BSA

SOCIAL ——— TRANSFORMATIONS

Plenary Speakers:

Vron Ware
Aaron Winter
Climate Change Panel

**BRITISH
SOCIOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION**

BSA Annual Conference 2025

Abstract Book
Friday 25 April 2025

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**Abstracts are listed by Paper Session
then alphabetically by Stream name**

WELCOME

Welcome to the British Sociological Association Annual Conference 2025 at University of Manchester. The theme of the 2025 conference is 'Social Transformations'. It is a pleasure to announce that Vron Ware, Aaron Winter, and our panellists, Benjamin Bowman, Rebecca Elliott, Charles Ogunbode, Lisa Vanhala, Catherine Walker, will address the conference in three thought-provoking plenaries this year.

In addition to these plenaries, delegates have the opportunity to attend presentations on a wide range of topics. The conference is organised in streams designed to represent the major areas of research with which sociologists are engaged. These streams are open to any topic on which colleagues are currently working, enabling delegates to meet with colleagues in their areas of interest and explore a variety of topics.

The programme also includes a variety of special events, stream plenaries, publishing events and events for Postgraduate Students and Early Career Researchers.

This conference offers a rich and challenging programme and it is hoped that every delegate will find sessions of interest.

A conference of this magnitude and breadth depends on the efforts of many committed individuals. Significant thanks are due to all those who have helped with the organisation of the conference, particularly the coordinators of the conference streams:

Conference Stream	Stream Coordinators
Cities, Mobilities, Place & Space	Rashida Bibi
Culture, Media, Sport & Food	Katie Appleford Alexandra Kviat
Environment & Society	Samyia Ambreen Pancho Lewis Audrey Verma
Families & Relationships	Julia Carter Leah Gilman Shuang Qiu
Frontiers	Paul Campbell Mark Doidge Jen Remnant
Lifecourse	James Fletcher Sarah Milton Harriet Rowley Yan Zhu
Medicine, Health & Illness	Katie Coveney Sarah Hoare
Methodological Innovations	Terence Heng Wendy Olsen Vlad Rizov

Race, Ethnicity & Migration	Patricia Irizar Farjana Islam Aerin Lai
Rights, Violence & Crime	Louise Livesey
Science, Technology & Digital Studies	Alina Geampana Sheena MacRae
Social Divisions / Social Identities	Finn Mackay Gráinne McMahon
Sociology of Education	Tamsin Bowers-Brown Rachel Stenhouse Juliette Wilson-Thomas
Theory	Pam Alldred Fay Dennis Nick Fox Debbie Watson
Work, Employment & Economic Life	Caroline Barrett Viviane Galata Karen Tatham

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Sage Publications

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The BSA would like to thank SAGE Publishing for funding a portion of the free places for this year's conference. Sage is the sponsor for the Climate Change Panel.

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Located in the heart of one of the most vibrant cities in the UK, Manchester University Press (MUP) has been publishing exceptional research from leading names and emerging scholars since 1904. Our thriving Social Sciences list consistently engages with the most pressing issues of our times, boasting key series on globalisation, racism and resistance, and creative ethnography, and producing award-winning academic and trade titles on everything from migration and medicine to environmentalism and urban development.

Mass Observation Archive

Mass Observation (MO) is an archive of everyday life, thought and feeling. A not-for-profit charity (CIO). It contains papers by the original social research organisation MO (1937 – 1960s) and current MO Project (1981 – ongoing). It generates qualitative narrative material based on the original methods of early MO. A national panel of self-selecting volunteers respond to open ended questionnaires on social, political, and personal subjects. It is publicly available for research, teaching, and learning. It represents perhaps the largest collection of qualitative secondary data in the UK

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We are a leading not-for-profit UK Exam Board. As part of Cambridge University Press and Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge, we have access to unrivalled expertise and research capacity across assessment and examinations. Our qualifications equip learners with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve their full potential. These qualifications have been developed by working closely with teachers, industries, subject professionals, and higher education institutions.

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Princeton's sociology list publishes bold and original scholarship that betters our understanding of compelling social matters. It encompasses qualitative and quantitative research in such areas as cultural sociology, economic sociology, urban sociology, and computational sociology. Featuring work that is empirically rich, theoretically significant, and methodologically innovative, the list represents some of the most important contributions to contemporary sociological thought.

Routledge Books

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UCL Press

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IMPORTANT DELEGATE INFORMATION

Arrival and Registration

We're expecting a high volume of delegates arriving on Day 1, so the registration area is likely to be very busy. To help everything run smoothly, please collect your badge promptly on arrival and then step away from the desk to allow others to register. Feel free to grab some refreshments, explore the venue or take a moment to familiarise yourself with the programme.

Your badge must be worn at all times for security and meal access. It also indicates whether you've booked for the Conference Dinner.

Registration will take place in The Drum, University Place:

Wednesday 23 April from 08:00

Thursday 24 April from 08:30

Friday 25 April from 08:30

Venue Details

Venue address: University Place, 176 Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL

Directions:

- Interactive map
- Travel by train
- Travel by bus, tram or coach
- Travel by car
- Travel by air
- Travel by bicycle

Virtual Tour of University Place: https://www.conference.manchester.ac.uk/virtual-tours/universityplace/

Sessions will take place in various rooms at University Place.

Chairing

We are extremely grateful to all those who have agreed to chair one or more sessions. If you find yourself in a session without a chair we would be grateful if someone in the audience could volunteer to take this role. Chairing guidelines will be available in each room and a copy is also available here.

Meals and Refreshments

Tea and coffee	Throughout the conference	The Drum
Lunch	12:30-13:30 each day	The Marketplace Restaurant

Vegetarian and vegan options will be available as part of the standard catering provision. If you have notified us of any other specific dietary requirements, please make these known to the catering staff when collecting your meals and refreshments.

Your badge must be worn to access refreshments.

No breakfast or evening meals are included in your registration. Manchester offers a wide range of local dining options nearby.

Conference Dinner

The Conference Dinner will be held at Manchester Museum on Thursday 24 April at 19:00. Dress code is smart casual. This event must be pre-booked. If you are registered, your badge will display a knife and fork symbol. For any questions, please visit the registration desk.

Publicity and Photography

Share your experience using #britsoc25 on social media!

Please note that professional photographers will be capturing images during the conference. These may be used by the BSA for marketing and promotional purposes, including in print and digital platforms.

By attending, you consent to being photographed. If you prefer not to be included, please speak to a member of the BSA Events team or an official photographer, or contact us after the event at events@britsoc.org.uk

ROUNDTABLE SESSIONS
09:00-10:30
Marketplace Restaurant, University Place

Cities, Mobilities, Place & Space - Table 1

How the Institutionalized Danwei Culture Influence the De-Danwei Reform in Daqing (Northeast Of China) Since 2000?

Jiajing Huang

(University of Kassel)

The Danwei, a unique phenomenon in Chinese society, is the basic element of the Chinese urban structure and redistribution. The Danwei system was the collaboration of institutionalized Danwei organizations. Northeast China took the lead in establishing the Danwei system, and its elements appeared earliest and lasted longest. The transformation from the Danwei society to the post-Danwei society in the Northeast region is not simply a linear replacement process, lagging in its move toward marketization.

Daqing, the largest oil field in China, used to symbolize the most prosperous situation in northeastern China. It underwent an economic boom starting in the 1960s. With the reduction of oil resources and the de-Danwei reform, the city started to decay. Due to excessive reliance on petroleum and the lagging effects of the monotonous Danwei system, state-owned companies and bureaucracy continue to influence urban governance and social development. The collective consciousness and behaviors shaped by the Danwei society further expand to social relations and day-to-day life. The Danwei system operates invisibly with the institutionalized Danwei culture.

The study aims to focus on the de-Danwei reform in Daqing, looking deeply into the individual's living situation. The main research question is "What are the lagging effects of the institutionalized Danwei culture and how did they influence the social development of the de-Danwei reform in Daqing since 2000?" The qualitative data will be examined from the perspectives of social capital, monotonous, and collective consciousness.

Autistic Space: An Autoethnography of the Spatial Urban Experiences of an Autistic Woman in the UK and Ireland

Anna Blair

(Independent Researcher)

Cities and organisations across the world are making efforts to cater to the needs of autistic people through the inclusion of spaces such as sensory rooms in various public and semi-public building typologies. Though not reaching the level of Goffman's 'total institutions', these spaces approach neurodiversity through the creation of separate spaces for otherness rather than the transformation of existing space to be inclusive to all. As such, being an autistic person in space continues to pose risks of sensory overload and non-accommodating social spaces.

This research uses autoethnography to examine how autistic people, as people with social difficulties, navigate not only the built environment but social space. It exists in conjunction with an architectural drawing project, funded by the Irish Arts Council, which re-interprets public and private spaces to fit autistic needs, in the utopian canon. The research is based on my experience as an autistic woman in the UK and Ireland with a background of academic architectural and social contexts.

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University of Manchester

Exploring the Experiences of Student Interns and Co-Social Activities for International Postgraduate Students in the North East of England

Zeb Sattar, Lesley Geddes, Caroline Burns

(Northumbria University)

The recruitment of international students for UK universities is an important income stream (Brooks, 2018). However, many international students face challenges with culture shock reported as a common experience; financial difficulties; language difficulties; making friends and feeling homesick (Madge et al., 2015; Reddy, 2019). International higher education is appealing and presents a need for students to move across cultures in search of the best education. Inability to effectively manage the acculturation process, combined with the additional pressures associated with being an international student, such as specified course completion times and pressure to perform well and gain tertiary qualifications, can result in adverse impacts on students' physical, mental and social well-being. Five university student internship roles were created to support international students in their education journey. This study involved co-produced social activities (trips/food/travel) that were arranged to help acculturate international students to enhance student experience.

A qualitative study design was designed to interview the key stakeholders (interns, academic staff and international students) taking part in the social activities. Key themes included accessibility to new places, financial relief and improved perceptions of studying away from home countries. The study revealed that social activities arranged by the higher institution enhanced the student interns experiences but also impacted their views on employability positively. Student interns felt that co-produced social activities could provide peer international students support to acculturate by organising and supporting social and other activities delivered to international students.

Families & Relationships - Table 2

Investigating the Impact of China's Paternity Leave System on the Infant Care of Urban Dual-Earner Families: Gender Division of Domestic Labour, Care Relationalities and Gender Norms

Yun Wang

(University College London)

China modified the parenting leave system in 2016 to boost fertility rates. In addition to the 98-day maternity leave, first-time mothers receive 30 extra days, with 60+ days for subsequent children. Fathers have 7–30 days of paternity leave, while spouses get 5–10 days of annual parental leave until the child turns the age of three. Concerns arise over the expanding maternity-paternity leave gap, which impacts gender inequality and childbearing intention, particularly for urban dual-earner families. This research explores the share of domestic labour in Chinese urban dual-earner couples when fathers take the 2016 new paternity and parental leave, dedicated to examining the policy's role in (re)constructing gender roles and care relationalities. By conducting in-depth separate interviews with 10 Chinese urban dual-earner couples welcoming children after 2016, this qualitative research found that: 1) Taking paternity leave has been considered natural and mandatory by Chinese urban families, despite various degrees of initiative, with intrinsic motivations higher than extrinsic ones. 2) Taking paternity leave facilitates men's involvement through skills building, empathising with their wives, and developing responsibilities as fathers, but their exposure varies with the length of leave-taking. 3) The equitable gender division of labour between spouses is achieved by outsourcing the wife's labour, not by increasing the husband's, having a limited effect on reshaping gender roles. This timely research contributes significantly to the study of leave policies in China, highlighting that an egalitarian gender division of labour cannot be achieved without a structural focus on reproductive labour.

Familial and Religious Socialisation: Religiosity in the Everyday Lives of Second-Generation Nigerians

Bisi Adenekan-Koevoets

(University of Roehampton)

Using the lived religion approach, this paper explores the religious experiences of second-generation Nigerian Pentecostals in London and the extent to which religious and cultural identity contribute to their socio-economic trajectories. Using an intersectional lens, it investigates the role of religiosity, family upbringing and religious socialization on integration. For the second-generation, socioeconomic mobility is vital for a sense of belonging and education, rather than social class or ethnic origins, is viewed by migrant parents as a key predictor. Ethnic minorities therefore use diverse socialisation processes to motivate their children to persist and progress educationally.

Developmental literature on adolescents and emerging adults, following Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, argues that parents and families are foundational socializing agents who help their wards negotiate developmental challenges and changes using a variety of parental practices such as building culture, identity, and related adolescent assets and introducing them to their ethnic communities. This paper discusses how these processes of 'racial-ethnic' socialisation, both familial and religious, influence social mobility among second-generation Nigerians.

This ethnographic study showed that the SG remain committed to the religious values and home socialisation of their parents because of the avowed benefits. These sometimes conflict with ideas and information learnt at school and create tension with peers (who have different values) and the educational system more broadly. As young adults, they emphasise their religious identity as a marker of distinction and embark on spreading similar ethos in the secular spaces where they operate, often adopting more inclusive strategies than the first-generation.

Parenting without Romance? A Sociological Exploration of Coparenting in Germany

Sandra Eck

(Frauenakademie München e.V.)

The presentation deals with the phenomenon of co-parenting, i.e. the joint parenthood of people who are not a romantic couple. The main hypothesis is that in this context, tendencies towards individualisation and communitisation do not exclude each other, but are in fact mutually dependent. The author elaborates the role of care in the creation of communitisation, the versatile new intersections between social, legal and biological parenthood. A special stress lies on the question in what way re-naturalisation is important (especially in queer constellations).

The input is based on the author's current research project on the topic of co-parenting in Germany (Bender/Eck 2022). Following a qualitative, ethnographically informed methodology, the researchers explored the sociologically little researched topic of coparenting via interviews with coparents.

Money, Love, Identity: Commodification of China's "Black Children" under the One-Child Policy and Beyond

Jingxian Wang

(Independent Researcher)

This research seeks to illuminate the commercial liquidity of China's "black children" under the one-child policy and beyond, in particular the price of their identity at multi-levels of formal registration, family belonging, and social recognition. Through an employment of narrative analysis of 20 in-depth interviews about their lived experiences of being treated as costly burdens and something "less" than their siblings, the role of money in mediating interactions between (a) parents and bureaucracies; (b) parents and kinship or other carers; (c) intergenerational debt between parents and children are highlighted in this interpretative qualitative research. The family membership, physical freedom, legal citizenship, and human dignity were represented as items of commodity in reflections on how the "black children" were traded between individual families, family agency and bureaucratical forces, local governments and the state power in the name of "protecting" their families. Parental economic

evaluations of their "investment" on registering which baby or not, family discourses that considered the registered personhood and entitled resources (e.g., education) of the "black children" as "privilege" other than rights, and the public discourses around blames on these children's existence are essential to explain how the structural violence against the "black children" were formed, became solid, and internalised into the native norm. In doing so, this paper explores criteria used by the family, community, and the wider society to judge the human worth of "black children" in a distinctive manner from their siblings', and how such harms were conceptualised as moral innocent in cultural, political, societal settings.

Methodological Innovations - Table 3
Special Event

This session is presented in association with the journal *Sociological Research Online* and will be an excellent opportunity to learn more about the publishing opportunities with the Beyond the Text manuscript, which aims to feature and innovative and creative work which is often generated as a product of social science research, or produced as an expression of research participation, collaboration and output.

Beyond the Text? Public Engagement, Knowledge Production, and Creative Outputs

Edmund Coleman-Fountain, Harvey Humphrey

(University of York)

This session will explore the practice and ethics of producing and reporting outputs from sociological research, and then bringing those into the public domain through formats such as Sociological Research Online's Beyond the Text. This paper will draw on the example of the Support, Genders and Sexualities Project, an NIHR School for Social Care funded research project, which sought to represent and share narratives from the study through a short film created from the research. This film explored the experiences of LGBT+ disabled young adults who use personal assistance. The paper will explore the forms of involvement involved in producing the document, the questions it sought to respond to around sharing stories from the research, and what it means to consider sharing these documents as research outputs that can be "written up". This paper will then open up discussion about how we plan for publication of research outputs in the design of our research in a context in which universities and funders increasingly promote more involved/inclusive forms of knowledge production, including co-production.

As Is and Co-creating Theatre from Research to Stage: The Play's The Thing

Harvey Humphrey

(University of Glasgow)

We offer a film of an ethnodrama/play: As Is; originally performed in Glasgow in 2022. Our accompanying article describes the who, how, what and why of bringing this ethnodrama to life on stage. The original research project interviewed 36 trans, intersex and LGBTI activists. The lines of the ethnodrama are drawn verbatim from these participant interviews, with the exception of The Narrator: a fictitious inclusion for the audience's benefit.

The play offers an imagined space to allow these characters to speak to each other, and highlights the ways some felt unable to have their voices heard. The play takes the context of proposed law reform as a format for discussion of social change, imagined alternatives and these complex activist relationships. The fictionalised 'ASIS Bill' is drawn from real laws that passed, and bills that didn't, discussed by the research participants.

The article discusses sociological thinking on authenticity drawing in contemporary trans and intersex studies contributions to this work. The article highlights these sociological concepts within the context

of the As Is play and the ways in which these issues sit within contemporary discussion on language and legal recognition in the context of trans and intersex lives.

We (researcher, cast, director) all have a connection to the LGBTI community with most of us defining as queer and trans. The majority of the cast defined the same way as their characters. We/They brought so much of ourselves/themselves to these characters to bring them to the stage. We discuss this important work of authenticity and representation often missed with cishet actors playing queer roles. We use notebook images of 'Production Notes' to consider our personal experiences bringing this work to the stage. We reflect on this work of representation and authenticity including how this work mattered to us.

Race, Ethnicity & Migration 1 - Table 4

Married Migrant Women in South China: The Relationship between Migration and Perceptions of Gender Norms

Hainuo Feng

(King's College London)

This study analyses the impact of migration on married migrant women's gender perceptions in South China, focusing on their attitudes, behaviours and experiences before and after migration, as well as intergenerationally through the lens of Social Reproduction theory. It examines how rural families' gender norms lead women to out-migrate; whether women's gender perceptions change post-migration in terms of decision-making power, gender role division and leisure time distribution in marital families; and how traditional gender norms interact with migration. Based on original qualitative semi-structure interviews with eleven married migrant women in South China, this study suggests that migration is a multifaceted, long-term process with various trajectories, arguing that natal family gender norms and migration form a mutually-reinforcing loop in shaping these women's gender perceptions: traditional gender norms act as an internal driving force to motivate women to migrate, while migration acts as an external catalyst to empower them to exert agency in readjusting asymmetry within gender relations through exposing them to new opportunities and norms. However, the interplay between gender norms and migration is nuanced: Natal family gender norms can be both a barrier constraining women's perceptions and facilitator triggering women to challenge these norms, while the impact of migration is shaped by not only women's ages and employment status, but their self-awareness of gender norms and social networks. Younger and working women are more capable of readjusting asymmetry compared to older or non-working women. Yet many women remain constrained by 'doxa' under patriarchy, mainly assuming daily and intergenerational reproduction responsibilities.

Racism beyond the North-South Line: A Critical Analysis of Media Representations of Afghan Refugees in Iran

Faezeh Esmaeili

(York University)

Congruent with global patterns of displacement, where most refugees remain within the "Global South," Iran hosts an estimated 4.5 million Afghans, including refugees, people in refugee-like situations, Afghan family passport holders, and undocumented Afghans, according to the UNHCR. Studies have drawn some attention to ethnicity and racism experienced by migrants and other groups in Iran. However, Iran is often overlooked in discussions on racism due to its location in the Global South, as well as the tendency among race scholars to distinguish 'the West' from 'the rest.' This research will employ media frame analysis to examine the role of media in shaping and spreading migration policy narratives in Iran. It seeks to answer how media representations reflect, reinforce, and/or contest the racialization of refugees and to what extent these media portrayals align with Afghan migration patterns. I will employ framing analysis to conceptualize news content as a form of discourse, focusing on key dimensions of news texts to examine the complex interplay of power dynamics, socio-political structures, and state policies and media representations in constructing the 'refugee label' and how it affects Afghan integration into Iranian society. This paper argues for a multidisciplinary framework that incorporates insights from Race Theory, Ethnic Studies, and Refugee Studies, highlighting the need for

a more nuanced and context-sensitive methodological approach to understanding the social realities of refugees in the Global South.

1. "The West and the rest" is adapted from Stuart Hall (2018).

Building Race Consciousness: Racialised Students' Strategies of Surviving Structural Racism in Scottish Secondary Schools

Rohit Rao

(University of Glasgow)

Secondary school is a site of significant social transformation, in which young Black people and people of colour (BPOC) continue to be subject to racialising processes in the wake of the COVID pandemic, Hostile Environment resettlement policies, the neoliberalisation of employment opportunities, and austerity within youth services. This paper presents ethnographic and interview data with seventy BPOC 15-18 year olds, conducted over fifteen months across two very different Scottish secondary schools. The study pinpoints the processes by which an incipient racial consciousness emerges and begins to inform adolescents' ontological stances toward their private and public selves. Such consciousness emerges in response to specific turning point interactions with school staff that alert participants to the existence of structural racism. These staff interactions are informed by exclusionary liberal discourses underpinning staff training and school policy, and a superficial approach to 'antiracist' education that actively deskills young BPOC people in identifying and countering racism, making them more vulnerable to future exploitation under capitalism. Using Bourdieusian concepts of habitus and capital, the study finds that the manner of participants' responses to these racialising events, whether defiantly or deferentially, differs greatly according to their gendered position within structures of 'race', and their perceived class trajectory during migration, as well as according to site-specific patterns of gentrification, local housing policy, and public perceptions around migration. This paper hopes to contribute to scholarly discussion of how and when 'race' is felt, how 'race' is enacted, performed, and subverted, and the challenges of top-down antiracism efforts.

Race, Ethnicity & Migration 2 - Table 5

Rethinking Antiracism and Racial Justice Paradigms from Palestine

Shaira Vadasaria

(University of Edinburgh)

The persistence of race-thinking and racial violence towards Palestinians is inextricably linked to a century long settler and imperial project in the making. While race and settler colonialism have necessarily been interlocked in the question of Palestine, racial justice has seldom been the formative grammar upon which Palestinian sovereignty struggles have been waged. This paper draws from pedagogical reflections of teaching on critical race studies within higher education inside of Palestine to think further about why, how and upon what epistemic axis points such ambivalences might reside. In thinking with rather than against the tensions, I argue that while race and colonialism have necessarily been interlocked in the question of Palestine, paying attention to how ideas about antiracism gets registered and stacked within the wider legacy of anti-imperial and anti-colonial critique from Palestine, both historically and at this particular crossroad, invites a rethinking of state centered liberal approaches towards 'racial justice' and its relevance for Palestine's liberation struggle.

Civil Society Organisations' Representations of Migrant Trafficked People or Sex Workers in Italy and England

Andreea Pop

(Coventry University)

This research investigates the ways Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) portray migrants who are either victims of sex trafficking or sex workers. It focuses on how CSOs view and position about neo-

abolitionism (the Nordic model approach to prostitution criminalising sex buyers) and sex work decriminalisation (the New Zealand model approach decriminalising sex work and promoting the human rights of sex workers).

Historically, CSOs and NGOs working in human trafficking or sex work positioned and lobbied either for the criminalisation of prostitution or the decriminalisation/legalisation of sex work. This debate continues nowadays and influences values, positions, and partnerships among both CSOs working in human trafficking, and in sex work decriminalisation. This research provides an opportunity to conduct two case studies in Italy and England to understand how these debates contribute to representations of migrants, human trafficking, and sex work.

I examine a variety of CSOs working on human trafficking or sex work decriminalisation: NGOs, anti-trafficking associations, religious organisations, sex workers collectives and unions, and feminist groups. I conduct interviews with their staff, including representatives, managers, and fieldwork staff. I also carry out discourse and visual analysis of CSOs' public documents collected from their websites.

Rights, Violence & Crime 1 - Table 6

Community Policing and the Kinship Institution in Africa: A Sociological Study of Abu Bebeji Clan of the Mandala Ata Gala-Etutuobo/Angwa Ategune Chiefdom in Idah Kogi State North-Central Nigeria

Aminu Musa Audu

(University of Liverpool)

Community policing is a concept of policing that promotes the partnership between the police and public to tackle crime and security challenges. This model of policing was initiated in early 1970s in the Western countries such as the UK and US with considerable positive outcomes in crime prevention and control. Thereafter, based on its positive impact in the West, the policy was transferred to the global terrain especially in the emerging economies of Asian and African nations to help curb the growing crime and security issues in the area. For instance, between 2002 and 2010, the UK- Department for International Development(UK-DFID) overseen a £30 million community policing initiative in in Nigeria, in conjunction with the Nigerian Security, Justice and Growth and managed by the British Council, but without getting the desired outcomes. This was partly because the implementation of the Western Model have not put into consideration some aspects of the socio-cultural peculiarities of the recipient nations. Some scholars have argued that community policing was not a new strategy in the Global South as African communities have their own indigenous institutions, as mostly being embedded in the African family and kinship systems. This qualitative research is about the 'Abu Bebeji Clan of Mandala Ata Gala-Etutuobo/Angwa Ategune Chiefdom' in Idah, Kogi State North-Central Nigeria' to critically examine the nexus, and relationships between the African Kinship Institutions and community policing.

Community Policing and the Social Media Use in Nigeria

Aminu Musa Audu

(University of Liverpool)

Community policing have assumed the latest bride in curbing the perception of crime facing humanity. This is based on the understanding that no matter how sophisticated the institution of policing, fulfilling the police constitutional mandate of tackling crime and promotion of community safety required the robust collaboration between the police and the public, characterised by sharing intelligence information and provision of other useful forms of supports. However, what is pertinent is the democratisation of access to information through instrumentality of digital technology and social media space such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp. These digital resources are used to facilitate the dissemination of information, including sharing of intelligence data between the citizens and security providers. However, the emerging realities have suggested that the use of social media space is subjected to various forms of corruption and abusive practices by users such as promotion of news contents perceived to be fake, divisive, and capable of producing escalation of criminal behaviours across the nations and globally. Relying on the reviews and analysis of relevant literature, this paper

submits that although social media practices contribute enormously to the effectiveness of community policing, nevertheless the positive impact of social media on community policing seems to have been overshadowed by various forms of corruption. It is therefore imperative that adequate trainings on social media use and its regulations be provided to critical stakeholders such as the Law Enforcement Officers by governments in Nigeria, international communities and the entrenchment of anti-corruption policies and practices in Nigeria.

Selective Outrage on Rape and Sexual Harassment on Women in India

Neha C

(University of Liverpool)

In recent years, we are witnessing an increase in rape and sexual harassment cases among women in India from 2-3 weeks baby to 80 years old women. Rape has become a political tool to control the marginalised communities like Dalits, Adivasis, and Muslims by middle and upper caste, class men. The increase in cases of rape of women from marginalised communities can be seen in India. The issue of sexual violence in India has been deeply rooted and intersects with caste, class and religion. All the victims regardless of their caste, class and religion are equally important. But the rape cases involving upper caste victims receive more media coverage, public outrage and mass movement for justice when compared to the Dalit, Adivasis and Muslim women. But also in recent years, the perpetrators have been getting support and protection due to their caste. To understand and analyse how the caste system and Brahmanical patriarchy are prominent, the methodology used in this paper is that media reports and social media posts have to be studied and analysed in detail. This paper examines the caste system, Brahmanical patriarchy and the socio-political background that impacts the safety of women in India.

Dark Flow：An Ethnographic Exploration of Cryptocurrency Gray Usage in China

Dongzhen Wang

(University of Heidelberg)

This article examines how Chinese individuals use crypto assets to transfer "Dirty Money" and circumvent foreign exchange controls while dealing with financial risk mechanisms to maintain the "cleanliness" and security of their assets. Using ethnographic methods, including participant observation, unstructured interviews, and grounded theory, the paper demonstrates how participants strategically exploit blockchain technology to bypass regulatory scrutiny and legal barriers, effectively "cleaning" their money. This paper provides a structured theoretical framework that captures the evolving dynamics of cryptocurrency practices.

Grounded in Symbolic Interactionism and Actor-Network Theory, this paper analyzes the interactions between individuals and technology, revealing how participants manipulate technological systems to evade "black-box" risk-control mechanisms and manage risk in crypto transactions. ANT deconstructs key technological elements in the cryptocurrency ecosystem, such as algorithms, platforms, and privacy coins, showing how these tools intertwine with individual behaviors, enabling users to bypass capital flow restrictions. Symbolic interactionism further reveals how participants assign new symbolic meanings to these technologies, balancing between "Dirty Money" and "clean" assets.

By introducing the concepts of "Risk Control" and "Dirty Money," this paper demonstrates how crypto-assets owners utilize technological tools to "launder" money, challenging the effectiveness of traditional regulatory frameworks in a highly uncertain regulatory environment. The paper emphasizes that decentralization and anonymity have not only rendered traditional regulatory mechanisms nearly ineffective but have even contributed to the sophistication of global financial crime. To address this expanding gray area, international cooperation and cross-border regulatory innovation must be immediately strengthened to effectively combat the far-reaching challenges posed by crypto-assets.

Rights, Violence & Crime 2 - Table 7

Exploring the Impact of Citizenship Education in Higher Education in Combating Corrupt Practices in South-West Nigeria

Ademola Salawu-Adeitan

(Birmingham City University)

There is increasing concern over the widespread political and institutional corruption in Nigeria political system. In confronting corruption in Nigeria, the government established two anti-corruption agencies: the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission in 2000 and 2004 respectively. These agencies, the police and the criminal justice system which could have been vital institutions in preventing and enforcement of anti-corruption legislations has become ineffective and frequently politicised.

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the extent to which citizenship education might impact positively on young people. This study argue that citizenship education may provide valuable new insights into Nigeria anti-corruption efforts, particularly in terms of citizens not only victim of corruption but can also help the students' understanding the symptom of corruption, and how their own actions have contributed to culture of corruption. Introducing citizenship education is targeted at strengthening democratic values in the higher education institutions and the wider community, and formal institution reforms.

In achieving this research aim, A Convergent Parallel Mixed-Methods was employed (quantitative and qualitative). Two sets of online questionnaire surveys and two set of qualitative semi-structure interviews for both lecturers and students from 6 higher education institutions from the South-Western Nigeria. The ten participants took part in the online surveys.

Recommendation- the merging of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the establishment of an independent National anti-corruption body which must include the civil society organisations and the media.

From Rights to Privileges: The Legal Boundaries of British Citizenship

Martha McCurdy

(University of St Gallen)

British citizenship is increasingly viewed as a 'privilege' rather than 'a right'. Under new immigration laws and amid waves of anti-immigrant sentiment, British citizenship is no longer guaranteed and can be revoked by the government. While the selective allocation of rights has long been codified in nationality laws, legal professionals now face challenges in the wake of rising populism and Brexit. This presentation discusses initial findings from ongoing research on the role of legal professionals and courts in defining civic inclusion. British courts perform an increasingly important role in defining access to and protection of rights as citizens. In some cases, this has led to the protection of European citizens' rights in Britain. In other proceedings, a stricter interpretation of the law has been applied for EU citizens applying for British citizenship and those wishing to appeal against a deprivation order. This presentation asks what rights are encoded in the law, what role courts play in the removal or bestowal of citizenship rights, and how can legal sociology address issues of inequality and advocate for justice? This presentation explores some of the conference's key themes relating to emerging inequalities and the changing nature of citizenship rights whilst examining sociology's role in addressing these challenges.

Cracking the Code: Navigating the Challenges of Policing Cybercrime in Nigeria: An IPA Study of Victims Experiences

Adaora Okafor

(Teesside University)

Cybercrime is a global threat, and its prevalence poses a significant risk that can potentially collapse national economies. Nigeria is a major hotspot for these activities yet faces challenges in combating it despite efforts by authorities. The nation's importance as Africa's largest and most populous economy makes its cybersecurity issues globally important. This research employed an interpretative phenomenological approach to examine the challenges of regulating these crimes in Nigeria. An in-depth interview with victims reveals that these crimes present diverse challenges exacerbated by technological vulnerabilities to social and economic factors such as institutional deficiencies, widespread poverty and corruption and the general lack of cybersecurity education in Nigeria. To make meaningful progress in reducing the widespread impact of these crimes on individuals, businesses, Nigerian society and the global community, we must adopt a unified approach that tackles all these interconnected elements.

Rights, Violence & Crime 3 - Table 8

Dalit Land Rights and Social Justice: The Uncharted Struggle for Land Ownership in Haryana, India

Anand Mehra

(University of Delhi)

This study examines the rarely documented and largely unknown Dalit land movement in Haryana, India. In 1965, the Punjab Government allocated around 3000 acres of Najul land (government-owned land) to landless Dalits in the village of Bir Sunarwala, located in the Jhajjar district of now Haryana, India. Astonishingly, in July 1973, it was dispossessed in the name of the establishment of 'Sainik School' and 'Seed Farm' (Secretariat 1973: 244). There were around 152 Dalit families whose livelihoods were attached to that land. They worked on the land as tenants. Against this government order, the Republican Party of India (RPI), along with Chaudhary Chand Ram (the first Deputy Chief Minister of Haryana) started a satyagraha on 27 August 1973, with their 27,000 followers in Delhi. Satyagraha lasted for 113 days, in which more than 25,000 satyagrahi were arrested and put into the jails of Aligarh, Patiala and Tihar Jail in Delhi. Many lost their lives in this land struggle (Ibid).

Ultimately, the movement concluded with the intervention of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Central Minister Buta Singh, leading to a resolution. On January 29, 1979, the land ownership of around 3000 acres was officially transferred to the Dalit tenants. This movement, despite its significance, remains largely unnoticed in broader social justice discourses. By highlighting this struggle, the research contributes to discussions on caste-based oppression, land rights, and socio-economic justice for marginalized communities.

Balancing Fun and Fear: Women's Experiences in the Night-Time Economy

Shannon Hughes Spence

(South East Technological University (SETU))

This paper centres on the preliminary findings of my PhD study on young women's experiences in the Night-Time Economy (NTE) in Ireland through the use of Photo Elicitation Interviews. Utilising a feminist Foucauldian lens, this paper explores the juxtaposition between pleasure and fear within the NTE for young women.

"You shouldn't be (anxious), you're going to be fine". "If I'm feeling the moment, I love to dance". "He grabbed me away… didn't want to let me go… he was holding my hands and tried to pull up my shirt…I felt so desperate". This is 22-year-old Rachel's lived experience on nights out. Although Rachel highlights nights out as an opportunity to maintain social bonds and engage in leisurable practices like applying makeup-up and chatting with friends, Rachel must also mitigate threats to her safety when in NTE spaces. As Rachel alters her conduct by avoiding crowded places such as nightclubs, or covering her drink with anti-drink spiking lids, she engages in additional emotion work to enjoy the leisurable aspects of the NTE.

The findings of the research show that NTE spaces, while being presented as spaces of pleasure and female empowerment, are also sites of anxiety and fear. As exemplified by Rachel, women internalise neoliberal governmentality that encourages them to be responsible for their own safety, and to change their conduct to remain safe. Women are thus subject to disciplinary power structures as they embody self-regulatory conduct that highlights gendered social control and power relations within the NTE in Ireland.

Unveiling Symbolic Violence: The Hijab and Muslim Women in Contemporary Indian Politics

Tarannum Khan

(Jamia Millia Islamia)

The plight of Muslim women and their portrayal by the media and academic discourse as victims of their own religion has consistently been a primary concern in contemporary times, encompassing their education, employment, and appearance (such as covering heads with hijab and bodies with abaya), among other issues. The heterogeneous nature of this community presents numerous challenges as well as advantages. In this paper, I explore the symbolic violence experienced by Muslim women in contemporary Indian politics, focusing on the hijab as a "symbol of contestation and identity".

This ethnographic study was conducted at Jamia Millia Islamia, a central university in New Delhi. In-depth interviews were used to collect data from students who wear hijab. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis to understand the nuanced experiences of the participants. Ethical considerations were considered while conducting the interviews. The study was framed using the intersectionality of gender, identity, and politics as its theoretical framework.

This paper provides a detailed description of the nuanced experiences of Muslim women who wear the hijab. These experiences have led to their marginalization and stigmatization, affecting not only their identity but also their sense of belonging. Despite this, they are emerging as symbols of strength and fearlessness.

"Rich Women Don't Get Raped": Middle Class Formation and Wealthy Men's Violence's towards Women

Shannon Philip

(University of Cambridge)

In this paper I explore how the formation of the middle classes in India and South Africa, shape the experiences and discourse of gendered violence for wealthy and middle-class men and women. Theoretically this paper demonstrates the complex relationship between neoliberalisation, masculine domination, postcolonial inequalities, gendered relations and gendered violence.

Empirically I demonstrate how the accumulation of capital and 'becoming wealthy' in the Global South, hides certain forms of masculine power and privilege by framing wealthy and educated men as 'respectable' and 'non-violent'. As a consequence middle class and wealthy women who experience violence at the hands of these wealthy men are not believed. Amongst the police, service providers as well as the broader public discourse, only poor men are imagined to be violent men, and poor women are imagined to be the victims of violence. This situation creates paradoxical gendered vulnerabilities for wealthy and middle-class women who have gained upward social and mobility through capital accumulation, but are also rendered vulnerable and invisible due to their class position, with various dangerous tropes about how rich women do not experience violence. A further contribution of this paper is to demonstrate how patriarchal masculine privilege is compounded with class privilege for wealthy and middle-class men under neoliberalism.

Methodologically this paper draws on empirical qualitative material from long term fieldwork in New Delhi, India and Johannesburg, South Africa. Qualitative data was collected through ethnographic observations as well as interviews with men and women in India and South Africa from 2020-2022.

PAPER SESSION 8
09:00-10:30

Cities, Mobilities, Place & Space - Room 2.218

Naturalisation of the Israeli Shikun: A Case Study of "Recycled Discourse"

Matan Flum

(University College London)

This research aims to critically analyse the "recycled" naturalisation discourse of the Israeli housing block ("shikun"), as presented in cultural representations, during two national housing projects: the "Sharon Plan" (1951-1961) and the "Evacuation-Construction" plan (1998-2022). By using cultural representations, this study examines how did these projects, and particularly the construction and destrcution of the shikun, establish, continue and disrupt the "white"-Israeli spatial logic and its the knowledge-production amid violent Israeli-Palestinian context.

Many academic publications on Israeli housing contain a Western perspective that disconnects Israeli housing policies from Middle-Eastern geopolitics. While identifying this lacuna, the research adopts a standpoint that places Israeli housing within its region, and claims the shikun operates as a significant geopolitical tool. From a research angle that examines the racialisation of the built environment, I will contribute to the critical effort to deconstruct the binary between Israel's "internal" spatial oppression of Middle-Eastern Jews (Mizrahim) and the "external" Israeli-Palestinian violent conflict (Shohat, 2002).

This study hypothesises that the "recycling" of the discourse will reflect the Israeli society's perception of its location in the Middle-East. This perception has aimed to de-Arabise Israel's society, and particuraly the Mizrahim. In turn, it greatly shaped Israel's disparities. I argue that the representations of this naturalisation demonstrate the de-Arabisation of Israel as a project of "whiteness". These representations reflect the shikun's construction/destruction as tools in producing and maintaining a spatial logic of "militarised whiteness".

Archiving Tenant Histories as Public Sociology: The Glasgow Housing Struggle Archive Project

Kirsteen Paton

(University of Glasgow)

This paper explores the value of archiving as method, knowledge creation, and political intervention in sociological practice through a live archive project: Glasgow Housing Struggles Archive (GHSA). GHSA is a collective project to document and learn from Glasgow's rich and hidden history of housing movements and tenant struggles as well as document the rise of Living Rent tenant union, to offer a 'history-in-the-making' and a 'history-from-below' through accounts of tenant organising. As the debate on how to fix the housing crisis rages on offering histories, knowledge and insights from tenant groups as well as documenting the emergence of the contemporary tenant movement in real time offers powerful alternative narratives and knowledge. This takes inspiration from Dig Where You Stand's (Lindqvist 1978) critical intervention into the conflict between the narratives of workers' histories versus dominant elite histories: workers are experts in their own life: hence workers, in this case, tenants, should dig where they stand. Housing history should be written from a fresh perspective – by tenants investigating their own housing conditions. While analysing archives as data is an established sociological method, archiving, as a verb, and a sociological practice have been overlooked. Unlike traditional approaches to archiving which fetishise the artefact, a sociological practice of archiving offers different opportunities. This paper reflects on these, including: digital archives as form of live sociology (Back 2012), curation of a public knowledge (Puwar and Sharma 2012); and as praxis in urban and class sociology which can disrupt power and dominant forms of knowledge.

Towards a Zemiology of "Sex for Rent" in the UK

Chris Waugh

(Manchester Metropolitan University)

This paper explores the phenomenon of sex-for-rent in the UK through a zemiological lens, which emphasises the social harms arising from structural inequalities rather than focusing solely on legal frameworks. The research situates sex-for-rent arrangements within broader patterns of housing precarity, gendered exploitation, and economic marginalisation. It draws on qualitative interview data from survivors of sex-for-rent arrangements and professionals who support them, offering insights into the lived experiences of those subjected to this form of exploitation, as well as the challenges faced by service providers.

By examining sex-for-rent as a form of gendered violence exacerbated by the housing crisis, this paper argues that the transactional nature of such exchanges highlights the failure of current legal and welfare systems to protect vulnerable individuals. Through a zemiological approach, it critically assesses the limitations of legal interventions and policy responses, framing sex-for-rent as part of a continuum of housing-related harms that disproportionately affect women and other marginalised groups.

The paper also reflects on the ethical challenges of researching such sensitive topics, including survivor vulnerability and the socio-political barriers professionals encounter when supporting victims. It advocates for a more robust policy framework to address the root causes of sex-for-rent, informed by the voices of survivors and grounded in an understanding of the structural violence embedded in the UK's housing and welfare systems.

By broadening the scope of harm beyond criminality, this paper aims to inform both academic discourse and policy interventions surrounding housing and gendered violence in the UK.

Peripheral Urbanisation in Harare: The Logics of Autoconstruction and Multiple Spatialities in Eastview, Caledonia

Tatenda Mukwedeya

(University of the Witwatersrand)

The principal drivers of Urbanisation in Zimbabwe over the past twenty years have been urban–rural migration, a prolonged economic crisis, political turmoil, and the Fast Track Land Reform Programme initiated in 2000. A burgeoning diaspora population seeking home has also contributed to this process despite scant attention from scholars. These drivers of urbanisation have fueled rapid population growth in peri-urban areas on the outskirts of cities driving urban sprawl in a process now commonly referred to as peripheral urbanisation. This paper focuses on the processes underlying peripheral urbanisation in Zimbabwe more broadly and in Eastview, Harare in particular through the lens of peripheral urban dwellers themselves and their lived experiences. Peripheral urbanisation in other parts of the world such as Brazil, Nigeria or Kenya is characterised by makeshift housing, informal settlements, inadequate infrastructure and limited access to basic services. However, in Zimbabwe the paper will highlight how people autoconstruct, make and unmake urban spaces in a peculiar context characterised by a chronically unstable economic and political environment such that boundaries of the formal and the informal are collapsed with various implications for inequality, access to basic services and infrastructure as well as the nature of the urban space itself. The paper concludes by highlighting that urban peripheries often become integral parts of the urban social fabric, contributing to the city's socio-cultural landscape despite their peripheral location characterized by contradictory spatialities of dynamism as well as stagnation, and luxury alongside destitution.

Culture, Media, Sport & Food 1 - Room 4.206

From Us to You: Understanding Responsibility in Official Pandemic Narratives on Weibo and Twitter in China and the UK

Yumeng Guo

(University of Sheffield)

This paper investigates how governmental actors used digital platforms during the Covid-19 pandemic to construct specific notions of 'responsibility' — with significant implications for allocating obligations and promoting accountable practices — as key strategies for pandemic control and recovery. It specifically asks: which actions and actors were portrayed as responsible for pandemic management?

Drawing on Ulrich Beck's concept of 'risk society' and new public health literature, this paper applied thematic analysis to a stratified sample of 783 Weibo posts and tweets featuring responsibility, from government accounts on Weibo and Twitter/X in China and the UK between January 2020 to March 2022.

Findings suggest that responsibility was framed as 'networked' in both cases, involving contributions from governments, 'heroic' individuals, and citizens. The boundary between government and publics was shaped by similar narratives of what 'we (governments) have done' and what 'you (platform users as imagined publics) can do' to uphold responsibility. Responsibility was also defined politically and culturally, such as Chinese communication emphasising collective actions ('what to do'), and UK discourses highlighting individual reasoning ('why to do'). These frames of responsibility were further complicated by platform affordances, such as character limits and hashtags practices on Weibo and Twitter.

Conceptually, this paper contributes by (1) extending traditional conceptualisations of risk to include risk-taking cultures, and (2) demonstrating that, within the context of official communication, government interventions, and individual participation are framed not as conflicting, but as dynamically networked.

I'm Just a Girl: Young Women's Rejection of Neoliberalism in the Age of Social Media

Nadine Shanahan

(University of Liverpool)

The everyday application of 'girl' has made its way into the cultural lexicon of contemporary womanhood, with its meanings frequently shifting through wider transformations of social life. 'Girl' has experienced a recent resurgence in the form of social media trends, such as 'girl dinner', 'girl math' and 'I'm Just a Girl'. We focus on these three popular social media trends and the experiences of 10 women in the US South, to demonstrate a shift amongst young women, as there is an emerging rejection of the status quo shaped by patriarchy, neoliberalism, and capitalism. Traditionally, the dissemination of 'girl' has relied upon an alignment of the behaviours of young women and the broader political, economic and social arrangements. Our research marks a departure from earlier neoliberal iterations of 'girl', such as the 2010's 'girl boss', as many young women attempt to navigate an economic landscape that has shifted their priorities from ambition to survival. Our findings illustrate that contemporary young women are acutely aware of the pressures and expectations that the present economic order requires of them. Through 'girl dinner', women challenge the patriarchal regulations of domesticity and cater exclusively to their own needs. With 'girl math', women harness misogyny for their own gain and refuse to conform to the neoliberal standards of financial stability. Finally, through 'I'm just a girl', young women reject neoliberalism's culture of productivity and success, and by using humour they justify their choices to only participate in tasks that align with their desires and well-being.

Culture, Media, Sport & Food 2 - Room 4.209

From Personal to Platformed Nostalgia: Tumblr Nostalgia, Crisis, and the Commercialisation of Historical Social Media Nostalgia

Briony Hannell

(University of Manchester)

Developments in media technologies have a complex relationship to memory and nostalgia, which are mediated by and directed towards digital and analogue media objects, texts, and genres. As levels of public trust in social media platforms have declined in recent years, amidst a landscape marked by controversy, corporatisation, and misinformation, 'social media nostalgia' (Jungselius and Weilenmann 2023) often centres an imagined past of social media prior to the ascendancy of Big Tech and its concomitant crises. This aligns with sociological accounts which emphasise the relationship between nostalgia, crisis, and insecurity (Jacobsen 2023).

Nostalgic discourses of temporal loss have long infused the imaginary surrounding the microblogging platform Tumblr, whose obsolescence has enabled it to accrue value amongst users as a symbol of a supposedly simpler era within social media history (Tiidenberg, Hendry, and Abidin 2021). In turn, the platform has made discursive moves to engage with and co-opt popular articulations of social media nostalgia in order to position itself as a foil for the contemporary platform economy. In this paper, I will conduct a critical technocultural discourse analysis (Brock 2018) of the Tumblr platform, paying particular attention to its newsroom from 2019-2024, to consider how Tumblr has platformed popular anxieties about platform capitalism and sociotechnical change. This is sociologically consequential not only with regards to the commercialisation of 'digital nostalgias' (Niemeyer 2024), but also because this represents an attempt to discursively reshape the criteria by which social media technologies are valued and interpreted in broader moments of crisis and change.

Platform Affordances: Understanding the Role of Platform Designs and Technologies in Everyday Food Consumption

Jiaxi Chen

(University of Bristol)

Digital food platforms are shaping the way people consume food. While studies have emphasised how platforms are used in the organisation and performance of everyday food practices (Heidenstrøm & Hebrok, 2022; Samsioe & Fuentes, 2022), the active or agential roles of platforms receive limited attention. Adopting an affordance perspective, this paper looks into how platforms contribute to the way people consume food, and traces these contributions back to their embedded designs and technologies. 'Digital walkthrough' (Light et al., 2018) has been applied to two types of platforms (online grocery and box schemes) to map out their designs and technologies, while qualitative interviews, kitchen demonstrations and food diaries have been conducted with 23 households in Bristol to explore platform-based food consumption. The study found that partly enabled by their designs and technologies, platforms have multiple affordances that demand, encourage, allow, discourage, and forbid consumers to act in specific ways in their everyday food consumption. However, these affordances are not deterministic – their realisation concerns how platforms and their designs and technologies 1) are integrated into existing practices, 2) situate within the material arrangements, and 3) adapt to different contexts in everyday food consumption. In other words, platform affordances both contribute to and build on their everyday use. This paper proposes that when studying how technologies may bring changes to consumption, researchers should zoom in on how their constituent designs, algorithms, and the products and services they provide interact with the existing networks of actors in everyday practices.

Caring for Yourself and Caring for Your Partner? The Discursive Construction of Infidelity on Dating Platforms

Simone Schneider

(University of Cambridge)

Infidelity in intimate relationships is often perceived as (morally) wrong, a sign of questionable character, and causing relationship problems. And yet, dedicated dating platforms explicitly aim at enabling and facilitating infidelity. Against this background, this presentation explores how five such platforms discursively legitimate infidelity. With infidelity, I refer to the breaching or breaking of implicit or explicit relationship boundaries, often colloquially referred to as 'cheating' or 'affair'. Based on a discourse analysis of these platforms, I put forward five constructions of infidelity as a technology of 1) self-care, 2) relationship care, 3) community building, 4) honesty and 5) progressiveness. By invoking contemporary paradigms of the self and intimate relationships, platforms seek to dissolve their inherent contradictions and offer their users different modes of interpretation for infidelity. Through an unravelling of the discursive layers of infidelity as a particularly disputed object, I zoom in on the politics of infidelity, inquiring what intimate relationships and practices are portrayed as desirable and legitimate in the digital realm.

"Birds of a feather with shared cultural interests flock together?": Digital Dating on Chinese Non-Dating Social Media Platform Douban

Haojie Fang

(Loughborough University)

Dating apps have gradually become a common way for people to seek out intimate relationships. Yet there has been limited research exploring the phenomenon that people utilize general non-dating social media for the purpose of finding an intimate partner. Focusing on Douban (a Chinese non-dating social media about cultural consumption), this study examines how people narrated 'good love stories' from personal perspective.

Drawing on the concepts of cultural capital and homophily, I will present a thematic narrative analysis of 30 love stories narrated by Douban users under the hashtag #IGotMarriedWithDoubaners. My analysis highlights that shared cultural interests play a pivotal role in the dynamic process of dating/marriage relationship formation (encounter, developing process, and ending). The findings show how Douban users utilize cultural interests (the material form of cultural capital that reflects social status) to make distinctions between 'good love' and 'profane love' such as love solely based on similarities of wealth and status. The paper argues that this process can be conceptualized as "adjustive homophily" for users. Sociodemographic homophily such as wealth/status similarity is less obvious in users' narratives.

This study contributes to the sociological literature on digital dating by providing new insights from the general non-dating social media platform Douban, evidencing the significant role of shared cultural interests on dating/marriage relationship formation in contemporary China. Furthermore, it advances research about consumer culture and social relationship connections in the subfield of dating/marriage relationship formation.

Families & Relationships - Room 4.213

Affects and Strategies of Maternal Optimism: The Accounts of Mothers with Experiences of Anxiety and/or Depression

Sophie Mary

(University of Cambridge/Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

Motherhood is an experience that opens up ambivalent emotions, like intense and contrasting feelings of joy and resentment. This is especially true in a context where women are promised fulfilment through intensive mothering, while welfare support plummets around them. There is growing scholarly interest

to explore the emotions that are mobilised by motherhood in this context, and how mothers navigate them--which is of broader sociological significance, since it reveals the affective work individuals deploy to hold on to norms that promise them fulfilment but are difficult and hurtful to attain and sustain. Here, we present the results of interviews with mothers (n=15) who have experiences of anxiety and/or depression. Building on Lauren Berlant's works, we explore the expectations they invest in motherhood, and in how motherhood relates to their sense of the good life. We propose that their difficult feelings, and the strategies they deploy to navigate them, relate to those expectations. This locates motherhood within a larger affective regime whereby mothers work to protect their optimism in achieving the good life they fantasise–even in the face of contradictory and wounding experiences. In this context, norms of intensive motherhood become paths to a certain form of good life that they strive for and hold on to. We therefore contribute to existing studies by revealing the affective motivations behind mothers' relations to cultural norms.

Academic Adjustment and Mental Health of Arab Students in Israel Exposed to Family Violence in Childhood: The Mediating Role of Resilience and Sense of Coherence

Niveen Hassan

(Zefat Academic College)

Family violence, whether through direct abuse or witnessing parental violence, has significant long-term consequences, especially when experienced during childhood and adolescence. This study investigates the impact of such exposure on the mental health and academic adjustment of Arab college students in Israel. Using a sample of 996 students aged 19-35, the study examines how family violence exposure correlates with mental health challenges, as well as with academic performance indicators, including concentration, participation, and adjustment to academic settings.

Central to this research is the examination of resilience and sense of coherence as mediating variables, explaining how exposure to violence leads to poorer mental health and academic adjustment. The hypothesis is that family violence undermines resilience and sense of coherence, which, in turn, contributes to negative mental health and academic outcomes. In other words, resilience and sense of coherence provide the pathways through which family violence affects students, emphasizing their critical roles in either facilitating or hindering recovery from early trauma.

This study will provide crucial insights into the mechanisms by which resilience and sense of coherence mediate the effects of family violence. Understanding these pathways will help in developing interventions aimed at strengthening these protective factors, thereby improving the mental health and academic success of those exposed to early-life trauma.

"Doing Family Wellbeing" in Contradictory Contexts: Insights from a Swiss Study

Nadia Baghdadi, Irini Papaioannou, Kerstin Bronner

(OST – Eastern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences)

In Switzerland, the gradual transformation of care and gender regimes has given rise to a particularly contradictory framework, characterised by the emergence of new resources and constraints on family care. Insufficient support for care provided by the state and employers, coupled with rising female labour force participation rates and the lack of redistribution of care work between the sexes (gender care gap), has been called a 'care crisis' by researchers since the 1990s.

In this context, families continue to provide a significant proportion of care, and their care needs are becoming increasingly challenging to meet. As a result, mixed feelings, fluctuating well-being and even health risks for some groups of carers have been identified by international research. However, the topic has seldom been conceptualised from the perspective of family wellbeing using a relational agency approach. The objective of our ongoing research project is to examine the ways in which parents define and foster family wellbeing through the practice of interdependent caregiving in Switzerland. Based on preliminary results from narrative couple interviews, the presentation will propose a conceptual framework for examining the processes through which parents engage in the practice of "doing family wellbeing" in contradictory contexts and the extent to which parents succeed in developing a sense of relational agency.

Precarious Living, Precarious Choices: 'At-Home' Medication Abortion amid the Irish Housing Criris

Kathryn Ammon

(Trinity College Dublin)

Across Great Britain and the island of Ireland, growing inequalities in access to affordable housing have led to more reproductive-age individuals living with housemates or parents, contrasting with past trends where most lived independently or with partners. In the Republic of Ireland, the 2018 Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act (HRTPA) permits abortion up to 12 weeks of gestation, but the vast majority of these procedures—over 95% since 2019—are early medication abortions (EMA), administered through community providers and self-managed at 'home.' This paper draws on data from the Unplanned Pregnancy and Abortion Care Study (Conlon et al., 2022)—a scoping review of abortion experiences under the HRTPA—and calls for a re-evaluation of Ireland's reliance on medication abortion without an in-clinic alternative. It highlights the experiences of reproductive-age individuals organising their at-home abortions in complex living situations--such as maintaining desired privacy despite living with parents or in overcrowded rental accommodation. While previous literature emphasizes the benefits of medication abortion, such as comfort and privacy, it is necessary to examine experiential abortion narratives to determine if these benefits apply equally to all abortion seekers. Through a comparison of case studies of abortion seekers in precarious housing versus those in stable situations, this paper also connects the housing crisis and medication abortion provision in Ireland to reproductive justice principles (Ross & Solinger, 2017), emphasizing how inadequate 'at-home' aborting conditions can also hinder individuals from meaningfully considering parenthood.

Emerging Themes & Special Events - Room 4.214 Special Event

Sociological Stratifications and Climate Change in Democratic Flux: An Exploration and Feasibility Study for Modelling Economic, Social & Environmental Justice in Mozambique 2025-2050

Helly Ceary, Kaweh Kerami, Moises Siuta, Dato Vilissa

(Independent Researcher)

Proposed here is a multi-disciplinary research and development project which seeks to explore fault lines and cleavages that have appeared in the political infrastructure and State institutions of Mozambique in recent years, with a view to modelling how a transparent and democratic apparatus could foster a more equal and prosperous society facing the challenges of institutional asymmetry and environmental disequilibrium. A particular focus is to address allegations of State Capture which emerged in the aftermath of the controversial debt crisis. A public participatory model is proposed to actively engage civil society input and design constitutional conventions which filter institutional and societal inequalities and injustice. This engagement exercise will seek public participation in considering what kinds of institutional-societal relations can be re-imagined in Mozambique to secure the integrity of the State and civil society to avert private/public conflicts of interest. This particular problem is vividly illustrated by the South Africa film-short 'Amahubo' in which the narrator decries how 'the scavengers are feigning a new Neo-Liberalist movement' to blind side the naked dispossession of public land. In this context a wider global evaluation is proposed of the crisis of democracy and climate change in the 21st century amid widespread perceptions that private and corporate gain have 'crowded out' any remaining residues of the public interest and the common good. An appendage in the project seeks to evaluate the role of State media institutions and social media channels in their role in the public dissemination of (mis)information. A case study will examine the dangerous and damaging consequences on public financial institutions and State-Society relations. Are there any effective public policy proposals that can minimize and limit any such deleterious 'fake news' exposures? A series of public participation portals have been earmarked to help undertake the research and streamline the results. The project will seek to deploy a cross-section of methods from within humanities and the social sciences, utilising the background skills and experiences of the four practitioners and researchers involved. Sociological research will be combined with economic, political and philosophical analysis that

is impregnated within quasi-ethnographic public engagement portals. The project will be accompanied by a standalone, experimental sound-art installation.

Lifecourse - Room 3.212

No Other Choice: The Rise in (Non-)Elective Home Education in England

Katherine Davey, Lisa Russell, Jo Bishop, Ron Thompson

(Manchester Metropolitan University)

The number of young people leaving school for elective home education (EHE) in England has accelerated since the COVID-19 pandemic. While it is often assumed that EHE is a positive and active choice, this paper considers practitioners' concerns about the sharp rise in families who are turning to EHE as a last resort. These families do not enter EHE for philosophical or religious reasons but because the school system is not meeting the needs of their child.

The paper draws on an EHE case study in the Leverhulme Trust-funded project: 'Mapping Interventions for NEET young people in England'. While research has yet to establish a definitive link between EHE and young people becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) post-16, this longitudinal case study investigates whether such a connection exists. By analysing ethnographic data gathered with young people (aged 14-16) and families for whom EHE is not a lifestyle choice, and with professionals working with them, this paper examines factors driving decisions to deregister from mainstream schooling and the subsequent actions taken by families.

To theorise the relationship between structure and agency in these decisions, Margaret Archer's framework of reflexivity, specifically her concept of 'fractured reflexivity', is used. This framework allows this paper to consider structural constraints that leave some families unable to cope with the demands of the education system. Additionally, it provides insight into structural enablements that support families in repairing the 'fracturing' of reflexivity once they are no longer preoccupied with an immediate need for survival.

Challenging Education Exclusion: Understanding Children and Young People who are SEND and Experience School Exclusion and NEET

Liam Wrigley, Seamus Byrne

(Leeds Trinity University, Manchester Metropolitan University)

Within England and Wales, the numbers of young people who experience fixed-term or permanent exclusion from education has continued to rise (Byrne, 2020). With this, the risk factors associated with long-term disengagement from education and employment (such as family breakdown, mental ill-health, social spatial marginalisation and economic exclusion) similar align to narratives of school exclusion (Wrigley, 2024). Given specific societal shifts, including, inter alia, austerity, youth justice involvement in education, the COVID-19 pandemic and 'ghost' pupil experiences, little is understood about children excluded from school who later go on to become 'NEET' (McPherson and Wrigley, 2024). This paper ties two distinct projects that explores school exclusion of SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) experienced children and young people in England as a case study (Byrne & Alghrani, 2023) and young people who possess experiences of being 'NEET' (Wrigley, 2022). Together, we bring our corpus of qualitative research to examine the reality of SEND status, school exclusions and NEET experiences, using the 'right to education' as a key benchmark. Overall, we utilise our framework to advocate for SEND and NEET children and young people who experience fixed-term or permanent exclusion in England and Wales.

Giving up the Good Research Child

Mel Hall, Abigail Hackett, Kate Pahl, Peter Kraftl

(Manchester Metropolitan University)

Do you like apples?

Do you want to plant trees?

Do you love books?

We draw attention to emergent concerns regarding the dilemmas researchers in the field of childhood studies encounter when seeking to avoid the (re)production and affirmation of narrow constructions of child(hoods). We conceptualise the 'Good Research Child' who arguably dominate the qualitative research landscape. Good Research Children tell stories, plant trees, eat healthily, love reading and engage enthusiastically with researchers as co-playmates. The provide insights into their worlds with drawings and stories and are represented by adult researchers as unique, special and meaningful. When their actions are unanticipated, this becomes rich material to be 'used'.

Here, we reflect on the methodological, ethical and political orientations that we and many others within the childhood studies encounter - particularly in terms of matters of 'voice' and 'agency' that inform (Western) constructions of children.

We propose and critique the idea of the Good Research Child which is not embodied by any one individual child subject – but instead, a composite representation and construction of how 'ideal' children should be and act during the research encounter.

Our analysis draws attention to the 'Good Research Child' and how they shape the field. We utilise an interdisciplinary childhood studies which incorporates critical analysis of the versions of childhood we collectively create and perpetuate. How are Good Research Children produced, what work do they do and how can we resist their pull?

Mapping Play: Insights into Teenagers' Playful Experiences in a School Context

Zifi Tung

(University of Bath)

For decades, research on play has primarily focused on young children, emphasizing its benefits for social, physical, and cognitive development (Lindon, 2007; Casey, 2010, Jawabri et al, 2023).). This study shifts the focus to adolescents, examining the nature of their playful experiences within a school setting. Data collection methods include map-making, observations, and focus group discussions. This paper explores the use of art-based map-making as a tool for investigating teenage play in schools. Art-based mapping techniques have been widely applied in urban planning and the study of adolescent spatial experiences (Lynch,1960; Thomson and Philo,2004; Travlou et al, 2008; Webber et al, 2014). In this study, map-making was utilized to identify where students spend their break and lunch times, their favourite and least favourite locations, and restricted areas within the school. The mapping process involved students from Years 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12.

Preliminary findings indicate that, across year groups, the majority of participants spend their free time with friends at a particular space. For girls, it is 'chatting' with friends, and for boys, playing football on the astro turf is a predominant activity. During lunch, students are primarily engaged in eating, queuing for food, and socializing with peers. These initial results underscore the significance of friendship and shared meals in adolescents' school experiences. Observations and focus group discussions further reinforce the perception of play as being intrinsically linked to social interactions. Ongoing analysis will examine whether play is synonymous with friendship and explore students' interpretations of friendship in this context.

Medicine, Health & Illness 1 - Room 1.219

Navigating Disparities: Trans Community Activism for Inclusive Primary Care

Inna Blus Kadosh

(Bar-Ilan University)

Despite growing visibility, the trans population in Israel continues to experience discrimination, violence and exclusion on a societal and institutional level. In the context of healthcare, trans people encounter

disparities such as lack of standardized protocols, lower standards of care and prevalence of medical transphobia, particularly in the field of primary care medicine. Primary care encompasses services provided in locally distributed clinics and has a crucial role in providing both preventive and specialized healthcare. In addition, the surge of global and local populist and conservative discourses pose further challenges to the promotion of trans-inclusive medical services and policy making.

In this talk, I wish to demonstrate the alternative strategies employed by the Israeli trans community to promote better primary care services for themselves without having to depend on institutional support and acceptance. To examine these issues, 19 medical care professionals and 20 trans people and activists were interviewed, and a variety of relevant texts were analysed. I will demonstrate how the Israeli trans community has accumulated communal experiential knowledge and transferred it to physicians and policymakers in a localized and informal manner. Furthermore, I will argue that by using these informal practices, the trans community can provide support and information to its own members as well as operate alongside power systems, albeit in a slow and lengthy manner. More generally, the findings of this study highlight how patient activism is employed by marginalized populations, who face not only health disparities, but institutional discrimination as well.

Structures of Domination and Intersectional Identities: A Study of Trans* Persons Health Outcome in Prayagraj City in Uttar Pradesh, India

Mansi Sonkar

(Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee)

Transgender is an umbrella term that emerged in the early 2000s in India and became representative of many forms and subcultures of gender non-conforming identities. It is used to describe a wide range of identities that cross or transcend culturally de ned categories of gender and includes but is not limited to transgender women (male-to-female transgender individuals), transgender men (female-to-male transgender individuals), transsexuals, and subcultural groups such as Hijra, Kinnar, Aravani, Aruvani, and Jogappas. The identity of a transgender individual is not in isolation and is constitutive of one's social, cultural, political, and economic identities which may be dynamic and fluid in nature, interacting with each other and with the surrounding social forces in the society resulting in a marginalized social position. Depending upon one's social position in society, the health outcomes and the lived experiences of transgender people vary significantly.

The Transgender health outcomes as a result are shaped by the interaction of multiple identities of a transgender person (gender, caste, class, sexual orientation) with the co-existing and overlapping structures of domination in the form of prejudiced and discriminatory institutions such as law, healthcare, and family, where the historical baggage of colonialism, the hegemony of cis-genderism and heteronormativity remain salient. By using in-depth interviews, observation methods, and incorporating the intersectionality framework, the study aims to explore the interaction of these overlapping structures with transgender individuals in their day-to-day lives and how this interaction results in varied health outcomes in the city of Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.

Unveiling the Gender Gap: How Patriarchy Shape the Health Seeking Behavior and Health Status

Pankaj Kumar Mishra

(Jawaharlal Nehru University)

The paper investigates how the intersection of various axes of discrimination shapes the health and well-being of half of the population. Practices like patriarchy, eating last, and food preferences for women and children significantly burden third-world countries' health and nutritional status. The prevalence of undernutrition among women of reproductive age, girls, schedule castes, and schedule tribes in India is unacceptably high compared to other social categories. The shreds of evidence from the National Family Health Survey 2019–20 again show the uneven distribution of the prevalence of anaemia and malnutrition in the country despite numerous nutritional programs at the national and state levels. This paper explores how patriarchy shapes health-seeking behaviours and its determinants among women in 6 rural villages in India. This research has adopted a sequential exploratory mixed method design that follows the quant-qual approach; firstly, the quantitative data is collected. 285 women from different socio-economic groups were interviewed for the quantitative survey, and in-depth

interviews were conducted with 253 women, as few migrated during the study process. The quantitative data captures the socio-economic and demographic profile of the households that reported health shocks. The qualitative aspects explore the determinants/push/pull factors for health-seeking behaviours among women. This paper further highlights the role of sociocultural factors that reduced the women to only being subjects, and they were left with minimal decision-making power both in and out of households, resulting in unequal access to resources and healthcare facilities.

Medicine, Health & Illness 2 - Room 4.211

Men Minds: Understanding the Mental Health of Young Men at the Margins

Nina Vaswani, Leyla Kerlaff, Daniela Sime, Matt Maycock, Julie Cameron, Various Co-Researchers The Young People's Forum

(University of Strathclyde)

Young men are less likely to seek help for a range of mental health issues (Clark et al., 2020; Burke et al., 2022), and this is often implicated in increasingly poor mental health outcomes for young men, which include substance misuse (Holloway and Bennett, 2018) and suicide (Rodway et al., 2020). Young men also remain under-represented in mental health research (Ellis et al., 2014; Sheikh et al., 2024) which means that their experiences are less likely to inform both mental health knowledge and practice.

The Men Minds Project aimed to address this, by working with 12 young men (the Young People's Forum) to coproduce a research project for other young men. The project focuses on three groups of adolescent young men whose life experiences and frequently marginalised status means that they are more likely to have faced challenges to their mental health, while facing additional barriers to participating in mental health research or accessing supports (those who identify as: LGBTQI+; in conflict with the law; or asylum seekers, refugees or migrants).

Drawing upon around 80 hours of sessions with the Young People's Forum, and on a range of peer-led interviews and focus groups, this paper offers an intersectional analysis of the individual, relational, institutional, cultural and structural factors that affect young men's mental health. Furthermore, the paper will highlight the ongoing transitions in young men's lives (between childhood and adulthood, between cultures, between traditional and more contemporary notions of masculinity) and how this liminality interfaces with mental health.

The Cultural Logic of Mental Health

Evan Sedgwick-Jell

(Birkbeck University of London)

This paper argues an understanding of ideologies of mental health as a dominant contemporary form of subjectivity. As opposed to numerous criticisms of paradigms seeing mental illness as rooted in bioorganic cause and an individualization of social problems, I will examine precisely those mental health approaches seeking to contradict medicalisation and individualisation. Theories and paradigms taking in the environment, social determinants, and community work, are viewed as a particular conception, which in critiquing the functionality and atomizing nature of dominant clinical approaches, at once insidiously function as a collective imaginary proposing to save capitalism from its worst caprices.

Jameson's 'cultural logic' is proposed as means of seeing mental health "as a cultural dominant: a conception which allows for the presence and coexistence of a range of very different, yet subordinate, features". Mental health is viewed not simply as a powerful ideology structuring subjectivity that must be demystified, but rather a cultural logic that has come to inhabit the entire apparatus of socially organized mental healthcare, and indeed social relations themselves, and thus can only be demystified through interventions of movements to challenge their existing organisation.

This will be examined specifically in a discussion of Universal Basic Income and 'social prescribing' in the popular psychology of journalist and aithor Johan Hari, and broader mental health policy. The argument will be developed that these are reformist projects, which while appearing to centre the social,

aim to target individuals with social policies, as opposed to collectively challenging the basis of capitalist social organisation.

Promoting Mindfulness in Education: Scientisation, Psychology and Epistemic Capital

Peter Hemming

(University of Surrey)

Mindfulness is increasingly found in many educational settings in the United Kingdom, but existing research has focused primarily on clinical efficacy or implementation issues, rather than sociological interests. This article draws on data from the 'Mapping Mindfulness in the UK' study to help explain the successful growth of mindfulness in education, by exploring the discursive strategies through which practitioners construct, promote and solicit support for the practice among policymakers and educational leaders. The analysis highlights the significance of certain authorities or epistemic capitals, and logics of 'scientisation', for positioning mindfulness as a credible and legitimate practice for educational contexts, yet also reveals competing discourses and alternative conceptualisations. In doing so, it extends theories of 'scientisation' by explicating the role of 'harder' and 'softer' forms of psychology within these processes. The research makes original contributions to sociological understandings of mindfulness and education, while offering new insights on broader theories concerning science and society.

'A mother has to be strong!': Narrating the 'Strong Motherhood' in China's Online Autism Community

Xiaorong Gu

(University of Suffolk)

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are under-diagnosed, underprivileged, and under-supported within China's child population of 298 million. They live in a society where a comprehensive national policy tailored to their needs has yet to materialize, access to specialized services is restricted, and social stigma is entrenched. In this study, leveraging publicly available we-media data of 43 family stories, I unpack a narrative of 'strong mothers against adversity' as a response to a major crisis triggered by a child's ASD diagnosis. Typically beginning as a self-driven and motivational 'mantra', the narrative of 'strong motherhood' is marked by its gender-essentializing nature, as seen in the emotionally charged, self-sacrificial, and all-out approach to parenting . First, the 'strong mothers' experienced a child's diagnosis as an emotional roller-coaster, from initial feelings of doom and powerlessness to a growing sense of self-reliance. Seccond, a child's diagnosis often triggered an overhaul of family economic and care arrangements, leading to disruptions and reallignment in the mothers' careers as they shifted their focus towards caring for the child. Last, due to the absence of professional services and public support, the 'strong mothers' struggled to navigate a stressful and exam-oriented public education system, and the 'future' in the eyes of 'strong mothers' remained bleak. The study documents the coexisting resilience and vulnerabilities of Chinese families in caring for special needs children, especially the gendered parental care by 'strong mothers', and opens theoretical avenues to address the linkages between gender, care and disabilities in a non-welfare society.

Methodological Innovations 1 - Room 3.209 Special Event

Creativity, New Materialism and Analytic Thinking: Entangling Process to Deliver Novel Research Assemblages

Hannah Gardiner, Nick J Fox, Lucy Harding, Julian Burton

(University of Plymouth, University of Huddersfield, University of Central Lancashire, Independent)

Entering reality through the lens of new materialism we find ourselves at sea in terms of planning and delivering inquiries. We aspire to answer calls to 'jump in a boat and go with the flow' (Deleuze and

Guattari, 1987; Fox, 2023), but how to do it? We discover language inadequate to express the fullness and nuance of unique experiences bursting forth across a multiplicity of entangled beings (Massumi, 2015: 13). We come to understand the entanglement of our methods with the knowledge emerging from our research assemblages (Fox and Alldred, 2014). Writing itself becomes not a neutral tool but an active co-constructor of our outputs (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2017). Where do we go from here? How do we deliver inquiries congruent with new materialist thinking?

One emerging solution is embodied engagement with creativity, stimulating novel ways of inquiring and thinking through creative processes (Manning and Massumi, 2014). Both creative processes and thinking can support 'minor science' and rhizomatic, 'following' research (Fox and Alldred, 2016: 103), inviting engagement of our sociological imaginations to generate new possibilities (Andrews, 2019). Arts-based approaches can disrupt reproduction of hegemonic ideas and dynamics, and catalyse new ways of understanding phenomena (Butler-Kisber, 2002). Through this we can create 'answerable' research outputs which acknowledge their place in the continuum of becoming (Shidmehr, 2009).

As Fish (2017:37) suggests: "Rather than discovering that which already exists, a/r/tography embraces each movement, each new idea, as a new reality (Irwin, 2013). It is a dynamic force that is forever becoming entangled in the materiality of all things, human and nonhuman."

But the question remains - how to do it! Through this session we offer an embodied experience of how creativity can support analytic processes, helping participants to imagine how they might generate their own creative new materialist inquiries.

The session will consist of practical exercises to explore use of artistic media such as drawing, sewing, and modelling at different stages of the research process. We will then reflect on this together to consider how creative media could support getting in the 'flow' of new materialist inquiry. There will also be 1 short theoretical presentation, 1 presentation of an arts-based new materialist inquiry, and some art works which respond to new materialist theory for you to interact with.

Methodological Innovations 2 - Room 3.213

Singing Trauma, Calling Race: Sensory Explorations of Reproductive Loss

Ulla McKnight, Sarah Milton

(University of Sussex)

This sensory performance will draw on an NIHR and an AHRC project exploring racialised inequalities in maternal reproductive health via a "slow-stitch" workshop led by Saj Fareed, for racialised women with reproductive trauma in Brighton. The project explored ways in which arts-based participatory methods can foster intimacy and enable articulating "unspeakable" experiences. Inspired by live methods and using and extending a call-and-response methodology, the stories that were told formed a "call" that shone a beacon on unarticulated experiences, materialising them in different forms and spaces as a form of connection and solidarity. Bringing together a group of women and researchers racialised in different ways meant that the performative and intimate sides of race could be examined, as well as the relations formed around racialised bodies that foreclosed care in health spaces. Subsequently, the researchers commissioned songwriter Adriana Lord to create songs drawing on the narratives of the workshop. Her recorded songs will be played in this performance piece, interwoven with sensory content, spoken fragments from the transcripts, and autoethnographic accounts around race, intimacy and trauma.

Creative Voices, Activist Voices: The Significance of Sensory Object Elicitation-Driven Storytelling in Capturing Activist or 'Activating' Moments in Community-Led Culture

Katy Pilcher, Amie Taylor, Julia Hines, Kerris Casey-St. Pierre

(Aston University, Fun Palaces)

Drawing upon our project 'Creative Voices, Activist Voices: Sensory Stories of Creative Communities' (Collaborate Fund), this paper argues that sensory-object elicitation can facilitate particular ways of unlocking stories of activism or 'activating' moments. Our research questioned whether finding your

creative voice, through taking part in a Fun Palace, can unlock your activist voice. Fun Palaces is a nationwide-campaign for cultural democracy. Each year, on the first weekend of October, hundreds of communities across the UK make Fun Palaces - a free event celebrating the skills, talents and interests unique to that community. We conducted interviews and two group storytelling workshops with Fun Palace Makers, incorporating sensory object elicitation. Participants shared photographs, cardboard boxes, slime, paintings, a cookbook, a necklace, bubble recipes, a wig, a (mock!) stick of dynamite, and much more.

This paper explores: 1) the embodied, 'lived and felt', process of talking with objects; 2) the salience of objects within people's narratives, including how objects were returned to with meanings made and remade; 3) absent objects – those that did not get 'picked' for the research but were discussed.

We found that there is a radical potential in the process of sensory-object elicitation itself, particularly within group workshops, which acted as a potential moment to generate civic activism. Participants shared stories about local needs and ideas for making their communities better places, and through humour and interest in the objects, reflected on what they valued about each others' work/activism. These interactions could be read as productive, potentially 'activating', moments.

Race, Ethnicity & Migration 1 - Lecture Theatre A

"The only option they have is to go back to crime": Using CRT to Explore Labour Market Barriers Impacting Previously Incarcerated Individuals

Mariam Swehli

(University College London)

The topic of the successful reintegration of previously incarcerated individuals has been discussed at great length within the UK Parliament (HM Parliament, 2017). Successful reintegration includes access to the labour market (UNODC, 2018); however, only 17% of former inmates secure employment within the first year of release (Ministry of Justice, 2020). While criminal stigma impacts job opportunities (Decker et al., 2015), so too does ethnicity (Pager, 2002). Adopting a Critical Race Theory lens (Delgado and Stefancic, 2017), we examine how former inmates' labour market outcomes are influenced by their social and cultural environment. The over-representation of minoritized groups in the prison justice system (The Lammy Review, 2017), lower economic groups (HM Government, 2018A), unemployment (Heath and McMahon, 1997), and homelessness (Hetey and Eberhardt, 2018) prompts one to examine how structural design creates and reinforces racism (Delgado and Stefancic, 2013).

Findings from in-depth interviews with previously incarcerated men suggest that the conditions and assistance provided both within and outside of prison, along with the stereotyping and discrimination they face, and the community and networking opportunities available, are critical barriers to successful reintegration into the labour market. Race and ethnicity greatly impacted the types of barriers faced, with individuals from minoritised groups experiencing several sights of oppression unknown to their white counterparts.

Switching It Up: Migrant Entrepreneurs as the Integration Facilitators

Carolynn Low

(University of Southampton)

Extant studies on migrant entrepreneurship have observed how these entrepreneurs have made considerable contributions to their local communities through their businesses, in economic, social and even cultural terms. Applying the lens of integration, this paper seeks to explore how entrepreneurs, with lived experiences of being 'refugees/migrants', support integration processes for other local residents; migrant and non-migrant alike. In so doing, it seeks to contribute to moves towards redressing the critiques of understandings of integration that focus on the migrant as the sole subjects of a (primarily) one-way process of adaptation to their host society (Klarenbeck, 2021). Drawing on in-depth

qualitative research with 30 entrepreneurs living in one city in the UK, it demonstrates how these entrepreneurs enable processes of integration for those around them - including customers, employees and the wider public - in multi-dimensional ways. Moreover, it demonstrates their purposeful intention in assuming this role of 'integration facilitator', filling perceived gaps in existing support infrastructures. Therefore, this paper argues, through their actions the entrepreneurs provide a critique, implicitly and at times explicitly, of an austere and hostile Britain. This paper seeks bring debates on migrant integration into conversation with migrant entrepreneurship, shifting the focus from the migrant as the subject of these processes to the enabler.

The Logics of Settling Practices: A Bourdieusian Analysis of Lebanese Immigration

Greg Noble

(Western Sydney University)

Migrant settlement is often seen as a linear path through key life stages and institutions – getting an education, having a job, buying a house, starting a family – ignoring the complexities and the unevenness of 'modes of incorporation'. This paper draws on research on Lebanese migrants in Australia, and their children, to argue that 'settling' involves diverse practices whereby migrants make strategic use of the infrastructural affordances of the host country to enter into different types of social relations in and across different social spaces. Engaging with Bourdieusian theory, the paper suggests that the resulting ensemble of settling practices, across a range of social domains, is underlaid by competing but overlapping logics. The paper argues that there are three key practical logics – incorporative, where migrants seek to adapt to local but dominant ways of doing and being; diasporic, where migrants seek to draw on the resources and networks of ethnically defined communities; and convivial, where migrants engage with the differences which typify the interethnic places they inhabit. The interplay of these logics can produce thick and thin forms of civic belonging, but they also contribute to the formation of a 'tormented habitus'. This requires that we address what I call the 'pedagogical imperative' of Bourdieusian theory and the sensuous, embodied experiences of the settling process.

Understanding Un/Belonging for Afro-Diasporic Youth in Australia

Melanie Baak, Yahya Djomani-Ousmane, Shaza Hamed, Benjamin Grant-Skiba, Efon Luwala, Mwangaza Milunga, Jeanne Munyonge, Elaine Ncube, Habibat Ogunbanwo, Zamda Omba

(University of South Australia)

Societies are rapidly transforming due to global migration. The concept of belonging provides a tool for understanding how emotional, sensory, material and spatial attachments are experienced during these social transformations. This study examines how African diaspora youth experience un/belonging in Australia, a white settler-colonial nation that has only allowed significant Black African immigration in the past 30 years. As the African diaspora youth population grows, they face challenges integrating into a predominantly white Australian society, despite policies that promote an Australian identity based on cultural diversity and multiculturalism. Racial discrimination, media-driven stereotypes, and political narratives contribute to their marginalization, associating African youth with criminality and poor integration. These negative portrayals limit their social, educational, and economic opportunities.

Utilising decolonial approaches through collaboration between nine Afro-diasporic youth co-researchers and a white settler of Anglo-European heritage, this project centred the voices and experiences of 40 African diaspora youth from a range of locations across Australia. Through collective storytelling and peer conversations, alongside poetic expression, the decolonial approaches enabled a reclaiming of agency and sense-making, particularly concerning experiences of un/belonging in Australia. We argue that in settler colonial Australia, Black Afro-diasporic youth are positioned as racialized subjects, however, they continue to negotiate the ways in which they belong to diasporic and national identities as well to more localised collectives. Their belonging is experienced as conditional and determined not just by themselves, but always negotiated in relation to others.

Race, Ethnicity & Migration 2 - Room 1.218

"Do I trust Britain? That's what you should ask me!": The Social Justice Consequences of Belonging on Victims of the Windrush Scandal and their Families

Kalwinder Sandhu

(Coventry University)

This paper uses the lens of belonging to examine the fractured nature of belonging experienced by people caught up in the hostile environment that defined the Windrush generation and their families.

The UK's media lauded the victims of the Windrush Scandal as 'deserving migrants'. People who had paid their taxes, raised their families and were law-abiding citizens. The moral outrage located the scandal as a one-off event that was a blight on the decency of UK society. There is little empirical research on the experiences of those who lived through the Windrush Scandal, specifically framed as worthy recipients of UK's opening arms.

Through empirical research, this paper highlights the contradiction of a welcoming UK that embraces diversity and is seen as a saviour of the vulnerable where in contrast those who were directly affected by the scandal felt shunned, excluded from society, and were not hailed. This paper argues that their sense of belonging was fractured and despite gaining their citizenship they no longer trusted the UK state.

A qualitative approach using critical race theory employed a thematic analysis to give voice to the experiences of the people who became victims of the Windrush Scandal because of the hostile environment. The paper highlights the evolving nature of the consequences of racism by providing insights into the victim's fears, sense of belonging and identity illustrating how they lost their sense of everyday safety, how familial bonds were broken and how good working relationships were destroyed.

Refusal, Visuality, Sociability: Scavenging through the Anti-Raids Counter-Archives

Sergio Calderon Harker

(Birkbeck, University of London)

The purpose of this paper is to explore and dwell on the potential of grassroots and autonomous counter-archives to disorient and reorient the possibilities for border abolitionism. The paper is situated within my PhD research which explores moments of border refusal across the European detention regime. Constituted through an assemblage of detention centres, immigration raids, and deportation flights, the detention regime is central to Europe's bordering project. Moreover, I understand the detention regime at the injunction of bordering and carcerality, situated within the colonial and imperial continuum. Against this background, my research mobilises an ethnographic approach to counter-archives, investigating the multiple rehearsals of refusal which interrupt bordering, impede the detention regime, and testify to the porosity of Europe's borders.

In this paper I think with and through the photographic traces from the London Anti-Raids Network. This decentralised network supports local grassroots initiatives seeking to identify and interrupt immigration raids across London. Through Judith Butler's work I understand these photographic traces as representing "performative assemblies" while proposing a "disobedient act of seeing", thereby arguing that images offer an embodied way of refusing border carcerality as a continued, unfinished practice. In doing so, they show us how border refusals generate what Colectivo Situaciones calls a "new sociability" in, against, and beyond borders. Alongside this, I show that to dwell on these photographic traces puts into question our understanding of the past, and the archive itself, as a critique of the present as much as an interrogation of and for a borderless future.

Under and After Brexit: Transformation of EU27 Citizens' Experiences in the Aftermath of Brexit

Djordje Sredanovic

(University of Chester)

This presentation looks at the long-term impact of Brexit on EU27 citizens in the UK. Brexit has transformed the statuses and outlooks of EU27 citizens in Brexit, by removing much of the protections deriving from EU freedom of movement, and introducing new migration controls to most post-2021 arrivals from the EU. On the one hand, EU27 citizens who have arrived starting in 2021 and had no access to the EU settlement scheme are subject to significant migration controls and hold less rights than those who arrived by the end of 2020. On the other, longer-term EU27 residents have been confronted with the 2016 referendum and the long negotiation between the UK and the EU, having to navigate choices between leaving the UK, applying for settled status, and/or naturalising as British.

This presentation combines in-depth interviews with EU27 citizens who arrived before 2021 conducted in 2018-2022, recent re-interviews with a subgroup of the original interviewees, and recent interviews with EU27 citizens who arrived after 2020.

Taking a life-course perspective, it explores the process of embedding and dis-embedding, the choices between leave, naturalise, or wait-and-see, and the transformations in status and outlooks among long-term resident EU27 citizens who experienced Brexit. It also explores the stratification of rights and opportunities between EU27 migrants who arrived before and after the end of the transition period, and the 'legacy' position of those who hold settled status but can be potentially assimilated over time to newer arrivals holding less rights.

The Local Migrant Support between the City of Sanctuary Movement and the State Migrant Restrictions Expansion in the Case of the London Borough of Lewisham

Naoki Yonekawa

(Doshisha University)

This study examines how the local migrant support environment, particularly for asylum seekers and irregular migrants, is influenced by the national agenda of restricting migrant services and the local inclusive migration movement opposing these restrictions in the London Borough of Lewisham.

For over a decade, the UK government has been intensifying restrictions on entry and services, creating what is described as a hostile environment for migrants. Policies determining access to services based on legal status in areas such as education, health, housing, and banking have significantly impacted local migrant service practices.

Conversely, local authorities, including the Lewisham Borough, are developing their own migrant support agendas to assist migrants of various legal statuses. The Borough of Sanctuary strategy, which has evolved since 2018, involves various migrant support organizations promoting inclusive support against state migration policies. These practices include campaigns to reject Home Office-embedded local officials in the Lewisham department, developing educational access for those with No Recourse to Public Funds, and local organizations not inquiring about the legal statuses of service users.

Based on semi-structured interviews with charity workers, local government officials, and migrants in the London Borough of Lewisham conducted since 2022, this study contributes to understanding the development of the local migrant support environment. It highlights that local migrant support has apparently contradictory challenges to the impact of non-cooperation with the state's restrictive policies and challenges posed by the national migrant restriction agenda.

Rights, Violence & Crime - Room 2.219

Meeting the Unmet Needs of Inmates in South Western Nigeria

Ayoola Dada

(Federal Polytechnic Ado)

A survey of inmates was used to determine the unmet needs of the living conditions of inmates within the contexts in which they occur. Employing methods from Medical Sociology and Law, the study made use of the collaboration of both disciplines for comprehensive understanding. Its specific objectives encompassed: (1) To examine access and use of health facilities among the inmates; (2) To examine the effect of officers/warders attitude towards inmates; (3)To investigate the perception of the inmates towards the housing facilities in the centre and; (4) To investigate the feeding habit of the inmates. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, the researcher made use of mixed-method, such qualitative methods as interviews were undertaken to complement survey research (quantitative). By adopting the above explained inter-method triangulation, the study did not only ensure that the advantages of both methods were explored but also, fulfilled the basic purposes of research. The sampling for the study was purposively random. The study sampled six correctional centres in order to generate representative data for the inmates. A cross-section of inmates was selected as respondents, using a multi-stage random sampling technique. 200 questionnaires were administered. A semi structured (in-depth) interviews was conducted among the selected correctional centres respectively, to gain further insight, which the survey may not readily elicit. Ethical issues in research on human subjects were given due consideration.In the final analysis, qualitative data were analyzed using manual content analysis. Conclusively, suggestions were made to ameliorate the living conditions of inmates.

Prison the False Environment

Ashley Bushell

(University of Portsmouth)

This abstract reflects on how Prison culture can be identified as a false society. Established 'norms' and behaviours within the free world differ significantly from the norms, values and behaviours of those imprisoned. Focusing on the experiences of an experienced offender manager and the 'outsider' perspective of observing the adaption of new prisoners to the prison environment and the significant change in personal identity that becomes apparent throughout imprisonment.

The research underpins the acceptance and normalisation of violence within the prison environment. This paper argues that the realm of offender management is not alone when trying to reduce the impact of the development of a new cultural identity.

The paper contributes to the broader discussion within criminology and sociology on the importance of culture and the development of the 'false environment', exploring the changes in personality, societal norms and the adaption of individuals within the prison estate but also the wider world and the significant changes.

It is widely accepted and established that hypermasculine behaviours exacerbated by the ultra-masculine environment led to the normalisation and the 'social norm' for violence to be used as a maladaptive behaviour to meet personal needs. The paper will aim to discuss and critique the intersections of the constructed prison environment, and its link to the changed behaviour and norms of individuals imprisoned.

The casual link between academic perspectives on prison norms, values and behaviour and the lived experience disconnects the aim to connect practice and academia through a pracademic lens.

Science, Technology & Digital Studies – Room 2.220

"To Digitalise or not to Digitalise": Small-Scale Industries' Engagement with Digital Platforms

Brishti Sen Banerjee, Anindita Chakrabarti

(Indian Institute of Technology)

In contemporary times, digitalisation is crucial for small-scale entrepreneurship in India. With the Indian government's launch of the Digital India program in 2015, digitally mediated entrepreneurship started proliferating in India. The underlying assumption behind burgeoning digitalisation is that it necessarily empowers microentrepreneurs by establishing a direct connection with buyers. Yet, this is not always the case. This research on the artisanal clusters of textile sectors in West Bengal (India) raises the question of how and why microenterprises onboard digital platforms to ensure business growth. The ethnographic study involves nine months of fieldwork, compiling findings based on semi-structured interviews and participant observation. Taking the case of microentrepreneurs, this paper highlights the significance of digital technologies in sustaining their entrepreneurial endeavours. The research findings indicate that the pandemic accelerated the digitalisation process, transforming entrepreneurial practices in the craft industry. Exploring the tensions related to the adoption of digital technology, this paper illustrates how these microenterprises navigate these technological changes. Existing scholarship attributes microenterprises' lack of digital adoption to their size and limited capital. The research extends this analysis by exploring other factors influencing microentrepreneurs' decisions to use or avoid digital platforms, such as the extra commission fees imposed by e-commerce sites. This research argues that most entrepreneurs refrain from transitioning completely to digital, believing that balancing offline and online markets is crucial for profitability and long-term success. The study will contribute to the existing scholarship by illustrating how traditional businesses innovate and the impact of digitalisation on the sector as a whole.

Digital Inclusion in Higher Education: Exploring Inequalities during the Pandemic

Miriam Mukasa, Eric Ansong

(University of East London)

This paper is concerned with digital inclusion. More specifically, it focuses on the assumptions made about digital access and academic engagement during the pandemic. Digital technologies are now incorporated into every sector of the economy including Higher education. Many businesses also require employees to be digitally literate and universities must build capacity to meet this requirement and contribute to social mobility. As with many businesses, during the pandemic, universities closed their doors and moved to online learning /delivery making digital access a necessity for academic engagement and support services.

Contrary to commonplace narratives about the transformative capacity of digital technology for education, adoption, and use of digital technology for academic engagement highlights challenges and lack of equity. To this end, the paper presents a case study of student experiences of adoption and use of digital technology to access teaching and learning at a UK university. The paper uses a mixed methods approach and explores what is invisible yet taken for granted in social constructionist analyses of the benefits and outcomes of digital inclusion. Findings suggest that while digital access to academic engagement is critical to social mobility and social transformation, there is inequity when it comes to digital inclusion.

The paper concludes that there needs to be a holistic approach that considers the interrelationship between digital access, capabilities, and inequality in Higher education. This has the potential to broaden our understanding of vulnerabilities and Capabilities and how appropriate policies can address these vulnerabilities and capabilities and enhance digital inclusivity.

Social Divisions / Social Identities 1 - Room 3.210

Beyond the Frontier: The Impact of Northeastern Boko Haram on Southeastern Muslim Women in Nigeria

Nduka Udeagha

(University of Leeds)

Since their inception and public attacks in 2009, research and reports on Boko Haram's activities in Nigeria have predominantly focused on the northern region, the base of the terrorist group. This has resulted in overlooking their impact on southern regions, particularly the predominantly Christian southeastern part of the country. This paper explores the far-reaching impact of Boko Haram's insurgency on Muslim women in southeastern Nigeria. Drawing from fieldwork conducted across five southeastern states, this study reveals that, despite the geographical distance from Boko Haram's stronghold, Muslim women in southeastern Nigeria face severe challenges due to the group's activities in the northeast. These challenges include enduring stereotypes, security risks, and psychological trauma. Boko Haram's strategic recruitment of women in the northeast as suicide bombers has led to increased suspicion towards Muslim women in the southeast. Consequently, these stereotypes and scepticisms that are rooted in faith identity divisions have culminated in discrimination and social exclusion, making it challenging for Muslim women to fully participate in the predominantly Christian society. It demonstrates the pervasive impact of Boko Haram's actions beyond their immediate area of operation, contributing to a broader understanding of the security and social effects on Muslim women in southeastern Nigeria. There is a need for targeted interventions to support affected women and promote community cohesion and understanding.

The Iterative Relationship between Local and National where Community Development is Deployed to Resist Polarisation and Division.

Amy Sanders, Michael Woods, Rhys Dafydd Jones, Flossie Caerwynt

(Aberystwyth University)

Community development theorists advocate for its use in responding to societal polarisation, but how it is mobilised is less well understood. Different modes of community intervention should be considered. Extant studies examine where local responses are engendered by a contentious event which politicises one community or where communities generally mobilise to build resilience to divisive politics. This paper considers both scenarios in examining the place of community development in the discourses of how local communities resist polarisation and which modes of community development are revealed.

A set of polarising dynamics (including 'race', religion, migration) were identified through a literature review and utilised in a media analysis of 1200+ news reports about local-scale polarisation. Twelve mini-case studies were then undertaken which included semi-structured interviews, followed by three detailed ethnographic case studies in the USA, England and Wales. This paper focuses on the Welsh case study.

Findings reveal a repurposing of community development in new civil society settings to overcome societal division which can be understood as a contemporary iteration of its historical undulations. A complex degree of community organising was exhibited engaging hyper-local communities, a city-wide strategic partnership and national bodies. This paper encourages us to theorise about the iterative relationship between seismic politicised events and subsequent community organising. This enables us to rethink the local-national relationship, recognising multi-layered structures for resilience. A practical implication is the emergence of a civil society model for resisting polarisation which combines priming communities to collaborate around cohesion and guidance when contentious politicised events occur.

Social Divisions / Social Identities 2 - Room 3.211

Diversity in Wartime: The Case of Palestinians in Israeli Academia

Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder

(Ben-Gurion University)

During wartime, academic institutions face challenges that threaten the democratic values they represent. Emergencies can create conditions for long-term damage to democracy, complicating the balance between collective goals and individual rights, particularly when security needs are prioritized over civil rights. This issue is intensified when parts of the population, such as Palestinian citizens of Israel, are identified, to some extent and by certain groups, with the national group that includes the 'enemy' (Palestinians in Gaza).

This study, based on interviews with 27 Palestinian faculty members in Israeli higher education during the October War, reveal that wartime reproduces national supremacy through new controlling mechanisms and hierarchies rooted in colonial logic, leading to differentiation between populations, identities, narratives and rights. Relying on the 'expanded multilevel framework' of institutional racism, it examines whether democratic values like equality and inclusion can endure the pressures of war or if they are undermined.

This raises important questions about the role of Palestinian researchers while Israeli academia supports military efforts and reinforces a hegemonic patriotic discourse.

The paper will explore paradoxes such as the reorganization of political issues related to freedom of expression during war, the impact of military presence on campus power relations, and the challenge of ensuring that privileges for one group do not infringe on the rights of minorities. Finally, it will address how to implement effective diversity processes in an academic environment mobilized for war, where populations are fragmented and fearful of each other.

Will Understanding Youth Identities Assist in Tackling Economic Inequality?

Ruth Richardson

(University of Derby)

Economic inequality in the United Kingdom (UK) is notably extreme and suggests no signs of reversal. This inequality exists alongside the UK being regarded as one of the richest countries in the world. Some critiques would suggest that inequality might not be a concern if taxation was to be applied effectively. However, numerous indicators suggest that vast economic inequality in the UK is resulting in detrimental outcomes across a range of indicators for millions of people, especially children. This research findings were generated through a mixed methods approach. Data was utilised from Longitudinal Cohort Studies (LCS) starting in 1958, in addition to focus groups with young people across the North, Middle and South regions of England. The aim of the research was to ascertain if young people are employing class-based identities in order to comprehend structural economic inequalities. The quantitative data assisted in mapping how identity related to class has changed over time. The assertion from the findings is that today, young people's identities are much more individually as opposed to collectively driven. Findings from the research suggest that other factors such as climate change appear to be determining how young people in the UK identify. These factors can be related to economic inequality, but it does not appear that structural inequality is being considered within identity formation. If young people, nay any people, are not aware of the extent of economic inequality in the UK, how can we expect to ever change it?

Education and Social Identity Complexity: Learning from Transformative Post-Conflict Educators

Robert Averies

(University of Leeds)

Education is a vehicle for social change. It can provide spaces for social renewal and transformation – while also fostering dark forces of stratification and antipathy. Arguably, this is felt no more viscerally than in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in which, since the mid-1990s, many young people's educational experiences have existed through an internecine triad of ethnic division across spatial, intellectual and psychosocial dimensions. In my research, I set out to understand how, to contest these realities, social transformation is being imagined, developed and brought into being by educators – starting with the need to rethink social identity.

But what can turning to the pedagogies of those who resist the reproduction of rigid, one-dimensional social identities teach us, for example, about how we help learners to address the polarisation of identity and discourse through our educational settings? And how does this relate to Alasdair MacIntyre's famous argument that, before we decide how to act, we must first ask ourselves "of what story/stories are we are a part"?

In this interactive session, participants engage with a key part of the 'transformative telos' of education in BiH, as conceptualised during interview discussions with local educators. That is, the need to expand Social Identity Complexity – defined by Sonia Roccas and Marilynn Brewer as the extent to which individuals recognise the diverse relationships which form part of their social identities. Participants are invited to reflect on the translatability of these pedagogies to their teaching context, co-create possible reformulations, and explore their potential impact.

Sociology of Education 1 - Room 4.204

Catalysing Social Change through Learning Ecosystems: The Pathway to Equity and Transformation at 'Five Ways House' in Taiwan

Chieh Yu Shen

(To Be Educational Catalyst)

In an era marked by growing inequalities and complex global challenges, how can educational systems evolve to foster social equity and catalyse meaningful social change? This paper addresses this question by examining the potential of learning ecosystems—decentralised, adaptive networks that integrate formal and informal educational spaces, community resources, technology—as mechanisms for social transformation. Traditional education models often perpetuate social disparities, especially for marginalised groups. In contrast, learning ecosystems offer flexible, inclusive environments that promote lifelong learning and empower communities to navigate and respond to evolving socio-economic landscapes.

Drawing on the case of the 'Five Ways House' Initiative (五味屋), a community-based learning ecosystem in rural Taiwan, this paper illustrates how local initiatives can bridge educational gaps, foster collaboration, and build civic engagement. 'Five Ways House' serves as a model for how learning ecosystems operate in practice, offering a space where learners from diverse backgrounds can access resources, engage in problem-solving, and co-create knowledge that contributes to both personal growth and community resilience. Through this case, the research explores how localised learning ecosystems address systemic inequities and promote inclusive participation in the face of global challenges.

This paper argues that learning ecosystems have the potential to transform not only educational practices but also broader social structures, fostering resilience, inclusivity, and collective well-being. By reimagining education as dynamic and interconnected, this contribution offers practical and theoretical insights into how learning ecosystems can be leveraged as tools for advancing social equity, with implications for sociologists and educators committed to creating just and sustainable futures.

Reaching Students about Researching Consent: A Consent Education Programme Evaluation

Pam Alldred, Gabriella Mutale, Sarah Seymour-Smith

(Nottingham Trent University)

Sexual harassment and violence (SHV) is a societal problem that schools and universities are now expected to address (EVAW 2023; OfS 2022; 2024), although they can be sensitive about the implied suggestion that it is a particular issue on their territory (Phipps 2017; Shannon 2024). It is perhaps better to emphasise the particular interventions that educational communities can make to promote consent, whether through poster campaigns, behaviour policies or education about consent and about sexual harassment and violence.

The USVreact project (Alldred & Phipps 2018) recommended that university communities worked on their equality policies and culture, as well as their compassion as a community, to reduce, not only better handle, SHV disclosures. The same ideals would promote discussion of sexual consent and sexual ethics (Lamb 2015), within a wider examination of the hierarchies and inequalities in HE institutions and racialised, gendered, classed and embodied dynamics that shape experiences of abuse and disclosure. Education being our business might mean it is uncontroversial to tuck active bystander or consent education programmes into the curriculum. However, challenges remain, not least regarding the ethics of mandatory training. This paper will report from the six studies of a project that evaluated the consent education programme that ran at one university for three years. It will share findings about what elements of local culture and context helped and hindered the consent education programme delivery, as well as what challenges the researchers identified in trying to study this.

How Does Schooling Produce Political Socialisation? Educational and Social Order Viewed by Pupils

Maxime Michiels

(UCLouvain)

When considering the relationship between schooling and politics, sociologists, from Durkheim to Bourdieu, have seen the school as an institution that socializes students to the norms, values, and hierarchies of society, thereby ensuring the stability of the social order (Durkheim, 1966/1922, 2012/1902; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970). However, despite the growing importance of education in Western societies, we cannot ignore the rise of protest, social conflict, and defiance against the state (Roudet, 2012; Siblot, 2015; Sallenave, 2019). This context invites us to revisit the question of political socialization in schools.

Based on ongoing ethnographic research, combining observation and interviews in two socially differentiated schools in French-speaking Belgium, I aim to show how the educational institution can foster both adherence to and resistance against the educational order. Through the concept of symbolic recycling (Lignier & Pagis, 2017), those disposition can extend to the broader social order. Drawing on the works of Bourdieu (1970, 1977, 1982) and Willis (1977), as well as recent literature investigating political socialization in a broader context (Sapiro, 2004; Bargel & Darmon, 2017; Boughaba et al., 2018; Barrault-Stella et al., 2020; Haegel, 2020), I argue that the outcomes of the school's socializing function depend on students' subjective schooling experiences and the socializing competition between school, family, and peers (Darmon, 2016). These factors can influence perceptions of (il)legitimacy of the institution and impact its capacity to impose distinctions and hierarchies.

Connecting STEM Education to Social Justice

Michelle Starr

(University of Limerick)

The importance of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education is constantly disseminated as the panacea for equipping the younger generation with the skills necessary for tackling the challenges of today's climate crisis, and unanticipated future. Furthermore, economic, socio-political, and/or environmental factors, such as war, human rights violations, poverty, persecution, climate disasters, among others are impacting increased immigration trends that require individuals and societies to be adaptable, resilient and more importantly, live in harmony.

This paper argues for a critical sociological approach to STEM education at all levels. By questioning and researching the historical, socio-cultural and socio-political factors (local and global) in the production and commodification of scientific (the STEM topic of study in the classroom) knowledge, students learn insights about injustices which in turn, support building their competence for how to work for change. Such a critical sociological approach intertwines STEM education with Civic Engagement and Social Justice, and goes some way in developing a new way of thinking of values in relation to the ethical journey of human change. A critical sociology pedagogical approach (e.g. hooks 1994; Greene 1998 in Goldman 2010) can furnish students with the skills to respond in more constructive and critical ways to a crisis that they will experience more acutely.

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Sociology of Education 2 - Room 4.205

Young People's Stances towards the Future: Deictic Movement between Temporal Contexts within the Internal Conversation

Richard Sandford

(University College London)

Work within youth studies and the sociology of education has addressed young people's future orientations. Woodman (2011) notes that young people are capable of sustaining multiple orientations towards the future, combining the strategies described in previous typologies of future orientation. This paper describes some of the mechanisms that might underpin movement between such multiple future orientations, situated within accounts of agency and practice (e.g. Mandich, 2020; Decoteau, 2016; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998) that describe the subject's movement between different temporal contexts within the internal conversation (Archer, 2003).

Drawing on a discourse analysis of interviews in the UK with young people aged between 12 and 13 choosing subjects for GCSE study, the paper describes the deictic shifts within their language that facilitate their movements between temporal contexts, and shows how successive shifts between contexts enable a complex, fluid, agile and layered consideration of real and imagined past futures and future pasts, often within the same clause or sentence. It suggests that stances towards the future can be taken up or discarded as a subject's attention moves through different temporal contexts, and that associating a stance with a context, rather than an individual or a life stage, affords researchers greater analytical clarity when tracing the wider imaginaries and structures shaping the formation of that stance. In so doing, it not only contributes to debates concerned directly with young people's future orientations, but also to the wider sociological challenge of better describing the future (e.g. Halford and Southerton, 2023; Coleman and Tutton, 2017).

Graduating into Uncertainty: Care Experienced Students' Experiences of the Student-to-Graduate Transition

Ceryn Evans

(Swansea University)

Care-experienced young people have some of the lowest rates of participation in post-16 and higher education (HE) in the UK (Jackson and Ajayi 2007; Cameron 2017). Whilst extensive research has highlighted the factors which facilitate or hinder care-experienced students' access to university (Jackson and Anjayi 2007), there has been less attention to their transitions from university to graduate life except for a few important studies (Harrison et al. 2020; Baker et al. 2021; Baker 2024). This omission is striking given that the number of young people participating in HE has grown substantially in recent decades. As HE has massified and the volume of graduates greatly increased, the relationship between HE qualifications and employment has become fractured (Brown, Lauder and Ashton 2011; Tholan and Brown 2017). In the context of deeply competitive graduate labour markets, questions arise

regarding how graduates with limited familial support navigate the transition from university to the labour market. This paper draws on the findings of a study which explored care experienced students' experiences of transitioning from university to graduate life. Interviews with nine care-experienced students and seven care experienced graduates from universities in England and Wales revealed the significant concerns, fears and worries that participants had regarding leaving university and finding employment and accommodation post-university. The paper has important implications for HE policy and practice around supporting care experienced students to make positive transitions to employment and accommodation upon leaving higher education.

Building Solidarity and Navigating Transition in Higher Education through Hallways of Belonging

Gary Poynton, Fatema Khatun, Joshua Evans

(Birmingham City University, Aston University)

Since the massification of higher education, two contradictory processes have been notable in its development. The marketisation of the sector has advanced steadily at the same time as professed policies of widening participation, while the datafication of EDI policies has rendered invisible the minoritised experience in HE, and the needs of non-traditional, intersectional student identities. In previous work (Khatun et al, 2023), we have established the concept of hallway learning, which begins with acknowledging that traditional learning spaces are sites of social power that marginalise non-traditional students (and staff). To engage in Hallway learning, then, is to promote and embody dialogic pedagogies (Freire, 1970) within brave spaces that we, as working-class academics, can occupy.

This presentation will further extend the Hallway learning concept and fuse it with the difficulties of transitions from being working-class, zero-hour staff into full-time - yet still precarious - roles. We posit that the continuing pushdown of wages, funding crisis and waves of redundancies across the sector have a detrimental impact on the ability of working-class academics to make a career in academia and our ability to sustain a career in academia. The rapid professionalisation of teaching and learning through neoliberal policy levers, including TEF and REF, have negatively impacted staff wellbeing and the engagement and attainment of our working-class students. To combat this, we propose that Hallway learning can foster solidarity between academic teaching staff and students, easing – but not erasing - the precarity that comes with transition on both sides of the fence.

"My perfect meal": Social Transitions through the Written Mimicry Skills of Lancashire Children Adopting the Language of Haute Cuisine

David Glynne-Percy

(Tutor4progess)

Research indicates that our greatest mimicry powers exist when we are young. This is illustrated by language acquisition; 'If we learn a second language in childhood, we learn to speak it fluently and without a 'foreign accent'; if we learn in adulthood, it is very unlikely that we will attain a native accent.' Yet little research exists in how these mimicry abilities in childhood can be used in other domains, such as writing, to foster social transitions. This research examines the ability of disadvantaged pupils to mimic, within the medium of writing, the language of fine dining. 50 disadvantaged pupils (aged 13-14) from an East Lancashire secondary school were invited to write an initial assessment "Describe your perfect meal". After 7 one-hour lessons the same pupils were invited to rewrite "Describe your perfect meal." Findings indicate all pupils had transformed their perfect meal from one to three courses, their food choice, substantially expanding their word count, use of adjectives and figurative language. Implications of this early research suggest that children from less advantaged backgrounds are adept at mimicking a written language style to describe culinary experiences often beyond their lived experience. These findings shed an interesting light upon the potential of language acquisition to re-imagine and even transform social transitions.

Theory - Room 2.217

Contemporary Dimensions of Nostalgia: Towards a New Theoretical Framework

Dariusz Brzezinski

(Polish Academy of Science)

In 2001 Svetlana Boym stated: 'The twentieth century began with a futuristic utopia and ended with nostalgia'. She claimed that yearning for the past – which takes many different forms and involves a variety of practices – will be of increasing importance in contemporary culture. In the more twenty years that have since passed, the interest in the study of nostalgia has flourished. Several dozen books, articles and essays devoted to this phenomenon have been published. It has also been pointed out that 'nostalgia studies' is emerging as a new transdisciplinary field of research.

Both the dynamic development of research on nostalgia, and the increasing role that longing for the past plays in the contemporary condition, make it necessary to re-theorise this phenomenon. Michael H. Jacobsen wrote in this context: 'nostalgia (…) in desperate need of theoretical elaboration and empirical investigation'. Zygmunt Bauman claimed in his last, posthumously published book, that reflection on nostalgia is indispensable in a world in which the impact of this phenomenon 'is visible and palpably felt at every level of social cohabitation'.

The paper addresses all these issues. It aims to discuss the need for a comprehensive, transdisciplinary analysis of the contemporary manifestations of nostalgia, and to propose a sketch of a new theoretical framework for studies on nostalgia in the current condition.

The paper results of my current (2022-2025) research project 'Contemporary Dimensions of Nostalgia: Towards a New Theoretical Framework', financed by the National Science Centre in Poland, value: 127 000 Euro.

Tragedy of Culture or Tragedy of Cognition? Reimagining Simmel as a Cognitive Sociologist

Ningxiang Sun

(University of Edinburgh)

Georg Simmel's "tragedy of culture" concept is often viewed as central to his discourse on culture and art. This paper reinterprets Simmel's work through the lens of art anthropology and cognitive archaeology's discussions of the "cognitive life of things", positioning him as a precursor to cognitive sociology, whose crucial, yet overlooked, contribution lies in identifying the evolving cognitive ecology between humans and artifacts in modern life.

I argue that Simmel's theory goes beyond common interpretations (e.g., Frisby and Featherstone) that focus on the conflict between transcendental subjects and fixed objects —— Instead, it describes a "tragedy of cognition": as humans transcend existing cultural forms (e.g., artifacts, novels, poems), they continuously create new ones, leading to an ever-growing cultural system too complex for individuals to fully comprehend. This ongoing process of cultural creation and accumulation results in escalating cognitive pressure on individuals in the modern world, prompting coping strategies like forgetting, simplifying, indifference and attitude of blasé, which are key to understanding modern life characteristics such as pre-reflexivity, fluidity, and commodity fetishism.

My approach reveals a new dimension in Simmel's work, bridging classical sociological theory with contemporary interdisciplinary perspectives. By reframing the "tragedy of culture" as a cognitive phenomenon, I provide a cohesive framework that interconnects Simmel's diverse discourses on culture, art, and modern life. This reinterpretation not only enriches our understanding of Simmel's contributions but also illuminates the cognitive challenges of our increasingly object-saturated world, offering fresh insights into the interplay between humans and non-humans in the Anthropocene.

A Decolonial Standpoint Theory from the Margins of Spaces and Identities

Shalini Nair

(University of Glasgow)

Building on the emerging scholarship that combines intersectionality (critical race theory) and space (feminist geography), I propose a novel conceptual framework for theorising the margins and better understanding multiple overlapping structural power inequalities. I argue that such a global South margin standpoint framework enables a situated understanding of oppression, resistance, and justice. A tool for developing theory and praxis rooted in the margins, it is essential to ensure that discourses, including that of laws, policies, civil society mobilisations, and media, are inclusive and reflect the interconnectedness of struggles. Lastly, as I show, my conceptual framework is a decolonial approach to intersectionality theory which currently fails to adequately attend to the power imbalances of the colonial-neoliberal world order.

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Work, Employment & Economic Life 1 - Room 3.204

To Plan or Not To Plan? Temporal Orientations and Anticipated Agency at the Postdoctoral Career Stage

Kathia Serrano

(Heidelberg University)

Postdocs are caught in the limbo of temporary work contracts and high-performance expectations of academia. Our paper investigates how they make sense of this particular career stage. In particular, our study examines how postdocs plan future activities and career steps in the absence of tangible prospects. We therefore draw on a full qualitative interview panel of 45 postdoctoral researchers in Particle Physics and Modern History employed at German research institutions (total number of interviews = 135). By focusing on the temporal orientations engrained in the decision-making process of postdocs, we contribute a novel and processual perspective on the precarity and meaningfulness of academic work. We find that postdocs' career narratives are structured by the temporalities of different forms of academic competition: On the one hand, the temporal horizon against which postdocs make sense of their career is adapted to both the average length of employment contracts at the postdoc stage and to the funding cycles of the grants that are crucial to secure postdocs' employment. On the other hand, narratives of career planning we found in the data - i.e. narratives of "strategizing" and "drifting" - are not related to the academic performance of our interviewees. Rather, they are but ways to cope with the omnipresent expectation to compete.

Discretion and Power in Work: Firefighters as 'Thinking Professionals'

Irena Grugulis, James Brooks, Hugh Cook

(University of Leeds)

Discretion and autonomy are central to work (Fox, 1974; 1966). There are many studies of declining discretion (Braverman, 1974; Taylor and Bain, 1999; Joyce et al, 2023; Felstead et al., 2002; Henseke et al., 2018). Official attempts to increase discretion rarely feature, possibly because few organisations seek to do this. This paper attempts to address that gap. It examines an attempt to increase the discretion that firefighters could exercise in work.

Firefighters have always known that "every incident is . . . different" (interview) and have relied on local knowledge as well as standard protocols. The attempts to increase discretion saw changes to procedure, including encouragement from senior ranks and the introduction of a decision log. But internal power structures remained and firefighters could still expect to be disciplined for exercising discretion (some were told that both discipline and commendation had been considered for the same actions).

Here we examine the ways that firefighters made their decisions, the procedures they went against, the rules they broke and the ways these actions were treated by their bosses. Firefighters exercised discretion: (i) when the situation they were facing was complex, (ii) when the situation was urgent and (iii) when the guidelines were simply not very good.

This is a longitudinal and ongoing study. Phases one, two and three involved 122 interviews (48 repeated), four months observation, a 'live burn' and shadowing the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, who kept a diary. The current fourth phase, involves interviews with FBU officials and firefighters.

"A High-Tech Job Is a Dream": Druze Pious Women with High-Tech Careers Bridge between Their Religious and Professional Identities

Ebtesam Barakat

(Zefat Academic College)

The paper examines the Lotus initiative as an NGO, aimed at developing a high-quality, professional workspace for Druze pious women in their villages. Based on observations, group discussions, and semi-structured interviews with female high-tech employees, religious leaders, and employers, I will argue that this NGO's initiative created a high-quality workspace, that allows women to integrate into the labor market while maintaining their religious identity. The establishment of the Lotus workspace was enabled by the negotiation held by Lotus' female leader with four groups of stakeholders – civil society, high-tech companies, Druze religious leadership, and the women employed by this venture. One of the insights from this study is that while adapting the workspace to the needs of pious Druze women (gender segregation and geographic separation) allows women to integrate into the labor market, it also creates a glass ceiling, which limits their professional advancement

Work, Employment & Economic Life 2 - Room 3.205

Utopias of Work and Work in Utopias

Hanna Ylostalo

(Tampere University)

Work is one of the most central areas of human life and it also plays an important role in social change. The presentation draws on feminist literature on work and post-work and on utopian studies to shed light on current gendered injustices in work and visions of alternative futures of work. Drawing on a large ethnographic and interview data in Finland with people imagining better futures in their everyday lives, the presentation discusses utopias of work and the role of work in everyday utopias, that is, spaces

that perform regular daily life in a radically different fashion (Cooper 2014). The presentation shows that utopias about work are united by a critical reflection on the oppressive structures of waged work and an attempt to redefine work through the needs of people, communities and the environment, instead of the economy. It also shows that building better futures requires work that is geared towards reproducing political subjects and the planet for future generations, not towards reproducing capitalist economies. The paper suggests the concept of utopian work, characterized by the creation of alternative futures in and through work.

The presentation is based on an ongoing book project entitled Political Imagination and Alternative Futures, authored by Suvi Salmenniemi, Pilvi Porkola and Hanna Ylöstalo.

Cooper, Davina (2014) Everyday Utopias: The Conceptual Life of Promising Spaces. Duke University Press.

The Zero in Industry 5.0: Empty Signifiers and Fantasies of the Future of work

Christopher Land

(Anglia Ruskin University)

This paper critiques representations of the post-political 'future of work' in the European Commission's Industry 5.0 policy discourse.

In the early 2020s the European Commission launched a series of policy documents and Horizon funding streams to build towards Industry 5.0. Drawing on a range of sources, including the Japanese 'Society 5.0', Industry 5.0 promised a future of work no longer regulated by neo-liberal norms of efficiency and profit and opening work to a 'post-capitalist' future organized around three pillars: Sustainability, Resilience, and Human Centrism.

This paper combines discourse analysis of policy documents with findings from a three year, qualitative study of Industry 5.0 initiatives across four countries and 11 organizations. It argues that Industry 5.0 is best understood as an 'empty signifier' open to flexible interpretation by stakeholders and structured around anxieties about technological and environmental apocalypse, and the political irrelevance of Europe in a world where the axis of power is between the USA and China. Drawing on psychoanalytic discourse analysis (Cederström & Spicer, 2014), and Global Libidinal Economy (Kapoor et al. 2023), the paper argues that 'Industry 5.0' functions as phantasy: a project creating an imagined future of work that sutures the contradictions of the contemporary, political economic, realities of work, promising their resolution in a future that is riddled with contradictions. Rather than being resolvable, these contradictions are constitutive of the Industry 5.0 project(ion) that fetishises 'Industry' as a post-political imaginary, fetishising 'the system itself' and prevents the political disputation of the contemporary capitalist workplace's antagonisms.

Who Is The 'Human' In 'Human-Centric' Industry 5.0?

Jana Stefan

(Anglia Ruskin University/University of Milan)

Industry 5.0 has been arousing increasing academic interest due to its promise to bring about more resilient, sustainable, and human-centric societies. However, the concept of 'the human' in 'human-centric' has not been explicated to sufficient detail. Thus, this article asks: Who is the 'human' in 'human-centric' Industry 5.0? I argue that if this question is not answered clearly, investments made under an Industry 5.0 label will likely reproduce extant inequities, exacerbating the marginalisation of minorities. Positioning my argument in science and technology studies, I dissect socio-technical imaginaries of the human and (new) technologies drawing on in-depth ethnographic data collected in a German SME. The data are analysed using reflexive thematic content analysis, and results show that the imaginary of what human would come to use a new piece of technology may influence purchasing decisions, with a tendency to prioritise the needs of white cis-het men aged 50 and older. As such, this article contributes to a critical discussion of the current theoretical underpinnings in the debates around I5.0 and workplace innovation, and raises awareness for how practical approaches to innovation may stifle the achievement of a truly resilient, democratic, and sustainable society.

PAPER SESSION 9
11:00-12:30

Culture, Media, Sport & Food 1 - Room 4.206

'Deal with it, man up': Managing the Menstruating Body in the Male Domain of Karate

Chloe Maclean

(University of the West of Scotland)

There has been growing awareness to issues of menstruation in sport in the UK over the last five years, largely thanks to high profile women athletes speaking publicly about menstruation. Menstruation has been historically been interpreted as a symbol of contamination (Douglas, 1966) and of women's unsuitability for sport (Hargreaves, 2004). Despite increased awareness of the menstruating body in sport, menstruation remains surrounded in taboo and stigma. Karate is a sport that holds particular challenges for negotiations of menstruation as the uniform is white, which enables menstrual blood to show easily, and it is practiced mixed-sex, where women will menstruate in the presence of men.

This presentation will explore female karate practitioners' narratives of managing menstruation in mixed-sex karate practice and examine the way in which such practices respond to, reproduce, or challenge notions of a male bodily norm. Data is drawn from semi-structured online interviews with 10 female Scottish Karate practitioners aged between 18-48 years old, and survey responses from 175 Data is drawn from semi-structured online interviews with 10 female Scottish Karate practitioners aged over 16 years old. Findings suggest that the menstruating body is under-catered for in mixed sex karate practice which assumes a male bodily nom. Female karate practitioners reconcile desires for the menstruating body to be 'normal', with thorough menstrual etiquette regimes to hide the presence of menstruation.

A Call for Sociology of Sport to Centralise Climate Action and Nature

Mark Doidge

(Loughborough University)

There is a 'Strange silence of mainstream sociology' on climate change (Lever-Tracey 2008). Sociology of sport is not absolved from this silence (McMillan 2024). The United Nations Sports for Climate Action Framework (2018) called on the global sports sector to take leadership on climate change by aiming for carbon neutrality and using sport to create 'solidarity among global citizens for climate action' (UNFCC, 2018). The UNFCC provides an entry point for sports organisations, yet this is just the tip of the melting iceberg. More needs to be done to in order not to miss 'a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all' (IPCC 2022: 35). Sport is (and will continue to be) impacted by climate change, and it also impacts the environment and climate. Despite this, the sociology of sport has been slow as an academic discipline to approach the issue of climate change, even thought it will be the central issue affecting society and sport in the coming years. Sport Management colleagues have led the way in developing what they call Sport Ecology as a subdiscipline to address this drought (McCullough, 2023; Mccullough, Orr and Kellison, 2020). This paper addresses this lacuna in sociology of sport and suggests a tentative research agenda for the sociology of sport to ensure that the research we undertake has lasting impact on the planet – and define ourselves in relation to sport management.

The Evolution of '90-Minute Bigots': Regulating the Social Use of the Old Firm in Northern Ireland

Théo Leschevin

(Université Paris Cité)

It is well established that sports can have political implications and serve as a platform for expressing the complexities of national identities. However, it is less common to view sports as an entry point in the practical management of conflict. This appears to be the case in Northern Ireland with the social use of the 'Old Firm derby', a notorious rivalry between two Glasgow football clubs. This rivalry now presents a challenge: in times of peace, how should actors handle the historical link between the Old Firm and the community conflict between nationalists and unionists in Belfast? Does its continuation risk reigniting sectarian tensions, or does it serve as a safe outlet for social and political antagonisms?

Ethnographic research in North Belfast's working-class neighbourhoods reveals that residents, particularly supporters, are acutely aware of this connection, its risks, and its consequences. This presentation seeks to show that the social use of the Old Firm is changing. Contemporary supporters are trying to redefine these sporting rivalries by balancing two key objectives: avoiding the sectarian nature of the rivalry and preventing the Old Firm from becoming a trivial, depoliticized sporting event. Following Elias' concept of 'sportisation,' this presentation links these new approaches to sport with the evolving relationships between unionist and nationalist communities. It also stresses their risks and their shortcomings.

Culture, Media, Sport & Food 2 - Room 4.209

Collective Objects in Collective Rituals

Jorunn Mathy

(University of Stavanger)

This paper explores how material objects can be understood as active participants in collective rituals. Traditionally, research on "mega-events," such as the hosting of world championships or European Capitals of Culture, has focused primarily on the input and output of such events, leaving a significant gap—namely, the face-to-face interactions that occur during these occasions. Moreover, the material objects around which people gather during these events have largely been overlooked, as seen in the works of both Emile Durkheim and Randall Collins, whose theories inform this paper. By examining Stavanger's 900th anniversary in 2025 as a collective ritual, the paper uses qualitative analysis to investigate how two material objects—a cathedral and a main street in Stavanger, Norway—actively participate as collective objects in the city's celebration.

Rethinking Traditional Arts and Crafts as Intangible Cultural Heritage

Yaqian Li

(University of Bath)

In this presentation, I will delve into the concerns on the commodification and capitalist reproduction of intangible cultural heritage, especially in development and planning areas, and the concerns for the sustainability of this form of preservation. Emerging as a UNESCO frame, intangible cultural heritage (ICH) has gained ground from member states. I will reach a synthetical point of the emerging concerns surrounding this policy intervention on local craftsmanship, and its relative implications on social and cultural identity changes can shed light on the neglected area of social transformation. This presentation draws from my doctoral research on traditional art and craft being incorporated as an intangible cultural heritage in China. I will also demonstrate how including traditional intangible heritage in development and commodification may inevitably entail changes in the local community landscape, thus pinning the memory of the place at a specific point in history. Finally, I will discuss how using decolonial approaches to traditional and Indigenous art, craft and design, and the silenced voice in this special area may help foster more appreciation for local traditional art and craft and how this may lead to a better approach to preserving our heritage.

The Zhongshan Suit: A Symbol of Revolution and National Identity in Modern China

Naqi Liu

(University of Essex)

The Zhongshan suit, often referred to as the Mao suit, holds profound significance in Chinese political and cultural history. Originating in the early 20th century during the revolutionary changes in China, the Zhongshan suit symbolized both modernity and national identity. Designed with a blend of Western and Chinese elements, it emerged as part of Sun Yat-sen's vision for national reform, emphasizing practicality, simplicity, and dignity. The suit's structure and symbolic features, such as the five buttons representing democratic powers, reflected Sun's revolutionary ideals.

As political leaders like Chiang Kai-shek, Mao Zedong, and later Xi Jinping donned the suit, it became a tool for expressing political ideologies and national pride. Mao Zedong's choice to wear the suit during key historical moments cemented its status as a symbol of the Communist revolution, while its later adaptations under Xi Jinping demonstrate China's evolving diplomatic image. The Zhongshan suit continues to serve as a bridge between traditional Chinese values and modern sartorial practices, embodying both China's historical transformations and its aspirations in the global political arena.

Through various modifications across different periods, the suit remains a cultural artifact that reflects the integration of Chinese heritage with contemporary fashion trends. This study examines the suit's origins, its political symbolism, and its role in defining modern Chinese identity, highlighting its enduring presence as both a revolutionary symbol and a staple of Chinese national dress.

Emerging Themes & Special Events – Room 4.214

Institutionalised Coproduction and a Civic Sociological Imagination

William Fleming, Mark Fabian

(University of Oxford)

For several decades coproduction has been widely advocated across social policy and research contexts as a solution for wicked problems, unequal power and status, epistemic gaps, and declining civic participation. In some settings, coproduction is now such a fixture of operational practices that it is institutionalised. One domain where this has been especially enthusiastic is the third sector. We explore the institutionalisation of coproduction in charities by reporting a dual-pronged research project. First, our participation in and leading of two coproduction series for poverty action, 'Thriving in Financial Hardship', at both national and local level. Second, we interviewed professionals in the UK third sector involved in implementing coproduction, especially those linked to multiple forms of social deprivation and inequality (e.g. poverty action). We detail organisational embrace of coproduction and trace its justification and social aims. We find that institutionalised coproduction in charities offers a formal and ongoing public sociology, which can but does not need to involve sociologists. A civic sociological imagination is evident in our case study and in the experiences of our professional interviewees, demonstrating a collective navigation from personal troubles towards collectively designed social transformation. We reflect on the promises of this civic-public sociology, as well as its limits for challenging structural disadvantage.

Sociological Correlations of Vaccination Refusal and Compliance with the Rules Made During the COVID19 Epidemic and the Lessons that Still Apply in Hungary

Marton Tamas Csanady

(Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary/Budapest Metropolitan University)

Since the outbreak and end of the corona virus epidemic, the intensified debate about vaccination does not seem to have subsided. That is why it is justified to continue to analyze our related data. In 2020 and 2021, KRE's research team conducted research on how online respondents selected by a

representative sampling procedure relate to the adoption of epidemic regulations and vaccination. We reported on the results of the 2020 research at the 2021 annual general meeting of ESA and ASA (Csanády and Mikó 2021). When the vaccines against the covid19 virus were ready at the end of 2020. It turns out that many people do not want to take the vaccine. Why? Who are those who oppose vaccination? Why don't they want to vaccinate? Our research in August 2021 focused on experiences and reactions to the Covid19 epidemic and the rejection of vaccination. Our 2021 research results show that older age, higher education, trust in institutions, information from traditional printed and electronic media, and the practitioner's traditional religious background clearly increased willingness to vaccinate. On the other hand, the use of closed social media platforms and susceptibility to esoteric and new age religious teachings increased the likelihood of vaccine refusal. In my presentation, I would like to talk about the results of the two researches and the consequences that still exist in many aspects.

Researching Law through an Interdisciplinary Caribbean Lens

Kasandra Silcott

(University of Leicester)

Law does not operate in isolation, it is part of social, economic and political processes that shapes society. Therefore, law has a role in shaping society because the rule of law can be seen as governing society. The impact of law on minority groups from an economic and psychological perspective is not a new phenomenon. Decolonial socio-legal studies attempts to pull together sociology, social policy, criminology and law when investigating clusters of injustice. This approach seeks to explain why legal systems aggravate disadvantages within academic spaces where the crossovers between law and society can be carefully investigated. Those experiences of different ethnic groups and how they interact with laws cannot be done in isolation from other areas such as sociology. If anything, merging sociological and legal theories can create a liberal conceptual framework for analysing the impact of law when looking at social problems. Additionally, consideration should be given to those voicing these liberal conceptual frameworks. Moreover, creating a space in academia for those from communities whose voices have been silences is a missing element. Academia should embrace the discomfort of unity. It is only by unifying the social sciences one can properly assess clusters of social injustice. It is only by allowing marginalised communities to own and reclaim research and their stories academia can generate consciously impacting research. By allowing researchers from marginalised communities a space to merge theories in lens associated with their identity research can be truly impactful whilst bringing about meaningful changes.

Environment & Society - Room 3.209

Climate Change Projects and Youth Engagement: Empowerment and Contested Knowledge

Kostas Stavrianakis, Jacob Nielsen

(Robert Gordon University)

This study investigated youths' empowerment through EU-funded climate change projects (CCPs) and the role social research and public engagement have in that process. The importance of considering youth empowerment in a time of climate change is increasingly recognised. Youths are exposed to interrelated health, social, economic, and political vulnerabilities caused by climate change, but they often have limited resources to address and navigate these changes. To help address these issues youth empowerment holds the potential to give youth a greater influence over their life in the context of evolving climate change. EU-funded CCPs plays a crucial role in EU's climate mitigation and adaption policies and the implementation of these projects can have widespread implications for youth across the EU. However, despite this, there is little research exploring local youth implications of EU-funded CCPs. This paper starts addressing this knowledge gap by exploring how youth empowerment was facilitated, shaped, and restrained over a year-long collaboration with students from a Greek school as part of an EU CCP project on social acceptance of Carbon Capture and Utilisation (CCUS) technologies.

The findings indicate that the activities provided students with opportunities to explore and express different types of concerns, knowledges and perspectives on issues related to climate change, social

acceptance and CCUS. However, the empowering potential of these activities were also shaped by power differentials and contestations around what types of knowledge matter knowledge sources. Although the capacity to engage with youth through EU resources is feasible, more longitudinal and meaningful participation is needed.

Youth-Led Creative Climate Activism: Intersectional Approaches to Environmental Justice

Susan O'Shea, Helen Prior, Jennifer Lord, Teresa Ó Brádaigh Bean

(Manchester Metropolitan University)

A recent literature review of young people's climate activism (Neas, Ward and Bowman, 2022) calls for researchers to transcend mainstream environmentalism, to better engage with communities already experiencing marginality and the impacts of climate change, such as immigrant and migrant communities, LGBTQ+ and communities of colour, and to better engage with Global South activists. This research examines a creative climate activism programme connecting young adults from diverse backgrounds across the UK with global mentors from regions navigating environmental stresses from conflict and the climate emergency. Drawing on mixed methods approaches, including surveys, interviews, participant observations, audience data and young people as researchers, we share preliminary findings from our work with the charity In Place of War. 100 young people attended a two-week training programme facilitated by global change-makers (July 2024), resulting in ten funded creative projects, which will include recordings from a musical exploring environmental responsibility, and an art installation co-created with South Asian communities in Cardiff. The mentored projects will help develop skills and knowledge in building creative campaigns to mobilise communities in the fight against climate change. In partnership with The Environmental Funders Network, the project will showcase young people's advocacy projects to policy and decision makers. Embedded in environmental justice and social movement perspectives, we assess how participatory arts-based methods and transnational knowledge networks can foster new forms of climate engagement among diverse youth populations, addressing climate change while simultaneously tackling broader social inequalities.

Rising Up Against Climate Coloniality: Strategic Contentions in the Global Spread of Extinction Rebellion

Tobias Mueller

(University of Cambridge)

The climate crisis is deeply entangled with the politics of race and colonialism. Using the concept of "climate colonialism", Gurminder Bhambra and Peter Newell (2022) urge sociologists to analyse what forms of resistance to the socio-ecological continuities of colonialism emerge, and what challenges they face. However, we lack empirical and conceptual studies on how activists confront climate colonialism, and how this differs across former coloniser and colonised countries.

This paper addresses this gap through an analysis of how climate activists in four different countries respond to climate colonialism. Using the case study of a transnationally operating group within the global movement, Extinction Rebellion, the paper compares strategic responses to climate colonialism in four different countries, namely Mexico, Uganda, the UK and the US. Methodologically, the paper uses multi-sited ethnography, comprising 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork and 74 interviews with activists, to gain a deep insight into the internal contentions within different parts of the movement. The different strategic responses can be identified as biosocial alternatives in Mexico, disaster response in Uganda, targeted disruption in the UK, and coalition protests in the US. The paper advances not only our understanding of how facing climate colonialism challenges movement spaces, but also how white environmental activists struggle with building racial justice into their practices and to build coalitions across the social justice movement space. It thereby contributes to the much-needed bridging between decolonial theory, social movement studies and the sociology of climate change.

Modes of Coordination in Pathways

Alice Ferro

(Scuola Normale Superiore)

The research aims to investigate how local and national modes of coordination within a protest campaign change over time. It aims to contribute to the conversation between the relational and processual approaches within the sociological literature of collective action by adopting the concept of trajectory, a sequence of modes of coordination (MoC). The concept of MoC allows to adopt an ontological position according to which it is not possible to define a priori the nature and form of the collective action phenomenon. It is thus that the concepts of social movement, coalition, organisation, and subculture become analytical sub-categories, the presence of which must be empirically investigated through the observation of the mechanisms of resource distribution and the definition of identity demarcation lines within a multi-organisational field.

The research aims to begin to overcome critical issues by means of a diachronic and multilevel analysis of a protest campaign: Fridays for Future in Italy.

Born as a transnational, FFF campaign spread capillary at the local level across the country starting in autumn 2018. It quickly took on a mass character, involved a new generation and offered an opportunity to the previous one, resonated within environmentalist, ecologist, student, sustainability and social justice discourses, gave rise to new local groups intent on coordinating at the national level, saw the involvement in the protest of numerous heterogeneous collective actors, and finally sustained itself over time. The campaign, while developing within a fragmented context that has historically demonstrated difficulties of coordination between its souls, triggers precisely a process of coordination and involves a heterogeneity of collective actors willing to participate in the mobilisation. It is thus that using a mixed-method approach, I analyse how collective actors coordinated in multi-organisational fields and how the two informed each other during the campaign. Specifically, data are collected through participant observation during national meetings, the administration of questionnaires and interviews with FFF groups investigating both their perceptions of the multi-organisational field as well as the meanings elaborated.

Families & Relationships - Room 4.213

Crossing Borders, Shaping Lives: The Case of Romanian Transnational Families in Manchester

Alina Ionela Badescu, Ciprian-Ilie Badescu

(University of Leeds, Romanian Academy)

This paper explores the multifaceted impact of transnational labour migration on Romanian families residing in Manchester, emphasizing the shifting dynamics of family life, social adaptation, and identity formation. Through a combination of qualitative interviews and ethnographic research, the study examines how Romanian migrant families manage the challenges of maintaining cross-border familial ties while adapting to the socio-economic realities of their host city.

The research draws on data from 20 semi-structured interviews conducted in 2023 with Romanian-heritage families, selected via snowball sampling. Focusing on parents of school-aged children, this study provides a nuanced view of how migration reshapes family roles, caregiving practices, and overall household structures.

Romanian transnational families frequently experience a reconfiguration of traditional roles and responsibilities, as prolonged separations and remote caregiving become part of everyday life. While these shifts may strain familial relationships, they also foster resilience, with families devising innovative strategies to maintain both emotional and practical connections across geographical divides. The research also delves into the broader effects of migration on children, the elderly, and efforts toward family reunification, highlighting the unique challenges and opportunities presented by transnational living.

By centering the lived experiences of Romanian migrant families in Manchester, this paper offers critical insights into the broader sociological implications of labour migration for newly formed migrant communities. It contributes to the ongoing discourse on transnationalism, identity formation, and social integration, while providing a deeper understanding of how these processes shape family dynamics and the evolving concept of "home" in contemporary urban settings.

Talking about Therapy, Talking about Divorce: Narrative Complications in Same-Sex Divorce and Civil Partnership Dissolution

James Hodgson

(University of Manchester)

In this paper I examine therapy talk and divorce talk, and explore how these two forms of talk affect each other. I draw on data from a qualitative study of 42 interviews conducted with people who ended their same-sex marriage or dissolved their civil partnership. Listening to their stories of divorce, I was struck by the profusion of references to psychotherapy. Talk about therapeutic ideas and descriptions, like 'narcissism' or 'psychosis', was common, mixed in casual ways with general ideas like mental health, anxiety, depression, boundaries, and emotional space. In some ways, the interviews felt less like my participants belonged to an 'interview society' (Atkinson and Silverman, 1997) and more to a 'therapeutic' one. Exploring these issues, I make two related arguments. Against most perspectives that claim the insidious, irresistible predominance of a contemporary 'therapeutic style' (Bellah, 1985) or of 'therapy culture' (Furedi, 2003), I argue that it was common for therapy to be experienced as limited or constrained in some way, particularly when it 'failed' to save the marriage. Conversely, I also find that therapy talk diluted the accounts of the self generated as my participants told the story of divorce itself. Taking these two findings together, the paper calls for greater attention to how different sets of practices to do with self-narration interact and complicate each other as they unfold in everyday life contexts.

Abolition Geographies of the Body: Disrupting Aesthetics of Race through Women's Care Practice in the Maré Favela Complex

Claire Blencowe

(University of Warwick)

The lives and vulnerabilities of Rio-de-Janeiro's residents are distributed through racist carceral geographies, in which endure legacies of slavocracy and settler-colonial 'modernity'. Amongst the many territorial divisions and inequalities, that between the favelas (informal neighbourhoods built by excluded, poor, and migrant communities) and 'the asphalt' is the most profound. The infrastructures of care and policing in the city have been built to neglect and actively discount the security and need for care of favela residents who are represented as, at best, insignificant, difficult exotic others, and at worst as the inherently criminal internal enemy. At the same time, faveladas and other racialised women of the urban peripheries provide the under-paid and insecure labour force through which middleclass Brazilians enjoy exceptionally high levels of domestic labour. The lives of women in the favelas are shaped by the constant threat of police operations that are always immensely disruptive and most often are immensely violent. Our participatory action research project explores the experiences of women in the Maré favela complex, including their collective practices of survival and self-care in the face of police violence. In this context the practice of, and demand for, care engenders more than individualised practices of healing. It is, rather, the refusal, disruption, and respite from, the carceral geographies and violent racism of the bio-polity.

with Julian Brigstocke, Bruna Silva, Camila Barros, Débora Bastos, Eliana Sousa e Silva, Fabiana Freitas, Irone Santiago, Isabel Barbosa, Joana Garcia, Lidiane Malanquini, Luana Bezerra, Luciana Barros, Rachel Gouveia Passos, Rosana Morgado, Tais Almeida.

Lifecourse - Room 3.212

Changing the Narrative on Health Inequalities: Reflections from Older Minority Ethnic People in the UK during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Its Aftermath

Bridget Makande

(Buckinghamshire New University)

COVID-19 highlighted and amplified health inequalities shaped by interlocking systems of subordination such as racism, sexism, ableism, and ageism. Accordingly, in the UK, older minority ethnic people had a higher risk of experiencing illness and death as compared to white British people. Additionally, COVID-19 lockdowns led to older ethnic minorities having different experiences than older white British people. Against this background, it is plausible that interlocking identity characteristics create variations in people's perceptions of risk during COVID-19.

This presentation is based on a study that explores the experiences of older ethnic minorities in the UK throughout and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Data is drawn from focus groups, one-on-one interviews with older people, and individual interviews with community leaders. This research synergises intersectionality and risk theory to facilitate a nuanced analysis of the heightened risks and vulnerability that older ethnic minorities faced.

Data analysis reveals that older ethnic minorities' encounters with interlocking systems of subordination shaped their perceptions and experiences of the pandemic. Their lived experiences at the intersection of systems of marginalisation such as ageism, racism, and ableism fed into some conspiratorial thoughts within the communities. Concurrently, amidst their vulnerability, the multifaceted identities of older minority ethnic people were also a source of resilience. Overall, this suggests a need to acknowledge the contextual factors that affect older minority ethnic people's perceptions of risk to COVID-19 and their decisions on health matters. Furthermore, it is important for policy makers to be culturally sensitive when implementing health guidelines during future pandemics.

Insights into Structures and Norms of Solidarity in the Mountains of Switzerland and the US

Marion Repetti

(University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland)

In Global North countries, the social and material consequences of economic poverty on people's lives can vary depending on the social support available in their environment. For instance, the places where people live may offer stronger or weaker formal and informal support resources, including those provided by public policies and programs, families, friends, neighbors, and charities. Additionally, while some individuals may consider receiving and providing help as normal, others might believe they should rely solely on themselves. These issues are particularly significant in later life, especially in mountainous areas where services and infrastructure are less developed than in urban contexts, and where people may depend more on community-based solidarity.

In this paper, we ask to what extent and in what ways these variations influence how older individuals navigate poverty in their daily lives within mountainous contexts. To explore this, we compare the experiences of poverty among older adults living in the mountains of Switzerland and the United States, where public policies and infrastructure are limited. Drawing on qualitative research with 60 Swiss and US participants, and using life history calendars and semi-structured interviews, we analyze the types of support our interviewees report receiving, the sources of this support, and the extent to which they view asking for help as normal or not—and why. This analysis sheds light on the impact of structures and norms of solidarity on people's experiences of poverty and their ability to manage their situations in later life.

Overlooked Grievers: Grief Literacy and Youth on Campus and in the Community

Lisa McLean, Adrienne Sauder, Carrie Traher

(King's University College)

Grief is a natural and multi-faceted response to loss. While grief is commonly associated with death-related loss, non-death losses such as the loss of a job, relationship, or the loss of a sense of safety arising from experiences of racism and discrimination may also provoke significant grief responses. Youth are often overlooked as grievers and may have their grief misinterpreted as anxiety or depression, thus leading to gaps in appropriate support (Jacobsen et al., 2020; Schuurman, 2018). In response to the lack of recognition of the prevalence and diversity of grief, there have been calls for the development of compassionate communities grounded in the knowledge, skills, and values of grief literacy (Breen et al., 2022).

In this presentation, researchers with the Grief and Loss Research Lab will discuss emergent themes from the recent Grief Literacy Symposium organized by the Lab at King's University College in London, Canada. The speakers will discuss topics including youth experiences of loss, pedagogical supports for grieving youth, and youth-led grief activism. Grieving students often bring the emotional and psychological effects of loss into the university classroom, which can hinder academic performance. Faculty training in handling sensitive conversations about loss is essential to creating a supportive, inclusive environment that promotes both student well-being and academic success. Lastly, youth are not only overlooked as grievers, but also as agents of social change. The presentation will conclude with a discussion of youth-led activism rooted in personal experiences of grief and loss.

Death, Debt and Grief: The Affordability of Funerals for Older People Living on Low Incomes in the UK

Kingsley Purdam, Georgia Chatzi, Ana Nicoriciu

(University of Manchester)

A funeral is a time for people to grieve and to reflect on the life of the deceased. However even basic funerals in the UK can involve considerable financial costs and evidence suggests that there has been a rise in the number of Public Health Funerals or what were termed 'paupers funerals'. Drawing on national level survey data and interviews with older people aged 65 years and older living on low incomes this article examines the affordability of funerals. Substantial numbers of older people do not have the financial resources to be able to afford the costs of an expense such as a funeral, particularly those older people living on low incomes and those in poor health. Many older people would be reliant on borrowing money and asking family and friends for help. Some older people did not want a funeral at all due to the costs. This is part of the wider financial insecurity many older people can face in the UK. A funeral is an important part of the private and public grieving process and is linked to how life is valued and respected. It is important that funerals are affordable, and that people living on low incomes are financially supported during a time of grieving and vulnerability. For those people who die without a family or close friends who are able to help with the costs of their funeral their death should still be treated with dignity and respect.

Medicine, Health & Illness 1 - Room 1.219

Trust, Access, and Awareness: Socio-Economic Disparities in Breast Cancer Screening in Egypt

Basma Salem, Paula Saukko, Jessica Robles

(Loughborough University)

Breast cancer continues to be a major health concern worldwide, including Egypt, where late diagnosis rates remain high despite numerous awareness campaigns. While there is extensive literature on issues shaping attendance in breast cancer(BC) screening in both Global North and the Global South, including psychological, knowledge, and access issues, this paper explores the experiences of affluent, working-class, and illiterate women in Egypt through semi-structured interviews with 29 women aged

37 to 70. Although education has been addressed in BC screening studies, this paper contributes insights on differences in contextual experiences between women of different social classes in a middle-income country. Three major themes were identified, including awareness, trust, and interpersonal relations. Affluent women relied on private services due to convenience and connections with trusted practitioners but did not consistently attend screenings, citing busyness or opting for alternative tests, such as a blood test for cancer. Working-class women were the most diligent in attending screenings, often making significant efforts to compare private and public services based on trustworthiness and cost, with decisions influenced by personal relationships and distrust of private practitioners offering questionable services. Illiterate women were aware of screening but often lacked access to free screenings and rarely attended. These women expressed mistrust due to personal experiences with cancer-related deaths and the perception that healthcare was neglecting the poor. In conclusion, the study's findings could serve as a basis for inclusive public health strategies, urging policymakers to improve healthcare accessibility across all social classes, with a focus on lower-income women.

Well-Being Outcomes of Sharing Cancer Experiences on Social Media: A Qualitative Study Exploring the Experiences of Chinese Young Adult Gynaecological Cancer Patients

Jie Xu, Dr Meena Khatwa

(University College London)

Gynaecological cancer (GC) presents unique psychological challenges for patients due to its life-threatening nature and treatment-induced reproductive issues. In China, sociocultural expectations about women's roles and fertility heighten the distress of young adult gynaecological cancer (YAGC) patients.

This research combines feminist theories, traditional Chinese cultural values, and social media use to explore Chinese YAGC patients' perceptions of changed body image and their experiences of navigating their identities (a woman, a cancer patient, and Chinese) through social media sharing. Employing qualitative methods, we analysed the digital content of 13 Chinese YAGC patients on Xiaohongshu and conducted interviews with 7 survivors sharing experiences on this social media platform.

The findings support existing literature that body image changes cause self-discrepancies amongst YAGC patients. We further find that alterations in reproductive organs are more traumatic for Chinese YAGC patients than changes in appearance, due to the treatment-induced sexual dysfunction and infertility, which is regarded as deprivation of their childbearing right originating from their women's identity. Conversely, embracing the changed appearance is used as a coping strategy. Furthermore, beyond information seeking, patients share cancer experiences on social media to address their unmet psychological needs and foster a peer-support community. However, while facilitating connection and support, social media may also intensify well-being challenges due to the overloaded information and exposure to fellow patients' negative emotions.

Therefore, we suggest the development of collaborative e-health platforms to better address the well-being needs of Chinese YAGC patients, enhancing support mechanisms, and reducing the adverse effects of social media use.

Medicine, Health & Illness 2 - Room 4.211

Researching the Rhythms of Ageing, Disability and Care

Catherine Coveney, Carrie Ryan, Wendy Martin, Shadreck Mwale

(Loughborough University)

Biological rhythms are a part of all of us, and although embodied, are shaped by the social rhythms that we encounter across our everyday/night lives. Reaching old age is an important transition that disrupts normative rhythms of daily life in a myriad of ways. In the context of disability, normative rhythms can also become disrupted; people can find themselves living out of sync, their bodies must bend to new rhythms to move through the world.

In this paper we ask: how can a focus on biosocial rhythms help us to better understand embodied, lived experiences of disability, ageing, and care across the lifecourse?

Data comes from a scoping review of the social science literature on 'rhythms, ageing and disability' and two ethnographic workshops with parents of disabled children and older adults who are carers. Our analysis draws together social theory on rhythmanalysis, with medical sociology, and anthropology work on rhythms of ageing, disability and care to present six empirical key themes: time, place, space, embodiment, objects of care and relationships.

We suggest that disabling temporal rhythms of everyday life become entangled with embodied temporalities in care practices. Attending to spatiality meanwhile, shows us how people are made to feel dysfunctional or out of place, as well as making points of connection to create ways of 'being together'.

The Rhythms of the Ward: Using Rhythmanalysis to Understand Expressions of Bodily Need in the Care for People Living with Dementia during an Acute Hospital Admission

Andy Northcott, Paula Boddington, Katie Featherstone, Shadreck Mwale

(University of West London)

This presentation posits Henri Lefebvre's concept of Rhythmanalysis as a novel methodology for observing and understanding the everyday life of the hospital ward. To do so we draw on observational data taken by the authors across three NIHR funded multi-site studies of acute NHS hospital wards in England and Wales (22 wards across 14 hospitals) between 2015 and 2024, exploring resistance to care, continence care and the everyday use of restrictive practice.

This data demonstrates how analysis of the rhythms of the ward, and the arrhythmias that manifest around patients, allow us to develop a detailed and embodied perspective of how the ward is experienced by the many different actors within it. We focus on one particular group, people living with dementia, considering how they fit both within and outside the rhythms of the ward, and the dressage required by staff to maintain those rhythms, and how these actions create new arrythmias across everyday care.

We conclude by discussing rhythmanalysis as a means to observe underseen aspects of hospital care and pressures on both patients and staff within them. We discuss the value of rhythmanalysis for researchers when exploring hard -to-define concepts such as power, personhood and dignity within the ward setting.

'Managing Down': Exercising Professional Discretion in the South-West of England Care Homes during the Pandemic

Selin Sivis

(University of Bristol)

This qualitative study investigates how care homes in South-West England managed and responded to the everyday challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic While many studies explore the impact of the pandemic on care home staff, residents, and families, limited research addresses care homes staff experiences with filtering top-down rules and guidelines during 'uncertain times'. Drawing on the concept of street-level bureaucracy, this study examines how professionalism operates under crisis conditions and how it impacts discretion and organizational response within care homes. Based on fourteen semi-structured interviews with care home staff, including managers, analysis highlights care homes engaged in effective response mechanisms and developing policy practices in response to the needs of staff, residents and their families by moving beyond the scope of established guidelines. By mobilizing professionalism discretion under crisis conditions, care homes initiated bottom-up policy practices, centred around four different categories: strengthening infection control and prevention, promoting socialisation, enhanced communication and fostering intra- and inter-professional teamwork. This study, in contrast to the existing research highlighting a bleak picture of the challenges experienced by care homes during the pandemic, emphasises the ability of care home staff to take action and their resilience in facing pandemic-induced challenges.

Households with Children and/or Young People with Kidney Disease and Those Who Support Them: Introducing a Study of Their Digital Needs

Rebecca Harris, Jeanette D'arcy, Gianfranco Polizzi, Simeon Yates

(University of Liverpool)

Rare kidney diseases are the primary cause of kidney failure in nearly all children and 10% of adults in the UK. The LifeArc-Kidney Research UK Centre for Rare Kidney Diseases project aims to establish a UK Kidney Ecosystem using the network of the British Association of Paediatric Nephrology. The current system for treatment favours adults, common diseases and more represented groups. This project aims to explore barriers for children and young people and identify solutions.

As part of this project, experts in digital inequalities and digital literacies from the University of Liverpool's Digital Media and Society Institute (DMSI) will explore the role of digital technologies in this area. Drawing on the DMSI's Minimum Digital Living Standard, this research adopts qualitative and quantitative methods to understand the digital needs, in terms of access/equipment/skills, of households with children and/or young people with kidney conditions. As part of this objective, we will identify barriers/support available, measure rates of access to digital systems and explore attitudes to data collection/sharing.

Additionally, we will examine the digital literacy and confidence of medical practitioners/researchers working with this population, including their expectations/concerns around the use of digital technologies and whether medical technologies meet their needs and their patients'. This paper will introduce our work on this project, setting the scene for the fieldwork that will begin in 2025. This research is a timely intervention to tackle some of the socio-digital inequalities that remain prevalent across the UK health system.

Methodological Innovations - Room 3.213
Special Event

Ways of Working with the Mass Observation Project

Helen Holmes, Khaleda Brophy-Harmer, Andy Balmer, Dawn Lyon, Rebecca Coleman, Nick Clarke, Emma Casey

(University of Manchester, University of Southampton, University of Manchester, University of Kent, University of Bristol, University of Southampton, University of York)

This special event on Ways of Working with the Mass Observation Project (MOP) will showcase different approaches to working with MOP datasets. MOP has a long history, founded in the 1930s, with an interruption in the 50s, it came back to strength in the 1980s. Today, it remains an active independent social research organisation capturing people's lived experiences, thoughts and opinions. MOP is comprised of hundreds of volunteer mass observers who receive a directive 3-times a year, containing 2-3 themes formatted as a series of open questions, to which they write a response, many of them writing for years, if not decades. This represents perhaps the largest and most important secondary qualitative dataset in the world. Subjects explored through directives in the archive often explore everyday experiences of politics, work, home and material culture.

In this special event we bring together researchers interested in different periods of MOP to discuss ways of working with the archive, to help others imagine how to incorporate it into their own work. Approaches include: working with large qualitative data sets to generate alternative histories; dealing with multiple forms and voices; in-depth close reading for new conceptual/empirical insights; creative re-engagement with secondary materials; the role of the directive and the researcher; the characteristics of the writers and the performance of identities; and working with objects and materials. In doing so, we celebrate MOP but also examine its limitations, bringing renewed attention to the complex 'messiness' of archive work in sociology.

Helen Holmes

(University of Manchester)

This paper explores the role of objects and materials in Mass Observation (MO) data. Drawing on my own experiences, including working both with MO directives and also the earlier Work Town collection, I illustrate some of the challenges and opportunities of researching objects and materials through MO. I argue that MO by its very everyday nature invites attention to the 'stuff' of everyday life – the material things which furnish our day-to-day existence. Nonetheless, despite the plethora of 'stuff' in MO accounts, the majority of scholarly work which engages with objects and materials through MO data has done so as a means to make sense of the life course. In other words, objects act as the vehicle to understand identities and biographies. Whilst such approaches are undoubtedly valuable to the field, this is often at the expense of exploring materials and objects in their own right and what their material capacities, qualities and sensibilities illuminate about their consumption and role in everyday lives. I outline how objects and materials can play a more central role in MO accounts - from the point of issuing a directive to working with existing MO data. Using examples from my own work on family practices of passing on and the moralities of thrift I highlight how I have centred objects and materials and what these experiences may offer to others looking to engage with MO in a materially focused way.

Khaleda Brophy-Harmer

(University of Southampton)

Questions regarding ethnicity and racialised identities in MO material are not straightforward. The 'protected characteristics' of sexuality, disability, religion and ethnicity were not, until 2021, collected and held by the Mass Observation Archive (MOA) in Mass Observer metadata. Yet, across both periods of MO (1937 – 1955 and 1981 – present) the vast majority of 'Observers' have been generally assumed to be racially categorised as 'white'.

This paper looks to present my own reflections on using MO material to understand performances of whiteness in England, 1990-2000 (based upon my current doctoral research). In so doing I outline my own tripartite approach to MO material, developed over the course of the project to grapple with the complexities of the topic (and the archive itself). This method begins with the analysis of directives, the historical and social contexts from which they emerged, and the prompts they provided MO Observers. It moves on to the analysis of shared themes across directive-responses (as part of a horizontal analysis), with a final phase focusing on longitudinal and individual case-studies. In so doing I look to consider MO writing as an elicited racialised identity performance that can be explored for the affective discourses and 'cultural repertoires' it draws upon. I supplement this reading with a look to the 'difficult' or 'less typical' MO cases, that highlight the messiness of racialised identity performances and give attention to the ambiguities of 'race' and the archive itself.

Andrew Balmer

(University of Manchester)

In this paper I explore a creative way of working with mass observation accounts. Mass observation's focus on everyday life and autobiographical writing, its use of lists and images and materiality, lends itself to an aesthetic and creative disposition.

I examine the use of 'data poetry' as a way of making sense of the everyday in observers' accounts. Data poems have begun to find use in sociological work, as ways of thinking, analysing, presenting and deriving 'research impact' from qualitative data. MOP is well-placed for exploration of this as a form of sociological work. Observers often produce forms of writing which can be treated as poetic, weather in the form of lists of items from around the house or words they associate with particular ideas, or in their uses of imagery, metaphor, rhythm and tone in their descriptions and analyses of everyday experience.

Dawn Lyon, Rebecca Coleman

(University of Kent, University of Bristol)

Mass Observation writing is an ongoing source of fascination and challenge. Whether viewed as citizen journalism, 'collective or multiple autobiography' (Sheridan, 1983: 34) or micro-ethnography (Highmore, 2010), it is widely regarded as unruly and difficult to analyse. In this paper, we build on the recognition of a dialogue of sorts between readers and writers in the archive (Clarke and Barnett, 2023) to explore the entanglement of data-and-researcher and the live messiness of grasping the everyday, all the more so during the real-time unfolding of a pandemic.

In summer 2020, we co-commissioned an MO 'directive' on COVID-19 and Time. To analyse the 228 responses (using NVivo), we devised codes to explore themes and concerns. Furthermore, we sought to read with and 'against the grain' for temporal points of resistance and affective intensities (Pors and Ravn, 2024). Many of the accounts have a 'grappling' quality as the writers themselves sought to capture a 'live present' in the context of the unfolding – and unknowable – pandemic (Coleman, Lyon and Turner, forthcoming). They offer 'fragments' or 'small stories' about 'mundane things and everyday occurrences' (Bamberg, 2006: 63) which point to emergent forms of sense-making. In this paper, we discuss specific segments of writing which we selected for close reading because they stuck with us and animated our thinking with their insight or strangeness. We present and promote ways of working with the richness, messiness and liveness of MO data as we seek to attune to their wonder and potentiality (MacLure, 2013).

Nick Clarke

(University of Southampton)

I discuss four ways of working with Mass Observation. The first reads MO writing for how people receive attempts to govern their conduct. The diary form allows writers to record such attempts, the dilemmas they presented, and how they responded. The directive form works to position writers in relation to current affairs, allowing researchers to analyse directive-responses for how people receive such positioning. The second way addresses the problem of representativeness. MO writing is read for the cultural resources used by writers to make sense of their lives and the world around them. If shared by differently situated writers, these cultural resources are inferred to be circulating widely in society at that particular historical moment. The third addresses the problem of representation. Can MO be used to give voice to ordinary people, without speaking for them, in a way that aligns with recent agendas of public, participatory social science? The original MO of the late 1930s published MO writing in edited form. This way of working with MO seeks to revive such a strategy: researchers as editors, publishing the writing of MO correspondents. The fourth is captured by an image from Jennings' Pandaemonium. He describes a rope. One option is to cut the rope and study the multiple strands where it was cut. This represents the possibility of using particular MO directives for cross-sectional analysis. Another option is to follow one strand along the length of the rope. This represents the possibility of using particular MO panellists for longitudinal analysis.

Emma Casey

(University of York)

The 1980s are the subject of much contemporary fascination and reimagining, and yet only scant attention has been given to exploring how people experienced the rapid social transformations and inequalities of the time. The key aim of the paper is to challenge some of the scholarly mythologies of the 1980s by exploring the Mass Observation Project's 1980s archive. Given that Mass Observation is often used to challenge popular myths and narratives, it is ideally placed to offer alternative 'everyday' histories of the 1980s. Working class people who lived through the 1980s are often presented as either romantic rebels or passive victims. Moreover, accounts of the 1980s have tended to aggregate events as 'lists' rather than experiences (Robinson, 2016) and have often overlooked the cultural and political ambiguities of the decade (Beckett, 2015). I ask, what about those who weren't activists and who didn't directly engage; what about those who were 'observers'? How did their everyday lives change during the 1980s? How were they impacted?

By utilising Mass Observation data in this way, the paper will offer a fresh approach to historical sociology by exploring the ways that ideological shifts and social, political and economic transformations are embedded into everyday practices. The unique features of Mass Observation and the 'Observers' who write for them mark out the archive as a particularly important yet habitually disregarded form of qualitative data collection that has potential to empower researchers to tap into diverse memories and recollections of the 1980s.

Race, Ethnicity & Migration 1 - Lecture Theatre A

Gender, Migration, and Registration: Migrant Professionals in Medicine in the UK

Amrita Limbu

(University of Leeds)

The role of migrant healthcare professionals in the healthcare systems in Anglophone countries, including the UK, US, Canada, and Australia, is well-recognised. In the UK, approximately 38 per cent of licensed doctors hold a non-UK primary qualification, with over half of new doctors in 2022 being overseas graduates. Despite this reliance on international medical graduates (IMGs), the registration process for IMGs — the legal mechanism enabling overseas-qualified individuals to practice in the UK — remains complex. Existing literature primarily focuses on migrant medical professionals' post-registration experiences, including their workplace dynamics, career progression, and fitness to practise, with less emphasis in understanding their experiences with the registration process itself. Furthermore, although gender disparities faced by women in medicine have been well-documented, there is notable gap in understanding the experiences of migrant women doctors within the registration framework. This presentation explores some of the experiences related to the medical registration process in the UK, focusing on the intersection of registration, gender, and migration. It relies on qualitative interviews with migrant and refugee healthcare professionals, extending the discussion on gender and migration into the context of medical registration framework. The discussion aims to inform British medical regulation regarding the movement of migrant workforce in medicine, emphasising how the rigorous registration process complicates the registration journeys of migrant healthcare professionals and disproportionately affects migrant women doctors.

Ethical Loneliness and the Undermining of Social Capital: How Racism Shapes Loneliness in Three UK Asian Communities: A Mixed-Methods Study

Mengxing Joshi

(University of St Andrews)

Loneliness can have severe health impacts, and ethnic minority groups may face heightened risks due to structural barriers like racism. This study explores the relationship between racism, social capital and loneliness among Chinese, Indian, and Pakistani communities in Britain. Using mixed methods, we analyse secondary data from the Evidence for Equality National Survey (EVENS) and data from qualitative interviews with 20 older adults and 8 key informants. Our findings show that racism not only exacerbates loneliness but also appears to undermine the positive effects of social capital in reducing loneliness. Ethnic bonding does not consistently protect against loneliness; instead, participating rarely in ethnic activity is associated with less loneliness for Chinese and Pakistani people. We find that marginalization and isolation within ethnic communities, particularly due to socio-economic status, can exacerbate loneliness and, together with limited English proficiency, hinder the building of bridging ties. Furthermore, although a sense of belonging to British society (bridging capital) lowers loneliness, institutional racism undermines this benefit, leading to ethical loneliness—a profound sense of isolation and abandonment. The findings emphasize the need for policies that enhance both ethnic bonding and bridging capital while addressing structural racism and social inequalities.

Constructing (Post-)Race in English Health and Social Policy: The Case of Roma People

Lois Orton

(University of Sheffield)

Prevailing post-racial ideologies insist that 'race' is a thing of the past, and that everyone experiences the same life chances; although in reality racial inequalities are deepening across the globe. The term 'Roma' is a political construct used to categorise diverse populations. Collectively, Roma are considered Europe's largest racialised minority and are thought to experience the poorest health and social outcomes in the region. This is often blamed on their 'refusal to integrate' despite intense policy attention. In England, however, Roma are considered more recent arrivals and are viewed quite differently.

This paper asks, what do constructions of Roma in English health and social policy tell us about how (post-)race is done in this context? Frame analysis of 31 English health and social policy documents produced 2004-2023 and 19 semi-structured interviews with those involved in developing and/or implementing them reveals how 'European' Roma have been conflated with 'British' Gypsies and Travellers, framed as a specialist topic, to be kept out of mainstream policy and occasionally contracted-out to third sector organisations with specific expertise. Rather than being constructed, Roma are in fact non-constructed through omission and confusion. Their resulting invisibilisation has three effects: 1) it allows powerful national-level policy-makers to maintain specific ignorances; 2) it creates problems for regional/local policy-makers in locations where Roma are harder to ignore; and 3) it conceals persistent racialised exclusions. In conclusion, the active invisibilisation of Roma people in England allows the inequalities they experience to remain hidden and the 'post-racial' ideology intact.

Associations between Experiences of Racism across the Life Course and Mental Health: Exploring Direct and Indirect Pathways

Patricia Irizar, Dharmi Kapadia, Harry Taylor, Gertrude Wafula, Charles Kwaku-Odoi, Laia Bécares, Srinivasa Vittal Katikireddi

(University of Manchester)

The detrimental impact of racism on the mental health of ethnic minority people is well-evidenced. However, most studies have examined experiences at any point in time or recent experiences, without capturing the accumulation of racism over time. We aim to explore the association between racism across the life course on common mental disorders (CMD) during the COVID-19 pandemic, testing direct and indirect pathways. Cross-sectional data were obtained from the Evidence for Equality National Survey (Feb-Nov 2021, N = 8,897 ethnic minority people aged 18-60). The survey measured experiences of racism across multiple domains and time periods. Path analyses were used to explore the associations between racism and CMD and the indirect associations via SARS-CoV-2 infection, financial concerns, loneliness, and belonging. We find a clear dose-response relationship between experiences of racism over time and CMD. Compared to no experiences, chronic experiences of racism were associated with 2.91 times the odds of CMD (95%CI: 2.33-3.65; recent experiences only OR=2.11, 1.67-2.67; past experiences only OR=1.50, 1.16-1.92). Recent and chronic experiences of racism (but not past experiences) were also indirectly associated with CMD, via SARS-CoV-2 infection, greater financial concerns, greater feelings of loneliness and a reduced sense of belonging. Similar patterns were observed across the different domains of racism (hate crimes, interpersonal, institutional). These findings make a novel contribution to the literature, whereby recent experiences of racism have a stronger effect on mental health than past experiences, indicating that much of the adverse mental health impacts could potentially be reversed by preventing further racism.

Race, Ethnicity & Migration 2 - Room 1.218

Brexit's Afterlife: Rural Superdiversity, New International Mobilities and the Micro Social Management of Brexit Talk in the British Countryside

Sarah Neal, Anna Gawlewicz, Jesse Heley, Rhys Dafydd Jones, Kelsey Weber-Lawson

(University of Sheffield)

'[P]eople are coming more from like South Africa, Zimbabwe, Philippines because they are coming for 2 years (…) and they pay quite a lot of money where say, Poland or Romania, they don't need to pay that much because they can go to a different country in Europe'. This extract comes from an interview with a Polish shop owner in a rural market town in West Wales. The interview was conducted as part of a two-year project investigating the social consequences of Brexit and its dynamic transformation of rural lives and rural places. Rural areas, where the economies and services have been heavily reliant on EU migrant labour, have particularly felt Brexit's impacts. Using cross-national (England, Scotland and Wales) rural place-based fieldwork the paper examines three key themes: first, the new mobilities of rural international migration in which earlier EU migrants are leaving rural areas and being replaced by international migrants (often from outside Europe) on highly managed seasonal worker schemes; second, the emergence of concomitant narratives of rural superdiversity in which earlier Eastern and Central European migrants are nostalgically repositioned in new migrant hierarchies and third, the ways in which quotidian Brexit sensibilities and sensitivities continue to be sutured into everyday social interactions of rural residents. We align these themes to illuminate rural places as unsettled, relational sites, condensing complex mobilities and rapid social, economic, cultural and ethnic transformation. The paper draws on the Leverhulme Trust-funded project 'Living Brexit in rural Britain: migration and rural communities' (2023-25).

Postimperial Melancholia at the English Seaside: Nostalgic Longing in a Landscape of Material and Symbolic Decline

James Pattison

(University of Lincoln)

This paper explores the manifestation of postimperial melancholia (Gilroy, 2004) and its relationship to the material and symbolic decline of the English seaside resort. Drawing on data collected from an ongoing multimethod ethnographic study in Lincolnshire – aka 'Bomber County' –, I will argue that nostalgic longing for a lost golden age of the English seaside provides fertile ground for the emergence of melancholic nationalism. The seaside has been central to the popular imagination's national identity, and as a distinctly working-class space facilitated by railways and pub day trips, subsequently unmade through deindustrialisation and cheap air travel. Coastal towns now make up some of the most disadvantaged localities in the UK, associated with the decline of tourism and other coastal industries, peripherality and poor transport, population transience, concentrated ill health, and an ageing population. So-called 'left behind' towns, exemplified by the English seaside, have been at the centre of debates over nationalist populism in recent years, demonstrated most clearly by the successes of Reform UK in seaside towns in the 2024 General Election. This paper provides an empirical account demonstrating an interconnectedness between localised anxieties of loss with broader anxieties over Britain's place in the world. While many residents' lament seaside decline, a deeply politicised nostalgia for war, militarism and imagined community takes root in the pursuit of a fictional stable and homogenous past. A key contribution of this paper is the illustration of how the cultural landscape of postimperial melancholia Gilroy (2004) notes manifests within the seaside's urban landscape.

Ethno-National Identities in the UK: A Comparison of Recent and Established Migrant Groups

Ivelina Hristova

(London School of Economics and Political Science)

Ethno-national identities inform behaviours and shape social relations. However, most research investigates narrow definitions of ethnic or national identities, mostly for visible migrant and minority groups, neglecting the complexities of white identities. I locate migrant identities within social identity

theory. I ask: Is it possible to identify and explain a complex ethno-national identity for white and visible migrant groups in the UK. I use Understanding Society, a rich nationally representative longitudinal study. Employing confirmatory factor analysis, I construct and explain an ethno-national identity that encompasses nominal and affective measures of national and ethnic identity for main ethno-national migrant groups. My findings shows that such identity varies by ethno-national origin, with two main clusters for white and visible groups. Economic activity, income and class help explain such identity, alongside demographic characteristics such as age and gender. I find group-differences in the relationship between discrimination and ethno-national identity, including in the ways discrimination channels into identity through the labour market. I show that migration-related experiences are associated with such identity, with partial importance of the patterns of social contact. My contributions are in the novel approach to measuring and understanding the ethno-national identity of migrant groups in the UK. I amplify the sociological knowledge of migrant identities in the UK.

The Cultural Politics of Commemoration in Martinique

Meghan Tinsley

(University of Manchester)

Statues are dynamic sites of constructing and contesting the nation, even as they set the past in stone. The materiality of statues proclaims their authority alongside their transience: just as stone can crumble, so can dominant narratives be toppled. It is fitting, then, that statues are loci for contesting history and identity. This historical process is particularly salient in societies that have been colonised (and continue to grapple with coloniality): anti-colonial nation-building projects saw the overthrow of one historical narrative, and one set of national heroes, for another. In pursuit of complex, localised struggles with implications for the global memory of empire, I look to Martinique, a French overseas département in the Caribbean. I ask: How does the memorialisation of abolition and the anti-colonial struggle construct the postcolonial nation? I draw from an ethnography of two sharply contrasting sites of memory: the site of a former statue of Joséphine de Beauharnais in Fort-de-France, toppled by anti-colonial activists in July 2020; and Cap 110, a memorial commissioned in 1998 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of abolition. Drawing from archival research, observation, and interviews with stakeholders (including community historians, local policymakers, cultural activists, official and unofficial tour guides, vendors, and quotidian passers-by), I explore the following questions: How does erecting and maintaining monuments construct (post)colonial Martinique? How do policymakers, heritage workers, and activists situate statues within their narratives of collective identity? How does the contestation of monuments reimagine (post)colonial Martinique? Finally, how do transnational narratives shape the memory of the French Empire?

Rights, Violence & Crime - Room 2.219

Digital Sisterhood and Self-Reliance: Coping Mechanisms of Chinese Women in the Face of Online Gender-Based Violence

Yiqing Liu

(King's College London)

This study examines online gender-based violence, including trolling and doxxing, in the Chinese context through in-depth case studies of four women's experiences, drawn from interviews with 19 female social media users. Employing narrative analysis, this research integrates Narrative Resilience Theory and the Social Ecological Model of Resilience to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact on survivors and their coping mechanisms within the Chinese context.

The study reveals that gender-based online violence in China is not limited to outspoken feminists, all visible women online are targeted with potential vicious attacks. It illuminates the interplay between individual coping strategies and broader social supports, revealing that online female communities play crucial roles in building resilience. Notably, the internet emerges as both a source of harm and a vital platform for support and resilience-building, reflecting the complex digital ecosystem in China.

The findings highlight the profound impact of online violence on survivors' well-being, social relationships, and online behaviours. The research finds that women are compelled to "do it all" in their fight against online abuse. They must independently collect evidence, confront their abusers, and even investigate to uncover their attackers' identities, with little to no institutional support during this process. This self-reliant approach underscores the lack of effective services and structures to assist survivors of online gender-based violence in China. There is an urgent need for improved support systems and policies tailored to the Chinese digital environment to address online gender-based violence effectively, reducing the burden on individual women to combat abuse alone.

From Sabotage to Surveillance: Transforming Tactics in the Anti-Hunt Movement

Finn Lees

(University of Warwick)

20 years after the official criminalisation of fox-hunting by the 2004 Hunting Act it is now widely accepted that the sport continues to this day in a broadly similar form to the one it took prior to the law change. The existence of a law against fox-hunting, however, means that huntsmen must act behind a veil of plausible deniability, achieved by appearing to engage in "trail-hunting" - a legal sport claimed to simulate illegal fox-hunting. The role of hunt saboteurs - animal rights activists taking direct action against fox-hunts - has thus changed from being simply that of disrupting hunting activity, to that of demonstrating the illegal nature of that activity.

In this presentation I will draw upon ethnographic fieldwork, comprising extensive participant observation and 18 semi-structured interviews undertaken with saboteurs to explore the relationship between their current activities and earlier forms of animal rights activism. While the strategy of exposing animal cruelty - understood in academic literature as "the politics of sight" - has been central to the animal movement for decades, I will argue that the influence of new technologies and new media, as well as the peculiar social context within which hunting operates, have endowed contemporary anti-hunt tactics with a unique character and positioned them to be uniquely successful.

Cyberbullying and Self-Esteem among Youth in UAE Society

Ahmad Alomosh

(University of Sharjah)

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between cyberbullying and self-esteem among the youth in UAE society. It delves into the prevalence of online harassment and its impact on the self-esteem of adolescents. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys to gather comprehensive insights. Findings suggest a significant correlation between cyberbullying experiences and diminished self-esteem, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to address this issue in the context of UAE's youth culture.

The research investigates the nuanced dynamics of cyberbullying in the unique cultural landscape of the UAE, considering factors such as cultural norms, social media usage patterns, and technology. It aims to discern the various manifestations of cyberbullying, from explicit online attacks to subtler forms, and their specific impact on self-esteem. the study explores potential coping mechanisms employed by youth and identifies preventative measures that could be integrated into educational and societal frameworks to mitigate the adverse effects of cyberbullying on self-esteem within the UAE context.

The study examines gender differences in the experience of cyberbullying and its differential impact on self-esteem among male and female youth in the UAE. It seeks to understand how societal expectations and cultural norms may influence these dynamics. By shedding light on the intersectionality of cyberbullying and self-esteem within the UAE society, this research aims to contribute valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on digital well-being and inform targeted strategies for fostering a more resilient and supportive environment for the youth in the face of online challenges.

Science, Technology & Digital Studies 1 - Room 2.218

The Normative Limits of Data Sharing in Scientific Investigation: The Case of the UK Astronomy Community

Francisco Duran Del Fierro

(University College London)

Scientific practices are changing as science communities introduce new Digital Research Infrastructures (DRIs) to access, analyse and visualize large amounts of data, thereby transforming longstanding epistemic practices in these fields. One of these practices is sharing, which has become an essential sociotechnical imaginary across science communities over the last decades (Duran del Fierro et al., 2024). Data sharing has been promoted by governments, funders and science communities to address various challenges such as research reproducibility, sustainability and scientific collaboration. In this paper, I discuss the conflicting ethos behind sharing, emphasising the tension between making scientific outcomes available and preventing any form of proprietary rights or proprietary period. Considering this tension, I ask to what extent the existence of any kind of proprietary rights in scientific investigations is justifiable. To address this question, I use the case of the implementation of a new Digital Research Infrastructure (DRI) in the astronomy community: the UK Square Kilometer Array Regional Centre (UKSRC). By analysing the discourse that guides the implementation of this DRI, I explore how institutional arrangements and technical infrastructures impede or enable new forms of data sharing and proprietary rights. This case provides the opportunity to discuss the normative limits of data sharing and the politics of scientific knowledge production in the era of big data and large-scale facilities.

The Sciences of the Universe and the Challenge of Major International Projects

Axelle Vanhaecke

(University of Toulouse)

The European Space Agency is a major player in the European space sector. In the 1980s, the Horizon 2000 programme was launched to renew the agency's activities. This was accompanied by a substantial increase in the agency's budget, enabling it to develop new, more ambitious types of space programme in terms of missions. These new ambitions led to an increase in the scientific, technical and technological complexity of these missions. It has resulted in the need to involve more and more people - from different professions, disciplines and specialities. The aim of this presentation will therefore be to outline the transformations that have affected the organisation and cooperation practices at work in the scientific consortia. The focus will be on the Euclid consortium involved in the development and exploitation of the Euclid mission. It is composed of 250 laboratories - from 16 countries - and more than 2,200 people. The Euclid consortium is particularly distinctive in that it is the largest consortium in terms of members and is part of a global trend towards more complex scientific cooperation in the space sector. The space research community used to be used to cooperation on a 'human scale', where everyone knew each other and had an overall view of the project. We have moved on to numerically larger cooperation where this global vision has been replaced by a more specific vision, linked to the activities in which each individual is involved.

Neo-Luddism in the UK: Resistance to Technologies at the Bingo

Ella McPherson

(University of Cambridge)

This paper draws upon my ongoing qualitative study of bingo playing, a major leisure activity in Britain, to examine a case of neo-Luddism. In so doing, it overthrows a pair of orthodox understandings in the literature. The first is around the scholarly understanding of bingo, which is often portrayed either as a deviant practice or, paternalistically, as a potential site for health interventions – if it is studied at all. Rather, my research reveals bingo to be a site of social support and community-building with its own

values of care and carefulness. The second is around the idea, prevalent particularly in the business literature, of technology rejectors (neo-Luddites) as backwards nostalgics who will eventually see the light. Talking with a bingo community about their reactions to the introduction of technologies to their bingo halls – from digital number selectors to slot machines to, currently, the apps meant to replace bingo halls altogether – creates a different understanding altogether of neo-Luddites. This understanding harks back to the original British tradition of Luddism, namely rejecting technology because the values underpinning it threaten a community's own.

Science, Technology & Digital Studies 2 - Room 2.220

Resistance for a Wage? "Lying Flat" Influencers in the Platform Economy

Jiali Fan, Jiaming Li, Edward Granter, Jeremy Aroles

(University of Cambridge, University of Birmingham, University of York)

The "lying flat" subculture, known for advocating a simpler, less work-focused lifestyle, has gained popularity among Chinese youth. This movement has given rise to "lying flat" influencers showcasing tranquil post-work lives on social media platforms. While apparently an act of refusal and resistance against China's competitive work culture, research examining the role of media platforms in shaping this resistance is limited. Basd on analysis of 150 "lying flat" videos on the platforms Xiaohongshu (Red), Bilibili and Douyin, our study suggests a transformation of resistance where "lying flat" resistance has become commercialized. As influencers actively depict an image of resistance, they have moved away from the initial aim of freeing the self from China's neoliberal socio-political and educational system to being part of the regime of neoliberal platform labour. This everyday resistance has turned into a marketable performance, highly romanticized, while remaining rooted in neoliberal power structures.

"Everyday Clicks, Unequal Picks?": How User-Generated Data Transforms in Digital Labor and Capital Dynamics

Zhehan Jin, Lingzhou Cheng, Jiahe Tian, Junyao Xing

(Zhejiang University)

Data is a key factor of the digital economy, reshaping not only economic processes but also social structures and relationships. Users play a central role in creating data that fuels digital capitalism, engaging in everyday activities, interactions, and consumption patterns as both active and passive participants. However, this user-generated data acquires value only when processed by digital platforms' algorithms. Enterprises leverage these platforms to gain competitive advantages, integrating data into their production strategies. This study explores how user-generated data participates in the circuit of capital, focusing on the social and economic implication of this process. It examines the dynamics of value extraction, questioning how platforms commodify products of user activities and how users, in turn, navigate their dual role within the digital ecosystem. Moreover, the research investigates how user data transitions from being merely a byproduct of digital interactions to a critical asset driving profits for platforms and enterprises. By centering on the user, this study aims to reveal the social implications of data commodification, including the alienation of user activity, shifts in digital labor, new forms of inequality in digital capitalism, and the broader societal impact of data-driven economic transformations. It also addresses challenges in data governance, such as privacy concerns, the lack of user agency in data usage decisions, and blurred boundaries of accountability between users, platforms, and enterprises. The findings emphasize the need for a deeper understanding of how platforms mediate user-capital relationships, and for policies that protect user rights while promoting fair practices.

Shaping Work Orientations in the Digital Age: A Bourdieusian Analysis of Consumer Values on YouTube Labor Narratives

Lilian Leupold

(Technische Universität Dresden)

This research explores how digital platforms, particularly YouTube, shape orientations for remote and gig economy workers through the lens of consumer values such as autonomy, choice, and flexibility. By examining YouTube career advice channels, the study investigates how these platforms promote a narrative of work that aligns labor with ideals typically reserved for consumption.

Using a mixed-methods approach, the research begins with sentiment analysis of video titles and comments to gauge the emotional tone, classifying discussions of remote and gig work as positive, negative, or neutral. This initial analysis provides insight into how digital platforms frame labor models in the gig economy. The qualitative phase explores recurring narratives tied to consumer values.

Grounded in Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and capital, the analysis highlights how workers' internalization of consumer values shapes their strategies for navigating precarious digital labor markets. While these narratives promote flexibility and personal fulfillment, they often obscure the structural realities of precarious work, reinforcing class-based inequalities in digital labor.

Drawing on Srnicek's theory of platform capitalism, the study critiques how influencers on YouTube shape narratives that normalize precarious labor. By blending consumer ideals with work identities, these influencers reshape professional expectations in the digital age. This research contributes to ongoing debates in digital sociology and labor studies, showing how digital platforms influence labor perceptions, particularly in the context of precarious gig and remote work.

Social Divisions / Social Identities - Room 3.211

Collectives in/of Solidarity: Student Activism by Women of Colour at the University of Oxford

Georgia Lin

(University of Oxford)

The myriad stories told about the University of Oxford, coupled with its status as an ancient, elite university, are often grand yet most actively exclude the experiences of women of colour students. I argue that by exploring the intersections of race and gender alongside other axes of oppression, a more comprehensive current history of Oxford can be told by and for women of colour students. My doctoral research explores the lived experiences of women of colour students through their participation in and engagement with student activism movements. Through a mixed qualitative methods study using narrative interviews with 47 former and current women of colour students and critical ethnography with two student organisations, this project foregrounds the voices of women of colour students and how they view their interactions and leadership within student activism that then shape their emerging identities. The research examines key themes of feminist action, spatial politics, identity and meaning-making, and the inherent possibilities forged through solidarities committed to social justice. I posit that there is strength in collective action and solidarities in service of change within and beyond the higher education academy in the United Kingdom. Given the recent global wave of action across universities for Palestinian liberation, including at Oxford, the need to challenge the University's traditional patriarchal and colonial foundations is essential. My research seeks to situate women of colour students as central actors in critical junctures of social change that have wide-ranging impacts on the broader UK higher education sector.

Caste, Discrimination and the Hope of Social Transformation: Insights from Constitutional Democracy

Dhaneswar Bhoi, Neelima Rashmi Lakra

(University of Edinburgh)

This paper critically examines caste as both a historical and contemporary social construct, highlighting its profound influence on social transformation in India. While narratives of marginalisation and discrimination persist, the hope for equality, fraternity, and liberty—rooted in the vision of Dr B.R. Ambedkar—offers an alternative discourse on social change. By adopting the framework of Constitutional Democracy, this study explores pathways to social mobility within a caste-stratified society. The lasting legacies of the Manu Smriti and occupational divisions under the Varna system continue to influence generational access to opportunity. Grounded in empirical research, this study analyses the educational achievements of 250 Dalit students, supplemented by in-depth life histories from 20 caste-based case studies. It investigates how Dalits have leveraged the Constitutional framework, public policies, and Ambedkar's concept of symbolic capital to escape traditional caste-based occupations. Education emerges as a key to occupational mobility, allowing Dalits to aspire beyond livelihoods predetermined by their caste.

This research also interrogates the role of welfare policies and the Constitution's transformative potential in fostering social change. By examining the interaction between state mechanisms and symbolic capital in Dalit students' lives, it assesses India's progress in promoting social democracy and reducing caste-based inequalities. Moreover, it critiques limitations within these frameworks, questioning the state's commitment to Ambedkar's egalitarian vision.

Racialised Young People Challenging White Gender Norms through Anti-Racist Youth Work

Thalia Thereza Assan

(Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

This paper examines how anti-racist youth work can support young people in resisting white beauty standards and exploring their gender identities beyond rigid and racialized constructions. It presents findings from an ethnography conducted in 2020-2021 with girls aged 14-20 and youth workers in Intercultural Youth Scotland (IYS), a charity for racialised young people. The majority of the participants were Black or South Asian.

I argue that interacting with other racialised people in IYS aided participants in appreciating their natural hair, trying out different hairstyles and engaging in digital activism on these issues. These were empowering experiences as participants often contended with ignorant and oppressive remarks about their hair from their white peers at school. Furthermore, I argue that with together their IYS peers and youth workers, participants challenged constricting and normative notions of femininity and masculinity. They did so through critical discussions in IYS' girls' groups and by combining appearances and activities that are considered 'hyperfeminine' and 'tomboy', such as wearing makeup and playing sports. Nevertheless, some participants did not experience IYS spaces as fully inclusive. A non-binary participant felt that some IYS members still subscribed to binary understandings of gender and therefore did not always feel understood in IYS.

By attending to the ways that racism shapes young people's experiences and understandings of gender, these findings help diversify girlhood and youth studies. Moreover, the findings underscore the significance of 'age' for intersectional analysis. Finally, this paper illuminates the transformative potentials and challenges of culturally- and gender-specific youth work.

Migrants' Social Positioning and Perceived Social Stratification Structures in the Countries of Origin and Destination

Rizza Kaye Cases

(Slovak Academy of Sciences)

Scholars tend to examine migrants' social positioning in terms of their strategies to access various forms of capital transnationally (e.g., Plüss, 2013; Stock, 2024). While such works are important to understand

the process of potentially achieving social mobility as well as acquiring/maintaining class position and identities, it is also equally important to pay attention and examine whether migrants imagine the structure of social stratification in countries of origin and destination differently and where do they position themselves in such hierarchies. This points to a possibly fragmented and more situated (rather than a consistent and continuous) understanding of one's positions and identities as migrants' traverse different types of societies and hierarchies.

Drawing on the use of visual tool within qualitative interviews, this paper compares how and why Filipino migrants working in the care sectors of New York and London (as nurses, caregivers, and domestic workers) perceive the US/UK and the Philippines as different types of societies based on inequality pyramids. At the same time, the paper also examines where and why they position themselves in such hierarchies.

The paper thus explores how (lack of) occupational prestige, accumulated capitals, and future imaginaries intersect with perceived hierarchy and desirability of destinations in relation to meaning-making related to structures of inequalities and (contradictory) social mobility.

Sociology of Education 1 - Room 4.204

Distinction: Navigating Teacher Identity through a Bourdieuian Lens

Sarah Butler

(University of East London)

This conference paper explores the relationship between teacher identity and experiences of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) through Pierre Bourdieu's framework of habitus, field, and capital. Drawing from my current doctoral research, which employs in-depth narrative interviews with experienced teachers, I reveal how teachers articulate their professional identities and locate themselves within their CPD experiences and the strength of feeling illuminated.

A striking sentiment emerges: many educators perceive themselves as 'not like others,' shaping their engagement with CPD initiatives, and the communities of practice sought by individuals seeking like minded others for informal yet impactful development. The distinction teachers discuss is rooted in their habitus: ingrained values, motivations and commitments to education. Frustration and anger arise over ineffective CPD programs that conflict with their habitus, undermining their integrity and passion for teaching. This tension reflects broader social dynamics within the educational field, where expectations often clash with lived realities.

I argue that teachers' resistance to certain CPD initiatives signifies cultural and social capital, as their professional values influence their perceptions of meaningful development. This raises critical questions about the alignment of CPD programs with teachers' habitus to foster authentic engagement.

This talk aims to promote sociological discussion about the implications of these findings for educational policy and practice. By examining teacher identity through Bourdieu's lens, participants will gain insights into the complexities of educator experiences and the need for CPD initiatives to resonate with their lived realities, ultimately fostering a more equitable and responsive educational landscape.

Decolonial Pedagogy in the Inclusive Classroom

Leon Moosavi

(University of Liverpool)

There has been much discussion about decolonising the curriculum, decolonising research methods, and decolonising campus spaces. What is perhaps less talked about is decolonising teaching even though this is one of the central activities which take place in universities. This paper will explore the question of what it means to decolonise pedagogy. It will use Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed as a starting point for thinking about how decolonial teaching may be practically achieved. It will then offer a critique of this approach so as to further expand the notion of decolonial pedagogy to ensure it is relevant for contemporary teaching in a variety of settings. This will include grappling with the question

of how to decolonise teaching when students may be resistant to such a project. It will be argued that decolonial pedagogy must be based on a recognition of power imbalances that exist in the classroom, which may be teacher-to-student but which can also be student-to-student, and then trying to find ways of addressing these imbalances. Yet, at the same time, decolonial teaching must not lose sight of other harms, and even oppression, that can emerge in the classroom which may be overlooked due to the focus on decolonial teaching. Thus, an intersectional and practical teaching against oppression will be explored which is fundamentally decolonial but which also expands itself to push forward our thinking about how we can teach without reinforcing the long shadow of coloniality and other hierarchies of oppression.

Accept or Challenge? Exploring the Experiences of Pre-Service Teachers from Minoritised Groups

Karan Vickers-Hulse, Sarah Whitehouse

(University of the West of England Bristol)

The shortage of teachers from Black, Asian and minoritised groups is well documented. Over the past decade, a body of research has confirmed that discrimination and inequality is a factor in the recruitment of Black, Asian and minoritised groups in England. Drawing on findings from the Runnymede Trust Report (2017) which highlighted Bristol's lack of racial diversity within the teaching community, this paper explores the experiences of a group of pre-service teachers on university teacher education routes who are minoritised within the general teaching population. This lack of diversity in the teacher workforce extends beyond race to other aspects of identity and representation in the classroom and is mirrored in teacher education. A series of focus group interviews were conducted across a nine-month period. Results are presented as vignettes to capture the voice of minoritised participants. The findings have implications for the recruitment and retention of a diverse teacher workforce as well as highlight the need to ensure a sense of belonging for all pre-service teachers entering the teaching community. This paper proposes a model relating to the analysis of critical incidents (Tripp, 2012) which aims to inform future research into how pre-service teachers respond to critical incidents regarding their identity. This model seeks to clarify tensions in the diverse lived experiences of pre-service teachers and help to explore the importance of context.

Sociology of Education 2 - Room 4.205

Discipline in English Schools: Examining Pedagogic Discourse and Identities through the Lens of Basil Bernstein's Work

Konstanze Spohrer

(Liverpool Hope University)

Recent education policy in England has seen a renewed emphasis on behaviour management and discipline in schools. A number of academies have adopted so-called 'no-excuses' policies and practices, often borrowing from approaches used in US charter schools. In these schools, strict regulation of pupils' movements, verbal and emotional expression is justified as necessary for boosting educational success and social mobility. Research in the UK and in the US has focussed on the damaging effects of these no on pupils' emotional, educational, occupational and civic outcomes. This paper seeks to add to the debate by examining no-excuses policies at school level drawing Basil Bernstein's notions of 'visible' and 'invisible' pedagogies. Drawing on a discourse analysis of documents from secondary schools in England, the paper shows how behaviour policies promote highly 'visible' pedagogical approaches exercising a high level of regulation and explicit rules for success. At the same time, these schools also emphasise the acquisition of knowledge and traits associated with 'invisible' pedagogies, such as self-control. Overall, they construct the ideal pupil as disciplined and relentlessly striving for progress towards educational and later life success. The paper will reflect on the potential implications of 'no-excuses' pedagogies for the relationship between pedagogic discourse, inequalities and student identities as well as discuss the potential of using Bernstein's conceptual tools.

Including the Excluded

Lana Crosbie, Jessie Abrahams

(Bristol University, University of the West of England)

Recent times have seen a rise in authoritarian approaches to behaviour management in schools with zero tolerance policies such as 'ready to learn' becoming the norm. These approaches arguably result in high rates of fixed-term exclusions; especially amongst particular groups of young people. Black Caribbean pupils and those of mixed Black Caribbean and white heritage continually experience exclusion in the greatest proportions. As do, young people living in areas of high socio-economic deprivation and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This paper showcases the findings and implications from Including the Excluded, a research project funded by the Brigstow Institute at the University of Bristol. The project aimed to co-produce knowledge on the educational and emotional experiences of pupils excluded from mainstream secondary schools (aged 11-16) in Bristol, UK in 2020 amidst the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and economic-related social instability. The project team comprised of academics from different disciplinary backgrounds (Education, Psychology, Sociology and Socio-Legal Studies), education practitioners and three youth community research fellows (YCRFs). Data collection involved two semi-structured interviews with teachers; three online focus groups and two semi-structured phone interviews wherein YCRFs initiated dialogue with pupils attending alternative educational provisions (APs) across the city. The findings from this research shed light on the social isolation, exclusion and feelings of frustration and injustice experienced by these pupils. This paper session includes a screening of a short film produced as an outcome of this research which is then used to open up dialogue around the findings.

"You don't go here anymore": An Exploration of School Exclusion

Stephanie King

(University of Derby)

This qualitative study brings together lived experiences of school exclusion with a novel use of theory. The analysis deepens understanding of how school exclusion both represents and reproduces social inequalities.

Governments and other organisations have demonstrated concern about school exclusion and its links to poor outcomes and life chances, but the problem persists. In England, young people from marginalised groups are consistently over-represented in the school exclusion statistics. School-excluded young people are more vulnerable to the associated poor outcomes and so school exclusion becomes both a symptom and a cause of wider social inequalities.

In this study, young people who have been formally or functionally excluded from school are interviewed about their experiences of school and exclusion from school. A composite theoretical framework is developed and applied, using concepts from critical realism and the seminal text Learning to Labour (Willis 1977). Fieldwork is conducted in a former mining area and this post-industrial context is considered alongside the future aspirations of the participants. The stories of school-excluded young people are platformed whilst analysis places this lived experience into a wider sociological context.

Neoliberal school systems based on individualism, measurable outcomes and linking school to work seem to hold little relevance for the young people in this study. Neoconservative behaviour policies further weaken the ability of schools to be inclusive, meet needs or to inspire young people from marginalised groups to engage in education. Instead, I call for a school system based on education for liberation and human flourishing.

Theory - Room 2.217

Middle Eastern Feminist Thought: A Practical Theory for Building Sustainable Peace

Farinaz Basmechi

(University of Ottawa)

In a world of uncertainties, where some political powers strive to reshape the current global order while others resist, conflict has become the only constant. Today, with much attention focused on the Middle East, it is the patriarchal logic that sustains and defends the ongoing violence in the region—regardless of which side is responsible, be it Hamas and its allies or Israel and its allies. What is lost in this conflict, and often overlooked, is the everyday lives of ordinary people caught in its crossfire—a struggle that has persisted for over seventy years.

Despite the so-called advancements in human and women's rights, the reality for people, especially women, in the Middle East tells a different story. Their lives are trapped at the intersection of patriarchy, religion, and both international and domestic politics. Although many feminists have attempted to address women's issues in the region on a country-by-country basis, a comprehensive, collective feminist theory is still missing.

In my presentation, I argue that developing a unified Middle Eastern feminist thought, based on core feminist principles, is crucial for addressing the ongoing conflict and securing a sustainable peace in the region.

The Social Theory of Iranian Decolonial Thinker Ali Shariati

Mohammad Masud Noruzi

(University of Liverpool)

In this paper, I critically and constructively engage with Dr. Ali Shariati's ideas to expand decolonial social theory. Drawing directly from his Persian works, I aim to offer an authentic interpretation of his "Estezaaf" (Oppression) concept, particularly in relation to his critiques of theocracy, capitalism, and exploitation. Shariati's work, which integrates Islamic thought with decolonial and postcolonial theories, reflects his evolution as an organic intellectual in dialogue with various social, political, and religious movements. His contributions are rooted in three key areas: "Ejtemaiyat" (Social Studies), "Islamiyat" (Islamic Studies), and "Kaviryat" (Existential Reflections), highlighting his monotheistic humanism. Shariati developed a unique critique of social structures by synthesising classical sociology with non-Western traditions, expanding beyond Eurocentric paradigms. This study also analyzes his engagement with critics and supporters, contextualizing his dynamic and evolving thought. It addresses the persistent misunderstandings of Shariati's legacy and emphasizes the relevance of his ideas, particularly his notion of "liberation Islam," in contemporary decolonial discourse.

Additionally, I introduce a five-part framework of oppression—'Estebdad' (Despotism), 'Estemar' (Colonialism), 'Estesmar' (Exploitation), 'Erteja' (Reactionaryism), and 'Estehmar' (Stupefaction)—which offers a more comprehensive understanding of Shariati's contributions. Shariati was the first to coin the term "Estehmar" within the context of sociology, but it has not garnered adequate attention from sociologists. Through this analysis, I hope to illuminate Shariati's significance in decolonial theory and introduce his work to Western academia, addressing both his critiques of Eurocentric modernity and his progressive vision for Islamic societies.

Epistemic justice, Rights-Politics, and the Coloniality of Knowledge Production: Critical Lessons from Rojava and the Jineolojî Movement towards Liberating Life

Hasret Cetinkaya

(Manchester Metropolitan University)

Since 2012 a revolution has been taking place in Northeastern Syria (Rojava). This project in 'democratic autonomy', has taken place in the anomic gap left by the absence of a state, and has been driven in large part by feminist activists. These feminist activists have played a pioneering role in re-

imagining a moral and political society, through jineolojî or 'women's science'. Jineolojî now extends beyond Rojava, constituting a vibrant and powerful transnational or diasporic public sphere, working to develop and promote new ideas about justice, morality and politics from a situated and embodied gendered perspective. Drawing on ethnographic data and published materials, this article examines theoretically the constitution of jineolojî, as well as the practices of research and self-fashioning activists undertake in the cultivation of new models for feminist power and legality. What emerges from these epistemic practices of revolution and the entanglement of ways of being, knowledge and the law, is the production of new modes of desire, subjectivity, and rights. It argues that the practice of jineolojî offers critical lessons for epistemic and political justice rooted in the local and a vernacular practice of rights.

Jane Addams's Sociology of Moral Practice and Practice of Moral Sociology

Owen Abbott

(Cardiff University)

This talk aims to illuminate Jane Addams's unique and remarkable contribution to social theorising about morality, arguing that Addam's work provides underappreciated insights on which contemporary sociologies of morality can build. Although efforts to undo the marginalisations of Addams's work are underway, Addam's contributions to sociological moral theorising remain few and far between. It is argued that Addams offers an alternate vision of moral theorising compared to her more famous peers. Notably, Addams takes moral engagement via social reform as its starting point and sees moral theorising as best arising from engaged and challenging moral living. This reflects an integral pragmatist moral epistemology developed and enacted by Addams, which sees moral knowledge as arising from socially engaged experience. Through this epistemological perspective, Addams delivers resounding critiques of abstract moral theorising. She is also critical of academic focuses on collecting data in abstraction from working towards social reform. Addams thus provides unique insights into how moral theorising relates to normative argument and social action, an issue that has contemporary prescience in current sociologies of morality. Crucial to Addams's arguments are the role interaction, emotion (notably sympathy), and perplexity play in engendering social change on a personal and social scale. Finally, it is argued that Addams's overlooked work Long Road of Woman's Memory uniquely illuminates the significance of memory to moral agency.

Work, Employment & Economic Life 1 - Room 3.204

Exploring Inequality in the 'Up or Out' Recruitment of Gender and Ethnic Minorities in China's Leading Academic Institutions

Keping Ruan

(Durham University)

This study investigates whether inequalities exist in the 'Up or Out' recruitment process for gender and ethnic minorities within China's leading academic institutions. 'Up or Out' policies, which require faculty members to secure promotion within a set period or leave their positions, have been a critical but underexplored aspect of academic career progression. While these policies aim to drive high performance and ensure talent retention, their impact on marginalised groups remains unclear.

A mixed-method approach is used to explore this issue. The pilot study, which involved 40 participants, revealed significant disparities in research output satisfaction, access to resources, and promotion success between male and female faculty, as well as between promoted and non-promoted individuals. The formal study, to be completed by the end of 2024, will expand to include 400 participants, enabling a broader examination of these trends. Additionally, in-depth interviews with 15 participants will be conducted, employing Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) to gain qualitative insights into the experiences of gender and ethnic minorities in the academic recruitment process.

The study highlights structural barriers faced by women and ethnic minorities in career advancement and calls for further investigation into institutional practices that may perpetuate inequality. Addressing

these inequalities is crucial as China's academic sector globalises, ensuring a diverse and inclusive workforce.

This study aligns with the BSA Annual Conference's theme of 'Social Transformations,' exploring how recruitment practices reflect and influence broader inequalities related to gender and ethnicity. Its implications extend beyond China, offering insights relevant to academic institutions worldwide.

'Bombastic Side Eye': Masquerading Labour Control through Body Language while Working on the 'Floor' in a Public House

James Green

(University of Worcester)

Organisational desire to facilitate the control over the emotional and bodily display of their employees is arguably discussed profoundly within literature. Recommendations to up twist the lips, the provision of performative emotion training, and the supervision of such performances, are some of the ways in which control over employee performances has been documented by other scholars. Given considerably less attention is how managerial body language may be used to control the workforce while they are enacting various forms of service. In this paper, I argue that subtle body language tactics are used by managerial pub workers to signal instructions to staff members. For example, subtle tactics manifest in the form of non-verbal subtle gestures (glaring, pointing) and commands (mouthed). These acts are implemented, for example, to (attempt to) display competence in the eyes of the customer and (sometimes) to emotionally exploit their workforce into labouring longer than originally planned. I also detail the ways in which workers heed to and resist such control mechanisms in the workplace. The data presented in this paper is an outcome of a wider project in which I undertook a year-long hybrid ethnography in a public house (pub) based in Central London. I worked as a bartender, adopting participant observation and observant participation, to investigate pub workers' experiences of emotion and managerial control through the eyes of both the self and other.

Heat Stress Adaptation: Strategies for Safeguarding Labour Productivity and Health

Tripti Singh

(University of Warwick)

This literature review focuses on adaptation strategies to mitigate the economic and health impacts of heat stress on labour productivity and worker health. As global temperatures rise, heat stress has emerged as a critical challenge, particularly for industries reliant on manual labour and outdoor work, such as agriculture and construction. The review highlights several adaptation strategies aimed at reducing the adverse effects of extreme heat on workers. Key strategies include rescheduling work hours to cooler parts of the day, personal cooling techniques like hydration, providing shaded rest areas, and allowing workers to acclimatize to heat.

Country-specific adaptations provide further insights. In China, the Administrative Measures to Prevent Heatstroke and Cooling (AMHP) requires employers to adjust work hours, provide health checks, and pay heat allowances for outdoor workers exposed to temperatures above 35°C. Similar policies in the UAE mandate work breaks during peak heat hours. However, these adaptations face challenges, including limited compliance, inadequate enforcement, and unintended consequences, such as the disruption of sleep cycles due to shifts in work hours.

The review also identifies gaps in the effectiveness of these measures, particularly for informal and vulnerable workers, who often lack access to social safety nets, health care, and legal protections. The literature suggests that effective policy enforcement, tailored adaptations, and worker rights advocacy are essential to safeguarding workers' health and productivity in the face of rising global temperatures.

Work, Employment & Economic Life 2 - Room 3.205

'Bottom Power': An Asset or Liability to the Achievements of Women in the Nigerian Banking Sector?

Oluseyi Kuti

(University of Central Lancashire)

The Nigerian Banking Sector currently boasts a higher percentage of women in senior management positions than other sectors in the Nigerian economy. This research reveals that about 63.1% of women, typically seen as part of the minority group in the Nigerian culture, occupy Middle Management positions in the Nigerian Banking Sector, while 34 - 48% of women occupy Senior Management roles. This record demonstrates a significant achievement given the records from the UK Banking Sector showing a national average for women in Senior Management positions at 28%, 36% in Middle Management positions and 11% in Senior Management. This research also reveals that the above achievements have been attained mainly through the personal efforts of the women. However, several limitations are experienced, such as the male-dominated nature of the sector, long working hours, the cultural expectations for women to take full responsibility as primary caregivers in the domestic environment and little evidence of support mechanisms such as Work/Life balance policies or health and wellbeing facilities contrary to good business practice and employment regulations existing in more economically advanced countries. A significant challenge also experienced by the women is the widespread assumption within Nigerian society that the remarkable achievements of these women have been attained by trading sexual favours, a phenomenon popularly described as 'bottom power' in society. Through a hermeneutic investigation into the lives and experiences of the women using qualitative semi-structured Life-Story interviews, this research aims to correct the negative perception currently existing regarding the reputation of these high-achieving women.

The "Woman Penalty": Gender Inequality, Mental Health and Work-Family Conflict in the U.S.

Paula Cornejo Abarca

(Independent Researcher)

This research examines the intersection of gender inequality, motherhood, mental health, and work-family balance policies in the United States, building on insights from previous work conducted in Chile. Despite global efforts to address gender disparities, women continue to navigate the dual burden of paid and unpaid labor, resulting in heightened stress and anxiety. In the U.S., the absence of national work-family balance policies may exacerbate these challenges, reinforcing the "motherhood penalty" and influencing women's career trajectories and mental health.

Using snowball sampling, alongside a combination of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, this study explores the strategies women—both with and without children—employ to manage their careers, the influence of gender stereotypes, and the relationship between work-family balance and mental health. The research incorporates an intersectional and life course perspective, engaging women across diverse employment situations, from full-time workers to homemakers. The findings reveal how societal expectations and the absence of national support policies shape women's decisions before and after motherhood, providing crucial insights into the gendered dynamics that impact both professional and personal lives.

Women's Underrepresentation in Leadership Roles in Indian BPO Industry

Parul Srivastava

(Leeds Business School)

This research examines the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles within India's BPO sector, which, despite being considered more gender-egalitarian, exhibits significant disparities. Women constitute 37% of the workforce but only 10% of senior management. Through a qualitative

approach, including 51 semi-structured interviews with both men and women, the study explores the unacknowledged barriers that hinder women's career progression. It highlights the significance of gender blindness, where gender biases are overlooked due to societal norms, and stigmatization of professional networking for women, influenced by harassment laws and gender stereotypes.

The study draws on multiple theoretical frameworks: Acker's gendered organizations theory, which explains how organizational structures reinforce male dominance, Kelan's gender fatigue, where individuals fail to recognize persistent inequalities, hegemonic masculinity theory, examining how male norms shape leadership, and meritocracy theory, which questions the assumption that success is based solely on performance, masking underlying biases. These frameworks have not been extensively applied to the Indian BPO context.

Preliminary findings suggest that performative diversity efforts fall short of creating true inclusion, with menopause and maternity-related challenges acting as hidden barriers. The study also uncovers internalized sexism, where women themselves may unknowingly perpetuate inequalities. By incorporating men's perspectives, it offers a more comprehensive view of the forces contributing to gender disparity, providing fresh insights into the intersection of gender and organizational culture. These findings are still under development, but they aim to present a nuanced understanding of women's challenges in leadership within the BPO sector.

PLENARY PANEL
13:30-15:00
Lecture Theatre B

SOCIOLOGISTS LIKE TO THINK THEY LEAD THE WAY ON SOCIAL JUSTICE. WHERE ARE THEY ON CLIMATE JUSTICE?

Benjamin Bowman, Manchester Metropolitan University, **Rebecca Elliott**, London School of Economics, **Charles Ogunbude**, University of Nottingham, **Lisa Vanhala**, University College London, **Catherine Walker**, Newcastle University

Chaired by Mark Doidge, University of Loughborough, BSA Membership Trustee

In her presidential address to the American Sociological Association, Mary Romero (2020) argued that Sociology has engaged with social justice since the discipline's inception. At this BSA conference there will be many papers that address issues of marginalisation around class, race, gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, and other social justice issues. However, there is one that often gets overlooked: climate justice. There is a 'Strange silence of mainstream sociology' on climate change (Lever-Tracey 2008). Environmental sociology has sat at the margins of mainstream sociology since its emergence in the 1970s (Dunlap and Brulle 2015). At the same time Sociologists have also been marginalised from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (Urry 2015). Despite this, climate change is already having a devastating impact on the most marginalised in society. Those who have contributed the least to climate change will be those who will be most affected (Schlosberg and Collins 2014). This panel is a deliberate provocation and aims to address this lacuna.

Benjamin Bowman, a senior lecturer at the Manchester Centre for Youth Studies, Manchester Metropolitan University, is a specialist in young people's political sociology, and especially the sociology of climate change. He uses youth-centred and creative methods to explore how young people make sense of, and take action on, climate change. He is best known for Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) with young people on climate change, and for co-authorship, co-research and collaborative partnerships with young people on climate action, including at the international level with the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the British Council.

Rebecca Elliott is Associate Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics and Political Science, where she is also affiliated with the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment, the Centre for the Analysis of Risk and Regulation, and the Phelan United States Centre. Her research focuses on how climate change, as a material and symbolic phenomenon, reshapes social and environmental landscapes. She is the author of *Underwater: Loss, Flood Insurance, and the Moral Economy of Climate Change in the United States* (Columbia University Press, 2021). In addition to publishing in academic journals, she has contributed to *The New York Times*, *The Houston Chronicle*, and *Harper's Magazine*. She is one of the editors of the *British Journal of Sociology*.

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Charles Ogunbode is an Assistant Professor in Applied Psychology at the University of Nottingham. His research addresses a range of topics relating to the roles of personal experiences, beliefs, and emotions individual and collective climate action, as well as how climate change impacts mental health and wellbeing around the world through biophysical, social, and perceptual pathways. In 2022, he led the first ever national survey of climate change experiences among people of colour conducted in the UK. Prior to joining the University of Nottingham, he completed a PhD in Psychology at the University of St Andrews and held positions at the University of Bergen and De Montfort University. He currently holds editorial positions with *Plos Mental Health*, *Global Environmental Psychology*, and *Personality and Individual Differences*.

 Lisa Vanhala is Pro-Vice Provost for the Grand Challenge Theme of the Climate Crisis and a Professor of Political Science at University College London. Her research sits at the intersection of political science, law and sociology. She studies the development and mobilization of law in the fields of climate change and human rights. She also teaches and writes about qualitative research methods. Her current research focuses on the policies and politics of climate change loss and damage from the UN to the local level. She has two forthcoming books, a monograph entitled *Governing the End: The Making of Climate Change Loss and Damage* (University of Chicago Press), and a co-edited volume entitled *Governing Climate Change Loss and Damage: The National Turn* (Cambridge University Press). In 2023 she also co-edited a special issue of the journal *Global Environmental Politics* on the politics of climate change loss and damage. Her work has been funded by the ESRC, the British Academy and the European Research Council. She also regularly acts as a consultant or advisor for UN agencies, philanthropic foundations and non-governmental organisations. She sits on the editorial boards of *Law & Society Review*, *Law & Policy* and *Environmental Politics*.

Catherine Walker is an interdisciplinary social scientist based at Newcastle University as a Newcastle University Academic Track (NUAcT) fellow. Her research straddles human geography, sociology and environmental politics. Most of her research has to do with young people, climate change and the environment, extending into environmental education, cultural identity and critical geographies of sustainability (how ideas about sustainability are culturally and spatially located, and how they travel). The aim of her NUAcT Fellowship is to explore the potential for climate justice – as both an agenda for action and a way of understanding inequalities – to galvanise youth and intergenerational responses to climate change as a past, present and future concern. Catherine is a co-author of *Environment in the Lives of Children and Families: Perspectives from India and the UK* (Policy Press), as well as Young People at a Crossroads, a creative resource for educators that presents reflections on climate change education from migrant-background young people in the UK and Australia. Catherine recently guest co-edited a special issue of Geographical Research on storytelling as a pedagogic resource to build intergenerational and global solidarity in the face of climate change.

PAPER SESSION 10
15:15-16:45

Culture, Media, Sport & Food 1 - Room 4.206

Hoarding Practices: The Clutter of Everyday Life

Tiffany Hall

(University of Manitoba)

Hoarding Disorder is characterized by "excessive acquisition, saving, and difficulty discarding" (Lin et al. 2023) and is categorized in the DSM-5 under obsessive disorders. This has resulted in a dominant medical framing of the behaviour, emphasizing research on diagnostic and clinical aspects and overlooking further investigation into the phenomenon of clutter in everyday life. Recently, authors in areas of cultural studies have considered other dimensions of household objects that include the vitality of materiality (Woodward 2015) and the intertwining of social relationships and things (Owen & Boyer 2019). Following this line of thought, I suggest a practice theory approach (Warde 2014) to household accumulation that engages with consumer culture to consider how everyday domestic practices contribute to excess objects in the home.

Based on in-home guided-tours and interviews, my analysis of eighteen cluttered homes reveals how different households confront environmental and positional barriers and constraints to practices, and how different performances and adaptations can create an accumulation of objects. Additionally, I highlight how conflicting values such as surrounded environmental concern, social relationship maintenance, or high levels of sentiment create problems with discarding objects. In this paper I argue that the concept of hoarding behaviour may be better understood as a spectrum of clutter that derives from the varying performances of daily domestic practices that occur in the home. This study brings a new perspective on hoarding behaviour that can inform how we understand the excess accumulation of goods.

A Spotlight on 'Dress Deprivation': Chance to Transform Unsustainable Clothing Consumption?

Kornelia Hahn

(University of Salzburg)

Since its beginnings over a hundred years ago, the decline of both bespoke and second-hand clothing and the rise of mass-produced, ready-made and affordable clothing has taken us from a clothing shortage to a clothing surplus, a trajectory I call the sartorial transformation. Its consequences are most evident in the ecologically dangerous overabundance of unworn and discarded clothing, but also in the paradoxical and hitherto unaddressed phenomenon of 'dress deprivation' on the part of consumers who feel compelled to engage with contemporary fashion and clothing culture even though they do not wear most of the products of the ever-growing fashion industry. To learn more about how best to implement more sustainable alternatives, I present data from an empirical project on consumer practices. These practices include handling and making sense of clothing products in fashion stores; assembling, storing, and curating of wardrobes at home; and sorting through second-hand offers by professionals and customers. Interestingly, the results of this research are not in line with conventional economic beliefs that emphasise the demand for novelty, brands or plenty of choice. Rather, they suggest that consumers develop and apply sophisticated strategies to deal with the mountains of clothing products. But it also turns out that consumption work in this area is less attractive than is generally assumed, a finding that can inform initiatives for change.

Keeping Fashion's Sustainable Transition Exclusive How Sustainable-Cultural Entrepreneurs Perpetuate Inequalities in the Sustainable Transition of a Cultural Field

Luuc Brans

(Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)

Recent scholarship has uncovered inequalities and distinction practices in sustainable consumption of cultural goods with high symbolic value like fashion and food (Elliot, 2013; Von Busch, 2022). Yet we know surprisingly little about those who professionally advocate for sustainability within cultural fields, like sustainable fashion influencers or vegan food journalists, and how they enable these inequalites. As a moralizing elite of sustainability, they define the 'right' behavior to counter the climate crisis. Combining literature on the overrepresentation of high cultural capital middle classes in key positions in cultural industries (Brook et al. 2020) with literature on the 'green moralization of the poor' in sustainable transitions (Malier, 2021), I ask: who are the moralizing sustainability elites in cultural fields and how do they perpetuate inequalities in the fight against the climate crisis?

To answer these questions, this paper studies professional sustainability advocates in fashion, from social media influencers to activists, theorizing them as 'sustainable-cultural entrepreneurs' with specific social, cultural, and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Gheihman, 2021). Based on social network analysis and subsequent interviews with over 30 sustainable fashion advocates in three European countries (Italy, UK, Belgium), I uncover how these sustainable-cultural entrepreneurs form gatekeeping networks that collectively frame the 'right' response to the climate crisis and exclude those with less capital and diverging ideas of sustainability. This paper thus demonstrates how previously unstudied networks of key players in the sustainable transition of cultural industries unwittingly reproduce exclusion and inequality, risking climate apathy among citizens with less cultural capital (Anantharaman, 2018).

Configuring Ordinary Cosmopolitan Cultures: Ethical Branding, Cosmopolitan Affordances, and Consumption in a Canadian Context

Sonia Bookman, Benjamin Ayamga

(University of Manitoba)

Companies as "moral entrepreneurs" increasingly draw on principles and practices of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to reframe their products and consumption itself as 'good' for people and the planet (Otto et al., 2021: 5). Global brands like Starbucks or IKEA comprise popular sites where consumers daily encounter images of global cultural diversity, principles of social responsibility, and opportunities to express environmental concern via cosmopolitan consumption. Yet, how do consumers engage such ethical "frames of action" (Arvidsson, 2006)?

Drawing on sociological theories of brands and branding, recent scholarship on cosmopolitan consumption, and empirical material from an extensive qualitative study (2020-2024) of the global brands Amazon, H&M, McDonald's, and their customers (including 49 interviews with consumers of the brands) in Winnipeg, Canada, the paper examines how consumers engage and negotiate brand-based CSR-centred cosmopolitan affordances. Specifically, it examines the various ways in which consumers enact moral cosmopolitan outlooks with, and especially, beyond the brands in everyday life. The analysis reveals that moral cosmopolitan orientations appear to be widespread among participants, finding particular expression in environmental activity and 'green' consumption - not limited to the brands. In addition, there are significant differences in terms of level of engagement with, access to, and ability to convey cosmopolitan repertoires, refracted through class, gender, and age, that may reflect the way cosmopolitanism operates not only an aesthetic trait valued by high cultural capital consumers, but also as a moral stance that may signal high status (Baumann et al., 2022).

Culture, Media, Sport & Food 2 - Room 4.209

Aesthetic Experience of Artists in the Collective Production of Art

Jiayi Tian

(University of Edinburgh)

This article explores how the tastes of artists influence their engagement in the collective production of the arts. Under the production/consumption paradigm, sociologists of the arts usually treat artists as professionals who work with others to produce the artworks and taste as a parameter on the reception side. Building on Howard Becker's canonical art world thesis, I focus instead on artists' expressions of their aesthetic experience as they engage with the artworks. I use an extreme case to carry out my discussion—the Dafen Oil Painting Village, which has been stereotypically depicted by the media and publicity as a "factory" where the painters are "workers" who do not possess creativity. Drawing on interviews with 32 painters over the course of five years from 2019 to 2023, I argue that the painters attribute their aesthetic experience primarily to their sense of self, especially their understanding of their own personality, and decide and authenticate their technical specialisation. They further frame their choice of cooperation within the art world as being driven by their aesthetic experience and accept, decline, or modify the art commissions accordingly. My research highlights the subjectivity of artists regarding their aesthetic experience and introduce this crucial dimension into the art world framework without compromising the premise that art is a collective action. It further sheds light on the role of aesthetics in art production more broadly and calls for sociologists' attention on the art world as an aesthetic network.

'Step Up and Take the Risk': Young Women's Raps against Gender-Based Violence

Baljit Kaur

(London School of Economics and Political Science)

Against the backdrop of our neoliberal capitalist society, the humanitarian crisis of violence against girls and women remains a grave concern and arguably runs counter to the depoliticisation of contemporary youth work practice. In this paper I draw on my engagement with Bass Youth Club, a creative youth space in East London that makes available free programmes for young people. It is also where I have worked as a volunteer and subsequently as a researcher for the last ten years. Between June 2019 and March 2020, I conducted ethnographic research at the youth club as part of my PhD to explore the ways in which working-class young people narrated their lived experiences of violence through the production of rap music. In 2023, I returned to Bass Youth Club to develop this research through a smaller project entitled Mapping 'the Streets': Young Women Music Creatives and Violence in East London. This project shifted the focus onto young women, narrating their stories over a co-produced music track called Voices. In amplifying the experiences and raps of two young women from the project, LirJane and Clarissa, I specifically use these examples to demonstrate how music can be used as a tool to influence individual lives as well as social change more broadly. In pursuit of social transformation and change, this paper calls for policy intervention and pedagogical action underpinning such music programmes, in the hope that these ripples will eventually rupture the status quo.

Resonating with Music: Singing for the Past, the Present and the Future in the 2019 Chilean Uprising

Daniela Fazio Vargas

(University of Manchester)

Taking inspiration from the idea that protests are "eventful" and, therefore, capable of producing cognitive, relational, and emotional impacts on their participants (Della Porta, 2008), my research seeks to comprehend how music helps sustain political transformation through "resonant events". For this, it takes the Chilean Social Uprising as a case study. Social Movement scholars, particularly frame theorists, have resorted to the metaphor of resonance when explaining the alignment process (see Snow et al., 1986; Benford & Snow, 2000). Still, building different theoretical traditions (Miller, 2015;

Rosa, 2019), my work argues that part of the transformative power of music derives from the solidarity it produces, capable of continuing after the movements fade away but also resonates through time.

Drawing on 47 interviews with demonstrators participating in the Chilean uprising, my research shows how music fostered a sonic solidarity capable of bringing together people who, despite not crossing their paths before, were all fighting (and singing) for the same thing. In other words, it enables us to explore the political potentialities of "being together" in a world that separates –especially in a context like Chile, where the ideology of neoliberalism and individualism prevails. Also, it suggests how music contributed to developing transhistorical solidarity, mobilising memories and making people resonate with past and future struggles. Particularly, music contributed to stirring up a "bridge with history": a connection with the battles that the dictatorship disheartened, as well as the yearned pasts of the time of La Unidad Popular.

Beyond Cultural "Hybrids": Enabling Transnational Travel of Children's Picture Books to China

Svetlana Kharchenkova

(Leiden University)

When cultural products travel transnationally, they can be localised to better respond to the expectations, needs, and tastes of local consumers, often through creating "hybrid" cultural products. The concept of a "hybridisation" is firmly grounded in unequal macro-level power relations, dictated by the logic of the dominant centre (usually the US) vs. the dominated and resisting periphery. Discussion of the impacts and processes of cultural globalisation receded into the background recently. However, global cultural flows obviously persist, albeit in a different form than that dictated by the strict centre/periphery logic. This paper innovates through investigating a different kind of localisation. It investigates the case of so-called "reading guides", which are added to foreign children's picture books in the Chinese market. Relying on in-depth interviews with Chinese editors, editors-in-chief, literary agents, etc. in the children's book publishing industry, and on extensive fieldwork in Beijing and Shanghai (2023-2024), the paper investigates why "reading guides" accompany books in China despite being absent in the original versions. I argue that this is a case of what I call "helpful localisation", which involves editors educating parents how to use and understand the books as they are, rather than adjusting their content to fit the local context. This paper contributes to sociological research of cultural globalisation. It argues that when studying cultural localisation we should look beyond hybridisation, beyond the homogenisation/heterogenisation dichotomy and beyond macro-level power structures, as they are not sufficient to aptly capture complex empirical phenomena of present-day transnational cultural flows.

Emerging Themes & Special Events – Room 4.214

The Fragility and Adaptability of Crisis Social Capital in the Context of War

Kateryna Bannikova

(Kharkiv University of Humanities)

This paper examines the concept of crisis social capital and its distinctive resilience in contexts of social instability and uncertainty, with a particular focus on the Ukrainian-Russian war. Crisis social capital arises during periods of severe disruption, characterised by a depletion of resources and the urgent need for rapid adaptation. Unlike traditional social capital, which is embedded in stable networks and enduring relationships, crisis social capital is often more fragile and exhausted, with fewer reserves available for individuals to draw upon. As people transition between different social contexts, particularly during conflict, their ability to leverage this form of capital tends to diminish.

Crisis social capital also demonstrates a lack of sustainability, unable to persist or strengthen over extended periods, even when reinforced by significant social events like war. While it weakens traditional social capital, it simultaneously opens new avenues for flexibility and adaptation. Individuals

relying on crisis social capital, especially in the context of war, develop adaptive skills that enable them to navigate a variety of challenging social situations. However, this adaptability comes at the cost of universality, as the focus shifts towards unstable aspects of life such as work, routine, and leisure, all disrupted by conflict.

This research, grounded in the sociocultural impacts of the Ukrainian-Russian war, seeks to advance our understanding of the psychosocial dynamics underpinning crisis social capital. It explores how this capital emerges, depletes, and transforms in response to conflict, contributing to discussions on resilience and adaptation during times of crisis.

Counter-Narratives in Bordering Activist Research: Lessons from Critical Race Theory Epistemologies

Ilaria Aversa

(University of Kent)

We are witnessing continuous shifts in governments and political narratives and policies that affect communities, especially those most oppressed. Critical Race Theory, Decolonial and Activist scholars reflect on the role of sociology in this climate (Birk, 2023; Tuck and Yang, 2014). With a duty to collaborate to a positive change in society (Goyes, 2016), scholars need to be conscious of and work on their positionality, reflecting on how that impacts the knowledge they produce, also in relationship to other knowledge production from which we might be taking platforms. In this presentation I will open a discussion starting from collaborative methods including composite characters that I used in my fieldwork, highlighting the importance of developing counter-narratives in bordering research (Mayblin, 2017; Brown, 2019). I will discuss the dialectical relationship between these narratives, the epistemologies from which they come from, and the theories that will emerge from them (Cook, 2013).

Environment & Society 1 - Room 3.205

Vegan Masculinities: A Biographical Study of Activists within the UK Animal Liberation Movement

Cameron Dunnett

(Edge Hill University)

The development of currently hegemonic masculinities and the exploitation of nonhuman animals were fundamental and interconnected components of global capitalist expansion. Their continued entanglement presents a significant barrier to addressing overlapping ecological and societal crises. Not only do men consume significantly greater volumes of animal products than individuals of other genders, the centrality of (largely ineffective) techno-fixes to the environmental harms of industrialised animal agriculture have been associated with a masculinisation of policy (MacGregor, 2010). The proposed presentation will examine the biographical experiences of UK animal liberation activists who self-identify as men. This will be done though the analysis of life history interviews, focusing on the men's relationship with nonhuman animals, their masculine identities, their (gendered) experiences within the movement, and the impact their involvement in the movement has had on their lives. The presentation will pay attention to the 'turning point' moments that shape how these activists perform gender, as well as how such performances shape and are shaped by shifting 'gender regimes' at the organisational and societal level. It will be shown how initial involvement in the animal liberation movement can be a transformative moment in the lives and identities of young men. In addition, it will be demonstrated that the men's continued participation in the movement has the potential to shift gender performance from hegemonic masculine scripts such as economic accumulation and traditional workplace achievement, towards an ethic of care for nonhuman animals and marginalised humans.

Work, Sustainability Crisis, and the Ecological Spirit of Capitalism

Suvi Salmenniemi

(University of Turku)

The structures and meanings of work are a central question in sustainability crisis. However, scholars have recently voiced concerns about the limited amount of research on this topic. In responding to this lacuna, this paper explores how representatives of business organisations make sense of work and its transformation towards sustainability, how sustainability demands are seen as challenging business practices and patterns of work, and what kinds of subject positions are constructed for organisations in this context. The paper draws on the analysis of twenty interviews conducted in eight companies involved in the Climate Leadership Coalition business network in Finland, committed to climate change mitigation. It identifies four discourses through which work in sustainability crisis is interpreted: trailblazing, sleepwalking, experimentation and passion. These discourses address the possibilities and limitations for making work processes more sustainable. They grapple with a deep-seated contradiction between economy and ecology and propose different solutions to it. The paper concludes that the efforts for making business and work practices more ecologically sustainable tend to remain in the remit of ecological modernisation and weak sustainability that emphasise incremental and market-based reforms in lieu of a more radical and in-depth transformation to meet the planetary boundaries.

"Obviously you can't worry about the environment and then starve yourself": Exploring Environmentally-Friendly Food Practices among Low-Income Mothers

Elisabeth Garratt, Christine Jackson-Taylor

(University of Sheffield)

The past decade has seen intensifying concerns about the environmental consequences of human nutrition. The production, consumption, and management of waste food has wide-ranging environmental impacts, including on climate change, biodiversity loss, and freshwater and land use. Significant changes are needed to current food practices to avert irreversible climate impacts.

Yet, research into sustainable diets has largely focussed on improving the sustainability of food production. Considerations of food consumption and people's capacity to engage with environmentally sustainable food practices have been comparatively overlooked. This omission is especially problematic in light of the social gradient in environmentally sustainable food practices, which are largely concentrated among financially advantaged groups. The persistently high prevalence of household food insecurity and ongoing cost-of-living crisis make it vital to consider how environmentally sustainable diets can be promoted in times of constraint.

This presentation will explore data from two waves of recent fieldwork examining environmentally sustainable food practices among low-income mothers in Sheffield, UK. Using in-depth interviews, life history interviews and a card-sort activity, we will uncover the novel, diverse, and sometimes contradictory ways sustainability does - and does not - feature in mothers' practices. While some women reported instrumental engagement with environmental behaviours that primarily prioritised cost saving, others recounted deep-rooted pro-environmental attitudes that influence their food provisioning in more principled ways, even under conditions of economic scarcity.

Our findings showcase the capacity for positive social transformations and will interrogate possibilities for social transformations to address both longstanding and emerging inequalities for people and planet.

Environment & Society 2 - Room 3.209

Towards a Sociology of Decay

Helen Holmes

(University of Manchester)

In this paper I argue for a critical sociological focus on the topic of decay. Caught at the intersections of multiple disciplines and nestled at the periphery of sociological studies of consumption and disposal, to

date decay has not been a central topic of sociology. Yet with the growing threat of climate change caused by our continued depletion of the Earth's resources - I argue that a sociological focus on decay is urgently required. Whilst heritage studies consider the practices of decay in relation to ecologically significant landscapes, and geographers and urban studies scholars reflect on infrastructural decay, sociological research has tended to skirt around the topic. Work from the sociology of consumption explores disposal practices, circular economy initiatives and different alternative 'R' pathways (e.g., repair, reuse, recycle), focusing on efforts to slow down our resource use and stall exploitative consumption practices, but decay has yet to be placed front and centre in sociological research on consumption, waste, and importantly, sustainability. In what follows, I explore what a sociology of decay might look like, outlining a number of potential pathways forward for a sociological research agenda on decay. These include valuing decay, the practices and temporalities associated with decay, infrastructures of decay, the moralities of decay, and finally transformations and performativities of decay. I conclude by illustrating why a sociology of decay is vital for understanding society's engagement with objects and materials, and in turn our ability to tackle the growing threat from resource depletion and overconsumption.

Intersecting Crises: Exploring Water, Sanitation, and Heatwave Insecurities in Delhi's Urban Poor Neighbourhoods

Tripti Singh, Evangelos Pitidis

(University of Warwick)

This study examines the intersection of water and sanitation insecurities during heatwaves in Delhi's urban poor neighbourhoods, with a focus on how community-based groups and social networks contribute to building resilience. Drawing on a literature review, it highlights key challenges related to water insecurity, such as unreliable municipal supply, reliance on mixed water sources at household and neighbourhood levels, and the gendered burden of water collection. Similarly, sanitation insecurity remains a pressing issue, with marginalised areas lacking adequate toilet facilities and depending on unsafe communal toilets. Despite national initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Mission (a sanitation program), access to safe sanitation continues to be limited in many urban poor communities.

These insecurities are further exacerbated during heatwaves, which increase water demand and strain already fragile water and sanitation systems. Heatwaves worsen water scarcity and undermine sanitation systems reliant on water, such as flush toilets, escalating public health risks. The review identifies significant gaps in research, particularly the limited attention to Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) provision in disaster relief and the long-term impacts of intersecting crises like heatwaves on vulnerable populations. Additionally, there is a notable absence of feminist perspectives in resilience studies, which overlook the disproportionate effects on women and marginalised groups. This gap highlights the need for more inclusive approaches to addressing the compounded effects of water, sanitation, and climate-related crises.

Families & Relationships - Room 4.213

Family Culture as a Response to Modern Individual Crisis in the Digital Society

Siyu Chen

(University of Manchester)

The development of digital technologies has significantly impacted social change, particularly how social interactions and relationships are constructed. Digital lifestyles have disrupted modern individuals' connections to deep-rooted traditional relationships, placing them in a "rootless" state. This has raised concerns about the individual crisis in the digital society. However, by creating digital avatars through digital games, Chinese gamers form a traditional family structure to cope with the individual crisis and loneliness.

The study focuses on how Chinese gamers establish stable and deep relationships, and traditional family structures. It also explores how these relationships, extended across time and space, transcend the limitations of individual presence and contribute to a social order rooted in "family culture." This

offers new possibilities for the formation of collective identity and consciousness. Furthermore, since traditional Chinese families are primarily centered around father-son relationships, the study also explores how patriarchal norms and stereotypes are subtly reproduced in the everyday interactions of active gamers. The daily routines gradually solidify individuals' awareness within the context of family culture. On a macro level, the institutional structures have the capacity to perpetuate rules and resources over time and space, leading both new and veteran players to unconsciously conform to patriarchal culture.

The study contributes to the understanding of how China's unique family culture bridges the front and back stages of social interactions while offering a solution to individual crises, and also reveals how patriarchal norm and gender discrimination embedded in family culture are subtly reinforced through digital games and social interactions.

Wealth Sharing within Couples Who Live Together: A Journey

Liz Mann

(London School of Economics and Political Science)

Wealth is often treated as a household characteristic, yet the sharing of assets within the household is poorly understood. This paper opens the 'black box' of intrahousehold wealth allocation, by exploring the allocation of assets and debts within couples who live together in the UK. In doing so, I extend the income and resource sharing literature to actively consider wealth and contribute to the small body of literature on the intrahousehold distribution of wealth. I draw on evidence from 35 in depth qualitative interviews, with individuals who currently live with their partner or spouse, are aged between 25-50 and are resident in the UK. The negotiation of assets and debts within the household is complex, dynamic, and bound by both circumstance and principle. Many couples do not share their assets in the early stages of their cohabiting relationship. In some instances, this changes as the relationship progresses, and particularly in response to major life events, such as buying a house, getting married or having children. In other cases, early individualised approaches become entrenched, and inequalities prevail, often with gendered effects. The evidence I put forward offers new insights into the household economy, demonstrating income sharing typologies offer only a limited perspective into the organisation of economic resources, and challenging common assumptions of equal sharing of assets within the household.

Bat Festival: Human-Bat Relationship and Its Social Capital in the Upland Tribe of Nagaland

Ropfuvino Krose

(National Institute of Technology Nagaland India)

Festivals are integral to the social fabric of the Naga people, comprising seventeen recognized tribes located in Northeast India. The Bat Harvest Festival is a significant cultural practice of the Bomrr clan of the indigenous Yimkhuing Naga, one of seventeen tribe who inhabit the borderlands of Indo-Myanmar. This festival has been transmitted orally across generations, though it has undergone changes in response to modernity. It holds deep symbolic meaning for the Bomrr clan, symbolizing key aspects to the clan's social life from birth to death, including traditional medicine. As such, this article seeks to explore the symbolic relationship between bats and the Bomrr clan from an indigenous perspective, focusing on how clan members interpret the presence of bats within their cultural and spiritual lives.

Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus and social capital, the article examines how the social construction of the Bat Harvest Festival contributes to the development of social capital within the community. Employing ethnographic methods—including engaged observation, in-depth personal interviews, focus group discussions, personal diaries and secondary sources from books, articles, local souvenir publication—the study examines the multifaceted ways in which humans and bats have interacted over time, emphasizing the cultural significance of bats in indigenous traditions and the ways in which these interactions shape social capital formation.

Lifecourse - Room 3.212
Special Event

NEET Youth: Alternatives and Possibilities in Education, Employment and Training

Liam Wrigley, Katherine Davey, Lisa Russell, Charlotte McPherson, Seamus Byrne

(Leeds Trinity University, Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Melbourne)

Contemporary generations of youth are contending with considerable challenges in their day-to-day, including economic downturns, weakened opportunity structures, declining state support, and widening inequalities. Globally, the cost-of-living increase and the ongoing effects of COVID-19 have compounded socio-spatial and economic issues (McPherson and Wrigley, 2024; McPherson, 2021; Byrne, 2020). Concern is therefore mounting about the living standards and prospects of youth, but young people categorized as NEET (not in employment, education, or training) are often among the most precarious, given their heightened risks of economic insecurity, health marginalization, and socioeconomic disadvantage. 'NEET youth' have routinely been uncritically characterized as a homogenous bloc (see Wrigley, 2024). There has also often been a tendency, particularly in policy, to examine 'NEET youth' only in relation to their (dis)engagements with education, employment, and training—a reductive, economist lens embodied in the NEET label itself. In this special event, we explore a range of studies in England and Wales that have sought to capture the complexities of NEET experienced young people (see Russell, Davey and colleagues, 2024). We discuss how through applied policy and qualitative research in the last decade, our studies have come to understand NEET, risk factors, schooling disengagement and social justice informed alternatives to compulsory education, which includes (1) An ESRC Funded Study about the Social Networks of NEET young people, (2) A Leverhulme Trust-funded project 'Mapping Interventions for NEET young people in England' (MINE) (3) A study of elective home education (EHE) where the school system is not meeting the needs of their child (4) A study of SEND children's right to education and experiences of school exclusion.

Medicine, Health & Illness - Room 1.219

Motivations for Engaging in Elective Egg Freezing: A Comparison between Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States

Kathleen Hammond

(Toronto Metropolitan University)

Elective egg freezing (EEF) refers to the practice of retrieving and freezing human eggs to store and use in the future. The use of EEF has rapidly increased in recent years in countries such as Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Scholars across a variety of jurisdictions have undertaken research to try and identify the underlying reasons why people electively freeze their eggs. In addition to the aggressive advertising of EEF by the fertility industry as a "have it all" technology, EEF is unique because it is neither life nor health preserving, and its future-oriented nature means that would-be patients are making decisions for an unknowable future and future self. This paper relies on data collected through semi-structured interviews with 27 people who had undergone at least one cycle of EEF in Canada. It explores participants' reasons for freezing their eggs and compares this with existing qualitative data on the motivations of people who have engaged in EEF in the UK (i.e. Baldwin, 2019) and USA (i.e. Inhorn, 2023). Like research in other jurisdictions, lack of partner was a motivator for some people pursuing EEF. However, more commonly cited reasons included wanting biological children later in life, and lack of certainty about wanting children. I argue that some of these differences may be explained by unique institutional barriers, societal norms, and other factors faced by participants in the three jurisdictions.

"Driving a Ferrari on a county road", Or How to Narrow a Genome-Wide Technology

Anne-Sophie Giraud

(French National Centre for Scientific Research)

Preimplantation genetic testing (PGT) is used to analyse embryos before their transfer into the uterus, with the aim of preventing the birth of affected children by genetic disorders.

The field of genetics is considered to have undergone constant and rapid changes in recent years. Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS) technologies have increasingly been adopted in PGT laboratories for their ability to sequence whole genomes at a faster rate and lower cost. But despite this major transformation, PGT laboratories in France still rely on older technologies, which were the gold standard more than a decade ago.

This is because French law strictly limits PGT to a single hereditary and targeted genetic mutation. As a geneticist explained, "It's like driving a Ferrari on a crappy county road". There is no point in using advanced technology if it is not at its full capacity while older technologies do. Even if their design originally does not entail the intention to limit genetic reading, these machines nonetheless embody the legislator's intention to make PGT a targeted technique, by the preference for their use over more recent machines. In that sense, the machines and technics not only embody legal restrictions due to their technical limitations, but also participate to respect them.

This paper is based on in-depth interviews with professionals and ethnographic observations at a French PGT centre. It aims to explore how French PGT professionals navigate within these ethical and legal frameworks, as well as the impact of these frameworks on the uses of technologies.

'We have the fatwa but…': Critical Reflections on more than Two Decades of Egg Donation in Iran

Sara Bamdad

(De Montfort University)

Religious endorsement of egg donation, fatwa, in the late 1990s, put Iran in a very unique position among Muslim countries in the Middle East where gamete donation was (and still is) strictly prohibited. Yet, despite over 20 years of practice, egg donation has still remained controversial among both medical practitioners and infertile couples due to the inconsistencies among religious leader's fatwas. This article provides a critical reflection on the controversies egg donation has created in IVF clinics. Drawing on ethnographic data in one of the pioneer and well-established infertility treatment clinics in Iran, I examine the ebbs and flows of egg donation in the clinic. Analysing the history of egg donation in the clinic demonstrates how this practice has been adapted by clinic users and medical practitioners, so that it is performed according to their own moral worlds. As I will argue, these adaptations demonstrate how cultural and religious notions of relatedness constructed in gendered ways have been reinforced or challenged and resisted by both medical practitioners and infertile couples. These changes as will be shown reflect the wider cultural and social norms around gender relations and notions of kinship in the Iranian context.

Methodological Innovations - Room 3.213

Childhood Participation: Challenges of Design and Implementation of Public Policies in Chile

Paulina Jara-Osorio

(Loughborough University)

Since 2019, Chile has been facing a transformation process, leading to a constitutional change in which childhood has been identified as an area of social demands. There is a debate over the position children and adolescents should have in Chilean society, especially around the idea of being protagonists of the processes in which they are subjects of intervention. This is relevant as children's rights to participation have faced resistance for its implementation in the country.

This qualitative research -through the Mosaic Approach Method and semi-structured interviews- explored the challenges around childhood participation in the Chilean policymaking. It was necessary to know the stakeholders' child participation understanding, as their conceptualizations could be the foundation to comprehend the nature of childhood participation in the Chilean policymaking; also, the main barriers and proposals to address the challenges around childhood participation in public policies.

Childhood participation meanings for participants in this research are different and obey to their own experience and context. The main barriers regarding children's participation in the Chilean policymaking are the misunderstanding of child's rights protection; lack of knowledge and methodologies in childhood participation; instrumentalization of childhood participation; adult-centrism and patriarchalism perspectives; and young leaders' barriers to participate.

Finally, this study discovered stakeholder's proposals to address the main challenges to promote children's participation in the Chilean policymaking like the recognition of children's participation benefits, the necessity of cultural change in Chile and a better public structure to promote children's participation in the country, and knowledge to promote children's participation in policymaking.

Evidence-Based Policy Making and Care Experienced Young People: The Role of 'Small N' Quantitative Studies

Claire E Crawford, Ian McGimpsey

(University of Cambridge, University of Birmingham)

Care experienced young people (CEYP) are underrepresented in higher education (HE), with around 14% of care leavers entering HE by age 19 compared to 47% of the general population (Department for Education, 2023). Those who go to university typically overcome major challenges to do so and UK policy-makers have emphasised a need for greater 'quality', 'rigour', and 'evidence-based practice' with respect to services that support them. Recent statutory guidance on care planning emphasises the connection between educational outcomes and quality of life in adulthood (DfE, 2021, p.177), while statutory guidance for local authorities on promoting the education of CEYP calls for 'Approaches… based on evidence of what works' (DfE, 2018, p. 21) and working with providers that have a 'robust evidence base' (ibid., p.28).

While the lack of 'robust' evidence to fulfil this policy demand for greater accountability in provision to CEYP is a problem in itself (McGimpsey et al., 2024), in this paper we critique the demand for evidence that takes the form of 'statistically significant' 'big N' quantitative data which we argue leads to representations of CEYP as a homogeneous group, and works against the needs of providers for flexibility and responsiveness in meeting the diverse needs of CEYP. Drawing upon both educational and demographic data for CEYP residing in Camden, compared to regional and national data, the paper will provide a robust defence of the value of 'small N' quantitative approaches that draw upon localised initiatives and interventions which generate small-scale quantitative evidence of best practice.

Challenging Knowledge and Power Imbalances in Sociological Research: Exploring Ethnicity and Unequal Ageing with Community Researchers

Joanne Britton, Rashida Bibi, Lois Orton

(University of Sheffield)

In efforts to counter the extractive orientation of dominant forms of sociological research, there is an increasing focus on embedding collaboration in routine research practice. This paper is based on a large, multidisciplinary project which is working in partnership with racially minoritized communities in Rotherham and Sheffield. The project adopts an intersectional storying approach to critically explore inclusive ageing through a life course lens, taking into account the significance of place. It includes nine community researchers, people who share an identity and lived experience with the communities we are collaborating with. The community researchers have contributed to all stages of the project, including research design, participant recruitment, data collection, data analysis and dissemination. In this paper, university and community researchers reflect on our experiences of working on the project together. We explore the opportunities for mutuality, reciprocity and co-learning afforded by our collaboration, as well as challenges encountered. We demonstrate ways in which collaborative methods narrow the gap between academic research and minoritized communities through, for example, working

across multiple languages and building capacity. We also provide a transparent account of limitations, including dedicating sufficient resources and time for training, retaining researchers and ensuring meaningful opportunities for equitable knowledge exchange. Overall, the paper contributes to methodological debates about creating more equitable approaches to research that address knowledge and power imbalances.

On Intellectual Craft Now: Pedagogical Tools for a 'Demonstrably Alive' Sociology

Michaela Benson, Les Back

(Lancaster University, University of Glasgow)

In this paper, we offer a timely update Mill's famous appendix on intellectual craft to fit to the challenges and affordances for teaching, learning and communicating sociology in the twenty-first century. Contra fears that digital culture poses an existential crisis for our disciplines, we focus on the opportunities and affordances of new media and technologies for developing a more sociable approach to teaching, preparing educational resources and innovative forms of sociological communication. Through a set of examples drawn from our own practices, we evaluate these new 'tricks of the trade' to quote Howard Becker. We explore these possibilities practically in the classroom context as a way of fostering a 'demonstrably alive' sociological craft. We start with our shared work on producing a methodological film series called Fieldwork Fables, a set of films in which actors restaged research scenarios to bring doing research to life in the classroom. Our second example draws on our respective experiences of the sociological possibilities of podcasting, while our final example foregrounds consideration of the sociological use of AI through the critical evaluation of its ecology and the validity of the information produced within its digital machines, and the exploration its potential as a sociological 'research assistant.' Through these examples, each of which takes up opportunities and affordances of new medias and technologies, we demonstrate the prospects for more sociable modes of sociological teaching - based in the classroom but not confined to it - and which embrace the possibility to expand our pedagogical tools.

Race, Ethnicity & Migration 1 - Lecture Theatre A Special Event

Harvesting Hope the Lives of Migrant Agricultural Workers

Roxana Barbulescu

(University of Leeds)

Harvesting Hope will center upon the confluence of migration, belonging, and food studies. This exhibition will showcase a collection of 25 original illustrations rendered in watercolour and ink, illuminating the concealed, frequently isolated lives of thousands of migrants who bolster British farming. The exhibition aspires to create a space for encounter and dialogue regarding the experiences of this isolated community, which plays a crucial role in the sustainability of farming and the food security of the UK.

The illustrations, crafted by the artistic illustrator Sarah Hannis (https://www.sarahhannis.com/) hailing from Wales, were produced as part of the ESRC-funded initiative Feeding the Nation: Seasonal Migrant Workers and Food Security, led by Dr. Roxana Barbulescu from the School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Leeds. These artworks were inspired by photodiaries maintained by migrants, facilitating intimate glimpses into their quotidian experiences on British farms.

Illustrations have been selected as the preferred medium, allowing for stylization of faces while preserving the anonymity of the migrants. The exhibition chronicles the journeys of arrival, the daily toil of harvesting fruits and vegetables during the summer and autumn, as well as the planting and tending of crops throughout winter and spring. It also depicts life in communal caravans on farms and the return journeys to their homelands. Special emphasis is placed on the realities of arduous physical labour, the rest in shared caravans located far from the nearest town or village, and the essential connections maintained with family and friends "back home."

Harvesting Hope seeks to cultivate empathy and awareness, inviting visitors to contemplate the complexities of migration and the invaluable contributions of migrant communities to society.

With special thanks to all who participated in the research.

Sarah Hannis is an illustrator who sketches what she sees around her almost everyday. Her sketchbooks are filled with ink and watercolour drawings of scenery, birds, plants, insects, and people. https://www.sarahhannis.com/

Dr Roxana Barbulescu is Associate Professor in the School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Leeds UK. Her work focuses on the rights of migrants and citizens and the lived experiences of recently arrived migrant and refugee communities. She is the author of Migrant Integration in Changing Europe (Notre Dame University Press, 2019), Everyday Europe. Everyday transformation in an unsettling continent (Bristol University Press 2020, with Recchi E. Favell A and at); editor of Revising the Integration-Citizenship Nexus in Europe: Sites, Policies, and Bureaucracies of Belonging (IMISCOE Springer, 2023) with Sara Wallace Goodman and Luicy Pedroza.

Feeding the Nation is an Economic and Social Research Council / UK Research and Innovation funded project (ES/V015257/1). It is a collaboration between the School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Leeds (Dr Roxana Barbulescu / Dr Bethany Robertson), and the Centre on Migration, Policy, and Society at the University of Oxford (Professor Carlos Vargas Silva / Rosaleen Cunningham). Some of the illustrations included here make part of a digital exhibition curated by Dr Ollie Douglas and Isabel Hughes at the Museum of English

Race, Ethnicity & Migration 2 - Room 1.218

The Nexus between Long-Distance Nationalism, Social Exclusion and Misinformation: Experiences of Indian Diaspora in Australia

Jasbeer Musthafa Mamalipurath

(Queen's University Belfast)

The spread of misinformation, particularly across digital platforms, poses multi-layered risks, such as suppression of accurate information and promotion of erroneous practices leading to poor social and mental well-being. In the Indian context, mis- and disinformation have been exacerbating social inequalities, normalising hate speech and radicalising Hindus to indulge in a range of hate crimes against marginalised communities, including Muslims and Dalits. Further, these problematic narratives traverse beyond platforms and borders and achieve cultural saliency due to transnational information networks. Yet, we know very little about, for instance, how misinformation takes the shape of radical narratives infused with long-distance nationalism and reinforces social exclusion within the transnational communities at large, specifically among the Indian diaspora in Australia. Using qualitative focus group discussions with key stakeholders and Indian community members, this study brings together a range of concerns about how Hindutva radicalises the Hindu diaspora of Australia, which then leads to the exacerbation of social exclusion and the spread of transnational misinformation in Australia. The study also reveals a number of alleged affinities between the Hindutva groups and White Australian politics and examines how such entanglements could pave the way for the normalisation of the activities of radical Hindutva groups in the diaspora.

Proud of Being Chinese? Understanding National Identity of Chinese Migrants in Global Cities in the UK

Dongwei Wang

(University of Edinburgh)

Social transformation processes mediated by local historical and cultural patterns can take the shape of international migration as well as the (re)construction of migrants' identity. Scholars have explored cultural identities of British Born Chinese, Chinese international students, and other Chinese diasporas in the UK in depth, but there is a lack of depiction of Chinese migrants' national identity in the age of fast-changing global geopolitics, especially in the post-pandemic world. It seems that the notion of a

unified Chinese identity is being put on hold and a perceived homogenous and hegemonic Chinese identity is being challenged. In this intervention, I ask how national identity is being (re)narrated by Mainland Chinese migrants, Hong Kong Chinese migrants, and British Born Chinese in a globalisation and glocalisation context. As global cities are seen as crucial units in the social transformation processes, this research focusses on Chinese migrants in London and Edinburgh, two global and capital cities in the UK. Borrowing ideas of the politics of national identity and the 'notional other' from David McCrone and Frank Bechhofer as analytical tools, the preliminary finding shows that identity was couched in national codes of language and culture by migrants from Mainland China, Hong Kong, and British Born Chinese. The interpretations of Chinese vary from heterogeneity of Chinese experiences not only in the UK and China, but on global and local social media platforms. British Born Chinese ability to learn their Chinese heritage is also influenced by the ongoing development of digital museums and communication technologies.

The Intersectionality of Religion: Fijian Constructs of Hybrid Identities in the UK

Anna Kolendo

(University of Central Lancashire)

The hybrid identities of migrants come to be constructed in various intersections of spatiality and time. However, reproducing certain traditions and knowledge systems becomes challenging in Western dominant societies that maintain Eurocentric beliefs. Notably, communities of an Indigenous origin, such as the Fijian diaspora in the UK, utilise their family networks to maintain their traditional rituals and cultural practices from the homeland of Oceania. The close relationship with the sea and the land spirits has been the foundation of Pacific cultures through centuries that have withstood the times of imperialism and missionisation. However, the detachment and objectiveness of Western societies towards their environments threaten the continuity of such cultural values and Indigenous knowledge within the Fijian diaspora in the UK. This paper strives to uncover the activities and rituals the diasporas perform in the host societies that maintain and nurture their interconnectedness with Pacific homelands by conducting qualitative interviews and participant observation. The case of the Methodist church as a space of cultural intersectionality will be analysed to determine the spatiality of social construction within the hybrid identities of the religious Fijian diaspora. The findings will be examined through transnationalism and the concept of Homi Bhabha's "third space" to determine how social relations are maintained through religious rituals. As such, this study aims to contribute to the body of academia on the construction of a 'third space' within diasporic identities by examining religious practices as the enabler of transnationalism between Fijian migrants and their homeland of Oceania.

Experienced Diaspora Identity(ies) in UK: A Phenomenological Exploration of the Ways Greeks Residing in UK, Experience Their Greek, Greek Diasporised And British Identities

Athanasia Chalari

(London School of Economics and Political Science)

The aim of this study is to explore the ways Greek born, permanent residents in UK (Greek diaspora in UK), experience their Greek, British and/or Greek diasporised cultural identities in terms of distance and/or proximity towards each one of them. 30 open-ended interviews have been conducted with Greeks residing in UK, discussing their experienced cultural identity(ies). Data analysis employed phenomenological hermeneutics and followed participants' stream of thinking while they were deploying their considerations about their own cultural identity(ies). The findings of this study, indicate that participants have experienced their cultural identities in six certain and distinct ways entailing proximity and/or distance towards each one of them. A multi-layered experience of cultural identity has been revealed, best portrayed through the concepts of transition and hybrid diapsorised identities as it involves constant negotiation between the Greek cultural origin of homeland, the British culture, along with the Greek diaposrised culture. A final and rather unanticipated finding, relates with participants' almost unanimous hesitation in belonging or committing to British national identity which paradoxically co-exists with the undisputed observation of their active and productive contribution towards solidarity and cohesion among British society.

Science, Technology & Digital Studies 1 - Room 2.218

Social Transformations: The Shifting Digital Identities of British Muslim Women

Renasha Khan

(King's College London)

This paper explores the dynamic landscape of digital identities among British Muslim women, emphasizing how social transformations shape and redefine their online presence and engagement. In an era marked by rapid technological advancements and evolving social norms, British Muslim women navigate a complex interplay of personal, cultural, and religious identities within digital spaces. This study employs a multi-method approach, incorporating qualitative interviews, digital ethnography, and content analysis to capture the nuanced ways these women articulate and negotiate their identities online.

The paper highlights key themes, including the impact of social media platforms in fostering community solidarity, the negotiation of traditional and modern values, and the emergence of new forms of digital activism. It examines how British Muslim women use digital tools to challenge stereotypes, assert their agency, and engage in transnational dialogues while grappling with pressures related to privacy, representation, and authenticity.Furthermore, the research underscores the role of digital technologies in enabling these women to build and sustain networks of support, particularly in the face of socio-political challenges and cultural marginalization. By focusing on the shifting nature of their digital identities, the paper contributes to a deeper understanding of how global digital environments influence local experiences of identity and belonging. The findings offer valuable insights for scholars, policymakers, and community leaders interested in the intersections of technology, religion, and gender in contemporary British society.

The Assemblage of Lively Data: Iranian Youth in a Digital Landscape

Davoud Zahrani

(University of Isfahan)

Background and Aim: Adolescent growth is a complex process influenced by internal and external factors, including the significant impact of technology and digital data on emotional regulation. Digital data has transformed the socialization process of adolescents, blurring the lines between traditional and digital forms of socialization.

This article aims to specifically examine the influence of video games as one of the primary sources of digital data on the lifestyles of adolescents, while also exploring the relationship between adolescents and digital data through the perspective of new materialism theories.

Method: The methodology employed in this study is based on an ethnographic framework within the field of Internet and digital data. This framework aligns with the principles of new materialism and posthumanism, emphasizing socio-material analyses. Additionally, we utilized three primary methodological tools: observation, document analysis, and interviews.

Data and Conclusion: Video games, as a significant source of digital data, play a crucial role in the lives of Iranian adolescents, serving as crucial and live data that is considered mediation. Through the assemblage with this data, adolescents have transformed into hybrid actors, assuming the roles of "Adolescents-video games". Within this framework, several key elements are of paramount importance, including Experienced Affects, Reconfiguration, Escaping Boundaries and Embracing Freedom.

Walkthrough Digital Applications: Understanding Metaverse through Digital Sociology

Xinyi Zhu

(University of Manchester)

As Metaverse is a concept that has been widely applied in various digital applications in recent years, many researchers have focused on the technical framework and architecture of the technology. However, this research is intended to concentrate on how social life has been transformed by the concept of the Metaverse. The core theory of this research is new materialism. The flat ontology of new materialism allows researchers to understand how non-human objects could impact human social interactions. In this research, the researcher has applied the observational method the Walkthrough method to systematically examine the Metaverse space app "Spatial". The Walkthrough method (Light, Burgess and Duguay, 2018) is a method widely applied in digital sociology to understand the socio-technical frameworks of the applications. It observes and documents users' log-in process, everyday usage, log-out and the terms of conditions of the application. Each step has been screenshot and annotated with research diaries. Moreover, this research also uses secondary data, as interviews, to complement the observational data. It has been found that Metaverse, in general, has transformed the idea of space and identity. This research aims to provide a reference for future investigation on Metaverse applications and users' interactions in digital sociology.

Light, B., Burgess, J. and Duguay, S. (2018) 'The walkthrough method: An approach to the study of apps', New Media & Society, 20(3), pp. 881–900. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816675438.

Interrogating EdTech Policy and Equity Discourse in the UK: A Limiting Approach to Social Transformation

Laura Hakimi, Rebecca Enyon, Louise Couceiro

(University of Oxford)

The use of technology in education is promoted by the commercial sector and by governments as a route to social transformation (Grimaldi et al. 2023; Komljenovic, et al. 2023). Drawing on network ethnography (Ball, 2016), this study traces discursive formations of EdTech, equity and inclusion that have emerged through UK government policies and initiatives over the past decade. Using critical discourse analysis, which views language as a social practice that can construct, maintain, and legitimise social inequalities, we examine language embedded in national policies related to educational technology, and explore how these policies and initiatives frame and address social and educational equity (see Voithofer and Foley 2007). Our analysis indicates the tendencies of national discourses about technology in education to a) focus on distributive understandings of equity that prioritise digital access, infrastructure and skills, or b) take an instrumental view that EdTech can 'level the playing field' or work to narrow a pre-existing educational achievement 'gap'. We problematise these differing conceptualisations of equity, drawing on sociological analyses such as Edgar (2022), Keddie (2012) and Levinson et al. (2022), and call for policy alternatives that attend to the contextualised cultural and political factors that constitute social and educational inequities. Indeed, whilst recent policies explicitly champion the commercial needs and business priorities of the UK EdTech industry, we argue for greater scrutiny of the embedded values and pedagogies of EdTech products and services, and recognition that such technologies can serve to reinforce and redefine inequities when education policies become practice.

Science, Technology & Digital Studies 2 - Room 2.220

Quasi-Feudal Lifestyles: On the Missing Cultural Dimension in the Techno-Feudalism Debate

Robert Dorschel

(University of Cambridge)

Proponents of the techno-feudalism have argued that the rise of tech firms and the operations of digital platforms have ushered in a mode of accumulation that operates less via exploitation, innovation and productivity, but rests increasingly on the feudal principles of expropriation and rentiership. Taking inspiration from this provocative claim (without fully buying into it), the main aim of my talk is to expand the focus of the so-called "techno-feudalism" to the cultural realm. More specifically, I make the case that large segments of the middle-class enjoy quasi-feudal lifestyles in digital societies. Members of the middle layers in the Global North, but also increasingly the Global South, are having digitally-enabled experiences of luxury, comfort, and service that resemble, or are emblematic of, aspects of the lifestyles of the aristocratic class in feudalism. Through the rise of digital platforms and technologies, not just the contemporary elite but also moderately affluent individuals are able to enjoy holidays in private upper-class residences (including beach villas and medieval castles), are regularly getting food and goods delivered to their doorsteps, command always-available AI butlers and assistants provided by Alexa or ChatGPT, and experience seemingly limitless entertainment via streaming platforms. To build my case, I discuss a range of empirical studies of consumer behaviour and theorize their findings to provide new insights into why the operations of the tech industry have not been met with more resistance.

Corporealising the Screen: Retheorising Mobile and Digital Media Space's through a Phenomenological Walkthrough

John Hodson

(University of Salford)

This paper focuses on the role of hardware in the appropriation, of dating/hook up apps. In particular, I draw from phenomenology in order to understand the screen, to assess the impacts of hardware, on software and people. This leads on to an analysis of implications for this on online identity work.

Hardware is an essential component for the delivery of dating apps including wifi networks, mobile networks, GPS technologies, personal computers, tablets and smartphones they may run on. A good deal of work in this space considers visual and haptic aspects of hardware, while other work considers elements such as the generation of barriers to use and the moderation of app functionalities.

Using Actor-Network theory, and what I term a phenomenological walkthrough, I attend to the role of hardware in a digital context; a mediator that holds the capacity to not be neutral through its corporeality. Hardware has the potential to generate a set of associations that positions dating apps to users, as rigid and finite. Specifically, I analyse how hardware might influence software development for dating/hookup apps and the implications of this for users. Taking a poststructuralist approach, this paper still recognises reality as corporeally bound. Drawing on the study of dating apps, I shed light on how hardware restricts the way identity can be practiced - through limited screen size, two-dimensional viewing, and through unchangeable corporeal being - realising how this guides software, and how software now guides us into normative ways of displaying the digital self.

The Dialectics of Discretion in Algorithmic Transformation of Policing

Ashwin Varghese

(University of Cambridge)

Algorithmic systems are slowly transforming policing and governing practices. Their manifestations, however, vary in particularistic settings. While proponents argue that algorithmic infrastructures will make policing impartial and objective, critics argue that they automate systems of inequality, exacerbate marginalisations and insulate institutions from democratic accountability. In this paper, I draw from a

postcolonial nation in the global south to engage with the literature on algorithmic governance to explore how algorithmic systems transform the practice of discretion of subordinate level police personnel.

This paper is derived from a research study documenting the digital transformation of policing and state practices in Kerala, India conducted between August 2022 and August 2024. For the purposes of this paper, I turn the gaze inwards to explore how algorithmic infrastructures are transforming the practice of discretion within the police force. To do so, I take recourse to a discourse analysis of how algorithmic governance and policing are perceived in the context of Kerala, drawing from interviews with key participants (police personnel and state functionaries) and extensive documentation of state initiatives and their reportage.

I argue that practices of algorithmic governance may be better understood through the lens of what I call dialectics of discretion. I demonstrate this by noting the emergence of two central tendencies in the incorporation of algorithmic framework in policing in Kerala – one, insulation of subordinate personnel from the public, and two, invisiblisation of the discretion of subordinate personnel.

Digital Destruction: The Environmental Harms of Digital Technologies and the Need for a 'Public Sociology of Technology'

Tom Redshaw

(University of Salford)

The rapid development and spread of digital technologies are having an increasingly harmful impact on the environment. Due to the mining of rare minerals required for their initial construction, the enormous amounts of energy required to power global data centres, and the escalating amounts of electronic waste resulting from devices that become obsolete within years of their production, digital environmental sustainability has become a key focus for governments around the world. Historically, such controversies surrounding the environmental impact of technology have led to the emergence of narratives that frame problems and solutions in ways that seek to persuade publics and policymakers, with public campaigns producing narratives that often compete with those sponsored by industry actors. In the case of digital environmental sustainability, we see this process playing out once more. This paper presents an analysis of one particularly destructive digital technology – the cryptocurrency Bitcoin. On the one hand, we see public campaigns to ban Bitcoin gaining traction in several contexts; yet on the other we see an industry pouring millions of dollars into research and lobbying to produce a counter-narrative which asserts Bitcoin is in fact the solution to, rather than the cause of, many social and environmental problems. In charting the rise of these competing narratives, this paper calls for a 'public sociology of technology' that seeks to understand, inform, and support democratic interventions in technology development.

Social Divisions / Social Identities 1 - Room 3.210

Stigmatisation and Resistance: The Plight of Mortgage Prisoners in the Post-GFC Era

Matthew Sparkes

(University of Cambridge)

The expansion of debt-leveraged homeownership in financialised economies like the US, the UK, and Australia has intensified class stratification. Asset-based stratification theorists argue that housing, bolstered by favourable governmental policies, plays a key role in defining individuals' class positions (Adkins et al., 2019). However, this view overlooks the varied policy responses following the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), which have differentially impacted homeowners. While investors benefited from policies such as quantitative easing (Forrest and Hirayama, 2018), marginal homeowners faced challenges due to neoliberal policies like labour market flexibility and austerity measures (Aalbers, 2017), accompanied by a stigmatising narrative of personal failure (Sparkes, 2020).

A significant, yet overlooked, group affected by the GFC are 'mortgage prisoners'. These are borrowers who obtained mortgages from now-obsolete lenders, later sold to inactive investment firms by the UK government. Due to high loan-to-value ratios and low credit scores, they are unable to remortgage.

Recent research highlights a stigmatising discourse labelling mortgage prisoners as risky borrowers, influencing policies that entrench their disadvantaged position in credit and housing markets (Sparkes, forthcoming).

Academic research on the impact of stigma on mortgage prisoners is limited. This study addresses this gap through a qualitative case study involving 28 semi-structured interviews with UK-based mortgage prisoners. Building on Tyler's (2020) research on stigma as a form of neoliberal power, findings reveal that mortgage prisoners are aware of the stigmatising discourse. While some internalise it as a moral failure, others have mobilised as a data public, resisting their stigmatised classification and demanding justice.

Interpellation and the Neoliberal Muslim: Exploring the Role of New Madrasas in Identity Formation

Abdul Qaiyum

(Azim Premji University)

Neoliberalism presents contradictory processes playing out in the everyday lives of the minority Muslim population in India. The push towards a market-based individualized identity is juxtaposed with the pull towards a community-based categorization of the self- a precarious juxtaposition. This reflects the 'interpellation' at work here- two ideological systems trying to recruit the subject in different ways and overlapping trajectories. However, the process of interpellation is never complete especially in the postcolonial moment of a society like India where contradictory tendencies and projects may just inform each other- and counterinterpellations by the subject may become visible. The subject may in turn 'call' the system and modulate it to fit her requirements. There may emerge ruptures and events which may come to redefine or reimagine the categories. One such reimagination is possible in the identities of the student and teacher in a modern Indian Madrasa where curriculum, values, practices and projects are constituted anew in the neoliberal-religious complex. One could reduce it to being another version of the Ideological State Apparatus- but then it would miss the pedagogical possibilities such spaces provide for change. Providing the students resources-scholarships, time, space, peers- otherwise not easily available to become "ideal educated Muslim". This has wider implications for the role sociology can play- connected sociologies specifically- to understand how contradictory tendencies may be visible across countries, and how subjects are counterinterpellating the ideological systems which are trying to recruit them.

Prejudice Against Religious and Sectarian Others among Educated Youth of Pakistan: The Impact of Religiosity, Intergroup Contact, Intergroup Threats and Intergroup Anxiety

Mussarat Hussain, Tauqeer Ahmed Lak

(University of Sargodha)

Prejudice, radicalization, and violent extremism are significant challenges in societies of contemporary world. Existing research on prejudice reduction, primarily conducted in western, secular contexts, may not fully address the unique dynamics of it in Muslim-majority countries. This study investigates the dual challenge of religious and sectarian prejudice in Pakistan, focusing on the role of intergroup contact, perceived threats, individual's religiosity, and intergroup anxiety. A cross-sectional survey of 1,013 university students in Pakistan was analyzed using hierarchical regression. The findings indicate that high-quality intergroup contact significantly reduces both religious and sectarian prejudice, while mere contact quantity can exacerbate prejudice if not facilitated by positive interactions. Perceived intergroup threats consistently increase prejudice, whereas higher levels of intergroup anxiety are also associated with increased prejudice against religious others. Individual's religiosity, however, does not have a significant direct impact on either form of prejudice. These insights provide valuable guidance for developing strategies to improve intergroup relations and reduce prejudice, sectarianism and exclusionary attitudes in societies where religion serves as identity consolidation factor.

Religious Transformation(S): Women's Responses to Christian Purity Culture in Britain and Shifting Religious Expressions

Chrissie Thwaites

(University of Leeds)

This paper draws on my PhD research, which examines the impact of 'purity culture' on women in Great Britain. Purity culture is a subculture within Christianity (specifically an expression of Christianity known as evangelicalism) which emphasised sexual 'purity'. This purity was predominantly expected of adolescents and young women, and achieved through abstinence until marriage, alongside abstaining from other practices ordinarily found in both romantic and platonic relationships. For many within this subculture, practising purity through their behaviour and interactions with others played a key role in the expression of their religious faith.

Purity culture is known for its emergence in the USA during the 1990s and early 2000s, tying religious beliefs to socio-political concerns about sex education and morality. It was, however, impactful in Britain too; my PhD constitutes the first study to consider this impact, and argues that purity culture has been evident in a distinctly British iteration.

This paper explores how growing up within evangelical purity culture can generate transformations in women's lives. This may include altered religious expression (e.g. moving from one Christian denomination to another), behavioural changes (such as still maintaining a Christian faith, but no longer complying with abstinence), or deconversion from Christianity altogether. The paper is based on the data generated for my PhD – an online survey (n=580) alongside one-to-one interviews (n=5). It draws on the experiences of women raised in this subculture to explore how purity culture can prompt shifting religious commitments and resultant changes to social life, behaviour and relationships.

Social Divisions / Social Identities 2 - Room 3.211

Transformation through Women's Mobility: Women's Changing Labour and Gender Role Perceptions between Rural and Urban Areas

Goksu Kokturk

(Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences)

The implementation of neoliberal rural development policies has transformed rural areas by driving rural-to-urban migration and increasing mobility between these spaces. The boundaries separating these areas have eroded and caused shifts in women's labour and their perceptions of gender roles.

An illustrative example of this phenomenon can be found among seasonal hazelnut workers, the predominant economic activity in Ordu, Turkey, accounting for the highest percentage of hazelnut production globally. Hazelnut, as an agricultural commodity, exemplifies an input used in global value chains and hazelnut agriculture, predominantly performed by women, signifies feminized, labour-intensive paid agricultural work and unpaid family work.

This paper aims to elucidate how women's mobility between rural and urban areas transforms their labour and perceptions of gender roles at the intersection of gender, class, location and age. Using constructivist grounded theory from a feminist perspective, the study's findings draw on field notes and semi-structured interviews conducted with hazelnut workers in Ordu during fieldwork in 2023 and 2024.

The findings include that distinctions between urban and rural women, and between paid and unpaid work, are becoming blurred by this mobility. Women work informally for daily wages in others' fields and as unpaid labourers on family land. They also take on informal urban jobs, like cleaning, while returning to rural areas for hazelnut work in the summer. Despite their mobility, their unpaid care and domestic work responsibilities remain, though in different forms. This mobility challenges traditional divisions between urban and rural identities, paid and unpaid labour, and reshapes gender roles.

What Gives Women a Say in Households? Intrahousehold Bargaining Power of Women in Pakistan

Mishal Niaz

(University of Warwick)

This study uses social survey data from Pakistan (Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18) to explore the factors influencing bargaining power of Pakistani women in intrahousehold decision-making and determines their participation in these decisions. Extending from Naila Kabeer's resources, agency, and achievements framework, this study uses decision-making agency as a proxy for a woman's relative position and status within the family and household.

Women in the sociocultural context of Pakistan achieve bargaining power within households by a combination of individual- and family-level determinants. Results from logistic regression analysis show that relative bargaining power of women, indicated by their relative age (with regards to their husbands'), relative earnings, and relative education, impacts the complex dynamics of intrahousehold decision making as well. Additionally, years since cohabitation, being married to the household head, and owning property increases the women's intrahousehold decision making agency whereas a greater number of children and being married to a blood relative decreases it.

It is critical to engage with negotiations of agency and autonomy as experienced by contemporary Pakistani women. This research is an important contribution to the inquiry into gender inequalities in the South Asia, because it studies women in Pakistan as they navigate structural inequalities within homes, despite getting education and entering the labour force in larger numbers than ever before. This study highlights the significance of measures of women's agency and empowerment, distinct from the ones that are widely accepted in the Global North, that incorporate sociocultural context of households in the Global South.

Theorising Patriarchy against a Backdrop of Gendered Workplace Stress in Academia

Andrew Baron, Charlotte Barrow

(University of Central Lancashire)

Our analysis investigates the relationship between sexism and workplace stress as experienced by female academics in the UK higher education system. We argue that due to the dearth of literature on this issue there is a limited knowledge base of the harmful psychological effects of gender inequality in the university sector. In applying the concept of 'gender regime' (Walby, 2009, 2011, 2020) through a feminist lens we explain how the patriarchal, neoliberal university is a site of sexist discrimination, producing psychosocial health hazards in the workplace resulting in stressful experiences unique to female academics.

The methodology employed both Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) alongside a feminist approach utilising semi-structured interviews to generate qualitative data. The sample included detailed interviews with eight academics (seven females and one male). Three themes were identified; exclusion, discrimination, and gendered divisions of labour as categories to illustrate how the gender regime manifests itself to cause stress in the workplace. Our data also revealed that the presence of masculinist leadership practices generated more acute levels of stress from general workplace issues and greater incidents of sexism compared to female led management practices.

To challenge such discrimination, we argue for recommendations that go beyond the micro agentic level implementing transformative change at the meso institutional level. These proposals include positive action programmes, equitable and transparent recruitment/promotion procedures, access to full participation in all forms of academic work, statutory equality training programmes for senior leadership postholders, and effective support mechanisms for employees with caring responsibilities.

Migrating Her Femininity: Reconsidering Women's Rural-Urban Migration and Intrahousehold Gender Dynamics in Qinghai and Yunnan, China

Bowen Xia

(King's College London)

This research explores how women's rural-urban migration interacts with intrahousehold gender dynamics in western China. It looks at the rural-urban migration of a group of young and single women who first arrived in China's urban areas as factory girls, in the early 2000s, before later spreading to other gender-specific jobs in domestic work and the service sector. Until recently, rural-urban migrant women have largely remained within the urban service sectors whilst academic attention has been shifted elsewhere. Working and living in the cities influences their values on gender roles, marriage and divorce, and intrahousehold division of labor, and allows them to enact autonomy and individual agencies through enhanced leverage and bargaining power. On the other hand, as gendered rural 'others', they are easily exploited and harassed across urban workplaces, discriminated against by city dwellers in social life. While some vie for urban marriage and others inevitably circulate back to rural villages, post-marital lives of rural-urban migrant women become further nuanced to depict. How does migration transform rural migrant women's domestic lives at both the sending and receiving sites? How does rural-urban migration shape and is shaped by intrahousehold gender dynamics over time? These questions deserve systematic reviews yet have remained peripheral in Chinese migration and gender studies. This project conducts ethnographic research that combines semi-structured interviews, visual diaries, and focus group discussions amongst rural-urban migrant women in western provinces of China. In doing so, it explores gender and intragenerational relations within rural-urban migrant women's households across different migration stages.

Sociology of Education 1 - Room 4.204

Interdisciplinary Tensions: Teacher Identity and Curriculum Structures in International Education

Hermione Paddle

(University College London)

Over the past two decades, there has been substantial development and integration of interdisciplinary learning into global education policy and practice. The international school sector has readily adopted such curricula as a way to combine knowledge and skills across subjects and disciplines. Through interviewing 25 teachers at nine schools across Germany and Switzerland, this research explores the way that teachers understand, implement and assess the interdisciplinary curriculum. Bernstein's theories on curriculum structures are used as a framework to conceptualise knowledge and the limits and contradictions involved in collaborating through an interdisciplinary approach. This research found that teachers maintain a high degree of agency over the interdisciplinary curriculum, through the way they select, organise and design assessment. In amongst this are powerful tensions embedded within the classification of knowledge in schools and the complexities that surround interdisciplinary implementation. These issues of power and control become part of the pedagogy, as they relate to the way that school subjects are not only compartmentalised but also embedded within teacher's professional identities. The issues raised in this research reveal that Bernstein's integrated code and the problems of order create unique spaces that challenge disciplinary paradigms and subject-loyalty. The implications of this suggest that teachers feel very much aligned with their own subject, and that there is often a fear that boundary crossing, through the merging of categories and ideas, dissolves the principles of social order that are based on the 'sacred' notion of the disciplines and school subjects.

Speculative, Reflexive and Dispositional Thinking: Modes of Producing Young People's Ideas of the Future

Richard Sandford

(University College London)

Sociologists of education have long recognised the role of dispositional thinking, conditioned by the habitus (Bourdieu, 1990), in forming young people's ideas of the future (e.g. Archer & Yamashita, 2003; Ball et al., 2002). Work concerned with how young people approach the future in late modernity describes the limits of field and habitus, and the need for the reflexive generation of ideas of the future when making choices (e.g., Archer, 2003; Leccardi, 1999). This paper theorises speculative thinking (Wilkie et al., 2017) as an additional mode through which young people produce ideas of the future, building on work concerned with creativity in researching young people's futures (e.g., Carabelli & Lyon, 2016). Attending to speculative thinking makes space for recognising novelty in young people's futures, and gives weight to the hunches, dreams and hopes that are not recognised otherwise.

The paper suggests the gap between expectation and circumstance thought to demand reflexivity from young people might equally be thought a site of possibility (Savransky, 2017) allowing the previously-unthinkable to emerge. Working with young people aged between 12 and 13 choosing subjects for GCSE study, and addressing the methodological challenge of tracing speculative thinking through a creative, sound-based approach, it describes speculative, reflexive and dispositional thought as inter-related rather than distinct, positioning the habitus as not only a fundamentally anticipatory capacity in its own right, but also the engine of speculative thought, driving an iterative process in which young people gradually move themselves towards new ways of relating to the future.

Cultural Capital and the Choir: A Bourdieusian Study of Choir Schools

Elizabeth Preece

(University of Bristol)

The education system has long been recognised as a site of social reproduction, yet most research tends to focus on mainstream comprehensive or private schools. Choir schools have rarely been explored within prior studies. These are educational institutions which host a small number of choristers who provide music for an attached religious institution. Their significance lies in the fact that they are uniquely positioned between three fields: education, religion and music. Using Bourdieu's concepts of field, capital and habitus, amongst others that form his field and reproduction theories, this paper will draw from wider PhD work which demonstrates the reproduction of these three fields within the choir school and explores how the choir school can inform our understanding of both social reproduction more widely within the UK and Bourdieu's field theory. It will also exemplify how the study of fields in this context can inform future applications of Bourdieu's theory in multi-field studies. It will do this by considering how the schools are intertwined with the Church of England, the role this institution plays in the reproduction of cultural values within the school, and how this contributes to the accumulation of cultural capital and the potential conversion of capital between a number of different fields.

Understanding Identities of Working-Class University Students: Subjectivity, Past and Present

Kaidong Yu

(University of Sheffield)

This paper focuses on the dynamic relationship between working-class identities and working-class trajectories in the UK from the 1950s to the present. With an increase in number of students from working-class backgrounds attending university, an important question arises about how these working-class university entrants perceive and present their working-class identities, especially given that university attendance is often seen as a class mismatch. Existing literature develop Bourdieu's concept of cleft-habitus to describe the divided sense of identity experienced by working-class students in a middle-class field of educational. However, less attention has been paid to how subsequent life experiences influence working-class identities across different life-course stages within changing social contexts.

By adopting a life-history approach, this research extends the exploration working-class identity shaping to subsequent life-course stages, going beyond a narrowing focus on university experiences. Drawing on 28 life histories of working-class graduates attending university from the 1960s to 2010s, this paper explores the varied ways in which people situate themselves within changing meanings of being working-class in a middle-class field. The research data does reflect a cleft-habitus in which a feeling of in-betweenness is evident. However, it is important to note that many participants reported a strong and robust working-class identity, indicating that class identity is a subjective and relational term that reflects relative inequalities in their subsequent life experiences. This contributes to a dynamic and subjective understanding of how class origins and subsequent experience shape working-class identities throughout an individual's life course.

Sociology of Education 2 - Room 4.205

Beyond "Cash Cows" and "Competitors:" Aspirations, Hopes and Multifaceted Precarities of Vietnamese Students in the UK

Trang Thu Nguyen

(University of Liverpool)

The UK government's approach to international students (IS) is paradoxical, treating them as privileged economic contributors while subjecting them to stringent visa regulations under a restrictive immigration policy. IS have often been viewed as neoliberal subjects who are exploited as lucrative "cash cows" or as "competitors" in a global marketplace seeking various forms of capital from Western countries. Such totalizing analyses miss crucial dimensions of the embodied politics that shape students' subjectivities and do not fully capture the multifaceted precarities of their experiences. Vietnam has a growing international student market, with 14,000 Vietnamese IS studying in the UK by April 2020 (MOET). Drawing on multi-sited ethnographic research, including 50 interviews with Vietnamese IS, 10 with educational agents, and multiple participant observations conducted in the UK and Vietnam, this study explores aspirations of Vietnamese IS and their multifaceted experiences of precarity, contributing to the increasing exploration of the fact that IS mobilities are increasingly diverse and stratified (Brooks & Water, 2022)

First, my research illustrates that the dynamics of transnational mobilities are deeply intertwined with students' situated social positions and are linked to agentive navigations amid constraints, with their aspirations being classed and gendered. Second, the research portrays IS as "real individuals" navigating various forms of precarity, including border and visa control, housing insecurity, labour market experiences, and financial difficulties. This paper advances a nuanced understanding of international student mobilities, moving beyond reductive "cash cow" or "competitor" narratives to illuminate the diverse, stratified, and often precarious experiences of student migration.

Developing Consciousness: Teacher Agency in British International Schooling in Post-Colonial Thailand

Joshua Watters

(University of Edinburgh)

This paper forms part of a wider study examining elite social transformation in Thailand as a result of the proliferation of British international schooling in the region. The case study draws on 12 semi-structured interviews and focus groups with parents, students, teachers and school leaders from a British international school based in Thailand. The analysis utilises contrasting conceptions of cosmopolitanism, noting the contradiction in perceived purpose of the school between staff, parents and ownership. I argue that that, in the instance of this school, staff are generally well-intentioned in their desire to develop global citizenship in their students, but the broader purpose of the institution (and, perhaps, the industry itself) is differently orientated. Drawing on Freire's theory of critical consciousness, I argue that there are limitations to the efficacy of agency in this context without an awareness of the wider structures to which teachers are contributing. I also discuss the limitations of Freire's analysis in the post/(semi)-colonial context of Thailand, noting that the teacher acts as the coloniser in the coloniser/colonised binary in this instance. While teacher agency may, on an individual

level, be ethically well-intentioned, the consequent contribution to broader structures – constituting a form of cultural imperialism – brings into question the authenticity of the school's educational project and its desire to develop global citizenship in its students.

International Schools in Service of the Nation: A Contradiction or a New Reality in China?

Ewan Wright

(Education University of Hong Kong)

This paper investigates the interplay between cosmopolitanism and nationalism in education. It focuses on international schools (schools offering international curricula in English) in China's Pearl River Delta region that are widely regarded as hubs of cultural diversity, global-mindedness, and internationalisation. However, the Chinese state has sought to "rein in" international schools to ensure they serve national interests, particularly in promoting patriotism. The paper explores whether this trend represents an irreconcilable contradiction or a new reality for international schooling. It applies the conceptual lens of cosmopolitan nationalism (Maxwell et al., 2020), which aims to capture how education may simultaneously promote global perspectives while maintaining local relevance and contributing to national goals. A multi-site case study was conducted across five international high schools in Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao, using field observations, website analyses, and interviews with principals, teachers, parents, and students. Findings revealed that while these international schools were perceived to offer more cosmopolitan education compared to mainstream schools, there was a rising national influence. This included recruiting more Chinese students and staff, promoting Mandarin, and integrating Chinese culture into the curriculum. Nonetheless, there was also resistance through a commitment to academic freedom, liberal learning environments, and international perspectives. Perhaps surprisingly, the participants were able to navigate, make sense of, and reconcile cosmopolitan and national forces. These dynamics are discussed as "cosmopolitan nationalism", potentially presenting a model that overcomes contradictions between global and national forces. The presentation concludes with a broader discussion of possibilities for education under globalisation and rising nationalism.

A Tale of Two Logics: Unravelling the Lived Internationalisation Dynamics of Sino-Foreign Universities

Bowen Zhang

(Durham University)

Sino-foreign universities exemplify a broader trend of internationalisation in higher education, serving as a rich site for examining the dual logics that underpin their efforts. This paper explores the lived dynamics of internationalisation within these institutions, focusing on the interaction and conflict between competing educational logics - Western neoliberal market-driven imperatives and localised Chinese cultural frameworks.

Through a case study of a Sino-foreign university, the analysis investigates how internationalisation is constructed through institutional self-representation, particularly on university websites. This self-presentation reveals a tension between projecting a globally recognised, elite identity and integrating local educational values. While English-medium instruction is touted as a hallmark of internationalisation, reflexivity regarding its association with Westernisation prompts some institutions to advocate for a more nuanced, locally integrated approach. The contrasting logics within the field illustrate how predefined and retrospective interpretations of internationalisation can diverge, emphasising the ongoing challenges of aligning institutional goals with the realities of diverse educational contexts.

Employing inductive coding, the study highlights ambivalence in promotional discourse, where internationalisation is both celebrated as a driver of pedagogical transformation and critiqued for perpetuating inequalities. This paper argues that such ambivalence reflects broader global tensions in higher education, where marketisation goals clash with those of equitable, integrative pedagogy. In Bourdieusian terms, individuals may possess the "feel for the game" to align with specific fields but may experience tensions arising from the juxtaposition of distinct logics. Ultimately, this study contributes to the critical discourse on internationalisation, offering insights into the complex power dynamics shaping Sino-foreign collaborations.

Theory - Room 2.217

A New Problematisation of the State We Are In: Explaining 'Wealtherty'

Sarah Kerr

(London School of Economics and Political Science)

This paper asks, in a context of complex and multi-faceted crises, how might we use alternative problematisations to gain traction for transformative social responses? The paper introduces 'wealtherty' as a new theoretical tool for the study of enduring economic inequality which combines Foucauldian genealogical method with a governmentally approach from the work of Dean. Trump's (2018) 'adjustment hypothesis' describes the public response to ever increasing economic inequality as one of incremental adjustment to ever higher levels of wealth hyper-concentration, rather than political demand for redistribution. In such a context, finding ways to talk about wealth inequality that galvanise debate and stimulate demand for change are imperative. 'Wealtherty' is presented as a descriptive and theoretical tool to i) describe the state we are in (a Foucauldian 'reversal', intentionally displacing poverty from its central position in orthodox analyses of 'what is wrong') and then to ii) open up a radical perspective on the histories of contemporary economic inequality across different axes of government: ways of knowing, governing, being and seeing (Kerr 2024). It is presented as a tool 'for cutting' in Foucault's terms, something that can help to clear space for transformative solutions, on the basis that without a more expansive and generative problematisation of the state we are in, we are unlikely to be able to, collectively, find ways out.

"God is Change" – "Shape God": Rethinking Social Change with Octavia Butler's Parable Novels

Daniel Davison-Vecchione

(Independent Researcher)

Scholars at the intersection of science fiction studies and sociology have started trying to theorise speculative fiction's power to anticipate and think about changes in societies. What sociologists arguably still underappreciate is how speculative fiction can work to conceptualise change itself. To explore this question, this paper looks to Octavia Butler's Parable series as a work of speculative fiction that not only illustrates numerous empirical changes that might occur in the author's society, but also thematises change. That is, these novels bring change itself into the foreground in order to explore and comment on it. They so by giving a central place to how the characters orient to change and to the future. This is mostly in the form of the religion of Earthseed that Lauren Olamina develops, the primary tenets of which are that "God is Change" and that only by accepting this can humanity consciously "shape God" and aid itself. Butler's approach to writing the Parable series allows her to imagine an orientation to the future that moves beyond older modernist ideas of strength in the face of change and towards an openness to change. In doing so, she provides a meta-commentary on the science fiction genre itself as a way of thinking about change and how we might relate to it. Thus, Butler provides resources for sociologists to think about not only the various crises the present century poses, but also the nature of social change itself and the role of human agency within it.

Towards a Sociological Conceptualisation of Morality

Anna Smolentseva

(University of Cambridge)

This paper addresses a question that is difficult for many disciplines: what is morality? In sociology, morality is usually approached through the concepts of moral beliefs, moral emotions, norms, values, practices, 'thick concepts' such as dignity or recognition (Hitlin and Vaisey 2013). Wider conceptualisations embracing various dimensions of morality are scarce (e.g. levels of morality in Abend 2014).

This paper develops a comprehensive sociological conceptualisation of morality based on Durkheim's later work on morality, which was left unfinished and is under-recognised. First, it reconstitutes Durkheim's theorisation of morality as a system of interrelated concepts which includes the unity of

moral ideal and moral obligation, social attachment to groups, and individual autonomy. Building from Durkheim, it elaborates on the concept of moral obligation. Second, the study differentiates between the morality produced by society as Durkheimian sui generis reality, and the morality produced by social institutions (moral order). That distinction helps to disentangle the different layers of morality, recognising the role of society, and also the role of powerful social institutions in the moral regulation of social life. It also opens opportunities for further interpretation and evaluation. Importantly, the Durkheimian approach embraces moral change and moral diversity.

This theorisation of morality enables us to conceptualise and conduct an empirical study of morality in any social setting, and to connect to interdisciplinary discussion on morality. The paper illustrates this theorisation with a study of moral transformations in Russia from the late Soviet socialist moral order to the present capitalist moral order.

From Obsession with Origins to Damaged Individual Lives

Csaba Szalo

(Masaryk University)

By examining the intersections between Foucault's genealogical approach, Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of instrumental reason, and Nietzsche's concept of the damaged individual life, this paper argues for an understanding of events that move beyond the naive faith in historical reason. For Michel Foucault, genealogy is about disrupting the teleological narrative about reason in history. The genealogical theoretical alternative consists of keeping up passing events' singularity released from the passion for origins. Interpretations oriented to disclosing coherence, rationality, and continuity, making historical events into elements in a configuration, are unmasked by genealogy as actualisations of the myth of descent. However, the endlessly repeated dramas of domination, in which mythologies of descent play a significant role, also link singular historical events into an arrangement. The paper focuses on the critical function of the categories of life and mortal body, which, along with the formal category of power, makes it possible for genealogy to articulate evaluative judgments about changes. In this line, this paper also explores how current, socially rationalised dispositifs demand the mythic sacrifice of individual lives, for instance, in wars and road violence events, and call for mundane experimentation on ourselves.

Work, Employment & Economic Life - Room 3.204

Beyond Birth Circumstances: Exploring the Agentic Capital of Non-Privileged Chinese International Students in Post-Graduation Employment Trajectories

Chu Liu

(University College London)

We are living in a world with global uncertainties—economic volatility, geopolitical tensions, climate change, and rapid technological innovation. As individuals navigating contexts of uncertainty, our personal life narratives appear increasingly unpredictable, with diverse potential outcomes and probabilities remaining open. While the emphasis on "class" and "social structure" offers valuable insights for understanding variations in individual life trajectories, an excessive focus on these factors risks leading to fatalistic or deterministic perspectives. The current backdrop constantly reminds us of the temporality and uncertainty of the "class"—a fluid concept, subject to change rather than being a predetermined fate. Therefore, by conducting interviews with 23 disadvantaged Chinese international students holding UK master degree and have worked at domestic labour market within 10 years, this study tries to uncover how this less privileged group adopt agentic capital (such as subversive strategies, the power of agency, self-efficacy) to challenge outcomes that appear to be "certain" or mediated by class, or even the established regularities and rules constitutive of one field. In addition, this study also finds that the disadvantaged family background can further intensify the development and subjective accumulation of individual agentic capital. By introducing the notion of individual agency or agentic capital, this study initiates the development of a more nuanced comprehension of life

course—an approach that acts as a counterweight to the simplistic meritocratic and neoliberal narratives, as well as playing an ineliminable part in socially mobile trajectories as it helped disrupt dominant power relations.

The Meaning of Being Independent: Analysis of the Official Narrative on Self-employment and Independent Work in Contemporary China

Ruoxi Liu

(University of Oxford)

Compared to developed labour markets such as those of the UK and EU countries, where freelancing and self-employment are widely-used umbrella terms in the context of 'being independent' in the economic sense, 'Self-employment' has no status as an official category in less developed labour markets such as in China. Based on archive and documentation studies of the PRC government reports of the past two decades and an ethnographic study from May 2020 to April 2021 on independent cultural workers, this paper summarises and analyses the genealogy of 'independent work', 'self-employment', and 'freelancing', viewing these and related terms in their broader Chinese social and historical contexts. Through a review of the relevant terms used by the non-public sector of the economy after the opening up, including private economy pioneer, private enterprise, self-driven job-searching, self-determined job-hunting, developing entrepreneurship by oneself, flexible employment, new forms of employment, this paper provides a deeper understanding of the ambiguous and fluid positions of being independent in Chinese society and labour market. It highlights the changing dynamics exhibited by independent workers in relation to the current social, economic, and political nexus of China as well as their historical and cultural references.

This paper thus contributes to the meaning of the 'private' and the 'public' in contemporary China– while being independent economically is consented, being independent in other senses, remains risky. Relatedly, the rise of independent workers has transformed the official attitude towards them, in the way that the official narrative needs to embrace its neoliberal senses.

Shaping Career Choice: South Asian Family Habitus and Medicine

Ashok Patnaik

(University of Birmingham)

Research Aims: This research explored how in contemporary Britain ethnicity, specifically, South Asian ethnicity helps shape the choice to study medicine, and how that choice is influenced by structures of opportunity and constraint.

Theory: Bourdieu's concepts of 'habitus', 'capital' and 'field' were employed to explain how the habitus of South Asian young people influences their career choices, specifically, how it contributes to the choice of careers within the 'field' of medicine.

Methodology/Data Collection: We conducted 12 focus groups with minority ethnic Year 13 science students across 7 schools and 1 Further Education college - 9 focus groups with medical school applicants and 3 with a comparison group of science students not pursuing medicine. 47 girls and 38 boys, from predominantly South Asian minority ethnic groups, from selective and non-selective schools and colleges, participated.

Findings: This study conceptualised the South Asian habitus as being comprised of influences from families, religion, and the community. South Asian parents, siblings and wider family members encouraged students to pursue medicine and supported them in practical ways but also allowed them to exercise their agency and follow other career paths. Findings highlighted the nuanced roles played by parents, particularly those in healthcare professions, in testing their children's commitment to medicine and encouraging consideration of other careers. A desire to serve the community – the ethnic community, the immigrant community, or the religious community – was an important factor in students' choice of medicine.

STREAM PLENARIES
17:00-18:00

Culture, Media, Sport & Food - Room 4.206

Where do we situate the Sociology of Consumption?

Vicki Harman, Daniel Welsh, Jo Littler

(University of Reading, University of Manchester, Goldsmith's, University of London)

This session develops from the Consumption Study Group Series, 'Situating Consumption', which seeks to understand where the Sociology of Consumption, and Sociologists working in this field, are situated today. Focusing on publishing, the plenary brings together a panel, whose significant experience of academic journals, editorial boards and book publishing offers valuable insight into the challenges facing those researching the Sociology of Consumption as to where to locate, and how to position, their work today. The discussion will consider the value of the Sociology of Consumption in understanding social transformations in everyday life, and wider social and political structures, and it will debate the relevance of the Sociology of Consumption for disciplines across the Arts, Media and Social Sciences. Indeed, the panel will reflect on the interdisciplinarity of their own work, and sociological research published in this field, and they will be asked to question to what extent the interdisciplinary and everyday nature of consumption poses a challenge when it comes to publication. Though much of the value of the Sociology of Consumption lies in its ability to inform understandings of inequality, identity, migration, food, and family, the diversity of this work can also mean it becomes difficult to identify where the emphasis should lie and where it should be located and for Consumption-based journals there are also important questions as to which aspects of consumption they look to engage with or promote.

Families & Relationships - Room 4.205

Are We More Emotionally Reflexive about Intimate Life and Why?

Mary Holmes

(University of Edinburgh)

Emotional reflexivity is the relational use of emotions to consider and form ourselves and our relationships in light of our social context (Holmes, 2014: 20). In this talk, I consider to what extent emotional reflexivity is new, or whether and why it has become increasingly important in navigating the complexity of life in late modernity? Arguably, emotional reflexivity is required as people become disembedded from the past and face complex, diverse and changing emotional and social norms. I will focus in particular on how novel social circumstances and departures from conventional ways of doing intimacy prompt emotional reflexivity. I discuss a range of empirical examples of emotional reflexivity, including amongst young refugee friends in Beirut, working class Scottish households navigating COVID lockdown and internet daters. This leaves questions about differences in doing emotional reflexivity and the implications for understanding inequalities in intimate life.

Chair: Leah Gilman, Manchester Metropolitan University

Environment & Society - Room 3.205

How Young People Imagine Their Climate Futures

Kathryn Wheeler

(University of Essex)

This paper explores how young people envision the future through the lens of a fictional child, 'Alex', who is their age now but living in the year 2050. Drawing on responses from 1655 young people who completed the SEEd Youth Listening Survey between 2021-2023, the study examines the expectations, concerns, and hopes that young people project onto future generations, offering insight into how they understand social, economic, and environmental change over time.

The findings reveal a dual narrative. On one hand, young people imagined Alex enjoying familiar aspects of childhood—playing with friends, engaging with technology, and experiencing nature. On the other, they expressed deep concerns about climate change, economic instability, and technological overreach. Many feared that Alex would inherit a world defined by environmental degradation, resource scarcity, and political inaction, with some respondents anticipating social unrest and extreme weather as defining features of daily life. Others, however, envisioned Alex as part of a more sustainable world, shaped by technological progress, climate-conscious governance, and shifts in social behaviour.

These contrasting visions highlight the ways young people interpret intergenerational responsibility and the perceived failures or successes of current society. The study underscores the importance of developing constructive narratives about climate action and climate justice to shape a more hopeful outlook for the future.

Chair: Samyia Ambreen (Independent Researcher)

Lifecourse - Room 3.204

Identifying New Spaces for Social transformation Across the Life Course

Melanie Hall, Katherine A. Smith, Kingsley Purdam

(Manchester Metropolitan University, University of York, University of Manchester)

The plenary will consider new spaces and possibilities for social transformation across the life course, concerned with changes in meanings, methods and ethics of researching with and across different generations, capturing the consequences of social transformation and how this might transform knowledge and practice. The Life Course stream plenary comprises four study groups (Childhood, Youth Studies, Ageing, and Death, Dying and Bereavement). Plenary speakers have provided a 5-minute provocation based on their research, intended to foster dialogue across the Life course stream as follows:

Melanie Hall
The plenary invites participants to reflect on their own research and identify if and how they might be complicit in the construction of the good research child. How might we balance the inclusion of children's voices in research in a way that avoids this construction? Is there potential to reorient research to avoid perpetuating the 'good' research child?

Katherine A. Smith
Why and how to study the mental health 'crisis'? This provocation explores the mental health 'crisis', and how and why to study what is a heavily contested social phenomenon. Addressing challenges to its ontological and epistemological basis, how increasing rates of mental health difficulties vary across generations, and various proposed underlying factors, I attempt to disentangle multiple strands of academic narratives of the 'crisis'. Through this I make the case for further research, especially that which privileges lived experiences and intergenerational dialogue.

Kingsley Purdham

Not even 'astride of a grave'! How a life on low income can haunt you - from low birth weight to not having enough money for your own funeral. What next for researching and tackling poverty and its consequences?

After all the plenary speakers have presented their provocations, we will break into small groups with attendees to discuss the provocation. The plenary will provide a supportive environment to advance debates across the boundaries of the study groups, which themselves span the life course, to create new allegiances and possibilities for sociological research.

Chairs: Harriet Rowley, Manchester Metropolitan University & James Fletcher, University of Bath

Co-Facilitators: Thalia Assan, Hebrew University of Jerusalem & Liam Wrigley, Leeds Metropolitan University

Methodological Innovations - Room 3.213

Area-Deprivation Government Spending and the Rates of Children in Care in England: Challenges of Capturing and Modelling Using Available Data

Stefanie Doebler, Karen Broadhurst, Bachar Alrouh

(Lancaster University)

This paper presents some recent population-level analysis of the rates of children in out-of-home care in local authorities in England and the relationships with area deprivation and local authority social care expenditure. The analysis used linked administrative population data from government sources, i.e. the DfE, birth and maternity records, multiple area-deprivation indicators from the English Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and government social care expenditure data reported by local authorities. The paper discusses some findings and challenges pertaining to measurement and modelling the rates of children in care, using administrative linked data to reliably capture their numbers, evaluating associations with area deprivation and government spending under austerity. The paper also reflects on how population level descriptive findings can be framed by and inform the sociology of child and family welfare and the sociology of care.

Theorising and Empirically Analysing Forced Labour, Child Labour, and Power (A Socio-Economic Approach)

Wendy Olsen

(University of Manchester)

In this presentation, I explain social systems in which some children are coerced into detrimental work relationships. Particular social and cultural norms, which are variegated by class, ethnic group, migrant status, gender, and life-stage, underpin the reasons why people do this self-detrimental work. The theoretical framings are considered at an abstract level. First, I offer and then critique the common framing in terms of individual choice which sees child labour mainly as a labour demand and labour supply issue (Webbink, et al., 2015). The parents are seen as suppliers of child labour. Second, I explore more collective and collaborative agency theories. These differ in terms of the degree of individualism, the analysis of social structures, the types of agents, and the varied social norms we consider. We can see these as the institutionalist approaches. The coerciveness in child labour is not just because of the parents' wishes, or the choices of individuals, but fundamentally result from social phenomena at the community and polity levels.

In the empirical section, I show trends and social-group variations in the percentage of children doing damaging forms of child labour in six South Asian countries. I conclude by examining the UNICEF, ILO and United Nations approaches to child labour, responding to the empirical findings.

References:
Lukes, Steven (1974), Power: A Radical View, London: Macmillan.

Kim, Jihye, Olsen, W.K. and Arkadiusz Wisniowski (2022) Predicting Child-Labour Risks by Norms in India. Work, Employment and Society. doi:10.1177/09500170221091886

Social Divisions / Social Identities - Room 3.210

Families and Wealth

Céline Bessière, Ye Liu

(Paris Dauphine University, King's College London)

Family wealth increasingly determines one's life chances: whether the ability to obtain secure housing, acquire an education, start a business or retire with dignity. For all social classes, family wealth contributes more and more to defining one's social position over the life course. The middle classes are increasingly dependent on inter vivo gifts and inheritances inside families, while a lack of savings and assets has become a reliable measure of poverty and a key dynamic in the decline of social mobility. The upper classes benefit from the so-called 'great wealth transfer' that will see fortunes of historic proportions passed on to new generations of heirs. In recent years, the role of family in sustaining, reproducing and even accelerating wealth inequalities has received growing attention. In a context described for example as 'patrimonial capitalism' (Piketty, 2014) and 'the asset economy' (Adkins et al. 2020), scholars from various disciplines have investigated the intertwined relationships between kinship and private wealth accumulation and the wider ecosystem of state, educational and legal actors that frame and regulate the decisions and actions of families with regard to property, shaping their more or less egalitarian nature.

The stream plenary will unpack the role of the family as a unit of economic accumulation and (re)distribution through presentations from Professor Céline Bessière (University-Paris Dauphine-PSL) and Dr Ye Liu (King's College London) followed by audience discussion.

Chair: Katie Higgins, Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Sheffield

Sociology of Education - Room 4.204

Pedagogies of Hope in Higher Education: Transformative and Liberatory Possibilities

Manny Madriaga, Syra Shakir

(University of Nottingham, Leeds Trinity University)

In an era where higher education is increasingly shaped by neoliberal imperatives, the call to cultivate pedagogies of hope becomes ever more urgent. This panel discussion brings together academics from diverse disciplines to explore how hope, as an active and transformative force, can create liberatory and meaningful opportunities for students and educators alike. We interrogate the colonial structures embedded within universities, advocating for the decolonisation of the curriculum as an essential step toward societal transformation. This journey to humanise our teaching and assessment practices can be painful and arduous, requiring boldness in the face of despairing processes of white supremacy and antiblackness hidden behind metrics of performativity and notions of academic quality.

We consider how alternative ways of learning and teaching, particularly through creative expression such as poetry, film, and music can offer critical interventions in dismantling oppressive educational paradigms. Hip-hop, as an art form deeply rooted in resistance and liberation, serves as a powerful pedagogical tool, speaking to histories of struggle while imagining new possibilities of hope for racial repair and healing. Inspired by bell hooks' vision of a 'classroom of all possibilities', we reflect on our own experiences as educators seeking to cultivate spaces where all students, irrespective of background, feel a deep sense of belonging, agency, and empowerment.

Chair: Tamsin Bowers-Brown, Leeds Trinity University