Welcome to the second research newsletter for the academic session 2015 - 16. I am pleased that so many new staff are profiled in this edition which reflect the diversity of research in our School. I am particularly pleased to welcome Roy Chilton and Rachel Harding who join us as Research Fellows in the Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families which will be formally launched in March 2016.

This research newsletter also demonstrates our increasing global presence in research with international conferences attended and hosted, as well as staff exchanges and publications that reflect significant international collaborations.

As usual the level of research activity going on is outstanding and I would just like to say a huge thank you for all your contributions to an ever developing 'research rich' School of Social Sciences.

Professor Di Bailey
Research Coordinator in the School of Social Sciences
MENA | Conference

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MENA studies have a long tradition of examining security issues in terms of state interests and inter-state politics, focusing primarily on high politics. There is clear value in this type of approach and this conference will examine the challenges facing both state and non-state actors in the region. The conference will explore the prospects for peace in the MENA as a whole and in its sub-regions. It will also consider a range of political, economic, security, socio-cultural and environmental issues that lie at the heart of the instability the region is experiencing. This conference will bring together scholars from different fields of study to consider these issues by using varying theoretical and methodological approaches.

For more information about this event please visit www.ntu.ac.uk/lena2016
Research activity in Politics and International Relations

News from the Division

**Marianna Poberezhskaya** recently completed media work around the Paris Climate Conference:

Media publications:


**Oli Harrison** has been invited to present at the 10th Pan-European Conference on International Relations, which will be held in Turkey in September 2016. He will form part of the ‘Mapping Alternative Routes out of Capitalism’ panel and will present a paper entitled: ‘The (continued) problem of organisational form: mapping the party in Negri and Badiou’.

**Sagarika Dutt** has recently had a review article published entitled, ‘Global development goals’, *New Zealand International Review*, November / December 2015, vol.40, no.6, pp.27 - 28.
Tarik Oumazzane, a Doctoral Researcher in the Division of Politics and International Relations, talks about his visit to the 7th International Prague Conference on Asian Studies.

Following the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) and the British International Studies Association (BISA) conferences in London last summer, I had the opportunity to participate in the 7th Annual International Prague Conference on Asian Studies in Prague, the Czech Republic. The conference took place on 20 November 2015 and was entitled ‘Non-Traditional Security Issues in the Indo-Pacific: Threats and Opportunities’. It attracted delegates and scholars from various countries who share an interest in non-traditional security issues.

The conference programme showcased the complexity of human security issues, including economic challenges, food, health, environmental degradation, migration pressures, arms race, transnational crime, water, energy security and personal, community and political security. The keynote speaker was Dr. Roy Smith from Nottingham Trent University (NTU), who addressed the topic of existential threats and opportunities for the low-lying atoll states of the Pacific. The conference was described as a historic event as it was the first ever joint conference on non-traditional security issues organised by the Metropolitan University Prague and NTU.

I presented a paper entitled: ‘An Assessment of the Economic and Political Impacts of the Agadir Agreement: Promoting Peace and Stability in the Middle East and North Africa?’ The paper was well received by the audience and inspired questions and debate. I received great feedback and was approached to work on joint future research. The conference provided a good opportunity to network with delegates, scholars and government officials from Prague, Vienna, Queensland, Frankfurt, Lodz and Brno. I also used the opportunity to visit the beautiful city of Prague, enjoy its classical music (Dvořák and Smetana) and its rich medieval and modern architecture and history.

Tarik Oumazzane, Doctoral Researcher, Politics and International Relations.
Professor Matt Henn presented a paper at the Annual Conference of the Southern (American) Political Studies Association in San Juan, Puerto Rico, between 7 and 9 January 2016. The paper was titled, ‘Youth, austerity politics and culture shift: has the global downturn triggered the demise of post-materialism?’, co-authored with Ben Oldfield from the Division of Psychology.

Abstract

Recently, young people’s futures have become increasingly susceptible to the spread of neoliberalism in many advanced liberal democracies. In particular, austerity programmes introduced globally since 2008 have resulted in an intensification of the risks and uncertainties faced by the current youth generation. Corresponding with these developments, there has occurred a deepening disconnect between young citizens and formal politics in many countries. In Britain, this divide is particularly visible, with a continuing abstention from electoral participation since 2001. But the current global financial crisis has also impacted on their political values. Inglehart’s post-materialist thesis suggests that in times of relative economic austerity, citizens’ values tend to focus more on materialist concerns, emphasizing economic and physical security. In contrast, under conditions of relative prosperity, citizens adopt more post-materialist outlooks, valuing quality of life issues. In this paper I compare results from two linked representative surveys focusing on the views and priorities of separate cohorts of 18 year old British youth. The first (postal) survey of 705 youth was conducted in 2002 during an era of relative global prosperity. The second (online) survey of 1,025 young people was conducted in 2011 at the height of the current global crisis. The results lend support to Inglehart’s thesis, suggesting that the relatively high levels of post-materialism evidenced in 2002 have diminished in line with the onset of the current recession. However, persisting post-materialist views are in evidence, with the current generation of young people demonstrating a particularly solidaristic outlook and a commitment to social justice.

Oliver Daddow: Staff Profile

Academic division: Politics and International Relations

Current job title: Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Relations

Tell us about your research career before you joined NTU. What is your research background and what are your research interests?

I gained my PhD on the Europe question in British politics in 2000. Since that time my research has developed to include theoretical and empirical elements. My research interests are in British foreign policy, British European policy, Euroscepticism, interpretivist International Relations and discourse analysis.

What sparked your interest in your current research topic?

The Europe question in British politics remains one of the most divisive national issues of our time. Domestically it splits political parties and is a major source of controversy between them. The EU is a major focus for UK media coverage and ‘myths’. Internationally it frames the debate about Britain’s role in the world. Trying to understand the complex dynamics behind the sense that Britain is Europe’s ‘outsider’ is an ongoing source of fascination for me, and hence why I do the research. David Cameron has announced that he will hold an ‘in / out’ referendum on Britain’s membership of the EU by the end of 2017. Understanding the dynamics of his strategy and the wide array of national and international responses to it, is a key plank of my current research.

What will be the impact of the research (and how will this be measured)?

I use the research to help advise a UK political party on media messaging on the EU referendum. The impact will be measured in terms of my input to the strategic and tactical documents produced by the party, and how these feature in helping effect the referendum outcome.
How will the research findings be disseminated?

The findings of my current research will be disseminated through a combination of books and book chapters, journal articles, media articles, online think-pieces, and an event in the School of Social Sciences during ACE week engaging students on the EU question in British politics. I also use my research to inform my teaching, both during general modules on British Politics and through specialist modules in International Relations.

What is the one piece of research that you've completed in your career to date that you are most proud of and why?

My new book, *New Labour and the European Union*. It is a multi-source account of why New Labour’s professed pro-Europeanism did little to change the predominant Euroscepticism of the UK people and media, including insider interviews. It is a wide-ranging book that enabled me to bring theories of structure and agency to bear on explaining practical, everyday issues such as the way the British talk about going ‘to’ Europe as if they’re not a part of it already. It also allowed me to test my ‘theories’ on those involved in making and executing British European policy under Tony Blair.

Which aspects of research do you find the most enjoyable?

First, the creative writing aspect of synthesising sometimes disparate data on the same subject into a coherent whole. Second, the research process of discovering new information about current political issues. Third, getting to meet interesting people, including academics and policy-makers. Fourth, communicating my research to stakeholders outside of academia, to show how even apparently abstract theoretical work can be relevant to day to day life. Finally, communicating my latest research findings to students and collaborating with them on developing new approaches to the material.

Which aspects of research do you find the most frustrating?

Lack of time to do it!

Where have you published your research?

University and commercial presses, academic journals, media, online politics sites and blogs are the main outlets.

Tell us about any conferences relating to your research area which you’ve attended and/or organised within the past year.

Conference organised (and paper given):


Papers at conferences:


24 June 2014: ‘The Murdoch-isation of Euroscepticism in Britain’, Resistance, Protest and Social Change in the EU, EU-funded University of Surrey Summer School (23 - 28 June)

University departmental research papers:

21 October 2015: ‘Could Britain Leave the EU? David Cameron’s Referendum Gamble’, Nottingham Trent University

29 April 2015: ‘Could Britain Leave the EU?: The Slow Death of Pro-Europeanism in Britain’, School of Politics, Geography and Sociology, Newcastle University

13 December 2014: ‘The Slow Death of Pro-Europeanism in Britain’, School of Politics, University of Nottingham

25 November 2014: ‘The Slow Death of Pro-Europeanism in Britain’, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

13 November 2014: ‘The Slow Death of Pro-Europeanism in Britain’, POLIS, University of Leeds
Research activity in Psychology

News from the Division

**Dr Juliet Wakefield** has recently had her paper ‘Greater family identification— but not greater contact with family members— leads to better health: Evidence from a Spanish longitudinal study’ published in Early View in the *European Journal of Social Psychology*. Along with co-authors Professor Fabio Sani (University of Dundee), Professor Marina Herrera (University of Valencia), Dr Sammyh Khan (Keele University) and Pat Dugard (University of Dundee), Juliet investigated the relationship between Valencian students’ identification with their family (i.e., subjective feelings of belonging to the family group) and their self-rated physical health over time. Findings revealed that family identification had a positive impact on participants’ health over eight months, even after accounting for the amount of contact that participants had with members of their family. Juliet has published a variety of papers examining the relationship between social group identification and well-being, with social groups ranging from community and school groups to multiple sclerosis support groups and army groups. A number of these publications originate from the large longitudinal and cross-cultural ESRC-funded Health in Groups project upon which she worked before it came to an end in August 2015 (http://healthingroups.wix.com/healthingroups).

**Dr Christina Howard** presented four experiments on the relationship between position perception and motion processing at the Christmas meeting of the Applied Vision Association on 21 December 2015 at Queen Mary University, London. This is a European conference for vision scientists and researchers in visual perception and the abstract for this work will be published in 2016 in the journal *Perception*. This is work Christina conducted with one final year project student, Victoria Rollings, and one voluntary research assistant, Amy Hardie in the Division of Psychology.

In November 2015, Dr Christina Howard with colleagues Professor Suvo Mitra, Dr Hayley Boulton and Professor Glyn Humphreys (University of Oxford) were awarded a Kickstarter grant from the Division of Psychology for their work on the role of the parietal lobe in determining the temporal resolution of attention. This work will utilise the newly acquired transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) equipment.

**Dr Daria Kuss** and **Dr Alex Sumich** have been awarded an NTU Kickstarter Grant to collaborate on a research project on mobile phone use and mobile phone addiction with colleagues from Computer Science at NTU (Dr Eiman Kanjo) and the University of Kent (Dr Jim Ang).
Alex Sumich is co-Principal Investigator on a collaborative study with Auckland University of Technology (AUT), New Zealand, to investigate the effects of mindfulness training on mood, compassion and brain function. Alex and Christina Howard have also secured funding from AUT for a PhD stipend to study brain connectivity in relation to ageing. The stipend has been offered to Mark Crook-Rumsey who will enrol in doctoral studies in April. Alex was also made an honorary research associate at AUT in September 2015. NTU will host the British Society for Personality and Individual Differences (BSPID) conference 15 April 2016, organised by Alex Sumich and Nadja Heym.

Alex Sumich has recently had the following work published:


Dr Sarah Seymour-Smith and co-investigators Professor David Brown (School of Science and Technology, NTU), Professor Penny Standen (University of Nottingham, Division of Rehabilitation and Aging), Dr Mike Rennoldson and Dr Lucy Justice have been awarded £6,533 for a Psychology Kickstarter grant:

Title: An exploration of communication competencies developed by humanoid robot interactions with children with profound and multiple disabilities.

Project description: Intellectual disability affects 286,000 children (Emerson et al, 2001) and impacts on social interaction with staff and other students (Milsom & Glanville, 2010) resulting in the need to employ different teaching strategies. One method is to employ robots which stimulate and reinforce the child’s response to social interaction in engaging and non-threatening ways (Robins et al, 2005; Werry & Dautenhahn, 1999). Brown, Standen and their team have conducted several studies with children from Oakfield School, centred around learning objectives identified by staff at the School as being useful, and have had positive results in terms of engaging students as evidenced by ratings (Hedgecock et al, 2014; Standen et al, 2014).

This current study is to examine data from previous studies undertaken by Brown, Standen and their team in order to test the strength and suitability of examining turn-taking, a key communication skill, by employing an innovative and creative methodology – conversation analysis (CA). CA is a sophisticated approach to studying the fine details of social interaction with a focus on identifying the practices and mechanisms through which the sequential organisation of design and turn management are accomplished.

Dr Sarah Seymour-Smith was invited to write a chapter, A critical discursive psychology approach to studying masculinity, in an APA co-edited handbook on masculinity The Psychology of Men and Masculinities) co-edited by Ronald F. Levant and Y. Joel Wong. The chapter has recently been accepted for publication.

A team from the Division of Psychology are building a collaboration with a local small business to explore the possibility of using 3D body scan technology and software as an intervention tool for health-related body management. Mike Marriott, along with Andrew Dunn, Mike Rennoldson, and Rebecca Stack, is working with Body Aspect Ltd to develop grant applications for business and health-research sources. The overarching hypothesis is that the use of a personal 3D avatar – including the potential to manipulate that avatar in order to create a target body shape – will hold a greater level of personal salience for individuals than traditional measures such as weight, BMI, and waist measurements, thus potentially increasing motivation to change. Applications might include health services for individuals diagnosed with obesity or “eating disorders”, and commercial gym settings. The Division of Psychology has funded an initial exploration of the software in action and Mike will be running experiments this spring to explore whether female perceptions of attractiveness in themselves and others change as a result of their hormonal cycle.
Recent publications by Daria Kuss include:


Conference papers


Kuss, D. J. (2015, November). European Internet research project. 4th International E-Life Congress, Athens, Greece.


Kuss, D. J. (2015, May). Internet and gaming addiction. Talks around post-surveillance art. Presented at the Acting Out Arts Festival at the Primary, Nottingham, UK.
Tell us about your research career before you joined NTU. What is your research background and what are your research interests?

Before coming to NTU at the beginning of this year, I was a research fellow and affiliated lecturer at the University of Cambridge for three years. Prior to Cambridge I worked as a researcher at Cardiff University, where I also completed my degrees.

What is your current research topic and what sparked your interest in it?

My research is centred on a lifespan approach to development. My preference is also to work in an interdisciplinary way – drawing on the strengths of multiple perspectives. Most of my work examines parenting and child development, with questions such as who becomes parents, what biological, social, and cognitive factors predict parental well-being and parenting practices and what does the child bring to communicative development.

Who is funding the research?

I have a project considering the role of biological relatedness, gender, and sexual orientation for adaptation to parenting. This project aims to assess what predicts men’s biological adaptation to parenting. Jacobs Foundation fund this three-year project. Another project running across Europe considers the role of biological relatedness, parenting roles and path to parenting for early family development. This three-year project is funded by the ESRC, ORA, NSF and NWO. A third project is run with Men Having Babies and is an international survey of same-sex parents experiences of assisted reproduction. Data I work on also includes a national UK large survey run in conjunction with the BBC Big Personality Test, including over 500,000 UK adults on measures of well-being, personality, and parenting status.

What will be the impact of the research (and how will this be measured)?

My research with families formed with Assisted Reproduction Technologies (ARTs) will be incorporated in documents for the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) and Men Having Babies.

How will the research findings be disseminated?

Findings are disseminated through journal publications, book chapters, policy documents and public engagement activities with CAFCASS.

What is the one piece of research that you’ve completed in your career to date that you are most proud of and why?

I think I’m always most excited about what is about to come! For me that includes the research I do in collaboration with Professor Michael Lamb, University of Cambridge and Dr. Lee Gettler, University of Notre Dame, on men’s biological adaptation to parenting. That work has real theoretical impact on our understanding of parental investment and well-being, as well as having real-world impact across policies and legislation around parenting.

Which aspects of research do you find the most enjoyable?

I love developing research collaborations. I think it keeps you on your toes and stops you getting too comfortable with your standard approach and perspective on research.

Which aspects of research do you find the most frustrating?

It can take a really long time to move findings out into the public domain. That’s the most frustrating constraint on research in general.

Where have you published your research?

Research activity in Social Work and Health

News from the Division

Graham Bowpitt has been involved with colleagues from Nottingham Business School (NBS) in a college-wide bid to join the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills’ (BIS) Research and Evaluation Panel. BIS expects to commission research valued at between £50 million and £90 million through this panel between 2016 and 2020. In the event, we bid to join the panel under three lots:

1. Programme and Pilot Evaluation Studies
2. Ad-hoc thematic analysis with a policy focus
3. Commercial, Economic and Social Impact Assessment and Analysis

The bid was successful in all three lots. This may be the first time that NTU has secured a place on a framework panel of this kind. Particularly noteworthy was the assessment of the programme and pilot evaluation lot – drawing on strong case studies from Social Sciences (Graham Bowpitt) and NBS (ESRB) – we outscored a number of Russell Group Universities and major research institutes. Clearly we still need to develop strong research project proposals in order to benefit from this opportunity. Nevertheless, it should open significant new opportunities to bid to undertake publicly funded policy relevant research.

From January to May 2016 Elaine Arnall will be a visiting global scholar at the Institute for Research on Women at Rutgers University, New Brunswick in New Jersey, the United States of America. Elaine was awarded the scholarship to focus on a study entitled: ‘Constructing an Autobiography: Resistance, Poverty and Transgression: Girls Tell Stories’. The research will be conducted through an online questionnaire and aims to understand more about how girls and young women aged 16 - 24 use their mobile phones, social networking sites and apps, as a way to create a story about themselves and their lives. It builds on an earlier qualitative study which Elaine undertook.

Role play: From Chaucer to Clarke Quay
Social policy on film - national and international

Dr Chris Towers and Phil Wane

Social policy lecturer Dr Chris Towers, along with his colleagues, has not only brought social policy home to Health and Social Care students in the School of Social Sciences but has also taken it overseas. In four years of role play Chris has created and worked with a fictional character called Colin Thatcher, role played by himself, in which Colin Thatcher is an unemployed man with a partner and child, who has endured homelessness and mental health problems.

The idea of using role play and, in particular, of creating the fictional character came about as Chris sought to emphasise the experiential aspect of social policies; how actions of governments and various other agencies impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals. As Chris comments: “I was keen to focus on the outcomes of social policies as they affect not only communities but also individuals. I wanted to get students to think of these issues from their own current experiences and to reflect on future ones.”

The material and information imparted has been drawn from his knowledge of social policies, teaching over fourteen years and also from his personal experiences of being out of work prior to becoming a lecturer. He has engaged students in debates around claims for benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance and Personal Independence Payments and highlighted issues in mental health law. Social work lecturers Mick Wilkinson, Simon Howard and Jill Beresford, as well as Health and Social Care lecturers Ann Liggett and Tim...
Harrison have performed roles. Ricky Gee from the Division of Sociology drew upon his experience of working for the Job Centre when playing a claimant advisor and Sociologist Phil Wane has filmed the action in England.

Phil said of these experiences: "The ongoing production of video clips based around the character of Colin Thatcher has proven to be useful. The video clips have been useful in themselves and as a developmental vehicle for the role of video with the School of the Social Sciences. The simplest videos are those with staff in character engaged in small sciences or as ‘talking heads’. The media suite in the School was the ideal setting for these as it gave good control of the production environment and allowed us to use the high quality recording and editing facilities. More ambitious productions have involved location filming or the use of other university facilities, for instance a green screen studio in the Waverley Building involving a cast of seven. Early videos often used a single camera whereas current shoots typically use three cameras, which presented new challenges in terms of editing the footage."

"The videos may sometimes lack the final professional polish but their popularity and pedagogic effectiveness seems little in doubt. The ‘Colin’ videos have helped drive forward the technical abilities and sense of what we can produce within the School. Being an academic myself allows me to anticipate the needs of fellow academics like Chris who are seeking to exploit video for learning and teaching."

Chris worked with a friend to film in Singapore, where they shot scenes on Singapore's Clarke Quay. In these scenes the character Colin Thatcher met and talked with fictional contacts as Colin went overseas in search of work. Chris said of these scenes: “It was exciting to film scenes in thirty degrees Celsius with a backdrop of a vibrant modern nation city, filmed during a thunderstorm.”

Students were also asked to reflect on the role of family in the provision of welfare in the United Kingdom and Singapore and to use the cultural and geographical differences to put the debates in wider contexts.

Chris commented further on these issues and debates adding: “Taking social policy away to Singapore allowed students to reflect further on these issues and appreciate the global aspects of welfare provision, to get away from purely parochial or local ways of seeing things”.

When watching the videos students have been able to literally see the issues before their own eyes, with many comments over the years reflecting on the value of learning through the visual senses.

Chris has also involved students in the acting as well as the building of the story, with many students either working on pre-recorded videos or in 'live' role plays in front of their contemporaries. One notable feature of the many discussions following role play has been the way students have engaged in orbital communication within the lecture theatre, even with its fixed seating. Students have been notably more engaged in large group discussion following the enactments and that has been particularly the case following live filming.

Chris, who seeks to continue to use drama as a vehicle for learning, said: “The emotional input has energised the students. When they see the character getting angry or upset, they learn how policies impact on the lives and difficult choices of service users and this makes them want to comment and debate.”
Context:
Following the development of international partnerships between NTU and Bochum Protestant University in the Ruhr Valley Germany, Mick Wilkinson and Dr Chris Towers were invited to deliver workshops at an international conference held in Germany in November 2015. The conference aimed to consider what constitutes a ‘Good Life’ and topics presented and considered included wellbeing, paternalistic or empowering practice in UK adult social work and the development of adult social work in the UK - specifically focusing on issues of capacity and consent (Mick Wilkinson). With a background in health and social care and social policy, throughout his sessions Dr Chris Towers brought forward definitional issues in health and looked at social determinants of health within his workshops. In addition, Dr Towers further explored issues of conditionality for users of social work and social care services, providing opportunity for international perspectives to be explored.

Addressing any issues of linguistic barriers within workshops through utilising host lecturer support, participants were able to consider differential approaches to social work, health and social care across international cultures. Presenters regularly returned to the wider theme of a ‘good life’, considering concepts of family care, generational issues from diverse cultures and responsibility for care in changing global contexts.

Summary of experiences:
Sessions were between ninety minutes and two hours, with formal lectures combined with group work activities. Sessions were discursive, with participants invited to share experiences of services, health and social care, housing, health and well-being. Group work appeared to be more successful, allowing participants to speak in their first language whilst deliberating, with supportive prompts and circular interventions by the lecturers to aid learning. Post-teaching focus groups undertaken between host lecturers and participants suggested participants were demonstrating a growing awareness of the tensions between issues of care and control, risk and empowerment. The balance between formal teaching elements and group work was noted as influential, with group work seen as being more successful e.g. Dr Towers’ input on social determinants of health and conditionality revealed passions, ideas and values, conveyed quite readily within the participant groups. A video on social determinants of health gleaned strong reflective responses within the session.

Post-teaching evaluative focus groups between host lecturers and participants identified preferable pedagogic approaches to facilitate Crossing Boundaries: Social Work Education across International Settings. Utilising targeted didactic delivery with less information but applying more detailed explanation and discussions, were identified as supportive and inclusive. In addition, participants revealed that emotion played a key part in their learning. Dr Towers delivered a poem entitled ‘Letter to a Social Worker’ that expressed tensions and issues related to matters of capacity, contributing to Mick Wilkinson’s session on risk, empowerment and capacity. Participants noted that this aided learning because of the power of the emotion involved. Delivered in English and translated into German by a host lecturer, participants suggested the high emotional content transcended any linguistic barriers, identifying their belief that emotions can cross boundaries of understanding within social work, health and social care education.
Research activity in Sociology
News from the Division

Dr Tom Vickers published a book chapter in October entitled "The contribution of UK asylum policy 1999 - 2010 to conditions for the exploitation of migrant labour", in the collection edited by Louise Waite et al, Vulnerability, exploitation and migrants: insecure work in a globalised economy. Migration, diasporas and citizenship. Tom argues that restrictions on asylum seekers' rights have countered the implicit challenge asylum represents for a wider migration regime that has increasingly prioritised labour market demand and personal wealth above human needs. Some of Tom's other work on the same topic has been translated into German for the journal Marxistische Blätter as part of a special issue on migration and flight and on 8 January 2016 he was an invited speaker as part of the concluding panel of the conference Changing Narratives of Asylum: Media, Legislation, and Refugee Support, organised by Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum.

Dr Soenita Ganpat presented preliminary findings of the Violence Trends project at the American Society of Criminology in Washington DC (November 2015). The Violence Trends project focuses on the role of population group - and context - specific changes in personal security and routine activities in explaining the decline in stranger and acquaintance violence. The research team of the Violence Trends project includes Professor Andromachi Tseloni (Principal Investigator), Dr Soenita Ganpat (Research Associate), Professor Graham Farrell, Professor Nick Tilley, Dr Rebecca Thompson and Dr Laura Garius (Co-Investigators).

Soenita also lectures on the ‘Sociological Research Methods in Action’ course on the topic of quantitative research.

Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families

Dr Roy Chilton has recently been appointed as Research Fellow at the Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families within the School of Social Sciences. He is a Chartered Health Psychologist with the British Psychological Society and has several years’ experience working across University, NHS and Local Authority sectors within a Children, Young People and Families context. Roy has a varied selection of research interests relating to physical and mental health, all of which can be seen on his staff profile.

Rachel Harding is new in post as a Research Fellow with the Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families. Rachel has a wealth of experience in working with the voluntary sector and brings expertise in qualitative research including of vulnerable people and peer research interviewing. She has a particular interest in homeless families and young people, provision of homelessness services and research ethics.

Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families will be launching in Spring 2016.
UK Career Development Award for Qualification in Career Guidance team

Nottingham Trent University's Qualification in Career Guidance (QCG) team has scooped the Best Practice in the use of Technology Career Development Award, sponsored by Prospects, at the UK Careers Development Institute Awards in Cardiff.

The award recognises the team's innovative use of technology to support student careers advisers on the University's Postgraduate Diploma in Career Guidance.

The UK Careers Development Institute Awards celebrate the achievements of the career development sector and reflect the role employers play in delivering high quality and innovative career development services.

Jo Mcfadden, Senior Lecturer in Sociology, said: "The success of this project is reflected in both high levels of student achievement and feedback as well as external interest in the methods we employ. Our postgraduate, qualifying diploma is jointly awarded by the Career Development Institute - the sector's professional body - and we are highly delighted to have won this award.

"The methods we employ enable students to develop their theoretical knowledge and career development skills. Carefully staged activities facilitate progressively ambitious learning and a key feature allows students, even if they are studying remotely, to learn from each other and their tutors, in a safe and supportive environment. These approaches are also being piloted to help undergraduate students develop employability skills."

Rebecca Thompson: Staff Profile

Academic division: Sociology

Current job title: Senior Lecturer

Tell us about your research career before you joined NTU. What is your research background and what are your research interests?

Before moving to Nottingham Trent University, I worked as a Senior Researcher at the Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Justice. This involved carrying out policing-related research and working closely with public and voluntary sector partners.

Prior to this, I worked as a Research Assistant on an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded project alongside Professor Andromachi Tseloni (Principal Investigator) (NTU), Professor Graham Farrell (Co-Investigator) (University of Leeds), Professor Nick Tilley (Co-Investigator) (University College London) and Dr Louise Grove (Co-Investigator) (Loughborough University). This utilised data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and expert advice from an Advisory Committee (made up of local and national stakeholders) to assess the effectiveness of security devices in protecting against household burglary. This work has informed both local and national policy relating to burglary security.

I also worked for Leicestershire Constabulary (with a specific remit around crime reduction and community safety) before being awarded a Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship to undertake doctoral study at Nottingham Trent University in 2010.
My research interests lie in the area of acquisitive crime, namely burglary, theft and robbery. I employ advanced statistical techniques to identify patterns and trends in victim and incident characteristics; the intention being to inform both victimisation theory and crime prevention policy. In addition, I have a strong interest in police-academic collaboration and the co-production of research.

What is your current research topic and what sparked your interest in it?

There are a number of research projects that I am currently involved in:

I am a co-investigator on an ESRC-funded project exploring trends in violence in England and Wales. This project explores (among other things) the role of personal security and routine activities in explaining the decline in stranger and acquaintance violence. This is alongside a team of academics: Professors Tseloni (Principal Investigator), Farrell, Tilley, Dr Garius (NTU) and Dr Ganpat (NTU). Research findings for this project are disseminated via a Twitter account (@project_vio); journal articles; and conference presentations. The project also has an Advisory Committee of practitioners / experts who meet regularly to discuss project findings and ensure the findings have impact.

I currently sit on the strategic board for the East Midlands Policing Academic Collaboration (EMPAC) and help coordinate the research activities of the NTU EMPAC Network on Local and Community Policing alongside Professor Simon Holdaway (NTU). EMPAC is a regional collaboration (five police forces, five Police and Crime Commissioners and seven universities) funded by the College of Policing, HEFCE and Home Office Police Knowledge Fund. The first two NTU EMPAC research projects will focus upon anti-social behaviour and community engagement. The research findings will be disseminated via a number of methods: a regional EMPAC Knowledge Hub, events, Twitter and journal publications. The research will hopefully impact upon both regional and national practice and influence operational policing. You can find more details here: http://www.northampton-news-hp.co.uk/East-Midlands-universities-police-forces-secure/story-27541311-detail/story.html

Which of the research groups and / or clusters in the School of Social Sciences are you involved in?

I am involved in the Quantitative and Spatial Criminology Cluster as well as the Policing Cluster.

What is the one piece of research that you’ve completed in your career to date that you are most proud of and why?

I am most proud to be part of the regional collaboration (EMPAC). I helped to secure £862,620 from the Police Knowledge Fund whilst working at the University of Northampton. This regional partnership is an innovative collaboration with the aim of producing high quality, co-produced research. Importantly, it ensures that findings are both relevant and of use to practitioners.

Which aspects of research do you find the most enjoyable?

I enjoy engaging with research users to ensure my research outputs have a demonstrable impact on policy and practice.

Where have you published your research?

I have published research in the Security Journal, Significance and Crime Prevention and Community Safety.


I studied BSc Psychology and MSc Psychological Research Methods at NTU. Before joining NTU as a postgraduate research student I was awarded a BSc in Psychology (2.1) and an MSc in Psychological Research Methods (Distinction). My research is looking at the relationship between personality disorder and sexual preoccupation in incarcerated sexual offenders. I have always been interested in mental health and forensic psychology; after working with people with personality disorder in a psychiatric hospital I knew this was the field I wanted to research in. I also liked how applied the PhD is, enabling me to gain experience of working with sex offenders. This research is being funded by NTU's Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship. The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has recently commissioned a new three year treatment pathway for personality disorder, therefore, this research will hopefully contribute towards this pathway, helping to inform and adapt treatment programmes. By understanding more about the relationship between personality disorder and sexual preoccupation, more appropriate treatment can be provided, reducing the risk of offenders and helping to protect the public and minimise victims in the future. I aim to publish my findings as soon as possible, as well as presenting at conferences such as the Assessment of the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA) and the International Association for the Treatment of Sexual Offenders (IATSO).

Name: Jackie Hamilton
Academic division: Psychology
Research project title: Exploring the relationship between personality disorder and sexual preoccupation in convicted sexual offenders

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Name: Catherine Blackburn
Academic division: Psychology
Research project title: Factors affecting the benefit received from visual information when listening to degraded speech in background noise

I was an undergraduate student at NTU where I studied Psychology and was awarded a 1st class degree. My research is looking at the benefit of visual speech information (seeing the face of the talker) for degraded speech, such as that experienced by cochlear implant users in background noise. My interest in this area
Name: Dimitra Gkiontsi  
Academic division: Psychology  
Research project title: The role of workplace practices for older workers’ workability: in the UK context

After finishing my BSc in Business Economics at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, I studied towards my first MSc degree in Applied Economics and Finance at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. I then continued my postgraduate studies at the University of Nottingham, where I was awarded my second MSc in Management Psychology. My research project aims to critically evaluate the deployment of the Finnish concept of Workability in the UK in relation to older workers, with reference to workplace practices. Soon after my postgraduate studies, I started working as a researcher on various EU-funded projects. Through my research work for the EU-funded project, WORKAGE (Division of Psychology, NTU), I developed a strong interest on issues around older workers and their ability to perform at work compared with their lifetime best. My research is being funded by the School of Social Sciences. The project will contribute evidence on how Workability can be applied in the UK context and how Workability can benefit the UK’s ageing workforce through the promotion of workplace practices. I will disseminate my research findings by publishing in high impact journals and magazines, through social media e.g. ResearchGate, and at conferences and workshops.
I previously completed an undergraduate degree in Sport and Exercise Science, however due to my innate interest in mental health I changed pathways and undertook an MSc in Psychology. Both my undergraduate and postgraduate degrees were completed at NTU. I graduated top of the MSc Psychology course with distinctions, particularly excelling in Cognitive and Biological Psychology. My PhD will focus on exploring whether social cognition deficits in schizophrenia influence one’s insight into their illness. Social cognition deficits and insight into one’s mental illness have both been significantly associated with poor functional outcome (e.g. poor social functioning and treatment adherence) in schizophrenia. Particular social cognition domains remain understudied and research exploring the association between social cognition and insight is warranted in the field of schizophrenia. The PhD is fully funded by the School of Social Sciences Scholarship. This PhD has both important clinical and research implications, whereby the particular investigations will potentially inform future interventions. Additionally, social cognition and insight are cutting edge topics in the field of schizophrenia that will produce high impact 3* and 4* research outputs. It is suggested the papers generated by this PhD will go to leading journals and a new impact pathway could potentially open up in follow up work.