Falmer
The University of Sussex magazine

Nº 56

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Welcome

Walking onto campus in 2019, you’ll see the brutalist architecture of the iconic 1960s Spence buildings standing alongside the modern Medical School and brand new East Slope residences.

In Falmer we’re looking forward – to pioneering nanotechnology with myriad future uses – and back, to memories of Brighton and Sussex nightlife in your era.

We’re also highlighting some extraordinary stories, including those of former and current Mandela Scholars whose lives in South Africa have been shaped by transformative education.

Elizabeth Churchill discusses the impact of artificial intelligence on society and Alexandra Loske takes us behind the scenes at the Royal Pavilion. Read how Obama’s election was a pivotal moment for Clive Myrie and find out what Martin Simonneau is doing to protect the rainforests.

Where do you stand on the ‘nature versus nurture’ debate? Read how new evidence is shaping the way in which vulnerable children and families are supported.

We delve into the world of cryptocurrencies, and learn how the lesser-known sense of interoception could lead to new treatments for autism.

And when life gets a little hectic, visiting the Sussex Roots allotment is a breath of fresh air – not to mention a lesson in sustainability.

I hope you enjoy the latest edition. It’s been a truly collaborative effort from many Sussex people.

Let us know what you think!

Sally
Falmer Magazine

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The Editor is keen to hear readers' views of the magazine and welcomes articles, news and photographs, although publication cannot be guaranteed.

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News in Brief

A graduation first in Doha

The University’s first GRADUATION CEREMONY IN QATAR took place in November 2018. The event celebrated the first cohort of the LLM in Corruption, Law and Governance, which is taught in the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Centre in Qatar, with academics from Sussex visiting to give lectures.

We are international

Sussex has been named AMONG THE TOP 25 MOST INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES in the world by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2019. The University has staff and students from more than 140 countries and has international partnerships with more than 160 universities.

Welcome boost for development studies library

The University has been awarded a WELLCOME TRUST GRANT OF OVER £400,000 to improve the accessibility of the British Library of Development Studies. Comprising around 1,300,000 items, the library is Europe’s most comprehensive research collection on development issues.

Girl-powered: Robogals Sussex hosts global conference

Robogals, an international organisation run by student volunteers, aims to inspire and engage young girls in the world of SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHS. The Sussex branch hosted the three-day conference for chapters in the Middle East, Europe and Africa to share best practice and undertake leadership and professional development training.

Exhibition takes visitors on musical journey from Soho to Paris


Current and former students join Mayor to open new residences

The first phase of the new East Slope residences, containing 535 bedrooms, officially opened in September 2018. Days before hundreds of students moved into the brand new accommodation, the Mayor of Brighton & Hove, Councillor Dee Simson, cut the ribbon with Pro-Vice-Chancellor Michael Davies, alumna Joanna Lozinska (Physics 1977) and Accounting & Finance undergraduate Irati Michel Saute (right). Joanna was an early resident in the original East Slope accommodation soon after it was built in the 1970s and Irati is among the first cohort of residents living in the new accommodation.
Vice-Chancellor proposes way forward for world-leading open-access research

The UK is set to hit its target of making all products of academic research freely available by 2020. However, its position as a world-leader in the field is under threat, says a new report, *Open access to research publications – 2018*, authored by Vice-Chancellor Adam Tickell.

Professor Tickell has made 13 recommendations to research funders, university leaders and policy developers on funding, administrative burden and transparency.

There appears not to have been a significant change in the market concentration of the major publishers.

SPORT

Albion manager opens new all-weather sports pitch

Hope Powell, manager of Brighton & Hove Albion FC’s women’s team, opened a new state-of-the-art sports pitch at the Falmer Sports Complex in March 2019.

The professional Albion team, who play in the top tier of women’s football, currently train on grass pitches on campus. The players will use the new all-weather pitch at the Falmer Sports Complex when the turf is too wet.

The University can now offer valuable training and match time, not just for Brighton & Hove Albion but also for students and staff, and a number of community clubs in the area. Hope Powell praised the club’s long-standing collaboration with the University and said: “It’s quite challenging for sports clubs. There aren’t enough pitches, so to have an additional pitch for community use, and certainly for the women if we need it, is fantastic. And for us, as Brighton & Hove Albion, it’s a real honour to be part of this collaboration.”

The advice includes calls for a UK-wide policy ambition covering the next five years, with a focus on achieving open access as the default publication option, delivering financial sustainability for research performing organisations and value for money on public investment in research.

In the report, Professor Tickell also raises concerns about the difficulties of new publishers achieving market penetration in an industry currently dominated by a small number of prestigious journals: “There appears not to have been a significant change in the market concentration of the major publishers, no significant widespread ‘flip’ of business models towards full open access from subscription and, as of yet, no significant transformative effect arising from new entrants to the publishing market.”
A place to share ideas

The Exchange is a new initiative to encourage free expression, lively debate and the sharing of thoughts and ideas through live events and digital content.

Launched in November 2018, the first panel discussion centred on ‘generation snowflake’, the idea that young people are overly sensitive and lacking in resilience compared to previous generations. The second event asked whether veganism could save our planet and if concerns about climate change should limit individual freedoms. Both topics prompted lively discussion from our panel members, which included alumni, current students and academic staff.

The Exchange at Small Batch Coffee has taken the project out into the local community of Brighton and Hove. The most recent of these events explored the women’s rights movement with Professor Claire Langhamer in conversation with alumna Dr Helen Pankhurst (AFRAS 1983).

Sussex Eco-Racing aims for pole position

Sussex Eco-Racing is an exciting new project that embodies our work to become one of the greenest universities in the UK. Masters students in Engineering will be designing, building and racing two sustainable single-seater racing cars – one powered by electricity and one solely by the power of wind. In May, the teams successfully raised £1,391, enough money to cover the cost of the build and competing.

Their fundraising took place on FundHub, the University’s crowdfunding platform. FundHub allows students and researchers to make their ideas a reality. Visit sussex.hubbub.net to find out more and see the next great initiatives seeking support in the autumn.
DIY SCIENCE

Scientists develop kit to demonstrate how our brains function

Professor of Neuroscience Tom Baden has been working with colleagues to build Spikeling, a piece of electronic kit which behaves similarly to neurons in the brain. Professor Baden said: “Spikeling is useful for anyone teaching neuroscience because it allows us to demonstrate how neurons work in a more interactive way.”

It’s part of a growing range of equipment which uses DIY and 3D printable models to open access to science education. All have been made openly available, with the design for Spikeling published on open access journal PLOS Biology.

SUSTAINABILITY

Turning searches into trees

Three Sussex Anthropology students have successfully campaigned to change the default search engine on campus to Ecosia, a social enterprise that donates at least 80% of profits generated through its advertising revenue to conservation organisations.

News of their success has spread to other universities, including Manchester, Kent and Newcastle, with the Sussex team offering advice and support. Founding member of Ecosia on Campus, Fred Henderson (left), said: “Ecosia plants a new tree every 45 searches. Is there a simpler way to make a positive change?”

Ecosia plants a new tree every 45 searches. Is there a simpler way to make a positive change?
Q1 You launched Inclusive Sussex last summer. Why do we need this strategy?

The purpose of the strategy is to make sure that we’re not just focusing on reducing inequalities between people who have so-called protected characteristics and those who don’t. We are creating a truly inclusive campus at Sussex, where all members of our community have equal opportunities to experience the University as one that really allows them to thrive and achieve their best. Inclusive Sussex is a way of trying to inspire the whole campus to get involved, to think about how they can use their expertise, commitment and courage to try to make the campus a better place for everybody.

Q2 What are the key aims?

The strategy focuses on four things: making Sussex more equal, diverse, accessible and flexible. One of the first things we did after launching the strategy was relaunch our flexible work policy – we wanted to flip it on its head and make sure that flexible working is an option for everybody. The early indications are good. We’re getting positive feedback from people who feel they can better organise their working day so that it allows them to balance work with caring responsibilities or work with a disability.

Our commitment to start work on tackling racism, different experiences of racism within our community and different outcomes in terms of race is of crucial importance.
Q3 How do you go about addressing something like race inequality?

The first thing is just to name it as a problem. Signing up to the Race Equality Charter commits us to identifying that there is an issue around race inequality on our campus. We can be much smarter about where we recruit our staff and students from and then make sure that the environment we offer here is far better. We need to have some really honest and open conversations across our community about the experiences of our Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff and students, compared to other staff and students, and then commit ourselves to trying to address those. BAME staff have felt very isolated across campus and so our newly established BAME staff network is a great first step towards creating that community.

Q4 What progress has been made so far with Inclusive Sussex?

Our first ‘fist pump in the air’ moment was the Flexible Sussex relaunch. When we published our gender pay gap data, we realised that none of the jobs at senior level were advertised as open to flexible employment. Opening up flexible work for everybody means that we’re opening up senior roles too.

We’ve signed up to the Race Equality Charter, established a dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) unit, set up a University-wide mentoring scheme, started a staff network for BAME staff and one for staff with disabilities. We’re also working on an institutional renewal for Athena SWAN, a gender equality charter, particularly focusing on the support that we offer to staff when they return from a period of caring leave. Getting those things in place is starting to change the feel and culture of Sussex in general.

Q5 How will you know if the strategy has been successful?

In our next staff survey, we are aiming for an increase in the percentage of people reporting that they are proud to be working at the University. Inclusive Sussex is about making sure everybody feels that they belong and that they can contribute.

We have those key measures, plus things like getting our Stonewall and Race Equality Charter marks and our Athena SWAN renewal.

Q6 Where do students fit in?

Students are at the heart of Inclusive Sussex. The new Learn to Transform strategy has a lot of Inclusive Sussex elements to it. For example, making sure that we close the BAME attainment gap, and that students who are living with disabilities have the same opportunities to thrive and succeed at Sussex.

We have an initiative at the moment, working in partnership with the National Autistic Society, to establish Sussex as the UK’s first autistic-friendly university. This is a really exciting initiative. We’re trying to harness all of our existing support and expertise and put into place a framework for what an autistic-friendly university looks like.

Q7 How can alumni get involved?

It’s always great to hear from alumni as role models for our students. Just recently, for LGBT History Month, Professor Tom Welton OBE (MOLS 1982), Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences at Imperial College, came back to campus to talk to staff and students about his time at Sussex and his career. He reflected on experiences of LGBT issues in Britain during the 1980s, such as Section 28 and imposter syndrome. It was so inspirational. Any dedicated opportunities or support from alumni around issues like that, or mentoring to understand what different career options there are, are invaluable. It’s great for our students to know ‘that could be me’.

We need to have some really honest and open conversations across our community about the experiences of our Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff and students, compared to other staff and students, and then make sure that the environment we offer here is far better. We want to halve our gender pay gap by 2024, which is a real stretch target. It is a hard one for us to meet but it’s really focusing everyone’s attention. Rather than just having a target for representation, this is actually more fundamental; it’s about making sure that what people get out of the institution is more equal.

Claire joined the Department of Politics at Sussex in March 2015 and was appointed Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equalities and Diversity) in November 2016.

Her research on gender, politics and policy was awarded the 2011 Richard Rose Prize by the Political Studies Association, the 2011 Carrie Chapman Catt Prize by Iowa State University and the 2012 Public Policy Section Prize by the American Political Science Association.

She is currently writing a book with Karen Beckwith (Case Western Reserve) and Susan Franceschet (Calgary) on Cabinets, Ministers and Gender.

Claire is on the Management Committee of the UK Women’s Budget Group. She contributes to their analysis of the impact of economic policy and changes to tax and benefits on gender equality.

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Mandela’s legacy: transforming hardship into hope
Shafika Isaacs (Science & Technology Policy 1996) and Ntsiki Mgxabayi (International Education and Development 2018) arrived at Sussex more than 20 years apart. Both women grew up knowing a vastly different South Africa but are united by a shared vocation – to empower their communities through education.

“I was born and raised in District Six in Cape Town, which is well known for being the place of forced removals under the apartheid regime. I have very vivid memories of it,” Shafika recounts, adding that her own family was forcibly relocated to Bo-Kaap.

Ntsiki describes herself as a “township girl”, born in the Eastern Cape but raised in Khayelitsha on the outskirts of Cape Town where, she says, “people lived in shacks; there was no hot water, proper sanitation or electricity. We were often woken up in the middle of the night because of fire.”

Regardless of the hardships, however, Ntsiki’s youth was full of hope. “People were excited about the new South Africa, about democracy,” she says. “People would be shouting in the streets, ‘We’re free!’ It was a really exciting place to live.”

In stark contrast to Ntsiki’s post-apartheid childhood, Shafika grew up in brutal, challenging times. She says that her family’s forced removal from District Six was “an experience that coloured my world in a big way” and that “it was not an accident that at a very young age I became a political activist.”

Shafika was flung into student and youth politics in 1980, her first year of high school, and a year that was marked by mass boycotts of the apartheid, or ‘Bantu’, schooling system (racially separated educational facilities). Shafika joined the Student Representative Council of Harold Cressy High School and in the community, established with her peers, the Bo Kaap branch of the Cape Youth Congress (Cayco), which was closely aligned to Nelson Mandela’s African National Congress (ANC), an organisation that was banned at the time.

“I helped found a primary school tuition project where we taught an alternative history to the apartheid history curriculum,” she explains. “We designed a curriculum to encourage critical thinking and not accept the doctrine education that we had received. We developed our own history books and a magazine for children. Our motto was ‘every house a school, every table a desk’.”

After high school, Shafika attended the University of Cape Town, but her formal education was interrupted when she was arrested and subsequently charged with furthering the aims of a banned organisation. “I dropped out of university. I couldn’t study formally any longer,” she says. “Besides, I was at a grander ‘university’. I was attending the university of life and political struggle… [through which] I received an extensive and intensive political education.”

After a brief stint in the UK, where she was sent to further her political learning, as well as to build relationships and support for the anti-apartheid struggles in South Africa, Shafika returned home and joined the labour movement. Becoming active in the research and education arm of the Trade Union movement, she was ultimately appointed Director of the Trade Union Research Project, whose main aim was to support the struggles of organised workers through education programmes for shop stewards and union organisers, and to build leadership among union women.

For Ntsiki, life in post-apartheid South Africa had a very different focus. Now released from prison and inaugurated as President, Nelson Mandela was actively promoting education as a means not only for communities to escape grinding poverty, but to establish the foundations for a new South Africa.
"We were the generation that was pushed to get an education and be something," says Ntsiki. "I remember (former President of South Africa) Thabo Mbeki's 'I am an African' campaign. I remember talking about an African renaissance. My mother said to me, 'I wanted to study and I couldn't. I want you to study, to be able to stand on your own two feet and use those opportunities.'"

Ntsiki pursued her schooling, enrolling at the University of Johannesburg to study journalism. After graduating, she became an intern for a regional website. It was at this time that she experienced her own renaissance: "I covered a story about child-headed families in one of our poorest communities. But I felt detached just writing about them and not being with the people... I wanted to be on the ground and work with them. I wanted to work in education, to focus on sharing information."

Her mind made up, Ntsiki enrolled on a Social Work degree course at Nelson Mandela University in Port Elizabeth. After graduating, she knew she wanted to found an organisation whose mandate would be to help local communities, more specifically children from the poorest and most disrupted backgrounds. Churches local to the University in the Summerstrand and Lorraine areas already ran outreach programmes, so Ntsiki approached them and proposed joining forces. She recalls the difficulties of getting people to buy into her vision, especially those who were more affluent, as they tended to be more detached from the harsh realities of life in the poorest communities: "I found myself fighting from both sides; being an advocate for the community but having to point out things that wouldn’t work because of cultural differences, whilst also trying to lift the spirit of the community by encouraging their input into driving projects."

Ntsiki’s fighting has paid off and her venture continues to flourish under her successor’s leadership to this day.

THE PATH TO SUSSEX

So how did Shafika and Ntsiki find their way to Sussex as Mandela Scholars?

"I was aware that Thabo Mbeki studied at Sussex, and also that the University was associated with alternative politics," says Shafika. "The intellectual work of the academics there challenged the status quo and was something that Sussex was known for amongst South African activist circles."

"I was sent to do political work in KwaZulu-Natal, which was where the battles were most ferocious, and that’s where I met Sussex academic Raphie Kaplinsky. He was in South Africa working on developing a new industrial strategy with well-known political comrades – and Institute of Development Studies (IDS) alumni – Faizel Ismail, Claudia Manning and Zav Rustomjee. It was 1994, Nelson Mandela was released, and we were all trying to design a post-apartheid South Africa. Raphie encouraged me to apply for a Mandela Scholarship", which she was duly awarded.

Shafika arrived at Sussex in 1996 to study for an MSc in Science and Technology Policy at the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU). When she returned to South Africa after graduating, Shafika joined an international development research agency whose specific aim was to explore the role of digital technologies to enable equitable quality access to education for everyone in Africa. She credits her Sussex MSc and the Mandela Scholarship with getting her the job.

In Ntsiki’s case, an internet search brought the Mandela Scholarship to her attention. It was only after arriving on campus that she discovered more about its history and connections with the anti-apartheid struggle.

LIFE AT SUSSEX

For Shafika and Ntsiki, living and studying at Sussex was not without its challenges and they agree that the settling in period was quite tricky. Both women suffered from culture shock and terrible homesickness.

In addition, Shafika had to contend with considerable personal tragedy, losing a number of her comrades in the bloody battles fought between the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

For Ntsiki, the internationalism of the students and staff came as a surprise, albeit a welcome one: “When I started my classes, I was really impressed with the quality of teaching, as well as my classmates’ experiences from different places and having multiple perspectives on a particular issue. Being at Sussex has exposed me to the different ways that I can contribute in my country.”

THE NEXT CHAPTER

Realising that digital technology could be an immensely powerful tool in enabling access to quality education for all, Shafika co-founded the pan-African NGO SchoolNet Africa, with a view to providing access to affordable digital technologies across 16 African countries. An MBA followed, as did support for NGOs and CBOs, and advisory roles for various organisations, including UNESCO, UNICEF and the International Telecommunications Union.

And Shafika’s next big challenge? “Our President has announced that every child should be given a tablet computer and it worries me because we need to learn the lessons from similar experiences across the world, some of which have tanked badly because they were techno-centric, failed to take account of local conditions and failed to address inequality. We’re talking about the fourth industrial revolution which holds huge risks of deepening inequality. That is my biggest challenge.”

Shafika was honoured at the 2017 Woman of Stature Awards, taking home both the Woman of the Year in Education and overall Woman of the Year awards for her work in empowering women and the poor through education and technology.

Ntsiki, meanwhile, is only mid-way through her Sussex journey; however, she says she already appreciates the enormous value of the Mandela Scholarship: “It has given me the opportunity to open my mind to the challenges and possibilities of our time... to step out and see the world... to live beyond myself.”
The Mandela Scholarship has given me the opportunity to open my mind to the challenges and possibilities of our time... to step out and see the world... to live beyond myself.

In 1973, the Mandela Scholarship Fund was founded by Sussex students under the leadership of Students’ Union President Cam Matheson (SOC 1972). The original idea arose from a desire to find a constructive way to oppose apartheid and raise the profile of Mandela’s struggle for freedom.

Despite the political challenges of the time, the Scholarship made it possible for oppressed South Africans to come to Sussex to study. Sussex was the first British university to offer such a scheme.

Following his release from prison, Mandela wrote to the Scholarship Fund: “The transformation of our country into a non-racial democratic society requires that we develop a highly-skilled workforce. In this way, we can begin to discover ways to recover from the damage of apartheid. It is in this regard that we appeal to you for continued and expanded support.”

Read more inspirational stories from Mandela Scholars at: [WWW.SUSSEX.AC.UK/MANDELA-SCHOLARSHIP](http://WWW.SUSSEX.AC.UK/MANDELA-SCHOLARSHIP)

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**THE MANDELA SCHOLARSHIP**

**1975**

FIRST MANDELA SCHOLAR ARRIVES AT SUSSEX

**1988**

SIR RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH’S FILM CRY FREEDOM PREMIERES IN BRIGHTON, IN AID OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

**1991**

NELSON MANDELA WRITES TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

**1994**

THE FIRST POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARS ARRIVE

**1995**

THABO MBEKI RETURNS TO SUSSEX TO RECEIVE AN HONORARY DEGREE AND MEET THE MANDELA SCHOLARS

**2019**

MANDELA SCHOLARSHIP CONTINUES TO SUPPORT SOUTHERN AFRICAN STUDENTS AT SUSSEX

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70

THE NUMBER OF MANDELA SCHOLARS WHO HAVE GRADUATED FROM SUSSEX

0

SINCE 1973, THE UNIVERSITY HAS WAIVED TUITION FEES FOR MANDELA SCHOLARS

£15,000

THE COST OF SUPPORTING A SCHOLAR FOR ONE YEAR

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LEND YOUR SUPPORT

If you would like to make a gift, visit [ALUMNI.SUSSEX.AC.UK/DONATENOW](http://ALUMNI.SUSSEX.AC.UK/DONATENOW) or contact Robert Yates at [ROBERT.YATES@SUSSEX.AC.UK](mailto:ROBERT.YATES@SUSSEX.AC.UK) and help us change a life forever.
In creating an ethical chocolate brand that reinvests its profits into conservation projects, Martin Simonneau (International Relations 2008) and Proyecto Washu are aiming to establish a blueprint for other NGOs working on similar challenges the world over to adopt.

**Welcome to the jungle**

“The rainforest is magical. There was one time I took a friend of mine and we were sat out in the middle of the night. I felt confident enough that I'd been enough times to take him myself, without the help of any of the locals. It was terrifying because you're walking in complete darkness. You can hear things, but you can't see anything. It's quite profound, a place of real reflection. Your mind is in total expansion constantly.”

Martin Simonneau’s journey from the rolling hills of Sussex to the Ecuadorian jungle is serendipitous but oddly logical – a case study in following your passions and taking opportunities as they come. Having grown up in Nelson Mandela’s South Africa – “he was a very inspirational person in terms of creating the space for people that used to be enemies to come together” – Martin went to school in France, but grew frustrated by an education system that felt elitist and restrictive. It was this sense that led him to the UK, and the “open-mindedness” of Sussex, to study International Relations – a subject that interested him, but which was simultaneously “vague” enough to leave his options open.

After a formative year abroad in Chile, which equipped him with Spanish language skills and gave him the opportunity to travel the South American continent, he knew he was destined to go back. But it is undoubtedly Martin’s love for Sussex and the community spirit that he found there that provides the binding glue to his experiences so far. His nostalgia for East Slope Bar resonates strongly. As well as spending time on the Downs behind campus when the weather was good, he became an East Slope porter for a while after graduating – “I didn’t want to leave Brighton at all”.

Your House by Birmingham reggae band Steel Pulse is the song that reminds him most of Sussex, the place where he met his girlfriend Rosa – they now have a 14-month-old son together – and where he first came to know Dr Mika Peck, Senior Lecturer in Biology at Sussex. Rosa was studying for her PhD in biology at Sussex with Mika as one of her supervisors. Mika, a conservation biologist, was setting up a project to save the spider monkeys in the northwest of Ecuador by establishing a cocoa cooperative. The aim wasn’t to produce as much cocoa as possible to sell for profit, but to protect the rainforest and find solutions to deforestation. Rosa was heading out there and Mika asked Martin to go with them and help.

“[Mika’s team] had worked with that particular community for quite a while already, mainly doing a lot of research on the monkeys, on their habitat, on why they’re key indicators for forest health. They’d already started getting the community involved, but they wanted to empower them to make their own decisions and really understand the value of the forest, why it’s important to protect it and how it mitigates climate change.”

Martin began attending Mika’s lectures to prepare himself for living in the rainforest. He had studied Environment and Development in World Politics with Professor Peter Newell in his third year at Sussex, which laid the foundations for his interest in environmentalism, and had just returned from a stint living in Honduras working on land use projects. “I decided to just be poor and try out different things and see where I landed.”

“We’re trying to establish a framework that can be developed and replicated elsewhere. The project isn’t limited by geography, but you have to be realistic enough to know you can’t just go into any community and be able to impose a plan on them. It’s important to empower them to make their own decisions and understand the value of the forest and the climate change implications.”

SUSSEX PEOPLE | MARTIN SIMONNEAU

In creating an ethical chocolate brand that reinvests its profits into conservation projects, Martin Simonneau (International Relations 2008) and Proyecto Washu are aiming to establish a blueprint for other NGOs working on similar challenges the world over to adopt.

WORDS BY JULIA ZALTZMAN AND TOM FURNIVAL-ADAMS

RIGHT: Martin Simonneau working on a cacao farm at the Tesoro Escondido Reserve, Ecuador.
In 2005, biologists estimated that there were only 250 brown-headed spider monkeys left in the wild. University of Sussex surveys through the Chocóan rainforests of NW Ecuador identified one of the last healthy populations of 150 primates in a 30km² area of unprotected forest at Tesoro Escondido (Esmeraldas Province). Mika’s aim was to gain the confidence and trust of the local community in order to get close enough to study the spider monkeys. “It’s quite hard to set up a project if you don’t have local allies. I think it’s a major issue for so many Western NGOs. There’s all the NGO colonialist aspect of, ‘Okay, we’re coming in to intervene because we do it better’.”

Mika and his team became involved with the local community in a social and meaningful way – partaking in parties at the dinner table, getting involved in family life, even in household life – and were quickly welcomed into the inner circle. They have now been working together for 10 years – “It’s almost family for a lot of them”. For Martin, improving livelihoods goes hand in hand with conservation: “When you look at what drives forest degradation and deforestation, it’s a lot of socioeconomic, political factors. There’s poverty. There’s a really restless political climate and you’re getting no social benefits in the region.”

Interestingly, Proyecto Washu’s approach of empowering rural communities is a model that many conservation NGOs have adopted, referring to it for similar conservation challenges elsewhere. “The Washu story is incredibly grassroots. It’s still super small. What’s interesting is that it came from academics, so it’s really rooted in an understanding of conservation science.”

Martin found working in the rainforest far from easy, however. It involves long days and arduous physical work. Despite efforts to build connections and understanding with members of the local community, the gap between their world and the Western world experienced by workers and volunteers never disappears. For Martin though, the fairy-tale enchantment of the dense jungle is just reward for the hard work: “If you have the opportunity to go to the rainforest, do go because it’s magical.”

The Washu initiative evolved from Mika’s work with the community on sustainable livelihoods. As Mika returned to focus more on his research, Washu was developed by local biologists and, with Martin’s support, now helps producers access niche markets and international buyers by way of an ethical chocolate brand. “We all learnt on the spot and we’re still learning. We’re making mistakes all the time. Ideally, we’d love to make a little bit of money out of it, but we’re not massively ambitious. Ultimately, the goal was to build this to supply the financial needs of the NGO.”

Currently based in Cornwall, Martin now works for Cool Earth, an experimental non-profit organisation that works alongside rainforest communities to halt deforestation and climate change. Founded in 2007, Cool Earth has initiatives all over the world, from Papua New Guinea to Congo. Martin project-manages the Peruvian partnerships and attributes his time living in the Ecuadorian rainforest (as well as a short stint working as a research assistant at the University of Exeter) as having helped him land the role. “(It’s) thanks to the chocolate project, the spider monkey project. I’m pretty much here because of that.”

Martin’s work with Washu and Cool Earth have helped him to truly understand and appreciate the importance of the rainforest, not to mention the communities who are “incredible protectors of this particular ecosystem”. When asked if he feels that those of us living in urban Western environments struggle to understand how important the rainforest is to the global ecosystem, his answer is a resounding “yes”. “I think until you’ve experienced it or met the people that are there, it’s really hard to find the connection. I’ve seen a few things with my own eyes, but I think I’ve got a lot to learn still. Businesses and government have a major role to play. That’s the real hard fight ahead because, how do you influence governments? How do you influence big businesses to make that change? But you need to remain optimistic... Of course, it’s going to be difficult to address, to fight, but I feel like with the movement that’s being created, plus the improvements in technology, there are plenty of reasons to feel optimistic.”

The Washu story is incredibly grassroots. It's still super small. What's interesting is that it came from academics, so it's really rooted in an understanding of conservation science.
What came first – your interest in psychology or in technology?
Psychology. Most definitely. I got into AI (artificial intelligence) and cognitive science mainly because I wanted to understand human reasoning and learning. Cognitive models (simulating human problem-solving and mental processing in a computerised model) seemed like a reasonable approach.

I then became interested in augmentation; can we develop smart tools that elevate human reasoning rather than replace it? Tools that allow for a perfectly choreographed human-technology dance. Think of how two dancers can develop and then perform an elegantly executed piece. This fascination really developed when I worked on my MSc thesis at Sussex with Ben du Boulay on intelligent tutoring systems.

I was also deeply inspired by Professor Maggie Boden, who encouraged me to think of technologies and computational techniques as reflecting human values, and that we can look at what we build and see ourselves within it. What follows logically from that is that if we don’t reflect on our moral values, we can inadvertently create truly destructive experiences. We could start by just acknowledging we are not singular identities, but always shaped socially. That is what psychology teaches us.

What do you believe has been the greatest breakthrough in terms of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI)? What HCI has really done is to put the human at the centre of the design and development process. HCI is a broad area of interlocking disciplines, from human factors to applied computer science, to psychology. HCI initiated a series of innovations from design methods to user experience research and usability, to the idea of graphical user interfaces and voice user interfaces, to adaptive layouts and interfaces, and input devices that are designed for people. »
showcase a certain success, and hide feelings of vulnerability for fear of being ostracised or, even worse, bullied. People are so hard on themselves now and worried about their status updates. More self-compassion, more kindness to ourselves will, I believe, lead to more compassion and care for others. Affix your own mask before helping others, as they say.

What are you most optimistic about in terms of tech development in the future?

Medicine and new techniques for diagnosis. Also, smart prosthetics. And if AI is useful I’d like to see better educational tools that mould to different learning styles and different abilities to help people who are not ‘normal’ learners (for whatever normal means). For example, better support for those who are dyslexic, assistive tools for people with memory issues and assistive technologies for those with cognitive impairments. Also, assistive technologies to help older adults live independently, while ensuring they are not isolated.

As an early recipient of industry investment in your MSc course, how important is it for universities and businesses to collaborate?

It is critical to empower leaders who understand the delicate balance between the short term demands of quarterly accounting budgets – and the resultant stresses on creativity – and the significant gains and long-term impacts of investing in longer-term research. Investing in students and in the institution who hosts them is an obvious win.

Do you ever doubt your own existence?

What an interesting and philosophical question! No, not really. I feel very solidly on this earth and of this earth. What I do try to question are my firmly held beliefs. I think it is critical that we don’t take ourselves too seriously. “Walk a mile in someone else’s shoes”, as they say. Someone else likely has different, if not more, information than I do. So, I doubt the existence of stable or perfect knowledge. And I embrace the possibility that someone else’s perspective may be better than mine.

Through the gathering and application of big data, are we on the threshold of a major change for good, or will we drown in it? It is going in both directions. When I was doing my MSc at Sussex, one of my lecturers introduced me to the concept/phrase “Garbage in – Garbage out” – that is, if you don’t understand the data and the quality of the data you put into a ‘black box’ process, you will not truly understand the results you get out the other end.

So, the main problem I see is having too much confidence in the data without a deep reflective perspective on the provenance and quality of the data. Too often, people only see what they want to see and lack a robust approach to analysis. We need better tools for data quality evaluation and analysis, and for interrogating what is going on in the ‘black box(es)’.

AI seems to be steaming ahead, with fears that it will heavily reduce jobs for humans. What is your view on this? Technologies automate the easiest things to leave the hard tasks to people. There is a great paper, Ironies of Automation, which discusses the ways in which the automation of industrial processes may expand rather than eliminate problems with the human operator. I think the nature of work is changing and there will be jobs that go away and others that emerge. A good example is the role of the data scientist; there was no such career a few years ago.

Is technology causing us to lose our humanity and to be less kind? Rather than less kind, I think we may be losing our experience of developing empathy for perspectives that do not align with our own. As many scholars have noted, we live in our own bubbles too much. We walk down the street and stare at our phones and don’t look at each other.

There is a really interesting book called Selfie which goes into the idea of social perfectionism and the unrealistic expectations it can burden people with. I worry that we are less kind to ourselves as a result of this; the feeling that we have to package ourselves is hurting a lot of teenagers in particular. Those who feel an extreme pressure to be a certain way, live a certain life,
Leading art historian, author and curator, Dr Alexandra Loske (Art History 2005) gives Rachael Miller an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at Brighton’s iconic Royal Pavilion. From its spectacular colours to its fantastical beasts, this much-loved building never ceases to surprise and delight.

Here be dragons

Many of these beasts are quite fantastical – nothing like a Chinese dragon, more of a Welsh dragon with added elements.
There are dragons everywhere – from the wallpaper and the carpets, to little visual jokes with hidden dragons painted into woodwork.

Many of our readers will have visited the Royal Pavilion at least once, but what might they have missed? The dragons. Any visitor will be aware of the spectacular dragon chandelier in the Banqueting Room, but there are dragons everywhere – from the wallpaper and the carpets, to exquisitely carved and coloured ornamentation on lanterns; lovely little visual jokes with hidden dragons painted into woodwork.

These paintings are almost invisible during the day, but imagine being at one of George IV’s parties, the worse for drink, and having one of these creatures leer out at you, caught in the candlelight!

And many of these beasts are quite wonderful and fantastical. There’s a real irreverence and a humour to Chinoiserie, and you definitely see that throughout the Royal Pavilion.

Keep an eye out, too, for a hidden joke in the wallpaper of Queen Victoria’s bedroom. Look carefully and you might spot where, back in the 1990s, artist Gordon Grant was recreating the Chinese wallpaper and painted a tiny pair of spectacles on one of the butterflies, to leave his mark. It’s entirely in keeping with the playfulness of the place.

Once you start to look, you’ll also see bells everywhere, many of them silvered and glazed. There are hundreds of them throughout the interior and they are one of the key motifs, along with phoenixes (and dragons, of course).

When we think of the colours used in the Pavilion, it’s the gold and silver gilding and the vivid pigments like vermilion, carmine, blue verditer and chrome yellow that usually spring to mind. What visitors may not realise is that many paler colours are also used. The interior design scheme is really quite subtle.

As you first come in through the main entrance, the only colour used is a very pale ‘peach blossom’ (a term used by Goethe). Then pale green is introduced, followed by a much stronger version of peach blossom, gradually building to the crescendos of colour in areas like the Banqueting Room and the Music Room.

You’ll know when you see the more muted blues and greys of Delft tiles that you’re truly behind the scenes at the Pavilion – in the servants’ corridors running through the entire building and beyond. But we shouldn’t assume that just because the colour is more restrained here, that George skimped on the servants’ quarters – there’s a fine underfloor heating system, and working conditions in the kitchens were particularly good.

The grand Saloon has recently undergone a spectacular restoration. What are the challenges and joys of maintaining and restoring a building like the Royal Pavilion?

One of the great joys for me is that it’s just such an over-the-top place. I love George IV’s gung-ho attitude to interior design. It’s truly a building of superlatives, from the rich layering of colours to the sheer number of individual things that need to be maintained or restored. For example, there are over 24,000 gilt plaster cockleshells in the Music Room ceiling, while the wall decoration in the Saloon has around 16,000 platinum leaf motifs, each of which had to be painstakingly applied by hand during the restoration.
It’s also both a challenge and a source of joy that throughout George’s years at the Pavilion nothing stood still — he was constantly changing the interiors. How do you decide which version of a room you restore? With the Saloon, we had to bear in mind that the room had at least four distinct looks between the 1780s and 1820s. But the great thing is that there is so much left from the original interiors. And, with our combined knowledge, the conservators, curators and front of house staff can keep piecing the jigsaw together.

Is it true that Queen Victoria and Prince Albert hated the Royal Pavilion? When Victoria first visited she did comment that it was a ‘strange, odd, Chinese-looking place, both outside and inside’ and she wanted to distance herself from her uncle’s extravagance and excess. But she did come for a few longer stays and had part of the upper floor adapted for her family. In fact, Prince Albert really quite liked the decorative schemes, but the building just wasn’t practical for their royal household and didn’t give them enough privacy and space. When Victoria sold the Pavilion to the town, almost all of the interiors were taken away to furnish the newly built East Wing of Buckingham Palace, designed by Edward Blore.

The royal connection continues today. What stood out for the Duke and Duchess of Sussex when they visited recently? They both loved the dragon chandelier but I think Harry was quite tickled when he realised that he had grown up with the chairs in the Banqueting Room — they were literally part of the furniture in his childhood and were only returned by Her Majesty The Queen a few months ago.

And if you were to hold a dinner in the Banqueting Room today, which Sussex alumni would you invite? Ian McEwan, definitely. I fell in love with British culture through literature, so he’d be a must. Sara Pascoe for her humour, and Lucy Worsley for her immense knowledge of Royal Palaces and her great sense of fun. And I’d really like to add Hilary Benn and Clive Myrie into the mix.

But if I’m also allowed Sussex academics — I’d have to invite Hans Hess and Quentin Bell (the founding fathers of the Art History Department), my mentors Meaghan Clarke and Maurice Howard, and Evelyn Welch. As women in art history go, Evelyn’s a real hero of mine. Without these inspirational individuals my life and career would have been very different. Sussex just feels like home to me. I owe the University so much.

What’s next for the Pavilion? We’re so excited. While the East Wing of Buckingham Palace is being renovated, the objects in it (many of them originally from the Pavilion) are being removed, and up to 130 exquisite pieces are coming back to the Pavilion on loan. It will add immeasurably to our understanding and enjoyment of this unique place.
On the front line

BBC broadcaster Clive Myrie (Law 1982) talks to Jacqui Bealing about his career journey, reporting from war zones and the night Obama was elected US president.
Although I was a northern black kid, and out of the norm, I found a way of fitting in.

When Clive Myrie first began filing stories as the BBC’s Tokyo correspondent in the 1990s, households gathered around their TV sets for the news at tea time or 9pm, and the reporters were as familiar as your neighbours and relatives.

But now, in the “fractured media landscape” as Clive describes it, it is far more difficult for the broadcaster to reach younger audiences. And yet, he points out that the need for the BBC is more important now than ever.

“There has to be an impartial view of the news. You have to have organisations you can trust,” he explains. “The fact that the BBC is paid for by the licence fee means that everyone is invested in it.”

**WAR ZONES AND ASPIRATIONS**

Clive, 54, has reported from war zones across the globe, from Afghanistan to Iraq to Kosovo. He was the Washington Correspondent during Bill Clinton’s impeachment and stepped onto the red carpet for the glitz of the Oscars during a spell as Los Angeles Correspondent.

He has also been the BBC’s man in Paris and in Brussels, and presented a BBC Two special on Barack Obama. Currently, he is the evening anchor on the BBC News Channel and a presenter on BBC Weekend News.

From a young age, the Bolton-born son of Jamaican immigrants was encouraged to work hard and have aspirations: “It’s the classic first generation/second generation immigrant thing. My parents didn’t fly 6,000 miles, leaving behind everything they knew and landing in a place that’s at times inhospitable – if you know what I mean – for their kids not to follow a good path.

“My mum had been a teacher in Jamaica, and education was important. If your grades weren’t up to scratch, you knew about it. She was firm but fair and made it clear to me that, in a white-dominated world, you had to be twice as good to make it.”

While a doctor or a lawyer – “a stable ‘decent’ profession” – would have been their preferred choice for their middle son of seven siblings, Clive had always set his sights on journalism. He appeased them by taking up a place at Sussex to study law, but his initial interest in what was happening in the world – and a desire to tell those stories – had been whetted by doing a paper round, when he would consume the news he was delivering. Then by the globe-trotting journalist Alan Whicker, who gave “a window on interesting places I had no clue about”, and most notably by the veteran news broadcaster Sir Trevor McDonald.

“I thought, ‘He looks like me, that’s something I could do’. Growing up, I was aware that there weren’t many black faces on the telly and, if they were there, they were in the sort of context that wasn’t flattering, whether it was famine in Africa, or riots in Brixton, or some social issue in Notting Hill.”

**ON AIR AT SUSSEX**

During his time at Sussex, Clive began to hone his broadcasting skills. He had a music show on the student-run University Radio Falmer (URF), playing jazz and funk and softening his northern vowels until he sounded more like “the posh southern kids” he was surrounded by (although he admits a regional accent is no longer a disadvantage in broadcasting).

The experience also gave him an opportunity to work for BBC Radio Brighton, as it was then, interviewing bands. “I had a lot of fun,” he remembers. “Although I was a northern black kid, and out of the norm, I found a way of fitting in – the same as I did at grammar school in Bolton. I liked that Sussex had a bit of an edge. I joined a rent strike within my first two weeks but I wasn’t really a firebrand or into student politics. I just got on with my journalism.”

At the end of his degree, he was faced with several choices. He had applied to Middle Temple to become a barrister, was offered a place to do a postgraduate journalism diploma at City University and was also awarded a coveted place on the BBC’s graduate training scheme. He chose the latter.

“My parents were happy that I had employment,” he says. “That cushioned the blow, particularly joining the BBC, with its reputation.”

**DIVERSITY AND CHOICE**

Taking the cautious approach and recognising the need to “learn the basics”, Clive worked in regional radio news before moving to Independent Radio News, and then to BSkyB as a TV reporter before presenting BBC’s Points West in Bristol.

While diversity was – and still is – an issue that the BBC grapples with, Clive has always wanted to be seen as a reporter who happens to be black rather than a black reporter there to do stories about race. In his early years, he preferred not to cover “black events”, such as the Notting Hill Carnival.

Since then Clive, who lives with his antiques restorer wife Catherine in Islington, has reported from more than 80 countries on a diverse range of news, from the fall of the Taliban in Sangin, to the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, to the Rohingya refugee crisis.

He admits that finding a way to tell these stories in a manner that’s respectful yet also packs an emotional punch is a perennial challenge: “There’s a saying we have, ‘Take them there, make them care’. You have got to make people want to watch things that are difficult, because if they don’t, nothing gets done.”

He also has no problem with news providers showing shocking realities (“although not beheadings”), adding: “The BBC sanitises too much and as a result we look like we are behind the curve.

“I did some reporting from Mexico last year about the colossal murder rate because of the drug wars. There was a lot of debate in the BBC about whether we were showing too much. My feeling was, well that’s the story.

“And that’s the point. It’s easy to go to war if you don’t understand its consequences, if you don’t understand what war is all about. If you can find a way to avoid it, you must.”

**CAREER HIGHLIGHT**

There have also been moments of elation and joy while doing his job. One such memorable event is the night Barack Obama was elected US president. “I was in Atlanta, Georgia at Moorhouse College, where Martin Luther King had studied, watching the results come in. To be there at that time was quite remarkable,” he enthuses.

“Obama is someone I greatly admire and I think history will record as one of America’s first-rate presidents. He came from a family with a strong mother, who emphasised the importance of education and scrimped and saved for him to go where he needed to go. I like to think there is a little bit of a parallel there.”
Sussex alumni all over the world have been active in starting new projects, making an impact at local and national level, achieving new career milestones and gaining recognition. Here is a brief selection of their news.

Community Heroes

The following alumni are global winners of the British Council’s 2019 Study UK Alumni Awards, in recognition of the impact they’ve made on their communities, industries and countries.

Social Impact Award winner RÉJANE WOODROFFE’S (DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS 2004) work addresses the challenges of rural poverty in South Africa. She is Director and co-founder of Bulungula Incubator whose programmes have reduced child mortality rates, facilitated access to online education and helped develop the local economy.

Entrepreneurial Award winner MAMUNUR RAHMAN (IDS 2006) is the inventor of a low-cost sanitary towel made from leftover clothing materials. Ella Pad is made by women to address the needs of the four million women in garment factories who lack access to sanitary towels, aiming to reach 35 million women and girls across Bangladesh.

FABIAN MARTÍNEZ (MANAGEMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP 2014), founder of PuntajeNacional, also reached the final stage of the competition. His enterprise is one of the largest educational platforms in Latin America, with more than 40 million views of its free education videos.

Milestone

PAUL RICHARDS (PGCE 2001) has been included in The Big Issue’s Changemakers Top 100. Paul founded Stay Up Late and Gig Buddies, helping people with learning difficulties attend live music events.

RSC Fellow PAUL REEVE (MOLS 1978) has completed his Arctic Challenge in Finland which included cross-country skiing, dog-sledding and a frozen lake ice-dip at -15°C. He raised over £2,500 for the Dickinson family, whose daughter Caz had suffered a serious head injury.

MAMUNUR RAHMAN (IDS 2006) is the inventor of a low-cost sanitary towel made from leftover clothing materials. Ella Pad is made by women to address the needs of the four million women in garment factories who lack access to sanitary towels, aiming to reach 35 million women and girls across Bangladesh.

FABIAN MARTÍNEZ (MANAGEMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP 2014) has won the entrepreneurial category for the national Study UK Alumni Awards in Turkey. He has helped 23 Turkish start-ups to obtain funding and grow their companies in global markets.

SIBONGILE NKOSI (GLOBAL BUSINESS AND DEVELOPMENT 2016) has been announced as Chief Executive Officer of Health-e, an award-winning South African health news service.

LYNETTE LINTON (ENGLISH 2008) has been announced as the new Artistic Director of the Bush Theatre in West London.

BEN LIPPETT (AMERICAN STUDIES 2013) has been announced as Brighton’s Young Chef of the Year at Brighton and Hove Food and Drink Festival. The 64 Degrees chef credits Italian cuisine as his strongest influence.

JOSEPHINE O’CARROLL (POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS 2013) stood as a Conservative candidate in the UK local elections in May 2019. The RAF veteran’s bid to become Brighton’s first trans councillor was unsuccessful this time.

RUWAN WIJEWARDENE (POLITICS 1995) has been sworn in as the new Minister of Mass Media in Sri Lanka. He was elected to parliament from Gampaha District.

DR MOHAMMAD SHTAYYEH (DEVELOPMENT STUDIES 1985) has been elected as Prime Minister of the State of Palestine.

PROFESSOR ROBERT CRABTREE (CHEMISTRY 1970) has been elected to the Royal Society, the UK’s national science academy. Professor Crabtree’s work focuses on the design and synthesis of molecular catalysts with unusual structures and properties.

NIC EADIE’S (ANTHROPOLOGY 2004) Sussex-based Thai food truck has been featured in a Lonely Planet book Around the world in 80 food trucks. Nic also offers cooking classes where he shares the secret to his signature Pad Thai.
New Ventures

DARREN TENKORANG (BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT 2012) and his business partner NANA DARKO (MECHANICAL ENGINEERING 2013) have launched Trim-It, a mobile barber shop in London with an app-based booking system.

JAKE THOMPSON (PRODUCT DESIGN 2013) has designed Flare, an award-winning cycling app that uses cyclist generated data to improve road infrastructure. It has won global recognition, including a road safety award at a competition held in Parliament in November 2018.

MOLLY MASTERS (ENGLISH 2015) won the Sussex Innovation Centre’s annual enterprise programme Startup Sussex in 2018 with her subscription box service Books That Matter. Her mission is to inspire women and girls through literature.

JULIAN BOURNE (FINANCE 2013) has won the Pitch@Palace People’s Choice Award for his technology start-up. Waffle is a personal assistant chatbot aimed at helping users find restaurant deals in their area.

Awards

PROFESSOR DAME GEORGINA MACE (BIOLOGY 1975) has become one of two ecologists to have won the Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award in the Ecology and Conservation Biology category. She has developed vital tools for facilitating policies to combat species loss.

ELIZABETH KARLSEN (ENGLISH 1980) has received the Outstanding British Contribution to Cinema Award for her productions including Carol and Colette. Alongside her partner Stephen Woolley, Elizabeth co-founded Number 9 Films.

PROFESSOR TERESA LAGO (ASTRONOMY 1974) has won the 2018 Ciência Viva Montepio Grand Prize for her contribution to promoting science. The astronomer is the founder of the Centre for Astrophysics of the University of Porto.

DR JOY MENCH (BIOLOGY 1977) has received American Humane’s Humane Hero Award for helping improve the lives of America’s farm animals. Her work focuses on poultry welfare.

MURA MASA (PHILOSOPHY AND ENGLISH 2014), otherwise known as Alex Crossan, has won Best Remix at the 61st annual Grammy Awards. He is the first artist to be nominated as a musician and creative director for the same album.

PROFESSOR SIR JOHN BALL (MATHEMATICS 1972) has been awarded the 2018 King Faisal International Prize for Science. Professor Ball has published over 70 articles, centring around nonlinear partial differential equations, the calculus of variations and dynamical systems.

PROFESSOR JANE OAKHILL (PSYCHOLOGY 1978) has received the 2019 Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award from the Society for Text and Discourse, in recognition of her work on reading comprehension.

UK Honours

PROFESSOR DAME GEORGINA MACE (BIOLOGY 1975) has become one of two ecologists to have won the Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award in the Ecology and Conservation Biology category. She has developed vital tools for facilitating policies to combat species loss.

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DR HELEN PANKHURST (AFRAS 1983) has been awarded a CBE for her services to Gender Equality. The great-granddaughter of Emmeline Pankhurst is CARE International’s campaign ambassador alongside practising women’s rights activism.

GEOFFREY VAN ORDEN MEP (AFRAS 1966) has been awarded a CBE for political service. Brigadier van Orden is a Member of the European Parliament and a former British Army Officer.

JIM CARTER (ENGLISH 1967) has been awarded an OBE for services to drama. The actor is best known for playing butler Charles Carson in the period drama Downton Abbey.

DR NEIL CHURCHILL (ART HISTORY 2009), NHS England Director for Experience, Participation and Equalities, has been awarded an OBE for services to the voluntary sector and carers.

DR LUCY WORSLEY (ART HISTORY 1997) has been awarded an OBE for her services to history and heritage. Chief Curator at the Historic Royal Palaces, Lucy also won a BAFTA in May 2019 for her BBC TV documentary on the suffragettes.

DR PENNY TASSONI (CREATIVE WRITING 2007) has been appointed an MBE for services to early years education. She is the Honorary President of the Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years.

DR SIMON EDWARDS (EDUCATION 2004) has been awarded an MBE for services to work and the education of young people. He is currently Senior Lecturer in Youth Studies at the University of Portsmouth.
New evidence has emerged that highlights the importance of the family environment. It dismantles the argument that genetic factors are the primary influence on children’s mental health and development and, as Professor Gordon Harold reveals, the implications and opportunities for vulnerable children and families are huge.

Words by Michael Edmonds

Family first
In 2015, Professor Gordon Harold spoke at an academic conference focusing on the needs of adoptive families and children. Afterwards, a mother approached him and told him about her family. She had heard him speak on a previous occasion, specifically about the discovery that positive and supportive parenting helps children with complex needs – no matter what age they are or whether they are genetically related to their child or not. She had been inspired to talk to her adopted teenage son about Gordon's research.

Shortly after their talk, her son came to her and handed over a knife. He told her he would no longer use it to self-harm, because he felt he mattered to her and she mattered to him. He said he realised that it was their relationship that was most important to him, not his belief that his behaviour was inevitable due to his genes.

Although confident that his research at the Andrew and Virginia Rudd Centre for Adoption Research and Practice (Rudd Centre) was discovering important ideas about the role of family relationships and the ‘nature versus nurture’ debate, never before had Gordon been confronted with such a stark example of how his and the Centre’s work can change people’s lives.

The Rudd Centre is focused on finding insights into the social, psychological and community-based processes that play a role in the development of children and young people. It has a particular emphasis on the specific challenges and needs faced by adopted, foster-care, looked-after children and their families. Until recently, there simply hadn’t been the evidence base to show that ‘nurture’ affects young people’s mental health and development and is just as important as ‘nature’. Indeed, nature and nurture likely work together to affect children’s behaviour and their futures.

This has several critical implications, including – as the mother with the adopted son realised – the idea that parents can and should be proactive in supporting and shaping their child’s development, whether they are genetically related or not. For some adoptive parents, it may be understood – and even directly communicated to them by practice professionals, media and other sources – that early neglect or genetic inheritance may explain most aspects of child behaviour; that ‘is only so much they can do’ to influence their adopted child’s behaviours and future opportunities. The latest research shows this is simply not the case.

All children need the love, commitment and sense of belonging and connection that results from family life.

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**SELF-HARM**

6–8% of children and young people deliberately self-harm

50% of those who die by suicide have a history of self-harm

5 in 5 years, the number of under-sixteens hospitalised after self-harming has almost doubled

WWW.MQMENTALHEALTH.ORG
Gordon’s work is changing the way parents and practitioners, such as doctors, teachers and social workers, think about the support needs of adopted, foster-care, and looked-after children and their families.

The research is also changing the way government and family-policy advocates work with families of all types, recognising the long-term benefits of effective early intervention strategies for today’s generation of children and future generations of families. This has often been seen as identifying issues at a very early age and stepping in with an intervention to stop problems before they begin.

The Rudd Centre advocates that early intervention should mean intervention before problems become apparent whenever possible, regardless of age. The word ‘intervention’ can also sound intimidating, but as Gordon says: “An intervention can be as simple as a parent engaging in constructive conversation with their child, or simply listening when their child has something that they regard as important to discuss.”

He is determined that the Centre plays a role in making sure parents receive the right support to have open, informed conversations with their children. It’s never too late to start talking to children of any age about important issues, and this message is starting to be heard by major policy and practitioner groups in the UK.

As Dr John Simmonds OBE, Director of Policy Research and Development at adoption and fostering academy CoramBAAF, explains: “The focus on permanence for all children where they cannot be looked after by their birth parents has been a major influence on policy and practice in the UK over the past 50 years. Whether those carers are other family members or ‘strangers’, all children need the love, commitment and sense of belonging and connection that results from family life.

“Yet it is the responsibility of state services to ensure that this is the primary focus for every child who comes into care. The messages that have been clearly articulated by the Rudd Centre through the research of Professor Gordon Harold and colleagues could not be clearer in establishing this perspective.”

The state of young people’s mental health has had an increasingly high profile with between 1:5 and 1:10 children experiencing mental health problems. It costs the UK economy more than £100 million annually and is predicted to cost the global economy $16 trillion by 2030.

In 2018, it was reported that the number of newborn babies being taken into care in the UK had doubled since 2007, from 1,039 in 2007/08 to 2,447 in 2016/17. The number of children being adopted, however, has been falling.

Often, both children and adoptive parents are at the mercy of a bureaucratic process that can last years. All too frequently, children go through numerous placements before receiving an Adoption Order. Meanwhile, adoptive parents can be left guessing, with aspects of their cases falling between the remit and knowledge bases of the various practice professionals they have to work with.

The result is that young children often find themselves without a stable family environment, moving from foster family to foster family, and becoming vulnerable to a damaging cycle of exclusion and uncertainty. This itself can lead to emotional problems such as anxiety and depression and behavioural problems such as conduct disorder, drug and alcohol abuse, as well as other issues such as self-harm, homelessness and suicidality (serious thoughts, plans and attempts about taking one’s own life).

As a result, we now have evidence that has been missing from the debate and policy decision making processes, and this is starting to change the way we think about children and families. It also addresses what can be done to promote positive outcomes for today’s generation of children and tomorrow’s generation of parents and families.

In December 2018, Universities UK listed Gordon’s work as one of the UK’s 100 best breakthroughs of the past century for its significant impact on people’s everyday lives, alongside the discovery of penicillin, work tackling plastic pollution, ultrasound scans to check the health of unborn babies and the establishment of the Living Wage.

It’s clear now that children aren’t just affected by their genes; they’re very directly affected by the family relationships they experience – specifically good parenting and healthy relationships between parents, married or not, living together or not, genetically related or not.

Now that we have the evidence that shows this, we can all start doing something to positively influence children’s lives and future opportunities.
A BODY OF EVIDENCE

Built over the past 20 years, Gordon’s research provides robust evidence that the quality and style of family relationships we experience as children clearly affect our mental health, not only in our early years, but also during adolescence and into adulthood. Through this research and that conducted by Professor Leslie Leve at the University of Oregon, who leads the world-renowned Early Growth and Development Adoption Study, we can now offer evidence-based support and advice to those who need it most.

The Rudd Centre is pioneering a training programme and annual symposium aimed at maximising the translation and impact of the latest leading research into adoption. Using a unique cross-disciplinary approach combining postgraduate education (at Masters and PhD level) and continuing professional development, the programme will train the next generation of social workers, teachers and doctors so that our new insights become best practice.

INITIATIVES AND FUNDING

The UK Government is taking notice of the research. Gordon was commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions to conduct research around evidence-based family support interventions which has, in turn, led to the Government’s promotion of targeted family support. Aimed at improving outcomes for children, it has a special focus on those that experience economic disadvantage. The Government committed £40 million in April 2017 to work with families and children.

Gordon has also been awarded funding by UK Research and Innovation to lead a network that encourages new collaborations to promote children’s and young people’s mental health in a digital world. Over the next four years (2018-2022), the Nurture Network (eNurture) will bring together academic researchers, professional advisers and partners from public, private and third sector organisations, to address this important dimension of young people’s experiences in 21st century society.

The Rudd Centre was established at Sussex with a generous donation from Andrew (MAPS 1968) and Virginia Rudd. If you want to find out more about the evidence-based support that is available for parents, families and organisations, please visit www.sussex.ac.uk/Adoption

YOUNG PEOPLE’S MENTAL HEALTH

75% OF THOSE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION START DEVELOPING IT BEFORE THE AGE OF 18

7 IN 10 YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM HAVEN’T HAD SUFFICIENT HELP AT AN EARLY AGE

3 CHILDREN IN EVERY CLASSROOM HAVE A DIAGNOSESABLE MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION

“[We need to] build on the learning from Professor Harold’s studies to empower adoptive and foster families to parent in a way that transforms the future of the children they love.”

RIGHT: Andrew and Virginia Rudd with Gordon Harold (left) at the annual Rudd Symposium on campus in 2019.
Help for anxious parents
The UK’s first clinic to prevent family transmission of anxiety launched in June 2018 following a successful trial. Devised and led by clinical psychologists Professor Samantha Cartwright-Hatton from the University of Sussex and Dr Helen Startup from the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, the Flourishing Families Clinic will deliver **RAISING CONFIDENT CHILDREN** workshops for parents with anxiety.

Music education declines in secondary schools
Nearly 500 UK schools were surveyed in the summer of 2018 for research into Secondary Music Curriculum Provision between 2016-18/19. The findings have revealed that **MUSIC IN SCHOOLS IS AT SIGNIFICANT RISK OF DISAPPEARING**, as the number of schools offering music as a subject, staffing levels and teaching hours in music are all in decline. In particular, the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), other performance measures and a squeeze on funding are cited as the main factors contributing to this continued decline.

Reaching the Paris Agreement goals: what can individuals do?
Individuals have as big a role to play in **TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE** as major corporations, but only if they can be encouraged to make significant lifestyle changes by effective government policy, according to a new European study. Responses from the study revealed household carbon footprints are not static but can fluctuate significantly with major life events such as having children, experiencing illness or retiring.

An end to phobias ‘just a heartbeat away’
Researchers have discovered that **EXPOSING PEOPLE WITH PHOBIAS TO THEIR FEAR** – for example, spiders for those who have arachnophobia – at the exact time that their hearts beat, led to the phobia reducing in severity. These improvements in exposure therapy were also shown to depend on differences in how well an individual patient can accurately feel their own heart beating in their chest, suggesting a further way of tailoring treatment to benefit each patient.

British mammals’ fight for survival
Climate change, loss of habitat, use of pesticides and road deaths are all putting pressure on some of Britain’s 58 terrestrial mammals. Their current status, historical and recent population trends, threats and future prospects have all been assessed in a comprehensive review commissioned by Natural England. The review, led by Professor Fiona Matthews, found that almost one in five **BRITISH MAMMAL SPECIES FACE A HIGH RISK OF EXTINCTION**. The red squirrel, wildcat and the grey long-eared bat are among those most at risk.
The Sussex Weidenfeld Institute of Jewish Studies

In a troubled political climate, it is more important than ever to learn from the past. This is why the University of Sussex has launched a new research centre inspired by the late Lord Weidenfeld, who arrived in Britain as a Jewish refugee and went on to become a successful publisher and outspoken advocate for using education to tackle discrimination. He became a trusted advisor to Angela Merkel and worked tirelessly to promote better understanding between Britain, France and Germany.

Lord Weidenfeld believed that societies could be characterised by their treatment of Jewish citizens and, in 1995, he became involved with the creation of the University’s Centre for German-Jewish Studies. The Centre is now a leader in the study of the history and culture of Jews in German-speaking lands, focusing on the history of antisemitism, the Holocaust and its effects on post-war history.

The Weidenfeld Institute of Jewish Studies will build on this, becoming an intellectual hub that situates the Jewish experience within a wider context, relating it to the challenges of our day. Expertise will be gathered from across the University including the Schools of Global Studies and History, Art History and Philosophy. Research will look to Israel, Germany, the US and the UK to collect insights to help shape 21st century society.

Projects will focus on Jewish culture and identity, Israel and the Middle East, minority culture and the challenges of integration, as well as antisemitism, racism and xenophobia.

Dr Gideon Reuveni, Director of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies, said: “The vision for the Institute is rooted in the awareness of the fragility of our civilisation and the supposition that societies can be characterised by the way they treat their Jewish citizens.”

The Governments of Germany and Austria, along with a number of foundations and individuals, are supporting the Sussex Weidenfeld Institute.

On 13 March 2019, the German Ambassador Peter Wittig hosted the Institute’s launch event at the German Embassy in London. In his opening address, he paid tribute to Lord Weidenfeld’s legacy and warned of the growing threat of antisemitism in our societies. He said: “To remain idle and complacent, to hope for the best, calm down and just carry on cannot and must not be our answer to this threat. ‘This is a duty for governments, authorities and institutions but first and foremost for each and every one of us.’”

The University is now raising financial support for a programme of Visiting Fellowships and for outreach and public events such as its long-standing Holocaust Memorial Day. In addition, disseminating research findings amongst teachers, educators and parliamentarians will be a key aim of the Institute’s impact agenda.

To find out more and to get involved, please email Cliff Tapp in the Development and Alumni Relations Office at c.tapp@sussex.ac.uk

The research found that deprivation was the strongest predictor of whether a riot occurred in a London borough. The boroughs in which people saw the police negatively and those that had more ‘Stop and Searches’ in the two-and-a-half years before the riots were more likely to see rioting in August 2011.

The research also dispels some myths about riots:

- There was no single ‘spark’ for the riots. Instead, they occurred after a drawn-out process. In each location, conflict with police and power-reversal in a local deprived estate was often the point at which smaller skirmishes became a mass event.
- The idea that those who rioted were mainly convicted criminals is not supported by official Home Office data. That myth is believed to have arisen because those are the people who the police arrested first.
- The riots occurred in waves, but not everyone who was exposed to them joined in; they were not simply ‘contagious’.

 Lord Weidenfeld believed that societies could be characterised by their treatment of Jewish citizens.

Sense of identity is key to how riots spread

Expert in crowd behaviour Professor John Drury has led a team of academics from Sussex, Keele and St Andrews universities to analyse the 2011 riots in London. The riots occurred two days after the fatal shooting by police of Mark Duggan and involved around 20,000 people. Their findings explain how and why riots develop and spread from place to place.

Professor Drury said: “While previous research has shown anti-police feeling among the rioters, what we have now found is that the rioters used their views of the police to define themselves collectively. Their sense of identity was key. Knowing and seeing others feeling the same way, across various locations, made the rioters feel that they were not alone and emboldened them to riot too.”

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ABOVE: Detail from the cover of What a Nice World: Volume One by Holocaust survivor Arnold Daghanii, held at Sussex.
**DIGITAL**

New research programme to explore protecting workers’ rights in the digital age

The University of Sussex is involved in a major new research programme, alongside Google, the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and the BBC, aimed at making digital services fairer and more secure for all.

The University is working in collaboration with academics at Newcastle University, Royal Holloway, University of London and Swansea University, as well as businesses, public sector organisations, professional and voluntary community groups, on a three-year social justice project, Not-Equal – Social Justice through the Digital Economy. The £1.2m NetworkPlus project is funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council. Sussex alumna and Director of User Experience at Google Elizabeth Churchill (see page 16) is on the project steering group.

Professor Ann Light, an expert on design and creative technology in the School of Engineering and Informatics, will lead on one of the project’s three main strands, Fairer Futures for Businesses and Workers. She said: “Rapid change in the way that businesses are organised has affected working life, particularly as digital platforms direct more people’s labour.

“Not only are new skills needed, but new sources of protection for people with increasingly precarious livelihoods. Whether working or displaced by a new wave of automation, people face a range of social justice issues linked to uses of technology. This network will offer researchers the chance to address these issues and develop alternative systems.”

**PSYCHOLOGY**

The warm glow of kindness is real

Many individual studies have hinted that generosity activates the reward network of the brain, but the latest study from Sussex is the first to split the results into two types of kindness – altruistic and strategic.

The Sussex scientists found that reward areas of the brain are more active when people act with strategic kindness, when there is an opportunity for others to return the favour.

But they also found that acts of altruism, with no hope of personal benefit, activate the reward areas of the brain too and, more than that, that some brain regions (in the subgenual anterior cingulate cortex) were more active during altruistic generosity, indicating that there is something unique about being altruistic.

Dr Daniel Campbell-Meiklejohn, Director of the Social Decision Laboratory at the University of Sussex, said: “The decision to share resources is a cornerstone of any cooperative society. We know that people can choose to be kind because they like feeling like they are a ‘good person’, but also that people can choose to be kind when they think there might be something ‘in it’ for them such as a returned favour or improved reputation.

Jo Cutler (Cognitive Neuroscience 2015), a PhD student who co-authored the study, added that there are implications for charities and organisations in understanding their donors: “Some museums, for example, choose to operate a membership scheme with real strategic benefits for their customers, such as discounts. Others will ask for a small altruistic donation on arrival... Do they want them to feel altruistic and experience a warm glow or do they want them to enter with a transactional mind-set?”

Jo and Daniel analysed 36 existing studies relating to 1,150 participants whose brains were scanned with fMRI scans over a ten-year period.
Research reveals mechanism for leukaemia cell growth, prompting hopes for new treatment strategies

Acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) is a devastating blood cancer for which, despite considerable improvement in patient survival over the past 50 years, the prognosis remains poor for many subsets of adults and children who suffer from the disease.

Current chemotherapies are highly toxic and often fail to induce a long-term cure. This has resulted in an urgent clinical need for the design of better tolerated and highly targeted therapies that induce durable remissions.

Leukaemia cells are known to have an overactive level of a protein called β-catenin, which can drive cancer development. Once this protein moves into the nucleus of cells, where DNA is stored, it can assist the activation of genes important for leukaemia development. The activity of β-catenin is highly dependent upon the interactions it forms with other proteins in the cell.

Until now, the movement of β-catenin into the nucleus of leukaemia cells in blood cells has been a poorly understood process. However, researchers from the Universities of Sussex, Bristol and Cardiff, using funding from the Kay Kendall Leukaemia Fund (KKLF) and Bloodwise, have now discovered a protein partner that promotes this process and helps leukaemia cells to grow.

In a paper published in the journal *Haematologica*, Dr Rhys Morgan, Lecturer in Biomedical Science, observed that protein LEF-1 can actively control the level of β-catenin in the nucleus of myeloid leukaemia cells. This is the first study to reveal such a mechanism is active in leukaemia cells and also the first to reveal β-catenin’s interaction partners in blood cells.

Whilst the research is at a very early stage, Dr Morgan and his team are now working to further understand the biological significance of many of the new interacting proteins discovered in the study, with the belief that others could be worth targeting to inhibit β-catenin levels and activity in leukaemia. Their findings could lead to the development of new therapeutic strategies to treat AML.

Giving premature and full-term babies a better start in life

Research into the benefits of delayed umbilical cord clamping (DCC) is improving the outcomes for premature babies both in hospitals across Sussex and in healthcare settings around the world.

At birth, around one-third of a baby’s blood is in the placenta. If the umbilical cord is clamped immediately (early cord clamping), the blood remains in the placenta and simply goes to waste.

Dr Heike Rabe at Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS) is researching and promoting the benefits of delaying the clamping (this can be anywhere from 60 seconds to three minutes), so the blood can flow into the baby as an extra blood transfusion.

The extra blood volume helps to stabilise blood pressure and delivers extra iron-rich haemoglobin to the baby (iron is particularly important for healthy development). It also reduces the need for later invasive transfusions, which can themselves carry complications and are often viewed with understandable concern by parents.

Dr Rabe’s team brings together researchers from BSMS, clinicians and healthcare professionals from the hospitals of Brighton and Sussex NHS Trust and collaborators from across the globe.

They are now developing teaching programmes that can be used anywhere in the world and Heike has rolled out a training video and web-based materials that are constantly evolving: “Staff using DCC in Nepal are in the feedback loop, telling us how we can improve the training materials. It’s so important to take the healthcare professionals on the journey with us. It’s a two-way process – we learn from each other.”

The World Health Organization has incorporated the use of DCC for pre-term infants in its global guidelines.

ABOVE: A comparative fMRI meta-analysis of altruistic and strategic giving decisions.
Rising star Sarah Garfinkel, Professor in Neuroscience and Psychiatry, talks to Rachael Miller about the lesser-known sense of interoception and its potential to improve our understanding and treatment of autism and other conditions.

**A battle for hearts and minds**

What are the eight senses?
The five senses of **SIGHT, HEARING, TASTE, TOUCH and SMELL** are familiar to all of us. Less well known are:

- **THE VESTIBULAR SENSORY SYSTEM** – this helps the body to maintain balance and gives us a sense of spatial awareness.
- **PROPRIOCEPTION** – our sense of the position, location, orientation and movement of muscles and joints.
- **INTEROCEPTION** – the sense of what’s going on internally from how fast our heart is beating to whether we are hungry or need to go to the bathroom.
**THE HEART-MIND CONNECTION**

Sometimes known as the eighth sense, interoception is our understanding of what is happening inside our bodies, from our heartbeat to our gut feelings. People who struggle with the interoceptive sense may have trouble knowing when they feel hungry, full, hot, cold or thirsty, but the ability to tune in to what is happening with our internal organs varies widely between individuals, and evidence is emerging that interoception is linked to how well a person can identify their own emotional state and empathise with others.

Sarah Garfinkel’s interest in interoception was first sparked by her postdoctoral research at the University of Michigan. She studied ‘fear memory’ in war veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder. Although she was looking specifically at brain activity, she began to wonder about the role the heart might play in emotional processing.

She was intrigued that the heartbeats of some veterans remained steady while they were recalling a traumatic experience, but others’ hearts really raced and they experienced other symptoms of hyperarousal (an abnormally heightened state of anxiety that happens whenever you think about a traumatic event). “No-one was really talking about what the body was doing,” she recalls, “and it made me wonder how the body might be interacting with the brain to alter emotion.”

**AUTISM, INTEROCEPTION AND ANXIETY**

Coming to Sussex to work with Professor Hugo Critchley at Brighton and Sussex Medical School, Sarah went on to demonstrate that there can be a disconnect between how good people think they are at detecting their own heartbeats and their true accuracy.

Crucially for individuals with autism, she showed that the less accurately they are able to ‘listen’ to their hearts, the higher the levels of anxiety they experience. In a population where 50% suffer with anxiety, this is hugely important.

Now, enabled by an EU grant, Sarah and Hugo have been able to develop a software-based intervention, known as Heart Rater, so that people can train themselves to be more interoceptively accurate.

“Previously,” explains Sarah, “we’d only been able to offer this kind of training in the lab, but this software will mean that people can do it in the privacy of their own homes. We’re working on a roll-out programme with the Sussex Innovation Centre. Their expertise in bringing products to market has been invaluable.”

**BUSTING THE EMPATHY MYTH**

Sarah’s work is also challenging stereotypes about how individuals on the autistic spectrum experience and process emotion. “There’s an idea that they have no emotional response to the emotions of others and they are often referred to as lacking empathy,” she says. But, Sarah’s research shows that when confronted with a strong emotion in another person, an autistic person’s body responds to that emotion, mirroring the body sensations and responses.

“They’ve been told over the years that they don’t have empathy, but that’s simply not true,” she says. “In fact, their bodily response to the pain of others is higher than that in people without autism. It’s possible they have trouble processing these sensations because the brain gets overwhelmed with them, but it’s not that they don’t have them.”

For Sarah, to challenge the misconceptions is a crucial part of what she does. A recent article in *The Guardian* about her work produced a huge online response. “The Twitter reaction to the article was really heart-warming – people with autism were saying how much it meant to them,” she says.

**NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR SCHIZOPHRENIA**

With some exciting early findings about how heart signals regulate emotion in schizophrenia, Sarah’s research may also have implications for treatment. “What’s so significant about studying heart-brain interactions is that they give us a whole new window into a psychiatric condition that we wouldn’t necessarily have insight into if we were just looking at the brain,” she says, “and the possibility that we may be able to get away from drugs that may have peripheral unwanted actions or from drug-based therapies entirely is very exciting.”

**THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING**

Recognised as an emerging leader in her field, Sarah was recently named as one of 11 outstanding early to mid-career scientists from around the world in the Nature Index 2018 Rising Stars. But, Sarah’s academic journey has had its challenges.

Quite severely dyslexic at school and, by her own admission “doing quite badly” in some of her A-levels, she is hugely grateful to Sussex for the kindness and support she has experienced both as a student and as a member of staff.

“I even failed my first term as an undergraduate and I contemplated dropping out. If it wasn’t for the kindness of one of my tutors, who told me, ‘Don’t be discouraged, you speak really well in class, and your writing will catch up’ – I wouldn’t be here today.”

The support of mentors, such as her PhD supervisors, Professors Dora Duka and Zoltan Dienes, continued what she sees as the powerful mix of ‘heart and brain’ exemplified by Sussex. “I genuinely believe there’s a culture of kindness and excellence here. It’s so important. Academia can be tough, critical and vicious, but for us to do our best and most creative and progressive work, we need to be comfortable and free to explore ideas. Hugo Critchley has created a kind and supportive environment that really allows us to grow into the best scientists we can be.”

As a mentor herself, Sarah is passionate about supporting her students as individuals. “There can be a temptation as a supervisor to turn all your students into ‘mini-mes’,” she says. “I want to recognise and nurture the different strengths each person has rather than trying to make them into something they’re not. It’s important to remain open and alert to the unusual areas in which someone might excel and make them feel good about everything they have to offer. I want so much for all my mentees to do well.”

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“I want to recognise and nurture the different strengths each person has.
Nanotechnology has the potential to make radical differences to everyday lives and, in some circumstances, save them. Professor of Materials Physics at Sussex Alan Dalton explains how.

WORDS BY JACQUI BEALING
At the start of the 21st century, scientists were predicting that nanotechnology – the manipulation of materials at an atomic level – would revolutionise our daily lives. From miniaturised devices to virtually unbreakable materials, science fiction was about to become reality. And at the forefront was the University of Sussex.

The late Sir Harry Kroto was a Professor of Chemistry at Sussex who received the Nobel Prize in 1996 for the discovery of a form of carbon (named the C60 Buckminsterfullerene) that could be a building block for super-strong and highly conductible ‘nanotubes’. Today, Professor Alan Dalton, who joined the University in 2016 largely because of Kroto’s ground-breaking work, is taking that legacy forward.

Professor Dalton and his team are among those developing practical and affordable applications for nanotubes that really will change our lives – and, in some circumstances, save them. Their projects include smart clothing that can detect an array of bodily functions, virtually indestructible yet incredibly thin smart screens and nanobarcoding for food packaging to ensure food safety.

Alan, who has two decades of experience in nanotechnology, says: “We are working with building blocks that are 50,000 times smaller than a single human hair. The real step change is in how we are now able to see them and manipulate them with the aid of atomic-force microscopes and electron microscopes.”

One such nanomaterial is graphene, a honeycomb lattice form of carbon derived from graphite (the ‘lead’ in pencils). First observed in 1962, it was finally produced in 2004 by physicists Konstantin Novoselov and Andre Geim, who received the Nobel Prize for their work in 2010.

Although it consists of just a single layer of atoms, effectively making it a 2D nanomaterial, graphene has extraordinary properties in terms of strength (it is 400 times stronger than steel), transparency and electrical conductivity. The idea for a simple, wearable but wireless device made from graphene that could detect pulse and respiration rates came to Alan while making French salad dressing with his nine-year-old daughter.

“She was amazed to see the little circle particles of oil,” he remembers. “And it set me thinking about how we could use the principle to create emulsions in which tiny balls of graphene are suspended in oil and water.”

Experimentation led to the emulsion being incorporated into a fabric that, when stretched, changes conductivity. If turned into a simple skin patch, which expands and contracts with each breath or heartbeat, it could have a variety of potentially life-saving applications.

“A simple and cheap-to-produce sensor like this could help prevent neo-natal deaths in remote communities in developing countries,” says Alan, with reference to a proposed traffic-light system, which tells a parent when their child is unwell or relays the information to a hospital.

“It could also be used for dementia patients to detect dehydration, a common problem with the elderly, and remind them to have something to drink,” he adds.

Another project being developed by his team is a food packaging material containing a graphene polymer hybrid that will change colour after a certain time period or with variations in temperature. “Perishable foods and medications that have limited lifespans, or need to be kept at a particular temperature, can cause logistical issues for manufacturers and suppliers,” he explains. “Penicillin, in particular, must be kept below a certain temperature. If it’s being sent to a war zone, aid workers need to know that what they are administering is going to work. This could solve this challenge.”

Likewise, Alan and his colleagues are currently working to develop nanobarcoding for supply chain management. “Customers want to be assured that food has been stored correctly. These simple little indicators are almost impossible to counterfeit.”

Graphene’s extraordinary strength and flexibility has led to perhaps the most eagerly awaited of the team’s projects. Using silver nanowires and graphene, they have produced a screen that’s more flexible – and hence less breakable – than the currently available technology. The material also has eco and cost benefits. At the moment, touchscreens are made from a rare, mined metal called indium tin oxide, supplies of which are expected to be exhausted in just a few decades.

“There needs to be a new disruptor technology, and this nano graphene system could be that,” says Alan. “These screens will be very cheap to produce as there is a plentiful supply of graphite and silver.”

A further blue-sky area of research is megastructure live monitoring. Bridges, oil pipelines and container ships are subject to nano level material faults and recognising these early offers the potential to prevent environmental disasters like the Exxon Valdez oil tanker spillage in Alaska in 1989.

The continuing challenge for Alan is to create technology that will be both commercially viable and have a positive impact on the world and society. As he points out: "There are severe problems in the world – water shortages, energy demands, healthcare – and universities are in a position to help find the solutions.”

Alan and his team are now collaborating with Advanced Material Development, a privately funded commercial business formed to support scientific research in British universities to take these ideas to the next stage. “We have a real issue with taking our great ideas and transitioning them into the market place,” he says, “so this is a really exciting opportunity for us because it’s the first time in my career that I have been able to work with a company that sees the pathway to bring it from the lab into an industrial environment and actually make a difference.”
Ten years ago, a Bitcoin could be bought for around a dollar. Today the complex industry surrounding it is worth billions. Adrian Imms finds out how Sussex is looking to the future of cryptocurrency and its potential to spark a cultural shift towards renewables.

Crypto cash: digging for digital gold
In remote warehouses around the world, a game is afoot. It’s being played by giant computers and the goal is Bitcoin – arguably the best-known of the many cryptocurrencies now in circulation.

Conceived in 2009 by a person (or group) named Satoshi Nakamoto, Bitcoin emerged as an alternative to the traditional currencies of online banking, cutting out big banks and allowing people to transfer money directly to one another.

As well as trading Bitcoin, anyone with the means to do so can set up a ‘mining rig’ – powerful computers designed specifically to process Bitcoin transactions. This process, carried out by a large community of miners, is the bedrock upon which cryptocurrencies function.

Without a central bank to make sure people don’t double-spend their money, it’s down to others to validate (or ‘prove’) transactions added to a massive online ledger, called a blockchain. Anyone can view transactions on the blockchain, and once a miner proves a transaction is genuine, it gets added (and securely encrypted) into the blockchain forever.

The miners’ reward for proving transactions is newly ‘minted’ Bitcoin. As awareness and confidence around Bitcoin grew, it also became an investment. More people started not only trading Bitcoin but proactively mining it. Giant hangars grew in places like Siberia and Alaska, where mining rigs could churn away algorithmically and stay cool.

Towards the end of 2017, the market reached fever pitch and Bitcoin was worth almost $20,000 a piece. But then it fell sharply and reached $10,000. Before crashing, it had a slight recovery, reaching $13,700 in December. However, despite the volatility, the financial technology industry (dubbed FinTech) is keenly monitoring cryptocurrencies and their underpinning blockchain technology. Carol Alexander, Professor of Finance at the University of Sussex Business School, says: “Because conventional digital currencies are not built on a blockchain, there’s still a need to trust a central bank to make sure people don’t spend the same digital record twice. With cryptocurrencies that record is distributed on machines all over the world.”

As every block is mined, more cryptocurrency is created, albeit at diminishing levels, so that in about 20 years’ time, the market will have theoretically matured.

“Dollars can be printed and used to manipulate financial markets,” says Professor Alexander, “but you can’t just print new cryptocurrency. No one yet knows how the value of, say, Bitcoin, will be affected (by new coins being mined over the coming years).

“The question is,” she adds, “what is a fair price for Bitcoin? There’s no intrinsic value. There’s only value insofar as people think there’s value.”

It is possible that, with proper regulation of cryptocurrency exchanges (which is likely to happen this year), prices could stabilise. This would mean that in the future, price manipulation would be less blatant.

Aside from concerns over the fluctuating value of Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies, there’s also the issue of energy consumption. With Bitcoin, the power needed to run mining rigs has outstripped the energy required to mine physical metals from the ground. Bitcoin’s energy consumption is now higher than the electricity used annually by countries the size of Denmark.

It’s important to note though that Bitcoin is not the only game in town. Other cryptocurrencies use less energy-intensive algorithms to mine blockchain transactions.

Cryptocurrencies are a hot topic at Sussex. Aside from FinTech, researcher Steve Huckle suggests they may herald a new era of socialism. He claims that, by nullifying central banks in financial transactions, cryptocurrencies could indirectly put an end to capitalism. Furthermore, although cryptocurrencies might use a lot of energy themselves, they could be the driver behind a cultural shift towards renewables.

Whatever the potential of cryptocurrencies, the finance industry isn’t fazed right now. “I don’t think banks regard cryptocurrencies as a threat,” says Carol. “They control the economy and they decide what currency we use.”

Carol was a Mathematics with Experimental Psychology undergraduate at Sussex in the 1970s, where she also did her PhD in Algebra. Later, she turned her skills towards econometrics (applying statistics to economics), returning to Sussex in the mid-1980s before a second spell in the City spent delving into financial risk.

Now, with her colleagues in the Business School (in particular banking expert Malgorzata Sulimierska), she is pioneering a new BSc in Financial Markets and Technology with the aim of developing tomorrow’s industry leaders.

“FinTech is the interface between AI and financial markets,” she explains. “Sussex is ideally suited to offer such a degree, with its strong interdisciplinary focus. Because blockchain applications cut across informatics, law and sustainability, as well as more traditional finance and business, we can build on the traditions of Sussex to become one of the first movers in this space.

“In the future, students who understand FinTech will have better career prospects, and not only in financial markets,” she adds. “New job opportunities will be everywhere.”

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**Dollars can be printed and used to manipulate financial markets. But you can’t just print new cryptocurrency**

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**BITCOIN’S PRICE HISTORY**

- **2009**
  - Launch at around $1 USD
- **2011**
  - Value rises to $29.58
- **2017**
  - Price peaks at almost $20,000 before crashing
Revolving around the motto ‘Reduce, Reuse, Recycle’, the Sussex Roots society is a model of sustainability. Current student Esme Williams (Media and Communications 2017) talks about the society’s ethos and the benefits gained from working outdoors.

Dig, sow, grow
It's amazing how much better you feel about yourself after a little bit of gardening.

The University of Sussex was originally designed so that, wherever you look, there is greenery. It is, therefore, unsurprising that sustainability sits at the very heart of the establishment. A number of sustainability-orientated societies exist at Sussex, ranging from Scoop, which sells fresh produce on campus; Sussex in Transition, a food waste café; and the Bike Shack, which fixes and rents out bikes. They all aim to minimise waste and reuse as much as possible.

Sussex Roots first began with an allotment situated behind the Brighthelm accommodation. With no running water, students would have to carry barrels of water in the summer up the hill to the plot. However, in February 2017, it was relocated to a fenced plot of land just behind the Park Village accommodation. Now, just a couple of years on, and with the expert leadership of Jaci Driscoll, one of the groundskeepers at Sussex, it is teeming with life.

The allotment has come a long way in a short space of time. It now comprises around 10 raised beds, a polytunnel provided by Sussex Estates and Facilities to nurture baby plants, wild flower banks, a beautiful shed and even a dug-in brick fire pit with mix-match seating. Fresh vegetables and fruit are often up for the taking at the plot during harvest season, ranging from watermelons and squashes to tomatoes and cress.

The society revolves around the sustainable motto of ‘Reduce, Reuse, Recycle’. It has its own homemade compost bins, as well as leaf mulch collection points, both of which provide enough soil to go around all year, meaning the society never has to buy bags of soil. Eat Central’s coffee waste is reused, mixed in with soil to put a variety of nutrients back into the ground, and the Tuesday Market’s old vegetable waste is collected and added to the compost bins.

Since relocating to the campus’s West Slope, Roots has done well to focus on building its physical infrastructure. However, with another possible relocation due to the West Slope development, more man power will definitely be needed to help make the move as successful as possible.

The brains behind Roots Jaci Driscoll is teaching and nurturing students’ knowledge of gardening whilst refraining from pressuring anyone into constantly helping out. Other regulars include recent Sussex graduate Leilah Clarke (Product Design 2015), who frequents the plot wearing a fetching apron that reads ‘Head Gardener’, and fellow graduate and ex-committee member Lionel De Bayser (Philosophy 2015), who has taught all sorts of skills to other society members, including how to handle tools properly; invaluable lessons in the world of gardening.

One member of the committee, third year Zoology student Connor Sullivan, made an insect hotel using old bits of wood and material which would have otherwise gone to waste. There is even an old toilet and pair of boots that have been used to pot flowers – nothing goes to waste, and members are always up for claiming rubbish and turning it into something beautiful.

The society never spends money on seeds but instead saves them from existing plants at the end of every harvest season. These are then traded for other seeds at Brighton’s Seedy Sunday event. This year, the society managed to accrue over 50 varieties of plants. Just before Christmas, the society also created various crafts, which were then sold on campus, raising around £50. As you can imagine, such a sum goes a long way at Roots.

Sussex Roots recently received a generous grant from the Sussex Fund, kindly supported by alumni donations. This helped the society to purchase a garden shed for the plot, meaning more dry, sheltered storage space for the equipment that was, up until then, cramping up the polytunnel.

Most encouraging of all, many students speak of the positive impact the plot has had on their wellbeing. One second year student comments: “It’s amazing how much better you feel about yourself after a little bit of gardening. I just love what a bit of fresh air and work with friends can do.”
From table football at The Pool to all-night parties at The Crypt and big bands in tiny venues, here we share some of your memories of Brighton and campus nightlife through the decades.

### 1960s

**SOBER BEGINNINGS** In 1967, the highlight for first years was to go to The Pool, a very sweaty and intimate venue beneath the Palace Pier Hotel, accessed via a spiral staircase off Pool Valley (hence the name).

The main room was equipped with a Seeburg jukebox and two or three electromechanical pinball machines. A smaller room contained table football, and there was a small window from which burgers, hotdogs, soft drinks (no licence) and hot beverages were served. Malcolm Church (MAPS 1967) was the self-appointed doormen/houncer at The Pool and he and I are still friends to this day. This mecca only lasted between 1967-68. In our second year The Crypt was opened in Falmer House.

**DEREK MAY (ENGG 1967)**

**TURN UP THE VOLUME** I still have happy memories of helping to promote the nights organised by the Blues Society at the little upstairs room at Jimmy’s on Steine Street during my first year in 1969. As well as classic blues singers such as Mississippi Fred McDowell and Champion Jack Dupree, we featured ‘progressive’ rock bands such as Free and Mott the Hoople – the latter being so loud I remember listening from the street outside! The highlight was probably putting on the reformed Traffic in 1970 for a grand fee of £450!

**DON BERRY (CCS 1969)**

### 1970s

**BORDERLINE CHAOS AT THE CRYPT** Summer term in 1971 and the Biols Soc. decided to hold an ‘all night party’ in The Crypt. However, (with no licence) it was decided to charge 2/6 on entry and serve ‘free beer’! Roy Stone (BIOLS 1971) and I were asked to brew some beer to add to the commercial stuff; for some reason we added double the sugar to multiple gallons.

On the night, I’d been sailing at Newhaven and arrived about an hour after opening. It was borderline chaos. All the alcohol had been drunk. I was given the job of operating the Union Disco, a double deck, amplifier and two big speakers, hired from the Union for a pittance – it came a double deck, amplifier and two big speakers, I was given the job of operating the Union Disco, borderline chaos. All the alcohol had been drunk.

**MARTIN PASCOE (BIOLS 1971)**

### 1980s

**THE CRYPT – CLASSROOM, CAFÉ, CONCERT VENUE** I managed The Crypt between 1980-81. At that time, it was a bar/disco/music venue by night, and later opened in the daytime, serving food supplied by Food for Friends. The Crypt was also used to teach a class on portraiture (by Dr Marcia Pointon in Art History) and as a practice space for local bands, such as The Piranhas, which later spun out Stomp. We showed films – the most popular being The Rocky Horror Picture Show. Yes, people dressed up even then. Most popular were the Thursday night Soul Disco with DJ Verbus, and Monday nights run by the then Gay Soc. Favourite drink was a pint of Harvey’s.

**JERI WAGNER (ENGAM 1975)**

**OUT OF FASHION** I played in a concert at The Crypt with Dr. Zarkov’s Orbiting Workshop in 1989. It was good fun! Raves and House Music were in at the time but I was never a fashionable person.

**ROLF BAY (CHEMISTRY 1987)**

**QUEUING AND ‘HARE KRISHNAS’ GET STUCK IN EAST SLOPE** I remember queuing for hours outside The Escape Club; also, the Pink Coconut on West Street, and Dynamite Boogaloo, in which you couldn’t get to the mirror in the female toilets for all the Drag Queens sticking their false eye lashes back on. The Gloucester (now North Laine Brewhouse) was another favourite haunt until 2am when you could spill out and go to the Market Diner for breakfast. On campus we had a Hare Krishna night, which was supposed to go all around Brighton but couldn’t get further than East Slope Bar, plus we misplaced the collection buckets after a while.

**GABRIELLE ROWLES (HISTORY 1985)**

### 1990s

**BIG NAMES ON CAMPUS** As Chair of the Entertainment Committee in the SU, I was involved in putting on bands like Radiohead, Pulp and The Cranberries at East Slope Bar.

Crazy looking back at such tiny venues given how big those bands went on to be.

After we put on The Prodigy for the Uni Xmas Ball (1991), I had to walk home with about £3,000 in cash down my trousers: security and proper procedure wasn’t a big thing in the 90s. And Bobby Gillespie was a regular face about town as Primal Scream were arguably at their peak, basking in the glow of Screamadelica. Cool times.

**GLENN MATCHETT (ENGLISH AND MEDIA 1990)**

### 2000s

**BLIND TIGER FAREWELL** I used to love the Playgroup (at Concorde) years. The last night of the The Blind Tiger Club (formerly Hector’s House) when they closed was one of the greatest nights; it was totally mental.

**MARTIN SIMONNEAU (INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS 2008)**

**SOME LIKE IT HOT** Dan ‘double decks’ every Wednesday night at the Honey Club and, of course, the Hot House on a Friday night.

Chooooooooooooonn!!!

**ALEXANDER LAWRENCE (POLITICS 2001)**

2. Gabrielle Rowles and friends at a Hare Krishna night in East Slope Bar.
5. Michael Badillo Ayala (V&E Politics 2009) meets Fatboy Slim at his Brighton home after organising a signed vinyl as a wedding present for a friend in 2010.
7. The Prodigy’s Keith Flint. The dance act headlined the University Christmas Ball in 1991.
Read more nightlife memories at
WWW. SUSSEX. AC. UK / FALMER
and send yours to
ALUMNI@SUSSEX. AC. UK
Nestled between the Arts buildings, the sun-bleached benches overlooking the pond offer a popular spot for reflection and contemplation. Beside them, in stony silence, sit two rather unusual residents – and their provenance has only recently come to light.

WORDS BY JACQUI BEALING

Silent giants
In 2005, a pair of giant tortoises carved from granite were brought to campus from a conference and activities centre once owned by the University, but at the time of their arrival their history was unknown.

It was only through a chance sighting of a letter to the Daily Telegraph from Nicholas Skeaping, in which he mentioned that tortoises made by his father John Skeaping RA were “now sadly lost somewhere in the Ashdown Forest”, that Sussex staff were able to identify the pieces and contact him.

Last autumn, Nicholas was, for the first time, united with the works carved in 1938 by his father and he was able to shed light on how these beautiful giants were created.

“They are everything I expected them to be,” says Nicholas. “I’d been looking for them since the 1990s, but details had been lost and dates were incorrect, and I feared they had become landfill.”

John Skeaping (1901-1980) was a prize-winning sculptor and a contemporary of Barbara Hepworth (his first wife) and Henry Moore, another sculptor associated with Sussex and whose iconic ‘Large Torso: Arch’ was situated on campus in the 60s.

John was originally commissioned to make the two-and-a-half tonne tortoises for a children’s adventure camp, known as the Isle of Thorns, on the edge of the Ashdown Forest near the Kent/Sussex border.

The camp, designed by architect Louis Osman, included a large paddling pool. The tortoises were located next to the pool, with the intention that children should be able to climb and play on them.

The University acquired the sculptures after buying the freehold of the property, by then a training course and conference centre, in 1992.

Although the property was sold in 2002, the tortoises were not part of the sale. Instead they were brought to campus as a memento of the University’s connection with the Isle of Thorns and, in recognition that, whatever their provenance, they should be preserved.

The tortoises, as Nicholas has discovered, were carved from stone from Blackingstone Granite Quarry in Moretonhampstead, Devon. “My father remembered the works he carved in granite over and above those in other stones because of the sheer hard work that went into creating them in an age before modern power tools,” he explains.

John Skeaping wrote about the tortoises in his 1977 autobiography Drawn from Life. He had bought two pet tortoises to study their form and listed the equipment he would need to work with granite as “two three-pound steel hammers, a dozen steel punches and a pair of granite axes, one coarse, one fine”.

He wrote: “Eventually I got the tortoises finished. I was justly proud of the accomplishment. Although they would never be on public display, I had satisfied myself that I could carve granite, something no other living sculptor could do.”

Nicholas, who lives in Devon, has spent nearly 30 years tracking down various pieces of his father’s body of work and encouraging a celebration of it. He says: “My father was commissioned to carve works that he actively encouraged children to climb on.” And although they’re no longer serving that purpose, he adds, “I’m sure my father would be very pleased to see them in a place full of young people, having been a champion of youth all his life.”

JOHN SKEAPING RA

John Skeaping joined The Royal Academy School for Sculpture in 1919, where he won the 1920 Gold Medal and the Travelling Scholarship. This he took in Italy, returning to exhibit at the Royal Academy in 1922. He won the Prix de Rome in 1924 and, shortly after, married Barbara Hepworth in Florence.

Although John and Barbara exhibited together, their marriage was over by 1931. John then married Nicholas’s mother, a dancer called Morwenna. Nicholas was born in 1947, while his father continued to work, travel and teach at the Royal College of Art.

CAN YOU HELP SOLVE ANOTHER MYSTERY?

Many of us are familiar with the Sussex sign. For years it has welcomed students, visitors and returning alumni entering campus. But who made it? When did it first arrive on campus? If anyone can help us to shed more light on the story behind the sign, do get in touch at ALUMNI@SUSSEX.AC.UK
A PIVOTAL MOMENT

“I’d been homeless for five and a half years when I applied for university. I was tired of sleeping in hostels, public toilets, people’s attics, on spare sofas and floors. Nobody wants to employ a homeless teenager and boredom was kept at bay only by fear.

On the precipice of giving in to overwhelming desperation and alienation, I began my Geography BA at Sussex. The monumental impact the Geography department has rendered on my life is inexpressible. They have stoked the flames of an all-consuming desire to continue learning, and so winning the MacQuitty Prize is all the more significant because it offers both a promise and a pivotal turning point.

It is a promise to follow this passion. It holds the economic security to pursue a PhD unreservedly, without distraction. Throughout my undergraduate degree, studying shared a precarious timetable with three simultaneous part-time jobs. Now, however, my work need not be stacking supermarket shelves at 4am or cleaning student rooms; it can be what I love.

It is also a pivotal moment. It will never be a case of ‘then and now’; homelessness and the fear of returning to it will forever haunt everything I do. The difference is that this prize marks those years as worthwhile. They have stoked the flames of an all-consuming desire to continue learning, and so winning the MacQuitty Prize is all the more significant because it offers both a promise and a pivotal turning point.

It holds the economic security to pursue a PhD unreservedly, without distraction. Throughout my undergraduate degree, studying shared a precarious timetable with three simultaneous part-time jobs. Now, however, my work need not be stacking supermarket shelves at 4am or cleaning student rooms; it can be what I love.

I’d been homeless for five and a half years when I applied for university.

GENERATIONS OF KINDNESS

In 1884, Dr Jonathan MacQuitty’s great-uncle William won a university prize of several hundred pounds for being top among the First Class Honours students studying for a BA in Experimental Science. When he died, the legacy of that one gift passed down the generations to Jonathan, helping support him as he studied for a DPhil in Chemistry at Sussex in the 1970s.

Continuing that legacy, in 2008 Jonathan established the MacQuitty prize for top performing science students, with a desire to allow the winner more financial flexibility in deciding what to do after graduation: “The choice of what to do with the proceeds is left entirely to the prize winner. It could be used to start a business, to donate to charity, to travel, to purchase something.”

Ten years later, thanks to Jonathan’s generosity, the MacQuitty Prize for Science was endowed in perpetuity to ensure that many more students will benefit in years to come.

He also funded the establishment of the annual MacQuitty Prize for the Humanities and Social Sciences. And, in 2018, Josie Jolley became the first recipient.
Alumni library

**PODCASTS**

**JESSIE WARE (ENGLISH 2004),** Table Manners. Alongside her mother Lennie, Jessie invites guests from the worlds of music, culture and politics to chat about food and family over dinner at her place.


**MARCUS PIBWORTH (ART HISTORY 2005),** Ministry of Change. Marcus travels around the UK in his camper van, visiting projects and sharing his own and other people’s stories to help make the conversation about mental health accessible for everyone.

**EMILY DEAN (ENGLISH 1989),** Walking the Dog. Emily takes some of her friends and their dogs for a walk where they discuss the weird, the wonderful, the funny and the extraordinary.

**BOB MORTIMER (LAW 1977) WITH ANDY DAWSON,** Athletico Mince. A humorous take on the world of football that isn’t strictly all about football.

**VERONICA WIGNALL AND GIGI HENNESSY,** Planet PhD. A Brighton-based podcast by current Sussex students which investigates the world and adventures of different PhD students with first-hand experiences and topical issues.

**BOOKS**

**ALEXANDRA LOSKE (ART HISTORY 2005),** 111 Places in Brighton and Lewes You Shouldn’t Miss, Emons Verlag GmbH. Think you know Brighton and Lewes? Alexandra Loske’s book reveals the history behind local landmarks and provides a huge selection of interesting, unusual and quirky places to visit.

**HELEN PANKHURST (AFRAS 1983),** Deeds Not Words: The Story of Women’s Rights – Then and Now, Sceptre. Helen, great-granddaughter of suffragette leader Emmeline Pankhurst and a leading women’s rights campaigner, charts how women’s lives have changed over the last century, offering a powerful and positive argument for the way forward.

**JONATHAN DRORI (ENGINEERING 1979),** Around the World in 80 Trees, Laurence King Publishing. Jonathan uses plant science to illuminate how trees play a role in every part of human life, from the romantic to the regrettable. They offer us sanctuary and inspiration, not to mention the raw materials for everything from Aspirin to maple syrup.

**MICHAEL FULLER (AFRAS 1978),** Kill the Black One First, 535. Michael was Britain’s first black Chief Constable. His memoir presents a stark representation of race relations in the UK and a unique morality tale of how humanity deals with life’s injustices.

**VERENA ERLENBUSCH-ANDERSON (PHILOSOPHY 2007),** Genealogies of Terrorism: Revolution, State Violence, Empire, Columbia University Press. Tracing discourses and practices of terrorism from the French Revolution to late imperial Russia, colonised Algeria and the post-9/11 United States, Verena offers a powerful critique of the power relations that shape how we understand and theorise political violence.

**MKHUSELI “KHUSTA” JACK (AFRAS 1990),** To Survive and Succeed: From farm boy to businessman, Kwela Books. A story of sacrifice, courage and triumph, this book highlights the obstacles Khusta Jack encountered from his chaotic upbringing to his unwavering determination to become a driving force in activism and fight for his people and to become a respected leader in the democratic movement in South Africa.

See more podcasts and publications authored by alumni in the past year at [WWW.SUSSEX.AC.UK/FALMER](http://WWW.SUSSEX.AC.UK/FALMER)
This year, alumni have generously given back to Sussex in many different ways. Here we highlight some of the programmes that you have been involved in and acknowledge the difference you make to students, staff and many others across the Sussex community.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who was inspired to give back to Sussex in response to the previous edition of Falmer. We were delighted to receive further offers of volunteer support from law alumni in response to our ‘Help is at hand’ article about the Sussex Clinical Legal Education programme.

Thanks to your help, we now have four alumni solicitors regularly working pro bono in the clinics, and more supporting the programme in other ways, enabling our students to gain practical experience while providing vital free legal advice to the local community.

AND THANK YOU TO...

Everyone who made a donation or pledged a legacy gift – your generosity, whether towards scholarships, student hardship or research programmes, helps us achieve so much more.

All alumni who came back to campus this year to share their knowledge – your talks and workshops have given students and staff crucial insights into your careers, industry sectors and fields of expertise.

All those who let us use their career stories in our publications and online – your case studies help to instil pride in the University and act as an inspiration to others.

Everyone who has signed up to Sussex Connect – mentoring and networking within the alumni, staff and student community will help to enhance student employability and increase professional development opportunities.

Our alumni in business who have generously opened their doors – hosting exclusive events in the UK and overseas has given alumni network members access to money-can’t-buy experiences.

Our global network of alumni consuls who wave the flag for Sussex – hosting local events, talking to prospective students and sharing your local knowledge with us broadens our horizons and helps keep the alumni community truly international.

Everyone who offers advice – from advisory board members to those filling out our surveys, we appreciate the time you take to give us your views and help shape the University’s future.
1. Anna Bartle (EAM 1987), Vice President of Corporate Affairs at The Estée Lauder Companies, kindly hosted an event for recent graduates and students at the organisation’s London HQ in February 2019.

2. Sussex Connect member and BBC journalist Kamilah McInnis (Sociology 2013) passed on her career tips to students at Make it Happen fortnight 2019.

3. 15Below Product Manager Neil Chalk (Artificial Intelligence 2001) returned to campus this year to speak to students aspiring to follow in his footsteps.

4. Hosted by the Politics Society, Hilary Benn MP (EURO 1971) shares his views on Brexit with a packed audience on campus.

5. Guests networking at Estée Lauder HQ in London.

6. Alumni Consul volunteers Cosmo Lo (MFM 2012) and Philip Lai (EAPS 1975) chat with Sussex’s Dr Marina Pedrinha Vilarino at a Hong Kong alumni event.

7. Alumni and supporters admire the view from the House of Lords at a donors reception in May 2019.

8. Yousra Abdelmoneim (Economics 2012), Senior Associate at PwC UK, passes on tips to students during Make it Happen fortnight.

If you would like more information on any of these programmes, please email ALUMNI@SUSSEX.AC.UK
It was not an accident that at a very young age I became a political activist.

SHAFAIKA ISAACS
FROM 'MANDELA'S LEGACY'
PAGES 10−13