

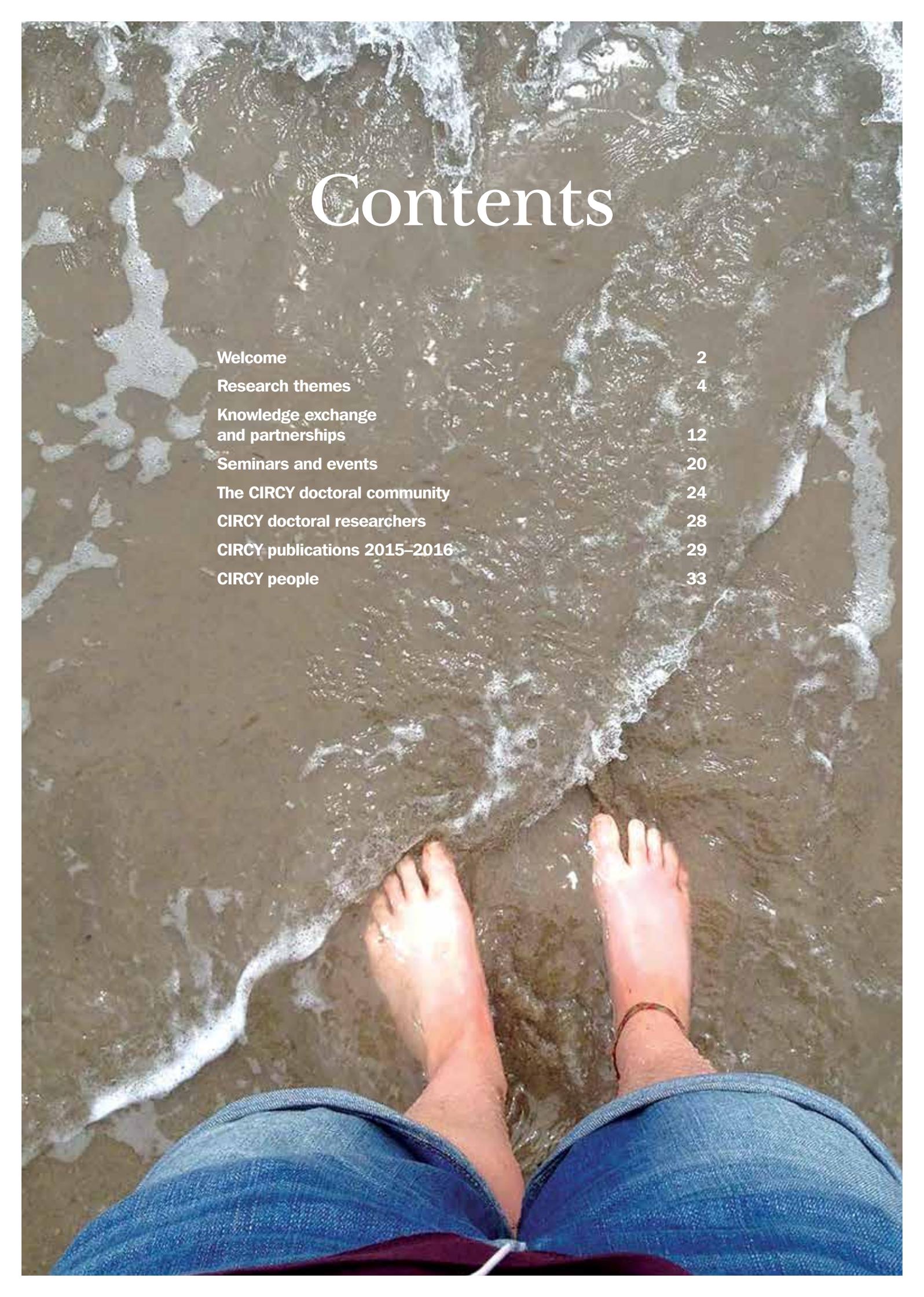
ANNUAL REPORT 2016

CIRCY

CENTRE FOR INNOVATION AND RESEARCH
IN CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

US

UNIVERSITY
OF SUSSEX



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Welcome

WELCOME TO CIRCY

The Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY) was established at the University of Sussex in 2012 as an interdisciplinary, pan-university centre involving members from the social sciences, arts, humanities and professional fields including social work, law, education and health. Our research and scholarship is diverse, but we share a common aim: to put children and young people at the centre of inquiry, across projects and disciplines. With this shared ethos, the collective whole of CIRCY's work spans disciplinary boundaries, generating critical understandings of childhood and youth, and of the practice of work with children and young people. Using innovative approaches, our research and scholarship engages with the real world of children and young people's lives in time and in place.

It's been a year of new developments for CIRCY as we have responded to learning from our three-year review in 2015, and moved through our fourth year. Rachel Thomson has led the research centre over the last four years, working in conjunction with Janet Boddy as Co-Director. Rachel has now taken on two key new roles within the University: as Research Lead in the Department of Social Work and Social Care, and Co-Director of the Sussex Humanities Lab, a major new University investment which has strong synergies with CIRCY's Digital Childhoods research theme. As part of this change, Rachel has handed over the Director's role to Janet, Professor of Child, Youth and Family Studies in the School of Education and Social Work. Rachel continues to be part of the CIRCY Steering Group, and remains closely involved in our work. Michelle Lefevre, a Senior Lecturer within the Department of Social Work and Social Care, has taken on the Co-Director role for CIRCY. Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Child and Family Social Work*, Michelle qualified and practised as a social worker and arts psychotherapist before becoming an academic. Her leadership role within CIRCY supports our focus on 'research in the real world', as Michelle brings particular expertise in professional practice with children and young people.

Our review last year emphasised the value of CIRCY's mission to be interdisciplinary, international and engaging with real world problems and these principles have continued to shape our priorities over the last year. As well as the change in leadership, we have expanded our University Steering Group to include stronger representation of disciplines across the university, and our external International Advisory Committee has also grown to incorporate expertise in knowledge exchange and co-production of research.

In keeping with our interdisciplinary strengths, one priority for the last year has been to foster innovation in interdisciplinary research practice through activities that span university centres of expertise. For CIRCY, collaboration is crucial. We also continue to develop our support for doctoral students and early career researchers, building a vibrant academic community that will produce the next generation of talented researchers and innovators in the field. Our taught courses, the BA in Childhood and Youth: Theory and Practice and the MA in Childhood and Youth Studies, continue to go from strength to strength with students from diverse and international backgrounds, who go on to work in a range of academic and professional roles with children, young people and families.

As CIRCY membership has grown and diversified over the last four years, it seems a good moment to reflect on the ways in which our researchers work with – and across – the underpinning CIRCY research themes. Throughout this report, we present some 'spotlight' examples of the range of CIRCY's research activity, including research projects, knowledge exchange activities, and doctoral research. When considered together, the multidisciplinary perspectives offered by these projects enrich our understanding of childhood and youth as a field of research and practice.



Research themes

Our research themes are not containers, setting boundaries between studies. Instead, they are designed to inform and inspire the work of CIRCY, so while some projects fall clearly within a single theme, many link across themes. Here we set out the core themes for CIRCY's work and aim to give a flavour of the variety of projects that characterise the CIRCY approach. In the *Research Spotlights* section of the report, we provide more detailed examples of our interdisciplinary boundary-crossing projects.

CHILDHOOD PUBLICS

CIRCY researchers are working with the concept of 'publics' as a springboard to think about childhood, youth and social change with reference to technological innovations, socio-economic developments and practices of activism broadly defined. Work within this theme is concerned with childhood and social change in the real world; it allows a focus on children and young people's lived experiences and on the multiple and overlapping configurations of social change and the relationship between the two. Furthermore, it enables us to ask questions about how childhood publics might be created, what social issues might mobilise children, young people and families, and which institutions might support or hinder the creation of new publics.

Projects within the Childhood Publics theme include the Connectors study, funded by the European Research Council and directed by **Sevasti-Melissa Nolas** (Social Work) – see our Research Spotlight – and a study of Forest Schools, funded by the University of Sussex Higher Education Innovation Fund, which explored the relationship between forest schools and children's understandings of environmental rights and responsibilities. **Helena Howe** (Law) and **Janet Boddy** (Education) led the study, working with the Sussex Wildlife Trust and Natural England. Children took photos of their experiences in a range of forest and beach school settings, and these formed the basis of an exhibition and public consultative event in the summer of 2015 at the Linklater Pavilion in Lewes. The project was exploratory, but in the photos and discussions at the exhibition, we begin to see how the embodied experiences of learning about nature within the Forest Schools might

be empowering for children, in allowing them to foreground their own perspectives on nature and the environment, enabling an environmental understanding and expertise that belongs to them and their Forest School community.

'GOOD CHILDHOODS' AND '(EXTRA) ORDINARY CHILDREN'

Research within this theme explores the contribution of historical and cross-cultural approaches to understanding the diverse and contingent meanings of childhood, as well as the ways in which global processes may cut across these in the expression of powerful ideas of what a 'good childhood' or an 'ordinary childhood' should or could be. Research within this theme also considers categories of children and young people whose circumstances are 'extraordinary', placing them outside of these normative ideals – for example young migrants, child labourers and care leavers – and considers the ways in which those categorisations can neglect the 'ordinary' aspects of 'extraordinary' lives, practices and relationships. Projects within this theme span arts, humanities and social sciences.

Dorte Thorsen (Global Studies) is involved in a cross-cultural project on Intra-household dynamics: gendered practices of remittance use and the shaping of youth aspirations. The research looks at investment in the education of boys and girls, at young people's perceptions of – and interest in – labour migration, at the views of young men and women's migration, and at how migration is both an outcome of social and economic changes and a stimulus of social change. The project focuses on Bangladesh, Ghana and Indonesia. Working Papers are currently in production. Dorte is also working on a consultancy project for Save the Children (US), focusing on rural children and youth Migrating to the City in Vietnam and Rwanda.

Also in Global Studies, **David Sancho** is funded by a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship (2015-18) to conduct *Educating Migrants*, an ethnography of middle class lives and schooling in Dubai. The project examines the robust Indian private school sector in Dubai and its role in the emergence and consolidation of a transnational Indian

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middle class. In doing so, it addresses a neglected area of work in transnational education: growing South to South educational flows and the novel educational practices emerging from these.

Lucy Robinson (History) is working with Jersey Heritage as the historical advisor for a year-long set of exhibitions on the 1980s. The project builds on CIRCY links with the Mass Observation Archive, drawing on some Mass Observation writing from the Channel Islands, and has created the opportunity for two undergraduate History students at Sussex to work on the research.

Michael Lawrence (Media and Film) is currently working on a book called *The Children and the Nations: Juvenile Actors, Hollywood Cinema and Humanitarian Sentiment 1940-1960*, which focuses on the roles played by eight child actors, including several refugee children from Europe, in Hollywood films about the Second World War that in various ways sought to sentimentalise the objectives and agenda of the United Nations during and in the decades following the war.



Image: Jean Qui Pleure, © Victoria and Albert Museum

Hannah Field (English) has recently started a new project, 'D is for Dunce', focusing on the figure of the dunce in art, literature, and material culture. In January 2016, she gave an invited talk on her work at a childhood-themed session of the London Nineteenth-Century Seminar at Senate House at the University of London.

Collaboration is central to our approach in CIRCY, and we are also involved in a series of projects in collaboration with the Centre for Social Work Innovation and Research, based in the Department of Social Work and Social Care and directed by Barry Luckock. These include a series of research evaluations of the Department for Education's Innovation Fund, and involve collaboration with Robin Banerjee (Psychology), Janet Boddy (Education), Gordon Harold (Psychology/Rudd Centre) and Gillian Hampden-Thompson (who directs the Centre for Teaching and Learning Research within the Department of Education).

Other CIRCY/C-SWIR collaborations include *See Me, Hear Me*, funded by the Office of the Children's Commissioner in England. Social Work faculty members, Barry Luckock, Michelle Lefevre, Kristine Hickle and Gillian Ruch, have evaluated the implementation in three local authorities of a new child-centred framework for structuring services to address child sexual exploitation. The findings from the pilot implementation will inform development of services around the country.

EMOTIONAL LIVES

Research under the theme of Emotional Lives seeks to understand established and taken-for-granted issues through the lens of emotion and affective practice, considering, for example, how emotional lives underpin our behaviour and practices. Our understanding of emotion takes account of historical and cultural contingencies, as well as an awareness of the ways in which emotion expresses and confirms the materiality, relationality and sensuality of social lives. Projects within this theme are also concerned with practice and policy approaches that are emotionally engaged and which seek to build insight into emotional dynamics and development among young people and those working with and for them.

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Our research and scholarship is diverse, but we share a common aim: to put children and young people at the centre of inquiry, across projects and disciplines.



As with other themes, projects concerned with children's emotional lives span disciplines. For example, **Hester Barron** and **Claire Langhamer** (History) have been researching emotion in children's writing, and have a paper due out shortly in the *Journal of Social History* (see publications).

In Psychology, **Robin Banerjee** leads a range of projects through the CRESS research lab (Children's Relationships, Emotions and Social Skills), which examine ways in which schools support pupils' wellbeing, social and emotional skills and relationships. Examples include research funded by the British Council Lifelong Learning Comenius Scheme; the 'Targeted Mental Health in Schools' project (funded by Bracknell Forest Council); the 'Building Communities Through Dialogue' project on group work and inter-ethnic relations (funded by the Development Education Centre, South); and a synthesis of research and policy evaluations on emotional health, wellbeing and resilience in primary schools for The Public Policy Institute of Wales.

The CRESS Lab has also worked with a variety of practitioners and policy-makers on projects relating to the psychological development, learning and aspirations of potentially vulnerable young people, including a study of the social and emotional development of children in care (in collaboration with Brighton and Hove City Council), a theatre project for young people who have been excluded from

mainstream schooling (funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation), and an evaluation of local projects designed to raise the aspirations of 8-13 year olds in Brighton and Hove (funded by Brighton and Hove City Council). In February 2016, Robin and colleagues published a report commissioned by The Public Policy Institute of Wales: *Promoting Emotional Health, Well-being and Resilience in Primary Schools*. This synthesis of research and policy evaluations which provides recommendations for the Welsh Government concludes that school-based work in this area can be very effective, but highlights the importance of strong connections across school systems.

DIGITAL CHILDHOODS

Research within this theme links closely with the work of the Sussex Humanities Lab, a major university investment (www.sussex.ac.uk/shl), and examines the many dimensions of digital childhood, including the ways that technology impacts on parenting and play as well as how the 'context collapse' associated with the digital complicates the contours of 'family-scapes' as well as personal and professional boundaries in work with children and young people, confounding age and generation-based hierarchies. Research within this theme recognises young people as entrepreneurs of digital landscapes, contributing to debates on data sharing, ownership and access as well as curators of archives and memories.

Everyday Childhoods is a series of projects which link CIRCY and the Sussex Humanities Lab, led by **Rachel Thomson** (Social Work) and **Liam Berriman** (Digital Humanities) and with funding from sources including the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The projects explore how we document 'Everyday Childhoods' in contemporary society, and involve partnerships between the University of Sussex, the University of Brighton, the Open University and the Mass Observation Archive. You can read more about their work over the last year on their blog (<http://blogs.sussex.ac.uk/everydaychildhoods/>) and read about a recent Everyday Childhoods event, the 'My Object Stories' Hackathon in the Knowledge Exchange section of this report.

We promote intelligent research design using a broad mix of quantitative and qualitative methods best able to address forward looking research questions.

The ASCmel.T. project, led by Nicola Yuill (Psychology) is developing an app that allows people with Autism Spectrum Conditions – as well as families, teachers, professionals, and anyone who supports someone with autism – to share their ideas on what kind of new technology could help people with autism. Users of the app (ASCmel.T.) can upload a one minute video explaining their idea. It's simple, easy to use, and the ideas will be shared with researchers so that new developments in digital technologies for autism can be matched to support the needs of users.

To find out more, visit <http://ascme-it.org.uk/>

METHODOLOGICAL INNOVATION

CIRCY has established a growing international reputation for methodological excellence and innovation. This includes world leading expertise in temporal research methods, as well as internationally recognised strengths in participatory research with children and young people, in research ethics, in cross-national research, and in creative, digital, sensual and psychosocial approaches. Across the disciplinary mix that is CIRCY, we promote intelligent research design using a broad mix of quantitative and qualitative methods best able to address forward looking research questions.

Sevasti-Melissa Nolas (Social Work) and Lel Meleyal (Social Work) have launched the People in my Life project, with colleagues at the Free University in Berlin (Antje Rauters) and Hasselt University (Johannes Schoning). This methodological innovation project spans the themes of Emotional Lives, (Extra)Ordinary Childhoods and Digital Childhoods, in exploring relationship dynamics for social work practice. The team are experimenting with haptic technology in order to create a tablet-based app that can be used with figurines to play out and track the movement of different relationships in a child's life. Over the summer, the team will be testing the new app against traditional pen-and-paper approaches (e.g. ecomapping), sampling children on the beach in Brighton and an inner-city school in South London. The project is funded by the Jacobs Foundation.

In another CIRCY/C-SWIR collaboration, Michelle Lefevre (Social Work) and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, Chris Hall, are working with two local authorities to explore Professional Communication between Social Workers and Children during home visits. Examining videos of real practice using Conversation Analysis, and exploring children and social workers' perceptions of their interactions, is enabling them to develop more informed understandings of how to overcome the challenges which occur in complex and contested encounters. This project is funded by the University's Research Development Fund, to develop methodological innovation in relation to an under-researched situation.

Against All Odds? provides another example of CIRCY's approach to methodological innovation and of the ways in which projects often span themes – in this case, 'Good childhoods' and '(Extra) ordinary Children', and 'Emotional Lives', as well as Methodological Innovation. Funded by the Norwegian Research Council, the research is led by Elisabeth Backe-Hansen at NOVA in Norway, and is being conducted in collaboration with researchers at SFI in Denmark. It aims to challenge stigmatising perceptions of the lives of young people and adults who have been in care.

Methods combine secondary analysis of administrative data in each country with a critical context-setting review and qualitative longitudinal research with care experienced young people aged 16-32 years. **Janet Boddy** (Education) and **Fidelma Hanrahan** (Psychology/Education) are leading qualitative longitudinal research in England. In the three countries this involves creative methods, including photography and music, to build understandings of what 'doing well' means in participants' everyday lives. The researchers are completing the first wave of qualitative fieldwork and have a variety of dissemination activities planned in the coming months, including papers at the International Sociological Association in July and at the EUSARF conference in September.

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SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH: CONNECTORS

Connectors is funded by the European Research Council and led by Sevasti-Melissa Nolas, working with Christos Varvantakis, Vinnarasan Aruldoss and Claire Prater (all Social Work). 'Connectors' is a cross-national study focusing on children's participation in public life and how an orientation towards social action develops in younger children (aged 6-11 years). This study follows a small number of the same children in three cities (Athens, Hyderabad and London) over a period of four years, working with a cross section of children in each city and using a range of qualitative and creative methods including drawing, photography and geographical and relational mapping.

The research team has just completed 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork with 45 families living in Athens, Hyderabad and London. During this time, the team also ran three creative workshops for the children participating in the study. Children worked with facilitators (including Sussex Doctoral Students Perpetua Kirby, Tasleem Rana, and Jenny Hewitt, and CIRCY Associate Researcher Catherine Walker), to share and discuss a sample of pre-selected photographs from the many they had taken of their everyday lives and what mattered to them over the previous 18 months. In each workshop children produced a single photo story from their images of something that mattered to them and which they were happy to share with other children on the study. The workshops were supported by a photographer and illustrator and the team will be curating some images from the workshop on the study blog in due course (see <https://connectorsstudy.wordpress.com/>). The research team are also in the process of organising these images into a book.

In early June 2016, the Connectors team also ran an academic workshop on exploring the intersections of age, politics, and everyday life across the lifespan. 'Activism on the Edge of Age' was attended by an interdisciplinary group of researchers based in the UK and the US, and represented research carried out in Cyprus, England, Greece, India, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and the USA. The workshop was also attended by a visual illustrator who documented the event.

For more information on the Connectors Study please contact Sevasti-Melissa Nolas: s.nolas@sussex.ac.uk





SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH: KEEP YOUR BACK TO THE FUTURE

Pam Thurschwell's (English) current project, *Keep your Back to the Future: Adolescent Time Travel Across the Twentieth Century*, argues that the history of 20th century adolescence can be usefully understood in relation to the figure of the adolescent as time traveller. From Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895) and Henry James's *The Awkward Age* (1899), to psychoanalytic and criminalizing discourses around the adolescent in the first decades of the twentieth century, from the birth of the teenager as consumer in the 1950s to American high school movies of the 1980s, to the post-apocalyptic landscapes of much of today's popular Young Adult fiction, we find images of youth attempting to reconfigure historical time. She argues that a series of 20th century portrayals of adolescence has formally identified it with chronological refusal and narrative rupture.

The adolescent has been repeatedly posited as “out of time” in all the varied meanings of that phrase: as anachronistic, or ahead of his or her time, invested in the ecstatic moment, or already nostalgic for the childhood or adolescence he or she is simultaneously eager to leave behind.

Through a series of close readings and contextual analyses, this book traces the meanings of the time-travelling adolescent across our contemporary culture, and through contemporary theorizations of time and futurity.

A recent paper, “Surviving Sex from Molly Ringwald to Katniss to *The Fault in Our Stars*” on a panel with Rachel Thomson (Social Work) and Lucy Robinson (History), at the International Girl Studies Association Inaugural Conference, UEA 7-9 April 2016, was a spin off from this project, which considered how the narratives available for adolescent girls are changing at this particular historical juncture. Through analysis of John Hughes's iconic 1985 hit, *The Breakfast Club*, Suzanne Collins's *Hunger Games* series and the book and film of John Green's story of two teenage lovers with terminal cancer, *The Fault in Our Stars*, Pam's work examines the sexual double standards in place for the adolescent girl, and the contemporary popular representations of teenage girls' sexual choices. Her argument contrasts historical moments in which representations of adolescence centre on sexual choice, and coercion, and what it might mean about our contemporary situation that some extremely popular representations of adolescent girls portray their sexual choices as taking place in the shadow of death or extinction. These teenage girls' lives and choices appear framed by contemporary Western neoliberal precarity. Are these stories a substitute for the diminishing possibilities of the *Bildungsroman*, and the typical American high school romance plot?

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SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH: BEATING THE ODDS

Led by Robin Banerjee (Psychology), the *Beating the Odds* project is conducted in conjunction with the CRESS (Children's Relationships, Emotions and Social Skills) Lab with funding from The Hollick Family Charitable Trust, Brighton and Hove City Council and an alumnus of the University of Sussex. The project builds on successful pilot work in 2014 (funded by Brighton and Hove City Council and Artswork), and involves two main strands of work: one focused on the impact of participation in creative arts projects for young people – including those who are vulnerable or socially excluded, and the other focused on family support work being carried out by local support services (including services linked to Brighton and Hove City Council's *Early Help Hub* and others run by voluntary organisations such as Safety Net).

The work sits within CIRCY themes of 'Good Childhoods' and '(Extra)Ordinary Children', Emotional Lives, and Methodological Innovation. The project involves close interdisciplinary collaboration with Ed Hughes (Music) and Janet Boddy (Education).

The creative arts research strand involves work with a wide range of arts organisations and projects, including those working with groups of potentially vulnerable or marginalised young people between 13 and 21 years of age, primarily across Sussex and the South East region. Collaborating projects use creative approaches including dance, drama, music, and photography, and multiple-arts approaches, and include both long and short projects. Partners include Glyndebourne; Miss Represented (Brighton Dome); Modelling Change (Thames Valley Partnership); AudioActive; and Turner Contemporary.

The research employs a longitudinal research design within a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative (e.g. survey-style rating questions) and qualitative (e.g. interviews; focus groups) methodologies, in order to study: social relationships and basic need satisfaction (e.g., environmental support for young people's experience of autonomy, competence, and relatedness); emotions, values, goals, and beliefs (e.g., self-perceptions, goal orientations, attributional patterns); and behavioural indicators (e.g., performance outcomes, perseverance, continued engagement/attendance, and broader social/academic behaviours and outcomes). The evaluative framework will enable understanding of pathways between these processes.

For more information about the projects contact Fidelma Hanrahan: f.hanrahan@sussex.ac.uk

Knowledge exchange and partnerships

Research in – and for – the real world has been integral to CIRCY’s work over the last four years. For us, this means that making research visible and accessible is an ethical imperative, and that depends on engaging with research users – including researched groups – throughout the research process and beyond the lifetime of specific projects. In this section, we highlight some examples of the range of work we do with knowledge exchange and partnership. That includes ‘traditional’ academic activities such as dissemination and expert advisory work, and also innovative projects which aim to democratise the research process and create mutual learning between researchers and others who have a stake in research process and outcomes (whether practitioners, policy makers, other academics, or children, young people and families).

CIRCY AT THE THEATRE

THE GOOD SEX PROJECT

Following a meeting with the Tricycle Theatre Company in the autumn term, Rachel Thomson (Social Work), Lucy Robinson (History), Pam Thurschwell (English), Ester McGeeney (Social Work), and Elsie Whittington (Social Work), have been planning a collaboration around a production exploring sexual health and social change, working with Director in Residence, Tom Bowtell. Subsequently, Ester and Elsie ran a workshop with Tricycle in which young participants and parents explored the issues. A performance entitled ‘Bred’ was performed at the Tricycle from 18-20 March 2016. You can read Rachel Thomson’s review of the performance on the Good Sex Project blog: <https://goodsexproject.wordpress.com/2016/04/06/bred>

WHAT MAKES A GOOD CHILDHOOD?

Fidelema Hanrahan (Education/Psychology) and Robin Banerjee (Psychology), with support from the Artsworld national agency for youth arts, held a workshop on participation in creative arts at WHY (‘What makes a good childhood?’) Festival at the London Southbank Centre, on 22 October 2015. They were joined by practitioners from creative arts programmes for young people developed by Brighton Dome, Thames Valley Partnership, and AudioActive.

NATIONAL THEATRE

CIRCY students on the MA in Childhood and Youth Studies visited the National Theatre in October 2015, where they watched A Comedy of Errors and learned about National Theatre youth projects and the Creativity Lab.

POLICY AND PRACTICE CONNECTIONS

CIRCY members have a range of partnerships with policy and practice stakeholders, including advisory roles with national and local government.

CIRCY members have a range of partnerships with policy and practice stakeholders, including advisory roles with national and local government. Other examples include Barry Luckcock’s (Social Work) longstanding role in chairing the CoramBAAF Research Advisory Group (<http://corambaaf.org.uk>). Janet Boddy (Education) sits on the Partnership Board of Research in Practice (www.rip.org.uk), the Policy Board for Fostering Network (www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk) and the Research Group of the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (www.adcs.org.uk).

Janet has also been part of the expert working group revising the ESRC Framework for Research Ethics, which was published this year (www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics/)

Kristine Hickle (Social Work) is one of four regional academic representatives working with the Child Sexual Exploitation and Policing Knowledge Hub based at the University of Bedfordshire’s International Centre: Researching Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking. Their aim is to partner with police in enhancing police responses to child sexual exploitation throughout England and Wales, and a key component of this work is in helping enhance police engagement with young people. Kristine is also the sole academic member of the Child Sexual Exploitation Regional Threat group, composed of members from police forces across the south east of England.

INTERNATIONAL LINKS

NETHERLANDS YOUTH INSTITUTE

Janet Boddy (Education) was the invited speaker on 'Understanding outcomes for young people after out-of-home care' at the International Symposium at 'For the Youth Day' (Voor de Jeugd Dag), Netherlands Youth Institute, Amsterdam 5 October 2015. As part of the visit, Janet met with local authority stakeholders in the municipality of Zaanstad (just outside Amsterdam), drawing on CIRCY research on child protection in schools, inequalities in school exclusions, and family interventions, to inform improved integration between education and child welfare provision.

EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL

Janet Boddy (Education) continues to work with the European Research Council in Brussels as an expert advisor for the ERC Ethics Assessment team.

SFI COPENHAGEN

Rachel Thomson (Social Work) and Janet Boddy (Education) continue to have close links with SFI, the national Social Research Institute in Copenhagen. Rachel is there as a visiting professor, and both Janet and Rachel serve on the SFI International Advisory Board. At the SFI Advisory Board meeting in June 2016, Janet contributed to a plenary panel presenting on conceptual and methodological issues in studying "vulnerable youth".

CIRCY IN THE MEDIA

SOCIAL MEDIA AND TEENAGERS' IDENTITIES

Liam Berriman (Digital Humanities) and Rachel Thomson (Social Work) were commissioned to write the lead article in a national A-level student magazine *Sociology Review* on 'Social Media and Teenagers' Identities' and was published in Volume 25 number 3 Feb 2016.

TROUBLED FAMILIES

Janet Boddy (Education) was in the *Economist* on the 22 January, talking about the Troubled Families programme: www.economist.com/news/britain/21688873-there-may-be-trouble-ahead

TALKING ABOUT OUR WORK

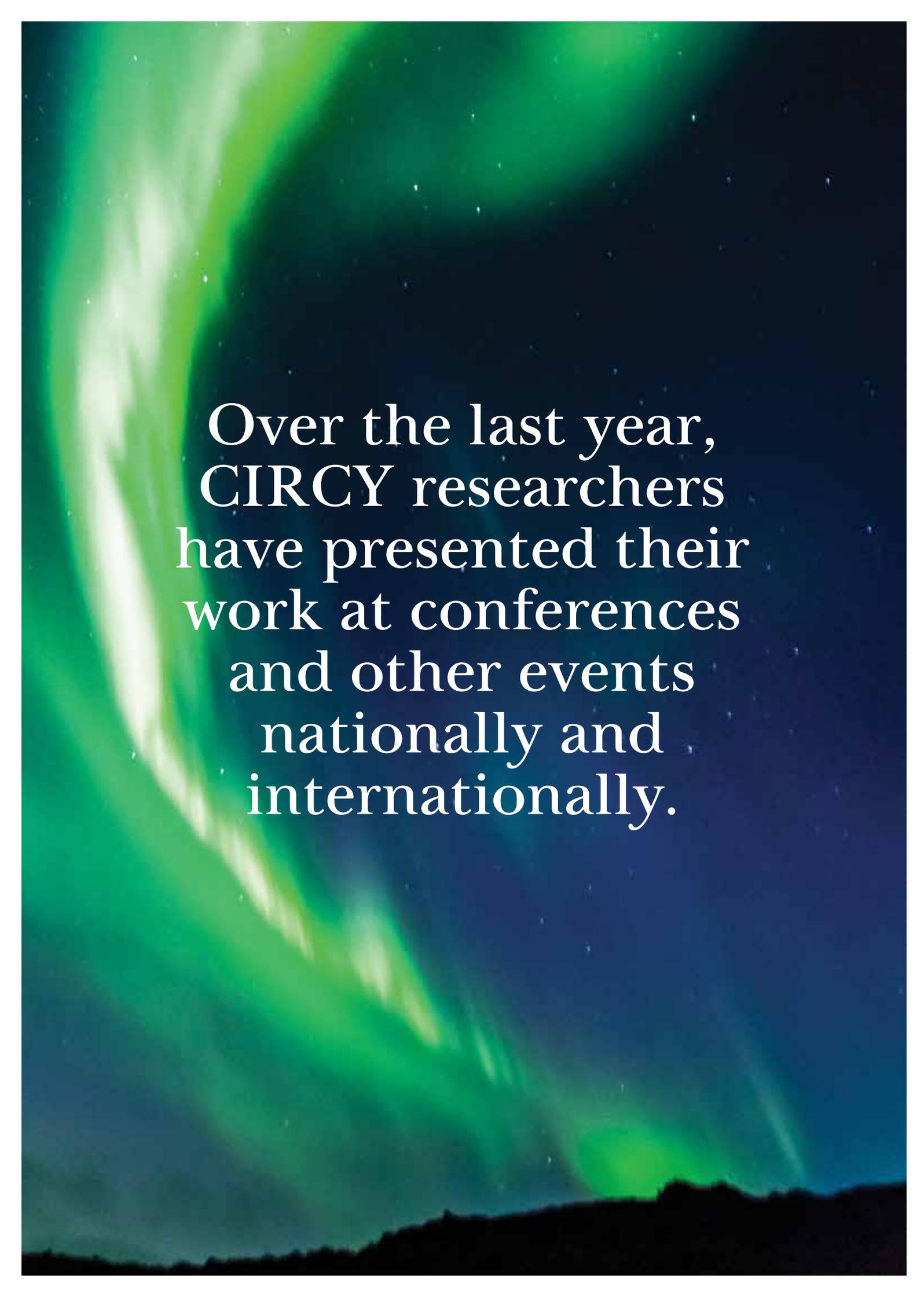
Over the last year, CIRCY researchers have presented their work at conferences and other events nationally and internationally. Here, we present some selected examples, which also show how CIRCY researchers work together across projects.

CENTRE FOR INNOVATION AND RESEARCH IN WELLBEING

CIRCY co-hosted the launch in September 2015 of the new University of Sussex research centre, the Centre for Innovation and Research in Wellbeing (www.sussex.ac.uk/socialwork/cirw), a two day conference with presentations from CIRCY researchers including Padmini Iyer (Education), Kristine Hickle (Social Work) and Janet Boddy (Education). CIRW is directed by Charles Watters (Social Work), who is part of our CIRCY steering group, supporting links between CIRCY and CIRW projects concerned with child and youth wellbeing.

ATTACHMENT THEORY

CIRCY doctoral researcher Tasleem Rana (Social Work) organised this workshop exploring theories and practices of youth mentoring. The workshop took place in October 2015, and was attended by MA students, PhD researchers, staff and clinical psychologists from East Sussex Mental Health services. Participants included Robbie Duschinsky from the University of Cambridge, and Sharon Lambley and Colleen McLaughlin from the University of Sussex. Through a combination of short presentations and group discussions the workshop provided a forum for the critical exploration of attachment theory.



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GENDER IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Roma Thomas (Social Work), Rachel Thomson (Social Work) and Rebecca Webb (Education) attended 'The Work of Gender in the Lives of Children and Young People' international symposium at the University of the Arctic, Tromsø, Norway in October 2015. Rachel gave a keynote address on Marking Gender in Documents of the Everyday Life of Teenagers, and Roma presented on an aspect of her doctoral work, the constructions of young masculinities within social policy and practice discourse, while Rebecca discussed the gendering of some school subjects within a rights discourse of one English primary school in England. They even saw the Northern Lights!

COMMUNICATIONS AND DEMOCRACY

CIRCY had a strong presence at the Communications and Democracy Conference of the European Communications Research and Educational Association in Copenhagen in October 2015, where the Connectors team organised a symposium with presentations from Liam Berriman (Digital Humanities), Jo Moran-Ellis (Sociology), Lel Meleyal (Social Work), and the Connectors team: Sevasti-Melissa Nolas, Christos Varvantakis, and Vinnarasan Aruldoss, addressing various aspects of young people's lives in a digital age.

UNEQUAL FAMILIES AND RELATIONSHIPS

CIRCY researchers organised a symposium at the International Conference of the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships at the University of Edinburgh in June. The symposium, entitled Different childhoods? Rethinking inequality through the lens of social change, included presentations from Liam Berriman (Digital Humanities) and Rachel Thomson (Social Work), Fidelma Hanrahan (Education/Psychology) and Janet Boddy (Education), Jacqui Shepherd (Education), and Sevasti-Melissa Nolas (Social Work).

DIGITAL BUBBLES

The Digital Bubbles ESRC Seminar Series on 'Innovative technologies for autism – critical reflections on digital bubbles' is led by Nicola Yuill (Psychology) and Judith Good (Informatics) from the University of Sussex, in collaboration with Sarah Parsons (University of Southampton) and Mark Brosnan (University of Bath). The series focuses on why and how technologies are being developed, applied and evaluated for people with autism, exploring different 'bubbles' that exist within the field; for example, methods, disciplines, stage of life, and the use of different technologies. On Friday 18 March 2016, the University of Sussex hosted the sixth seminar in the series, 'The Disciplinary Bubble', where Rachel Thomson (Social Work) was among the speakers, presenting her work on children's digital cultures. You can find out more on the Digital Bubbles website: http://digitalbubbles.org.uk/?page_id=824

INSIDE OUT

Lucy Robinson (History), Pam Thurschwell (English) and Rachel Thomson (Social Work) presented a panel at the inaugural International Girls Studies conference at the University of East Anglia in April 2016. Their panel 'Inside out: sexual/ digital revolution and the teenager' showcased their collaborative work focused on the teenage girl since 1980, exploring depictions in television, social research and policy, film and Young Adult literature.

EVERYDAY CHILDHOODS

Christos Varvantakis (Social Work) gave an invited public lecture, at the University of Flensburg in Germany in May 2016 as part of their CampusTalks series, entitled 'Everyday Childhoods. Doing ethnography with children in the family'. The public lecture was followed by a workshop for doctoral and post-doctoral students developing themes of ethnographic research with children living in cities.

THE SOCIAL, THE BIOLOGICAL AND THE MATERIAL CHILD

The Connectors team organised a symposium at the University of Sheffield Centre for the Study of Childhood and Youth 6th International Conference: The Social, the Biological and the Material Child in July 2016, with presentations from CIRCY researchers including Perpetua Kirby, Rebecca Webb as well as Connectors researchers Sevasti-Melissa Nolas, Christos Varvantakis, and Vinnarasan Aruldoss.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

CIRCY Visiting Professor, David Buckingham (Education, Media and Communications) has been elected as a fellow of the British Academy, and Rachel Thomson (Social Work) has been elected as a fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. Congratulations to both!

VISITORS

In November 2015, the Against All Odds? team held a three-day project meeting where CIRCY researchers Janet Boddy (Education) and Fidelma Hanrahan (Education/ Psychology) came together to work with Elisiv Bakketeig, Marianne Dahlen and Tonje Gunderson from NOVA in Oslo; Charlie Owen from UCL Institute of Education; and Mette Lausten, Jeanette Østergaard and Mette Agerskov Smith from SFI in Copenhagen.



In February 2016, we welcomed a group of faculty and pedagogy students from Hogeschool Rotterdam, led by Eline Bouwman. The group met students on the BA in Childhood and Youth: Theory and Practice, MA in Childhood and Youth Studies, and BA in Social Work. A group of faculty and students from the University of Sussex visited Rotterdam Hogeschool in June 2015, and as a result of this link, a BA in Childhood and Youth student, Steven Crowe, carried out his undergraduate research project on understandings of risk in residential care within a residential setting in Rotterdam this year.

Other visitors include: Professor Heinz Sünker from the Bergische Universität Wuppertal, Germany, who gave a seminar in November 2015; Dr. Anette Bolin, Senior Lecturer in Social Work/Social Pedagogy at Högskolan Väst in Trollhättan, Sweden who also gave a seminar in May 2016; Professor Thalia Dragonas, from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens visited in June and contributed to the Connectors study Activism on the Edge of Age workshop. In June 2016, Sine Kirkegaard Nielsen from RUC Roskilde Universitet in Denmark visited CIRCY to give a seminar and meet researchers. We are also pleased to welcome Professor Orly Benjamin from Bar-Ilan University in Israel, who is visiting the University of Sussex for a sabbatical from July 2016, and will be part of CIRCY during her time here. She will present a seminar in the autumn term.



SPOTLIGHT ON KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE: THE 'MY OBJECT STORIES' HACKATHON

On Saturday 14 November 2015, as part of the ESRC Festival of Social Science, the 'My Object Stories' Hackathon took place, hosted by CIRCY, the Sussex Humanities Lab and the Mass Observation Archive. The project sits within CIRCY's Digital Childhoods and 'Good Childhoods'/(Extra)Ordinary Childhoods themes, and was led by Liam Berriman (Digital Humanities), in collaboration with Ben Jackson, Cathy Grundy, Manuel Cruz Martinez, Chris Kiefer (all Digital Humanities), Thanos Lontiris (Music) and Rachel Thomson (Social Work), alongside photographer Crispin Hughes and film-maker Susi Arnott. The ESRC Festival of Social Science aims to showcase to the public the relevance and potential of social research. The Hackathon blurred the boundaries between research and knowledge exchange as it set out to open up the process through which researchers may co-produce 'data' with young participants and to explore the way in which this might be re-used and brought to life in different ways.

The day was centred on a shared project which explored ways of bringing to life young people's stories about their favourite everyday objects – building on work undertaken as part of the Curating Childhoods project which is creating a new multi-media collection within Mass Observation called 'Everyday Childhoods'. The hackathon model brought together all the different actors involved in the lifecycle of a research and development project to see what could be done in a day, creating a live interface between processes of data collection, archiving and animation and celebrating the mundane and the everyday in children's lives – from a well-worn book to a pair of Dr Marten boots.



SPOTLIGHT ON KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE: SAME-SEX COUPLES AND MEDIATION

Led by Maria Moscati (Law), working with a comparative and interdisciplinary approach, this research project addressed legal, procedural and social dimensions of same-sex unions and their disputes, focusing on three discrete but related areas: firstly, the socio-historical context of same-sex unions and their disputes; secondly, legal, procedural and social developments of same-sex unions and disputes within the Italian scenario; and, thirdly questions of access to justice and dispute resolution.

Maria coordinated a recent EU-funded research project called Litigious Love: Same-Sex Couples and Mediation in the EU (www.litigiouslove.eu), which collected data on the nature of disputes and the resolution of such disputes between same-sex partners and same-sex parents in four legal cultures in Europe. Overall the project attempted to raise awareness on the rights of same-sex couples and on the manner in which social disapproval, homophobia and lack of protective legislation all impact on sources of disputes between same-sex partners and on the resolution of those disputes. This work led to a further research project (also EU-funded) concerning domestic and dating violence on lesbian and transgender women in the EU.

Following on from this research, Maria has received funding for impact development from the University of Sussex in order to undertake a new project aiming at writing informative material for the children of same-sex couples regarding disputes involving their parents.

A photograph of a large turtle in a terrarium. The turtle is in the foreground, facing left. Its shell is dark with a pattern of lighter, starburst-like markings. In the background, through a glass window, several people are visible. A child is looking out from the bottom left, and two adults are standing in the center. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an indoor or shaded outdoor environment.

CIRCY hosts a
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and conferences.

Seminars and events

CIRCY hosts a programme of exciting and inclusive events over the year including workshops, seminars and conferences. Here we give a taste of the 2015-16 seminars, encouraging you to 'watch again' those that you missed, or to share the recordings with others.

21 SEPTEMBER 2015

Creative arts and family coaching interventions with at-risk youths: How and why might they impact the socio-emotional and motivational development of marginalised youths?, Robin Banerjee, Professor of Developmental Psychology and Dr Fidelma Hanrahan, Education and Psychology Research Fellow, University of Sussex

23 OCTOBER 2015

'Exploring Attachment Theory: A Workshop', Dr Robbie Duschinsky – University of Cambridge, Professor Colleen McLaughlin – University of Sussex, Sharon Lambley – University of Sussex

23 NOVEMBER 2015

Thinking with Vulnerability and Resistance as a Dynamic of the Research/Researcher Process, Dr Rebecca Webb (Education), Perpetua Kirby (Education), Marthe Paluch (Education), Louise Simms (Social Work) and Elsie Whittington (Social Work), University of Sussex.

30 NOVEMBER 2015

'Social Pedagogy and Social Work (Soziale Arbeit) in Germany: Histories and contemporary problems', Professor Heinz Sünker, Bergische Universität, Wuppertal, Germany

► <https://adobeconnect.sussex.ac.uk/p4p2yrycc3j/>

13 JANUARY 2016

The University of Brighton Business School / Education Research Centre and the University of Sussex Centre for Innovation and Research in Children and Youth (CIRCY) presented two events on Co-production in social and market research, in January 2016: *An Insight into digital marketing* and a *Roundtable on co-production processes*. Speakers included Sevasti-Melisa Nolas (Social Work) and Liam Berriman (Digital Humanities).

► <http://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/education/2015/12/23/co-production-in-social-and-market-research-weds-13th-january-2016-mithras-house-150-moulsecoomb-campus-uob-10-11-am/>

18 MARCH 2016

Digital Bubbles 5, The Disciplinary Bubble was held on Friday 18th March 2016. Focussing on work relevant to technology and autism, dispersed across diverse disciplines. How we can collaborate constructively across these, what we are trying to achieve with technology and how can each discipline contribute? Rachel Thomson (Social Work), presented a paper *'Research' as a feature of children's and young people's everyday digital practice*, at the Digital Bubbles (Autism & Technology) seminar series, on the same day.

► http://digitalbubbles.org.uk/?page_id=24

SEMINARS AND EVENTS

11 APRIL 2016

'Telling 'Moral Tales'? Family narratives of responsible privilege and environmental concern in India and the UK'
Professor Janet Boddy (Education), University of Sussex

4 MAY 2016

'Young people's strategies for handling economic adversity: Extending the research agenda', Dr. Anette Bolin, senior lecturer in social work/social pedagogy at Högskolan Väst in Trollhättan, Sweden.

► <https://adobeconnect.sussex.ac.uk/p3y54v18d1j/>

3 JUNE 2016

Connectors Workshop: *'Activism on the edge of age'*
Quaker Meeting House, Brighton. This workshop brought together researchers and activists concerned with the lived experiences of activism across the lifespan, with a particular emphasis on earlier and later life experiences.

► <https://connectorsstudy.wordpress.com/events/>

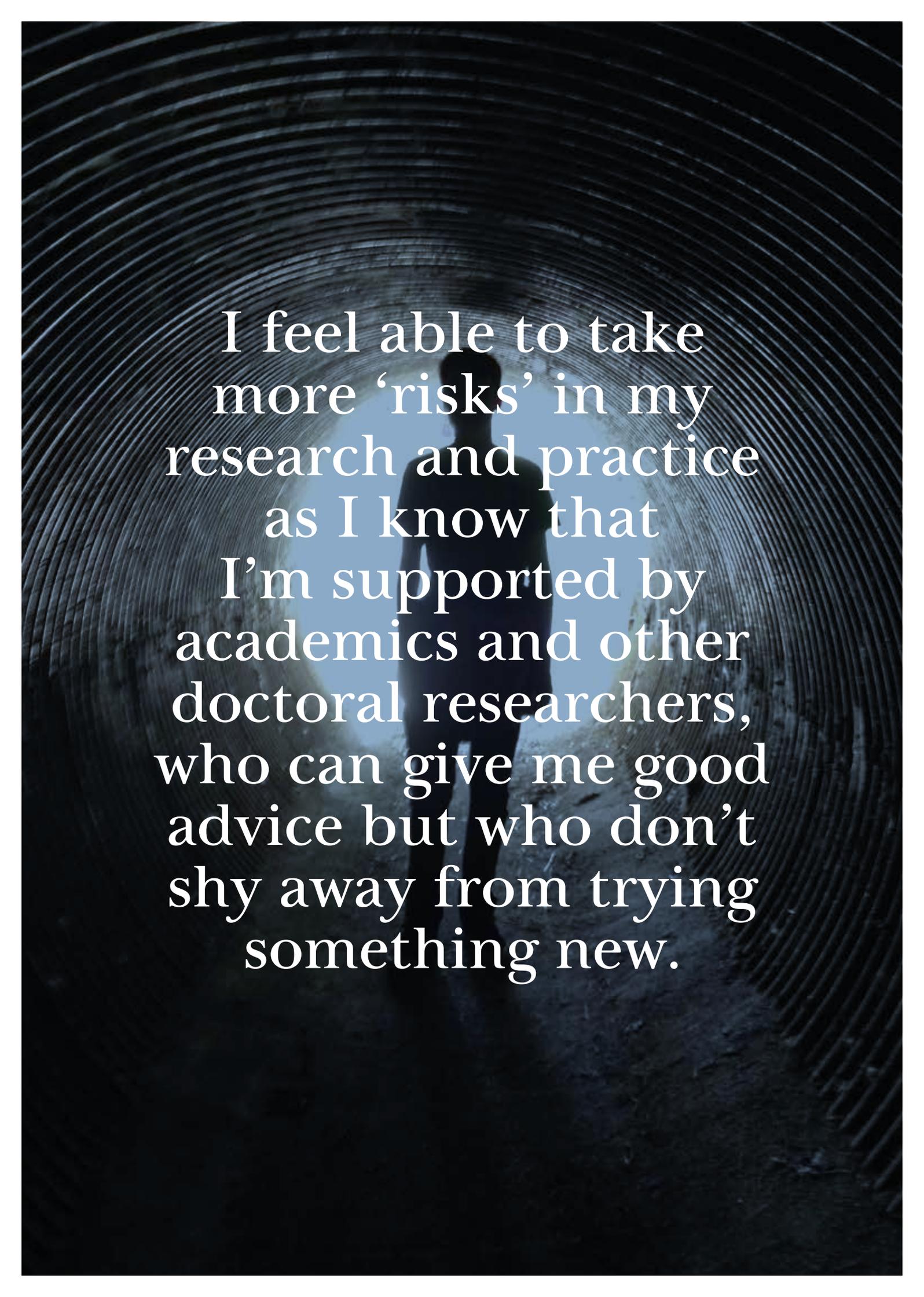
7 JUNE 2016

Joint Sussex Humanities Lab/CIRCY workshop organised by James Baker, where Ian Milligan from the University of Waterloo gave an introduction to using web archives to research youth culture.

30 JUNE 2016

A narrative analysis of change in hybrid forms of community mental health services for young people, Sine Kirkegaard, PhD Fellow, Roskilde University, Denmark.



A person is walking away from the camera down a tunnel. The walls of the tunnel are covered in concentric, circular patterns that create a strong sense of depth and perspective. The lighting is dim, with a brighter area at the end of the tunnel where the person is walking. The overall mood is contemplative and forward-looking.

I feel able to take
more ‘risks’ in my
research and practice
as I know that
I’m supported by
academics and other
doctoral researchers,
who can give me good
advice but who don’t
shy away from trying
something new.

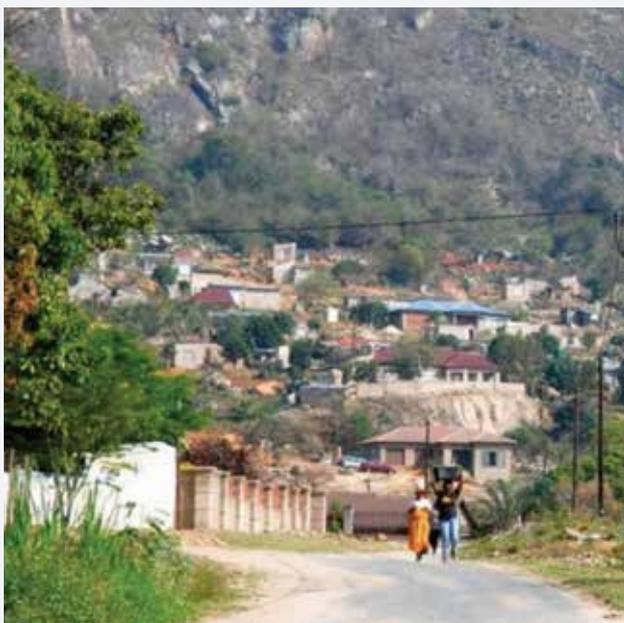
The CIRCY Doctoral community

CIRCY hosts a growing community of doctoral researchers, doing research that spans many of our research themes and draws on innovative methodologies. For example, both Tracey Fuller (Education) and Elsie Whittington (Social Work) have been working with film as part of their research process. Tracey, in an ESRC funded study of school counselling, has made a film to reanimate data generated in interviews with adult professionals, which is then shared and discussed with groups of young people who have experience of school counselling. Elsie, whose PhD is co-funded by Brook, is conducting a participatory project with young people about understandings of sexual consent; one outcome of this has been a short film, which will be used in schools and youth clubs to encourage debate and discussion about the complexities of consent. Methodological innovation bring distinct challenges – for example in relation to the ethics and practicalities of capturing complex data on film – and so it is crucial that CIRCY provides a supportive space within which early career researchers can explore and experiment.

We also aim to support our doctoral community in its wider academic engagement, and CIRCY doctoral researchers have had a busy year, delivering papers, presentations and symposia at the University of Sussex and at prestigious conferences in the UK and internationally. For example, Perpetua Kirby (Education), whose ESRC-funded research explores children's agency in learning within the modern primary classroom, has presented her findings at conferences in Sheffield and Liverpool in June and July 2016. Gemma North (Social Work) presented findings from her doctorate at the Joint Social Work Education and Research Conference (JSWEC) in Milton Keynes.

Louise Sims (Social Work), whose PhD is jointly funded by ESRC and CoramBAAF, presented her research on social workers' relationships with adoptive families in Finland, and Roma Thomas (Social Work) has presented her doctoral work – concerned with boys who are considered to be 'troubled' and, or 'troubling' within the education and child welfare system – in Norway, and most recently at the International Social Work Conference in Seoul, South Korea. Meanwhile, Fawzia Mazanderani (Education) has presented her research at India's annual Comparative Education Society conference, and at the International Sociological Association conference in Vienna.

All aspects of CIRCY's research culture are enhanced by the work of our doctoral researchers. We are committed to nurturing a vibrant doctoral culture by encouraging a sense of community in which 'not knowing' and exploration is acceptable (even if at times that might not feel comfortable!). An important new development, to be launched in September, is a CIRCY doctoral writing group where postgraduate researchers from all disciplines and all stages of doctoral work can explore and develop their writing voices. This will become both a formal and informal space for developing new approaches to writing, both individually and collaboratively.



SPOTLIGHT ON DOCTORAL
RESEARCH: NAVIGATING
THE 'NEW SOUTH AFRICA'

FAWZIA MAZANDERANI

South Africans born after the dismantling of apartheid in 1994 are referred to as the 'born free generation.' They were born into a democracy where everyone supposedly has equal opportunities to aspire to the futures of their choice, yet where a legacy of inequality continues to constrain possibilities. Fawzia's research (supervised in conjunction with the Centre for International Education) has involved nine months of ethnographic fieldwork at a school in a rural township in northern South Africa, where she explored how young people in this region envision and perform their future selves and what this suggests about the discourses that inform their current identities. Her methods involved participant-observation, in-depth interviews, focus groups, journal and letter writing.

Some striking preliminary findings have been the disconnection that students make between their present circumstances and the (recent) apartheid past. The teachers themselves reinforce this perspective with comments such as 'apartheid is just an excuse for when things don't work out for those people who are lazy.' Classroom observations of the subject *Life Orientation*, a compulsory learning area focused upon 'career guidance' and the 'development of the self in society,' indicated how both the curriculum content and the teaching of this subject reinforces 'rags to riches' stories of rural youth 'making it' through their own individual effort, thus encouraging the notion of young people as 'entrepreneurs of themselves.'

Placing great faith in this seeming meritocracy myth, the majority of participants conveyed ambitious future aspirations for university tailored professions, despite the mismatch between their own academic achievements and these career requirements. How young people choose to compose and perform their future lives has emerged as a central concern for this research. Do these students really believe that they will become who they describe themselves becoming or are these the narratives they feel they are expected to present, the particular discourses that are available for them to draw upon when constructing their possible selves? This is one among many of the questions that Fawzia will be attempting to make greater sense of as she delves into data analysis.

All aspects of CIRCY's research culture are enhanced by the work of our doctoral researchers.



SPOTLIGHT ON DOCTORAL RESEARCH: LIFE ON ROAD: YOUTH AND URBAN LIVING IN THE NOW

YUSEF BAKKALI

In the wake of the riots of 2011, gangs became a focal point as media outlets and politicians grappled with the complex nature of events and attempted to take control of the overwhelming narrative. Yusef's research has sought to understand the life worlds and biographies of young urban people engaged with life on road; oscillating between the minutiae of their day-to-day lives and broader structural happenings connected with the continued onslaught of neo-liberalism. The use of the term road is a UK specific expression which is more broadly understood as 'street culture'.

The initial findings of this study reveal a group who in many ways strongly embody neo-liberal values of consumerism, meritocratic status attainment and individualism, yet are broadly seen as anti-establishment and often find themselves at the centre of moral panics. The heightened presence of poverty, non-corporate masculinities, violence and criminality associated with road life (issues which many participants felt acutely) are often used as the metaphoric irons wielded by the powerful to brand the mark of abjection on urban youth. However, by examining the spectacular and everyday stories of those on road, the initial findings of this study identify a situated 'logic of practice' in actions which more powerful observers claim symbolise individual deficit and failing.

What becomes evident is that young people on road are engaged in a ceaseless process of performative negotiation with abjection and material deprivation. This process involves a wide array of strategies and forms of cultural expression including crime, violence, coolness, music and conspicuous consumption, creating a vibrant but often transient and destructive cultural landscape. In a globalised world moving through the late modern period we live in a nation bursting with difference, as many struggle to come to terms with it, the powerful seem to have mobilised around this crisis enforcing an externally imposed narrative. Embodying difference in Britain today can entrench and exacerbate material hardships adding to exclusion and abjection. Those on road however exhibit a ceaseless ambition for equitable inclusion (often described as 'going legit') via cultural and economic projects aimed at adjusting the status quo; epitomizing ways in which class struggle, albeit more complex and individualised, lives on in 21st century Britain.



CIRCY

doctoral researchers

YUSEF BAKKALI (PhD in Sociology)

Working title: *Life on Road: Youth and Urban Living in the Now*

LEETHEN BARTHOLOMEW (PhD in Social Work and Social Care)

Working title: *Accusations of child spirit possession and witchcraft: Experiences and outcomes for non-accused children within the same family network*

HELEN DREW (PhD in Mental Health)

Working title: *Supporting the Mental Health of Looked-After Children Across the Primary to Secondary Transition*

HELEN EVANS (PhD in Social Work and Social Care)

Working title: *In what ways is the concept of 'preparation for independent adult life' constructed by leaving care workers in the context of their practice with young people as they leave the care system?*

MATTHEW ELLIS (PhD in Social Work and Social Care)

Working title: *Young people, harmful sexual behaviour and identity: How do young peoples' narratives develop during treatment for harmful sexual behaviour?*

HELEN EVANS (Doctor of Social Work)

Working title: *In what ways is the concept of 'preparation for independent adult life' constructed by leaving care workers in the context of their practice with young people as they leave the care system?*

TRACEY FULLER (PhD in Education)

Working title: *'Can I Trust You?' Ethics considerations for school counsellors in information sharing*

FAWZIA HAERI MAZANDERANI (PhD in Education)

Working title: *Navigating the 'new South Africa' : A study of the born free generation in Mpumalanga*

JENNY HEWITT (PhD in Social Work and Social Care)

Working title: *Exploring The Power of Children Through Their Words and Worlds: How Young People's Public Constructions Intersect with the Political and Personal*

PERPETUA KIRBY (PhD in Education)

Working title: *An exploration of primary school children's agency in learning*

SANDRA LYNDON (Doctor of Education)

Working title: *An exploration of Early Years Practitioners' narratives of child poverty in England*

EMMA MARGRETT (PhD in Education)

Working title: *Staff experiences of pupils' self-harming behaviour in an independent girls' boarding school*

MANUEL CRUZ MARTINEZ (PhD in Education/Sussex Humanities Lab)

Working title: *The capabilities of video games to explore history*

GEMMA NORTH (PhD in Social Work and Social Care)

Working title: *Challenges for child protection social work in assessing and working with intra-familial emotional abuse*

CYNTHIA OKPOKIRI (PhD in Social Work and Social Care)

Working title: *First generation Nigerian immigrant parents and child welfare issues in Britain*

KEITH PERERA (PhD in Education)

Working title: *Multiliterate media studies: An investigation into the teaching and learning of an A Level media studies unit within the context of a changing media ecology'*

TASLEEM RANA (PhD in Social Work and Social Care)

Working title: *Against the odds? A case study of developing community participation with vulnerable inner-city children and young people*

LOUISE SIMS (PhD in Social Work and Social Care)

Working title: *'What can be learned from the practice encounter in adoption support social work?'*

ROMA THOMAS (PhD in Social Work and Social Care)

Working title: *Doing Boy Work? Young masculine identities and emotions – intersections and implications for professional practice*

ELSIE WHITTINGTON (PhD in Social Work and Social Care)

Working title: *Participatory processes with young people: exploring sexual consent*

DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THIS YEAR

JACQUI SHEPHERD (PhD in Education)

'Hopefully if I like get the right support at college, I'll be able to like find my way and all that if you know what I mean?' Experiences of transition from special school to mainstream college for young people with autism

PADMINI IYER (PHD EDUCATION)

Risk, rakhi and romance: learning about gender and sexuality in Delhi schools

SHAIBU BUKARI (PHD IN SOCIAL WORK)

Cradle to Work: Fishers' social construct on child labour in Ghana

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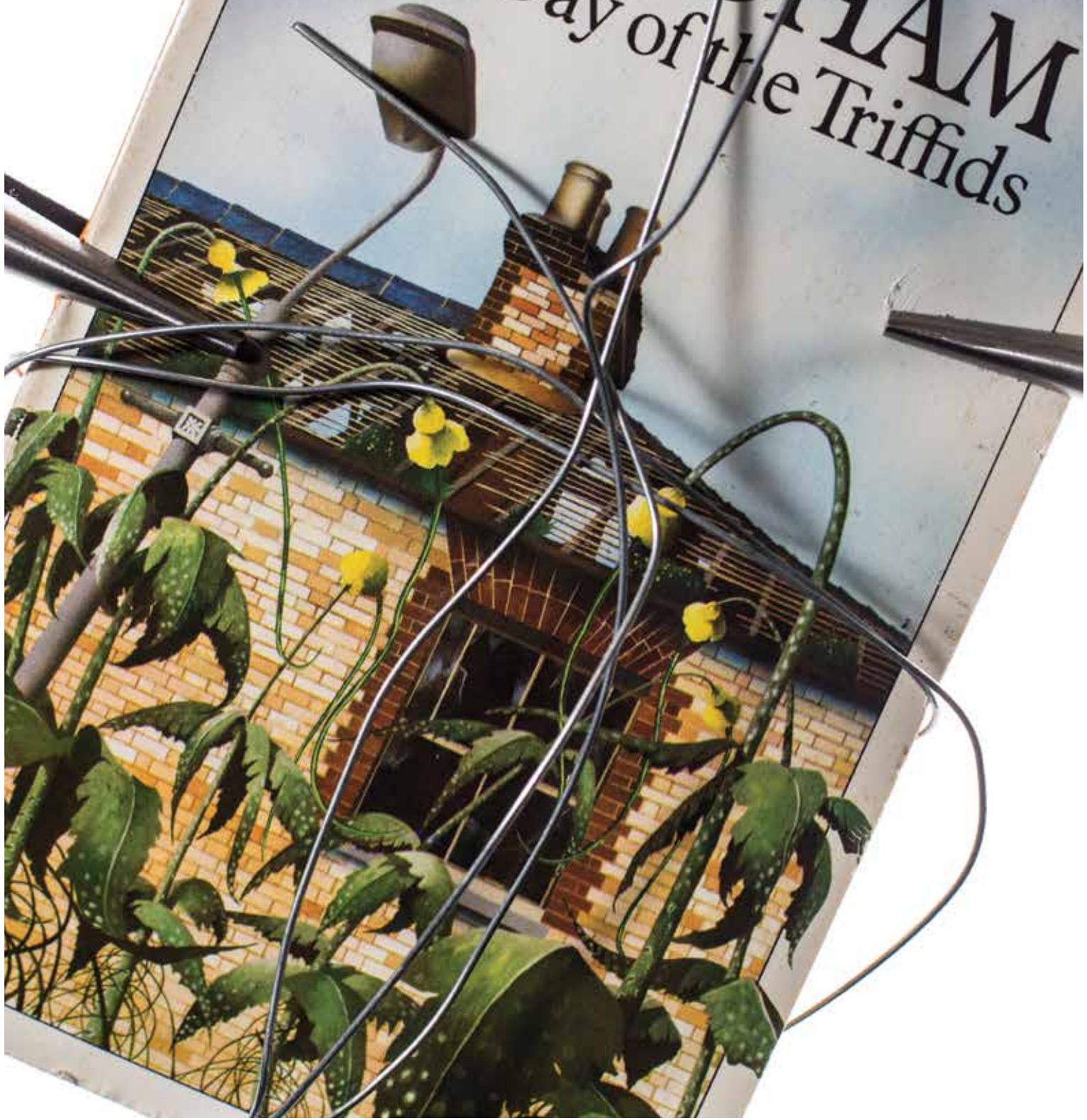
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JOHN WYNDHAM

The Day of the Triffids



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LOCATION

The Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY) is located within the School of Education and Social Work which is based in Essex House on the University of Sussex campus. The University is situated on a modern campus on the edge of the South Downs National Park near the lively seaside city of Brighton. London is one hour away by train, and there is easy access to Gatwick and Heathrow airports.

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