

# CIRCY Autumn Newsletter 2021

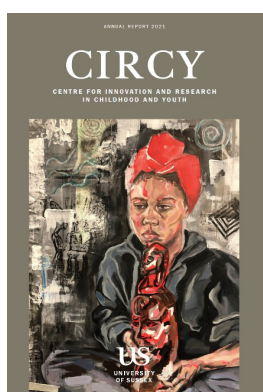
## A WELCOME FROM CIRCY TO THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/22!

Dear CIRCY members and friends

We hope you have had some time for rest and relaxation over the summer, amid all the productive work that continues through the non-teaching time, and on top of the ongoing Covid-related challenges. In this newsletter we'll let you know what some of our members have been up to and set out the programme of events for the autumn term 2021.

We have included some brief information at the end of this newsletter about what CIRCY involves and we'd like to encourage you to share this newsletter with new members of staff, doctoral researchers, and any other colleagues or students who might be interested in CIRCY and our activities.

Hopefully, by now you will have seen [the CIRCY Annual Report 2021](#). If you haven't already, do take a look! It's filled with inspiring and fascinating stories of research by CIRCY members, as well as beautiful artwork by children and young people on the theme 'Imagine if our world was ...' – children and young people from the UK, Chile and India shared their paintings, drawings and poems with us.



## OUR THEME FOR 2021/22: 'CHILDHOODS - THEN AND NOW'

The University is celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2021 and CIRCY's 10th anniversary will be in 2022! As part of this "looking back and looking forwards" retrospective, our theme for the new academic year will be 'Childhoods: then and now'.

Through this year, our seminar series, reading groups, PGR network meetings, events and community arts activity will centre around this theme. We will also be establishing a programme of engagement and consultation with key stakeholders from the university and beyond, including academics, practitioners, policy makers, children, young people and families, both from the UK and internationally. We aim to celebrate what we have achieved so far, but also to explore visions for CIRCY's expansion and development. We are hoping to culminate this work in a 'blended' celebratory event next summer, with participants locally, nationally, and globally joining both face-to-face and online.

We are delighted to let you know that we have created [an online gallery of all the CIRCY community arts projects through the years](#). This public space enables children and young people, families and our members and colleagues to view and admire children and young people's meaningful visual creations. Take a look!

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## AUTUMN TERM EVENTS

**We are delighted to invite you to all the activities and events we host this term! All events will continue to be delivered remotely this term with Zoom invitations issued in advance. However, we are starting to plan for future in-person events in the hope and expectation that Covid-related risks and disruptions will abate in the New Year.**

- **CIRCY COFFEE & COLLABORATION**  
Thursday 14 Oct 2021 / 3-4pm

In our termly CCC meeting, Clio Berry (BSMS), Carlie Goldsmith (Social Work and Social Care), and Arianne Shahvisi (BSMS) will each make a short presentation on an aspect of their research relating to children, childhood and youth. There will then be plenty of time for questions and discussion. Drop by with your afternoon cuppa!

- **CIRCY SEMINARS ON THE THEME 'CHILDHOODS - THEN AND NOW'**

**'Emotional Debt? Understanding emotions in mother-young adult daughter relations in the context of poverty and social marginalization'**  
Thurs 25 Nov 2021 / 1-2pm

In this seminar, PhD researcher Roni Eyal-Lubling, from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Bar-Ilan University-Israel, will explore the concept of emotional capital within mother and young adult daughter relations in the context of poverty and social marginalisation. Interviews with 18 mother-young adult daughter dyads living in marginalised communities in the south of Israel suggested that mothers' investment of emotional capital during their daughters' adolescent years turned into a demand for reciprocity during their young adulthood. Roni argues that, while emotional capital in middle-class mother-child relations is translated into children's educational and occupational profits, at the intersection of poverty and young adulthood mothers' investment of emotional capital turns into debt, which young adult daughters are expected to reciprocate.

**'Changing Perceptions of Childhood in Ghana and Changing Childhoods in Ethiopia'**  
Nov 2021 (date tbc)

This joint seminar involves presentations from Yaw Ofori-Kusi, Professor of Social Studies and currently the Dean of the School of Arts and Social Studies of the University of Energy and Natural Resources, Ghana - and Glynis Clacherty, Research Associate at the African Centre for Migration and Society, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

- **CIRCY READING GROUP**

Thursday 11 Nov 2021 / 1-2pm

Discussing **'The Outsiders'** by S.E. Hinton

This 'coming of age' novel about rival gangs, published in 1967, transformed the genre by presenting adolescent characters that were the opposite of everything a teenager (through an adult lens), was supposed to be. It is narrated from the perspective of 14-year-old Ponyboy Curtis, a teenaged member of a gang of "greasers". Hinton was only 16 herself when she wrote this 'gritty, honest and authentic' novel. In 2019 it was included by the BBC News on its list of the 100 most influential novels.

This reading group will be co-led by Michelle Lefevre (CIRCY Director) and Rebecca Webb (CIRCY Co-director)

- **CIRCY-CSWIR OPEN RESEARCH SEMINAR**  
Monday 6 December 2021 / 1-2pm

**'Kinship Care: Betwixt and Between' '**

This seminar will be presented by Louise Sims, Kinship Care and Fostering Consultant, CoramBAAF - Louise gained her PhD in Social Work & Social Care at Sussex.

The last decade has witnessed 'the withering of the state' and the pandemic has laid bare the results. As the state withers, families are increasingly being asked to take on the support for younger family members, often at times of crisis and when they themselves are in crisis. Kinship care has come to be known as the unsung and unsupported 'third pillar of the social care sector'. There is little scaffolding in place. Statutory support, legal, social work, policy, data gathering, and research responses have not kept pace with developments. We know very little of children's experiences or 'what is going on' inside [kinship] families.

In this seminar, Louise will use Joanne Warner's (2015) work on emotional politics as a psychosocial lens to consider both the matrix of tensions shaping kinship practices and the possibilities for new understanding and connections within families and across disciplines.

- **CIRCY IDEAS IN ACTION**

A platform via which colleagues can present new ideas for interdisciplinary feedback and suggestions, eg. a new or reworked bid, book proposals, or plans for knowledge exchange/impact generation.

Please let us know if you would like to present your work this term, or if you would like one of the CIRCY team individually to review a bid or advise on other work in progress. We are happy to respond at short notice if needed!

**More details and Zoom links will be circulated nearer the time to the CIRCY mailing list. Please email [L.Rodriguez@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:L.Rodriguez@sussex.ac.uk) if you're not on it already to make sure you don't miss any of the above events.**



## KEEP ON BLOGGING!

### Check out CIRCY's recent blog posts!

- 'Clothing Makes the Child: The 19th century children's fancy dress ball'  
Fiona Gould, International Junior Research Associate working with Dr Hannah Field on the AHRC research network 'Not Only Dressed but Dressing: Clothing, Childhood, Creativity'.
- 'Pulling It All Together: One PhD CIRCY researcher reflects on writing the last stages of her PhD during the Covid pandemic'  
May Nasrawy, CIRCY doctoral researcher

If you would like to blog on an aspect of your research - at whatever stage that might be - please get in touch. The blog can be short as you wish. We welcome blogs on any subject matter and from any disciplinary background that take seriously how we listen to and hear children and young people.

If you are interested in writing a blog, please contact Rebecca Webb (CIRCY Co-Director):  
**R.C.Webb@sussex.ac.uk.**

She is always eager to engage and will give as much or as little support with writing and editing as wanted.

## WE ARE LOOKING FOR A NEW POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Many of you will know of CIRCY's Postgraduate Research Assistant, Loreto Rodriguez (Childhood & Youth PhD), as the backbone of the CIRCY team. Sadly, she steps down from her role with us in spring 2022 to focus on her thesis. Shortly, therefore, we will be advertising for her replacement - initially for five hours per week (Jan-March 2022) working alongside Loreto to learn the role and what's involved. From April the role will be seven hours per week.

Primarily, the role involves organising events, pulling together information for newsletters and reports, coordinating the doctoral researchers' network, and gathering images for our yearly community arts project with children and young people. In 2022, it will also involve engagement with CIRCY members and relevant other external stakeholders as part of CIRCY's 10th anniversary consultation and celebrations.

We will soon be advertising the role to doctoral researchers in the CIRCY network, setting out relevant details and our expectations. If you're interested, keep an eye out for this. Loreto is happy to have an initial chat with anyone thinking about the role. This might be followed up with a conversation with Michelle or Rebecca once more details have been released.

## DOCTORAL CELEBRATIONS!

CIRCY is delighted to announce the following two doctoral passes:

**Sushri Sangita Punam** received an unconditional pass following her doctoral viva on 8 September 2021 for her thesis '*illuminating Adoptive Family Practice in India: A narrative analysis of policy and lived experience*'. The viva was chaired by Michelle Lefevre (CIRCY Director), and examined by Anna Gupta (Royal Holloway) and Russell Whiting (Social Work and Social Care). Supervisors Barry Luckock (Social Work and Social Care) and Janet Boddy (Education, CIRCY Steering Group) were in attendance.

**Roma Thomas** passed her PhD viva on 7 October 2021 with her thesis '*Being and Doing Boy: Marginalised Young Masculinities and Professional Practice*'. The examiners were Ann Phoenix (University College London) and Louise Gazeley (Education). The viva was chaired by Tish Marrable (Social Work and Social Care). Roma was supervised by Gillian Ruch and Rachel Thomson (both Social Work and Social Care).

## DOCTORAL RESEARCH NETWORK MEETINGS

The CIRCY postgraduate researchers' network meets approximately twice a term to share knowledge and support, with discussions facilitated by the CIRCY team. Topics for discussion to date have included the ethical and practical issues to bear in mind in fieldwork with children and young people, participatory research with children and young people, and researching in COVID-19 times. We will be in touch shortly through the CIRCY PGR mailing list to share the details and Zoom links for this term's meetings.

If you are a PhD researcher at Sussex who isn't yet a member of this network and you think your work might fall within CIRCY's research areas, just email **L.Rodriguez@sussex.ac.uk** to be added to the list.

## RESEARCH, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

CIRCY will be [making a response](#) to the Commission on Young Lives' call for evidence on important contemporary matters affecting children and young people, including with reference to young people's mental health and wellbeing, educational experiences, family support needs, and risks beyond the family home, such as exploitation. The intention is to identify trends and gather ideas for practice and policy solutions. Responses must be submitted by 30 November so **Michelle Lefevre** (CIRCY Director) will facilitate discussion of issues we feel best equipped to respond to at [a Zoom meeting on Thursday 28 October at 10am](#). If you can't make the meeting, please share your thoughts with Michelle via email: [M.Lefevre@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:M.Lefevre@sussex.ac.uk).

**Rebecca Webb** (Education, CIRCY Co-Director) and **Perpetua Kirby** (Education) were awarded Knowledge Exchange Funding over the summer for their project "Building capacity with 'TRANSFORM-IN EDUCATION': Enhancing interactivity of digital sustainability resources for professional development locally and internationally with teachers and sustainability practitioners". Have a look at the new area they have created in their Transform-In-Education website entitled '[For Educators](#)' and tell them what you think! It's still under development and will feature more visual and iterative activities and materials for educators. Watch this space!

Rebecca and Perpetua also have a small research project funded by PASTRES (Pastoralism, Uncertainty and Resilience: Global Lessons from the Margins) working in conjunction with Professor Ian Scoones in the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). This year, a long research-practitioner study in a local school will translate research findings from their recent IDCF-SSRP study with partners in rural West Bengal and Ecuador into a Global North context. The research will also involve CIRCY doctoral researcher, **Fliss Bull** (Education). The study is entitled '*Making Global Connections: Translating uncertainty across Global South and North contexts*'. Look out for updates throughout the year and publications that follow from their IDCF-SSRP research study '*Hope in the Present*'. This research explored the role of arts-based deliberative pedagogies for supporting young people of 12-18 years, in order that they can express relationships with sustainability uncertainties, in dialogue with stakeholders, with a view to fostering community resilience expressed through narratives of hope and sustainability action.

Rebecca and Perpetua are also taking part in the ESRC 'Festival of Science' which, this year, is foregrounding the voices of young people in the build-up to COP-26. Their event, on Saturday 6 November in Brighton's Jubilee Library, is entitled '*Connecting Young People through Sustainability 'Objects' across Global South-North Contexts*'. The library event will involve the screening of a short 2-minute film that will feature young people from research sites in Ecuador and India, as well as children from a local school. There will also be an exhibition of the work of local children and the opportunity for both young and old to join in with creative activities and a 'philosophical enquiry'. All activities are designed to be fully inclusive, thought-provoking, and enjoyable. Keep the date free!

## WANT TO BECOME A CIRCY MEMBER?

### WHAT IS CIRCY?

The Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY) is a pan-university research centre at the University of Sussex, with a membership that spans social sciences, arts, humanities and professional fields including social work, law, education and health. CIRCY's research is interdisciplinary and international in scope, united by a critical engagement with children and young people's lives in time, and a focus on the rights, voice and welfare of the child or young person at the centre of inquiry.

### WHO CAN JOIN CIRCY?

CIRCY encourages academics, doctoral researchers and others across the university who write and research in these fields to become members.

### WHAT DOES MEMBERSHIP INVOLVE?

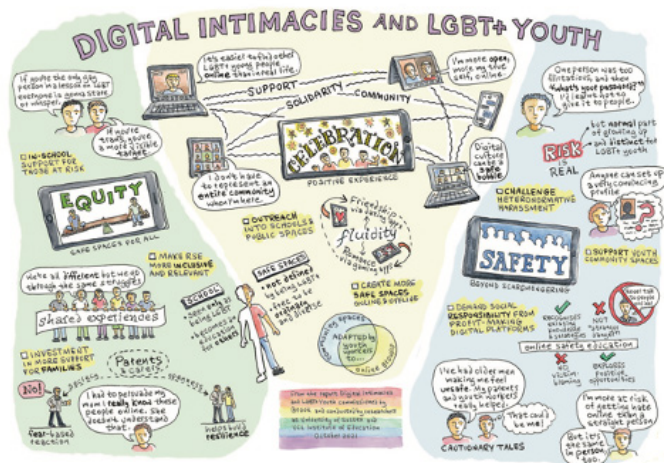
CIRCY holds lots of events through the year which members can attend. These include seminars, reading groups, methodology workshops, writing retreats, and work in progress workshops where members can get feedback on research or writing ideas.



## NEW PUBLICATIONS

CIRCY researchers, **Rachel Thomson** (Social Work and Social Care) and **Sara Bragg** (CIRCY External Advisory Group) are co-authors of [a new report commissioned by national youth health organisation, Brook](#). The report involves primary and secondary research with over 500 participants, and puts forward an agenda for action that maintains balance with the need to CELEBRATE LGBT+ ‘digital world-making’, ensure EQUITY for LGBT+ youth, and promote SAFETY in both on and offline spaces. The report includes a poster for use in educational and community settings. All docs are open access. Please help us spread the word!

- Thomson, R., Bragg, S., & O’Riordan, K. (2021): *Digital Intimacies and LGBT+ Youth: Celebration, Equity and Safety*. Brighton: University of Sussex.



**Julia Winstone** (doctoral researcher in Law) is in the process of publishing a chapter in the book *'Towards Gender Equality in Law: An Analysis of State Failures from a Global Perspective'*. This book has just been peer-reviewed for Palgrave Macmillan and is due to be published this year.

- Winstone, J. (2021): 'Towards Gender Equality in the Solicitors' Profession in England and Wales: A Practical, Intersectional, Socio-Legal Approach', in *Towards Gender Equality in Law: An Analysis of State Failures from a Global Perspective*. Guney, G., Davies, D. & Lee, P. Palgrave Macmillan.

## PRESENTING OUR WORK

**Sushri Sangita Puhana** (Social Work & Social Care PhD) presented virtually at the International Conference on Adoption Research (ICAR 7) in Milan, Italy (6-9 July) on '*illuminating Adoptive family practices in India: A narrative analysis of life stories, practice and policy*'.

In September, **Rebecca Webb** (Education, CIRCY Co-Director) and **Perpetua Kirby** (Education) presented their work '*Covid-19 and educating for uncertainty*' as part of a seminar series on Using Mass Observation's Covid-19 Collection. They are currently publishing from this research. [The presentation can be viewed on YouTube.](#)

**Robin Banerjee** (Psychology, CIRCY Steering Group) was the keynote speaker at the East Sussex Mental Health and Wellbeing Conference for practitioners in health and education. He also gave a keynote presentation at an enterprise event organised by EmpathyLab on empathy, child development, and books.

**Julia Winstone** (doctoral researcher in Law) was invited to attend the UNODC webinar on 'Assessment of Children Associated with Criminal and Armed Groups' in September. The event brought together professionals working with children to discuss issues related to the assessment of child victims of serious forms of violence. A key objectives of the event was raising awareness of the Child First/rights-based approach; highlighting the importance of adopting a holistic approach when assessing child victims; enhancing understanding of cultural considerations during the assessment process; and sharing essential ethical and methodological considerations to mitigate the risk of secondary victimisation and re-traumatization when assessing child victims.

## TWEET TIME!

Don't forget to follow us on twitter.  
When you tweet about your research,  
tag **@SussexCIRCY** and we'll make sure we  
re-tweet you to enhance your visibility!



## CIRCY IN THE MEDIA

**Robin Banerjee** (Psychology, CIRCY Steering Group) participated in the launch of a major research partnership with Claudia Hammond and the BBC for 'The Kindness Test', the largest ever public science project on the topic of kindness, with numerous media appearances on radio and television including a special edition of BBC Radio 4's 'All in the Mind' for the launch.

In June, Robin also took part in a high-profile public engagement activity as an online panelist for EmpathyLab's 'Empathy Conversation', speaking with Michael Rosen, David Baddiel, Catherine Johnson, and Miranda McKearney.

**Sushri Sangita Puan** (Social Work & Social Care PhD) was invited to the popular television talk show 'Breakfast Odisha' in the state Odisha, India, on 27 September to talk about her research on adoption policy and adoptive family practices.



## GET IN TOUCH!

If you're interested in taking part in any of our upcoming members events or other activities, or just want to find out more, contact CIRCY Research Fellow, Loreto Rodriguez: [L.Rodriguez@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:L.Rodriguez@sussex.ac.uk).

And please let us know if you have any ideas for members' events or seminars, or need any support with developing research bids, or other research-related activities, such as networking events or conference attendance.

## WHO'S WHO?

### CIRCY Leadership Team

#### Director:

Michelle Lefevre (Social Work and Social Care)  
E: [M.Lefevre@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:M.Lefevre@sussex.ac.uk)

#### Co-Director:

Rebecca Webb (Education)  
E: [R.C.Webb@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:R.C.Webb@sussex.ac.uk)

#### Postgraduate Research Assistant:

Loreto Rodriguez  
E: [L.Rodriguez@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:L.Rodriguez@sussex.ac.uk)



### CIRCY Steering Group

Our Steering Group meets termly to guide and facilitate the work of CIRCY. We are sad this term to lose Hester Barron due to her other commitments - and Saul Becker with his forthcoming retirement. We thank them for their support and guidance over the past few years. We are delighted, however, that Saul moves over to our external 'critical friends' advisory group.

Current Steering Group members are:

- [Robin Banerjee](#) (Psychology)
- [Liam Berriman](#) (Childhood and Youth/ Social Work and Social Care)
- [Janet Boddy](#) (Education)
- [Fiona Courage](#) (Mass Observation Archive/ Library)
- [Nuno Ferreira](#) (Law)
- [Dorte Thorsen](#) (Geography)
- [Pam Thurschwell](#) (English)
- [Kathryn Lester](#) (Psychology)
- [Jo Moran-Ellis](#) (Sociology)

If your research has the rights, concerns and/or perspective of children and young people at its heart, and you are interested in joining our Steering Group, please contact [Michelle](#). The minimum commitment is to attend a termly Steering Group meeting, and to attend or help facilitate at least one CIRCY event per term.



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