

CIRCY Spring Newsletter 2021

WELCOME TO CIRCY IN 2021

Dear CIRCY members and friends

We do hope you have had some time for rest and relaxation over the holiday period among the significant emotional and practical challenges we know you are all facing.

In this newsletter, we'll let you know what some of our members got up to during the autumn and set out the programme of events for the spring semester.

We have included some information at the end of the newsletter about what CIRCY involves and who might like to join us. 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.

If you haven't already, do take a look at our last annual report which is downloadable [from our website](#). It's filled with inspiring research stories by CIRCY members, as well as beautiful imagery by children and young people on the theme of 'Through my window' for which children and young people from the UK and Chile shared their artwork with us illustrating their lockdown experiences.

"Absolutely riveting!"
JASON REYNOLDS

"Stunning."
JOHN GREEN



ANGIE THOMAS

SPRING TERM EVENTS

We are delighted to invite you to the activities and events we are hosting this term! All will be online and Zoom invitations will be issued in advance.

- **CIRCY COFFEE & COLLABORATION**

Monday 25 January / 12-1pm

Alka Townend (Education), Maria Moscati (Law) and Dorte Thorsen (Institute of Development Studies, CIRCY Steering Group) will each make a short presentation on an aspect of their work relating to children, childhood and youth. There will then be plenty of time for questions and discussion.

- **CIRCY OPEN RESEARCH SEMINAR**

Thursday 4 February / 1-2pm

The Governance of Children's Lives during Covid-19 through Regulatory Educational Policies

Dr Martin Bittner: Europa-Universitaet Flensburg
This seminar will consider how children's institutionalized lives are regulated in Germany in the current Covid-19 pandemic by analysing political documents produced at both state and federal level to govern the response to the pandemic.

- **CIRCY READING GROUP**

Thursday 18 February / 1-2pm

Led by Pam Thurschwell
(English, CIRCY Steering group).

The reading will be "*The Hate U Give*" by Angie Thomas



- **CIRCY IDEAS IN ACTION**

A regular CIRCY event for members where 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 share your work this term.

- **CIRCY OPEN RESEARCH SEMINAR**

Thursday 29 April / 1-2pm

Presented by Louise Sims, CoramBAAF
The voice and experiences of BAME children in Kinship Care in the UK

CIRCY COLLABORATIONS

CIRCY is partnering with the Sussex Centre for [Social Work Innovation and Research](#) (CSWIR) in a collaboration with the [Children and Families Research Centre at the University of Bristol](#). The collaboration will begin with an online event on 16 March (9.30am-12.15pm) for staff and postgraduate researchers from all three centres entitled: 'Reaching Across - Developing Research Collaborations'.

The aim of the event is to begin to explore shared research interests and expertise, and hopefully to also expand our horizons in unexpected ways to open up new collaborative relationships and activities. Gillian Ruch (Social Work and Social Care) and Debbie Watson (Bristol) will share their tangible connection through material objects in 'Kit Bag' and 'Trove'. Booking details will be shared soon through the CIRCY mailing list. Please email Loreto Rodriguez [L.Rodriguez@sussex.ac.uk] if you are not yet on the mailing list but would like to join this event.



CIRCY IDEAS IN ACTION

Bringing Mass Observation archive data to CIRCY's 'Ideas in Action' space

Rebecca Webb (Education, CIRCY Co-Director) and Perpetua Kirby (Education) were delighted to be joined online by colleagues from across the university as they shared some initial findings from their analysis of 100 diary entries of children and young people, up to the age of 25 years, written during the first Covid lockdown. These were submitted to the Mass Observation archive on 12 May 2020 (as they have been every year since 1937).

Perpetua and Rebecca explored how children and young people engage with the uncertainty of Covid, and asked what this might tell us about what they need educationally in order to engage with life's uncertainties. Initial findings suggest that young people feel intensely the pressures of educational expectations to constantly achieve and reach one's limits during Covid, emphasising their aloneness.

The session explored their doubts and the contingency of government directives, navigating the tensions and dilemmas these throw up: they value slowing down to pay close attention to the world and imagine other possibilities; they engage in existential questions and have views; and they take up the opportunity to play, where they can experience different roles and ways of being.

CIRCY DOCTORAL RESEARCHER NETWORK MEETINGS

The CIRCY postgraduate researchers' network meets approximately twice a term to share knowledge and support.

Meetings have been co-facilitated by Michelle Lefevre (CIRCY Director), Rebecca Webb (CIRCY Co-director) and the two CIRCY postgraduate research assistants, Nehaal Bajwa and Loreto Rodriguez.

Topics for discussion to date have included the important ethical and practical issues to bear in mind in fieldwork with children and young people, participatory research with children and young people, and data analysis.

We will share details and Zoom links for forthcoming meetings through the CIRCY PGR mailing list.

If you are a Doctoral Researcher at Sussex and think your work falls within CIRCY's research areas, please let us know by emailing Loreto [L.Rodriguez@sussex.ac.uk] who will add you to our mailing list.

Go on: join us!

RICHNESS AND VARIETY IN THE CIRCY BLOGGING SPACE

Check out CIRCY's recent blog posts!

We have been delighted with the range of blogs this year on CIRCY activities, practices and research experiences.

Our September blog emerged from a PGR online session considering participatory methodologies with children and young people.

In her October blog, 'Light Over Here Please', CIRCY member and CoramBAAF Care and Fostering Consultant, Louise Sims, explored the children and young people most overlooked in kinship care processes, practices and research.

November saw a post detailing the experiences of former Childhood and Youth BA students in their role as managers of a south-coast residential children's home and coping with the COVID pandemic.

Finally, December produced the thoughtful reflection, 'On Hope and Certainty in Education', from Education PhD researcher and CIRCY member, Fliss Bull.

If you are interested in writing a blog, please contact Rebecca Webb: R.C.Webb@sussex.ac.uk.

NEW RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS AND FUNDING

Nicolla Yuill (Psychology) from ACoRNSussex and Sarah Parsons and Hanna Kovshoff from ACoRN Southampton (@ACoRNSoton) have been granted funding from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to run a 12-month project from 1 Feb 2021 developing the 'Digital Stories' method created in Southampton. The two ACoRNS, together with a technology company, will work on four linked projects with health and education practitioners to find new ways of supporting and developing the Digital Stories method.

At Sussex they will be working with the 'Time for Autism' project in the Brighton & Sussex Medical School and with Brighton & Hove Inclusion Support Service on the 'Just Right' intervention in primary schools.

Hannah Field (English) has been awarded an AHRC Research Networking grant for the project 'Not Only Dressed but Dressing: Clothing, Childhood, Creativity' along with co-investigator Professor Kiera Vaclavik (Queen Mary, University of London). The network will bring together curators, artists, designers, stylists, and scholars from a range of disciplinary backgrounds to think about the relationship between children's clothing, design, agency, and creativity. The grant has three museum partners, all with significant collections of children's costume: the V&A Museum of Childhood, the Worthing Museum and Art Gallery, and the Musée du textile et de la mode in Cholet, France.

CIRCY people involved in the network as participants or advisory board members include **Liam Berriman** (Social Work and Social Care), **Janet Boddy** (Education), **Nuno Ferreira** (Law), and **Maria Moscati** (Law).

Michelle Lefevre (Social Work and Social Care) was awarded £90k from the Department of Education to evaluate the embedding of a new approach to addressing extra-familial risk and harm - Contextual Safeguarding - in the London Borough of Hackney. The research team includes Sussex colleagues **Robin Banerjee** (Psychology), **Kristi Hickie** and **Tam Cane** (both Social Work and Social Care), as well as colleagues from Research in Practice and the Rees Centre at the University of Oxford.

An IDCF-SSRP research grant has been awarded to **Rebecca Webb** (Education) to work with Sussex colleagues, **Perpetua Kirby** (Education), **Mika Peck** (Life Sciences) and **Vinita Damodaran** (World History). They will work virtually with their collaborators, Dr Citlalli Morelos-Juarez (Ecuadorian rainforest coastal lowland) and Dr Anindita Saha (Indian Sundarbans) between January and July 2021 on their youth and climate change-focused research project: 'Hope in the present: Uncertain pedagogies for youth and community resilience in India and Ecuador'. The advisory team will include CIRCY's own **Janet Boddy** (Education).

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.

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.

Image: children's fashion from Kate Greenaway
Under the Window (1878). Public domain



NEW PUBLICATIONS

Dorte Thorsen (IDS)

- Roelen, K.; Barnett, I.; Johnson, V.; Lewin, T.; Thorsen, D. and Ton, G. (2020): 'Understanding Children's Harmful Work: A Review of the Methodological Landscape', ACHA Working Paper 3, Brighton: *Action on Children's Harmful Work in African Agriculture*, IDS, DOI: 10.19088/ACHA.2020.001

- Thorsen, D. and Maconachie, R. (2020): 'Children's work in West African cocoa production: Drivers, contestations and critical reflections', ACHA Working Paper 9, Brighton: *Action on Children's Harmful Work in African Agriculture*, IDS.

Pam Thurschwell (English, CIRCY Steering group)

As part of her continuing work on and around adolescence and music, Pam reviewed both of the Taylor Swift albums that came out during the last year: '[Evermore](#)' and '[Folklore](#)'.

Rachel Thomson (Social Work and Social Care)

- Hollway, W., Kofoed, J., Ruch, G., Sims, L., Thomson, R. and Tonkin, L. (2020): 'Carbon-lite collaboration: A virtual visual matrix', *Journal of Psychosocial Studies*, DOI: 10.1332/147867320x15903844214182

- Thomson, R. & Østergaard, J. (2020): 'Open-ended Transitions to Adulthood: New metaphors for times of stasis', *Sociological Review*. [Online first release 13 November 2020](#).

The Department for Education (DfE) published the first independent evaluation of *Contextual Safeguarding* which was led by **Michelle Lefevre** (Social Work and Social Care) working with colleagues at Sussex and [Research in Practice](#): Preston, O., Hickie, K., Horan, R., Drew, H., Banerjee, R., Cane, T., Barrow, M. and Bowyer, S. (2020): [Evaluation of the implementation of a contextual safeguarding system in the London Borough of Hackney](#).

Janet Boddy (Education) co-authored three chapters in a new book published by Sage, based on the authors' ESRC National Centre for Research Methods NOVELLA research node:

- Boddy, J., Phoenix, A., Walker, C. and Vennam, U. (2021): 'Multi-method approaches in narrative family research across majority and minority worlds'. In A. Phoenix, J. Brannen and C. Squire (eds) *Researching Family Narratives*. London: Sage.
- Boddy, J., and Morrow, V. (2021): 'The ethics of data reuse and secondary data analysis in narrative inquiry'. In A. Phoenix, J. Brannen and C. Squire (eds) *Researching Family Narratives*. London: Sage.
- Elliott, H., Edwards, R., Phoenix, A. and Boddy, J. (2021): 'Paradata in Marginalia: A narrative secondary analysis'. In A. Phoenix, J. Brannen and C. Squire (eds) *Researching Family Narratives*. London: Sage.

Janet also published an open access paper in a special issue of *Societies*, concerned with women who have been involved in recurrent care proceedings and based on the DfE-funded [Pause evaluation](#):

- Boddy, J. and Wheeler, B. (2020): 'Recognition and Justice? Conceptualizing support for women whose children are in care or adopted'. *Societies*, 10 (4), 96.

Dorte Thorsen and James Sumberg (both IDS) published a new blog on [Child labour in cocoa from a European 'doughnut' perspective](#) as part of ACHA (Action on Children's Harmful Work in African Agriculture) - a seven year, DFID-funded research programme.

WHO'S WHO?

CIRCY Leadership Team

Director:

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

Co-Director:

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

Postgraduate Research Assistant:

Loreto Rodriguez
E: 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.

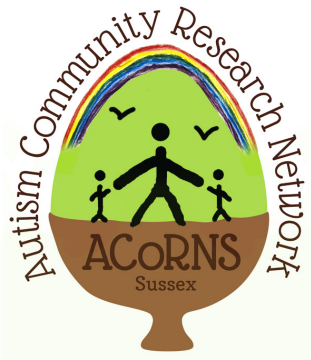
Current Steering Group members are:

- [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)

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.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Autism Community Research Network Sussex (ACoRNS) had their official launch debating 'Rethinking Education in Autism' on 21 October 2020 in an online event with over 80 participants. There were speakers representing autistic youth, parents, researchers and advisory services. The event included



the announcement of the three winners of the group's logo design competition from local schools. The next ACoRNS event will be on 24 February 2021 and will focus on how the group can support better experiences for autistic people and families in health services. Visit them at acorns-sussex.org.uk, email to be on the mailing list acorns@sussex.ac.uk and/or follow them on Twitter: [@ACoRNSussex](https://twitter.com/ACoRNSussex).

ACoRNSussex have restarted their monthly Autism Reading Group (ARG) online for the sharing of ideas on different topics related to autism. Email acorns@sussex.ac.uk to be added to the ARG mailing list.

Liam Berriman (Social Work and Social Care, CIRC Youth Steering Group) has been appointed as co-editor of the journal *Children & Society* from January 2021. The previous editorial team included fellow CIRC colleagues **Janet Boddy** (Education) and **Sara Bragg** (University College London). The new team will launch with an editorial and podcast introducing themselves and their vision for the journal over the next few years (available to read and listen to on the [Children & Society website](https://www.childrenandsociety.org.uk/) from early January).

The [Innovate Project's website](https://www.innovateproject.org.uk/) now has an [introductory video](#) by **Michelle Lefevre** (Social Work and Social Care) summarising what has happened in the first year of the project and setting out what will happen over the next two years of fieldwork. The ESRC-funded project is exploring how safeguarding organisations and networks in the UK are innovating to address extra-familial risks and harms facing young people (such as child exploitation).

Climate Change 'Uncertain Pedagogies' Locally and Global for Hearing from Children and Young People

CIRC members, Perpetua Kirby (Education) and Rebecca Webb (Education, CIRC Co-Director) have had opportunities this term to advance their [Transform-iN Education](#) work, especially focusing on 'pedagogies of uncertainty': non-didactic ways of working that name lived (ontological) uncertainties, invite questions and embrace complexities. They allow educators to share what they know, while avoiding knowledge inequalities of 'expert explication'. They focus on children and young people 'being' participants in community adaptation, not mere recipients of knowledge, respecting their capacity and rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) to respond together, making possible more sustainable futures.

Perpetua and Rebecca have used an ESRC IAA impact award to work with teachers locally for knowledge sharing in a city woodland to consider 'uncertain' practices that teachers might engage with in outdoor school spaces with their pupils. They have worked closely with the [Sussex Wildlife Trust](#) and will be delivering online training to [South Downs National Park](#) outdoor educators in January 2021.

Building on this work, they are also starting a research project with colleagues in Ecuador and India thanks to a research grant from the [University of Sussex IDCF-SSRP call](#) entitled, 'Hope in The Present: Uncertain pedagogies for youth and community resilience in India and Ecuador'.



WANT TO BECOME A CIRC MEMBER?

WHAT IS CIRC?

The Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRC) 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. CIRC'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 CIRC?

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

WHAT DOES MEMBERSHIP INVOLVE?

CIRC 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.

PRESENTING OUR WORK

Dorte Thorsen (IDS) with Mélanie Jacquemin from the French Institute for Demographic Studies were speakers at the Research Day on the Anthropology of Childhood at the Université de Toulouse on 13 November 2020. Their presentation was entitled: 'Assignations de genre v/s transformations des pratiques: trajectoires d'adolescentes migrantes au travail en Afrique de l'Ouest'.

Sushri Sangita Puhan (Social Work & Social Care Doctoral Researcher) was invited to present her research in Ranajeet Guru memorial international webinar series organised by the Indian Council of Historical Research. The title of her presentation was 'Illuminating adoptive family practices in contemporary India'.

Sushri contributed the blog post "[*I am adopted. It's not a big deal*](#)" But it is a big deal for others to The Critical Childhood & Youth Studies Collective (CCYSC), a network for scholars and practitioners engaged in research on and with children and youth across South Asia and beyond.

She also recorded two podcasts to promote her research. The first was in conversation with Dr. Elizabeth Dillenburg, Assistant Professor of History at the Ohio State University at Newark. The second was for an Indonesian broadcast discussing adoptive family practices from Indian and Indonesian perspectives.

Maria Moscati (Law) together with Dr. Francesca Ammaturo (University of Roehampton,) delivered an online presentation at the University of Gothenburg titled '*Centering Children's Voices on Matters of Gender and Sexuality: Exploring New Frontiers of Children's Rights*'.

Kristi Hickie (Social Work and Social Care) gave a keynote for Reading County Council's (virtual) trauma informed practice conference (for multi-disciplinary professionals across Reading).

Rachel Thomson (Social Work and Social Care) has presented her work at three events:

- 'Reanimating Data: Journeys in archiving, sharing and re-using social research', Open Research Data Seminar - Online, organised by the University of Sussex Library on 22 October 2020.
- "Longitudinal Youth Studies in Europe. Prospects, questions, collaboration", also in October. This online event was organised by the Finnish Youth Research Network and the Qualitative longitudinal research group on Italian youth ITA.LI (a research group at the Department of Sociology and Social Research, University of Milano-Bicocca)
- 'From a Noun to a Verb: Rethinking generation for new times', a keynote address to the European Sociological Association 'Youth & Generation' mid-term virtual conference, 24-5 November 2020, hosted by the University

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!



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