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**Diversity & Research
in Critical Times**
Power in the Polyvocality

PROCEEDINGS OF THE

13TH ANNUAL
MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
POSTGRADUATE CONFERENCE
17TH MARCH 2021

The Graduate School

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13th Annual Manchester Metropolitan University Postgraduate Research Conference, 2021
Diversity and Research in Critical Times: Power in the Polyvocality

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The conference committee would like to thank all student and keynote presenters, volunteers, Manchester Metropolitan staff and academic judges who participated in this event, especially: Dr Cathy Coombs, Natasha Howells and Stephanie Barker for their assistance and guidance in organising this 13th Annual PGR Conference.

13th Annual Manchester Metropolitan University Postgraduate Research Conference, 2021
Diversity and Research in Critical Times: Power in the Polyvocality

13th Manchester Metropolitan University PGR Conference, 17th March 2021
Diversity and Research in Critical Times: Power in Polyvocality
Introduction to the published proceedings by Dr Theresa McKinven, Head of the
Graduate School

I am delighted to present the proceedings of the 13th annual Manchester Metropolitan Postgraduate Research (PGR) conference, held on Wednesday 17th March 2021. This year has been the first time the postgraduate research conference has run entirely on a virtual platform and our committee of PGR organisers have sought to make the online experience inclusive and engaging for everyone involved, whether joining us from within the University or from across the UK and beyond. The Covid-19 pandemic has created a need to work together across distance; this year's conference has risen to that challenge and more, creating online spaces that have included multiple voices from different backgrounds and locations as never before.

The 2021 committee's chosen theme of *Diversity and Research in Critical Times: Power in Polyvocality* is close to my heart as Head of the Graduate School. Our Postgraduate Research strategy has diversity and inclusion as a foundation, drawing directly on our experience of the challenges that some students experience in undertaking research study. Manchester Metropolitan is a great, modern university, where we build on our excellent practice in widening participation, attracting and supporting students from non-traditional and low participation backgrounds at undergraduate level in order to challenge and address the systemic inequalities in access to postgraduate research. For our PGR community, we strive for all to feel themselves part of a rich research culture, and this year's conference has provided a wonderful showcase of that culture.

It is a common experience for PGRs to feel themselves to have a 'dual identity', holding roles within the university community as both students and early career researchers – neither entirely students nor wholly staff in their sense of place in the university. This year's conference theme recognises those multiple identities and embraces the value of including diverse voices and experiences in our research practice. The innovations made by this year's committee, from live transcription of sessions to the alternative conference schedule of wellbeing workshops, the non-traditional presentation formats and charity partnerships, have made this a truly accessible and inclusive conference and chime with our strategic aim as a university to support our PGR students in maintaining a healthy work-life balance that prepares them for a successful and sustainable future.

PGR students make a vital contribution to our research community at Manchester Metropolitan. The papers presented at this year's conference demonstrate that rich contribution made by PGRs and the many areas of strength within our research environment, including examples of partnership-led and practice-based work that ensure research conducted at Manchester Met has real world benefits for society, culture, the environment and the economy. I am very proud to introduce this published edition of the conference abstracts and share this demonstration of our fantastic PGR and ECR research culture at Manchester Metropolitan.

Dr Theresa McKinven, Head of the Graduate School

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New World Topics

Exploring the Fourth Space: writing the “I” of the British Pakistani Experience

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Abstract

As an aspiring British Pakistani writer, I faced the uncertainty of existing in a literary void where my voice felt misplaced. Caught in constructing an innovative poetic voice that expressed, authentically, marginalised experiences, I felt it was crucial to create and contribute to the urgent conversation of Race and Poetry in order to offer insight, creative thought, and expression.

I wish to discuss my motivations and my desired outcomes for undertaking my research in exploring the ‘Fourth Space’, posited by writers Nuar Alsadir and Sandeep Parmar, and writing the lyric ‘I’ of the British Pakistani experience. The ‘Fourth Space’ rejects cultural hierarchies and borders, and explores the poetics of displaced histories and experiences. I am working towards a collection of innovative poetry that experiments in this fourth dimension, and seek to speak with British Pakistani poets to document their poetics and to critically explore what kind of poetic approaches the ‘Fourth Space’ invites.

My aim is to encourage not only British Pakistanis to engage in conversations about their dual life experiences, but through recognising and addressing British Pakistani experiences, we may strengthen our shared selves to project the ‘I’ of the British Pakistani into the future of the literary world.

Cross-cultural comparison study of dark triad and five factor personality model in relation to prejudice and aggression

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Abstract

Imagine moving to a new country, a country with completely different language to your own, different cultures, traditions and even religions. Now imagine to that feeling of fear and intimidation we add comments from random people, people that you either never met before or people maybe you work with or study. This is a reality for at least 14% of immigrants in the UK, including myself. Prejudice and aggression is a reality of modern world, and now more than ever, we need to move away from malevolent behaviours that jeopardise our future as a developed society. When examining socially malevolent outcomes in the form of prejudice and aggression, previous research in the area of personality has failed to consider cross-cultural comparisons. My research, first of its kind, looks at potential causes of prejudice and aggression through personality via cross-cultural comparison. Personality effects all of our day to day behaviours, including prejudice and aggression. By using established questionnaires, I gathered data from over 2000 participants in the United Kingdom and data from over 3000 participants in Russia. The results showed that not only prejudice and aggression were global phenomena, with some distinct culture specific elements, which has never been done before for western vs non-western big samples, but also revealed that our personality and in particular people who are high in narcissism, psychopathy, and low on extraversion and conscientious are more likely to exhibit prejudice and aggression, through moral disengagement and political ideologies. My project creates a new platform for further cross-cultural studies, and most importantly creates a new literature branch for assessing prejudice and aggression through cultural differences.

Is mental health discourse gendered?

Author: Ffion Brown, PhD Applied Linguistics

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Abstract

My PhD research is concerned with how mental health is represented within different media contexts in reference to male mental health and how men discuss and linguistically frame their experiences with mental illness. Taking the position that mental health discourse in the media currently demonstrates a lack of male representation, the project addresses how mental health has become gendered and how that gendering can negatively impact those that do not see themselves as being represented. The project especially argues that the impact of considering and critiquing gender when exploring mental health discourse would allow for a more representative approach to mental illness both in the media and in society. By exploring current societal gender expectations and stereotypes, the project identifies how a more fluid approach to gender would bring about a more equal representation of mental health experience into the public sphere.

An exploration of LGBTQIA+ professional's experience of working in the screen industries in Northern Ireland and associations with their mental health and wellbeing – looking through an intersectional lens

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Abstract

The current PhD research project is focussed on the exploration of LGBTQIA+ professional's experience of working in the screen industries in Northern Ireland (NI) and associations with mental health and wellbeing. This presentation will provide a narrative overview of the research and methods to be employed. The presentation will begin by addressing the separate strands within the project by responding to core questions; 1) What do we know about creativity and mental health? 2) What are, and why, the screen industries? 3) Why LGBTQIA+ professionals? 4) Why NI? These important questions are what amalgamate the separate aspects of the thesis which aim to understand the intersectionality issues of being part of a sexual minority group and a screen sector worker in NI. We will consider the important similarities and differences relating to sexual minority statuses (e.g., cisgender lesbian differing from a transgender man) and how being both a member of a sexual minority group, and a screen sector worker in NI during Covid-19 has impacted such individuals. The presentation will end with an overview of methods proposed to address such questions and consideration for future implications of the work. The methodology and study design include online interviews and photovoice project.

Researching the global challenge of pronatalism, and showcasing the diversity and polyvocality of women's infertility poetry

Author: Betty Doyle, PhD Creative Writing

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Abstract

*Someone asks if I feed the birds to care,
to nurture, to serve a woman's purpose.
I say no. What do I know,
I thought I'd be a mother someday –
I grew up knowing I'd have a child of my own.
I don't know where the healing is supposed
to begin. In the birds?
Their joy to live? What could have been*
- From 'A Thing With Feathers', Betty Doyle

Infertility is a topic that is defined by absence and silence and is still seen as taboo by pronatalist society. The grief, absence, and taboo nature of infertility all contribute to the silence that surrounds it, making it an uncomfortable topic to discuss and write about. Through my research, I want to contribute diversity to motherhood poetry, and impact the global challenge of silence surrounding infertility. My research explores how poets create narrative discourses and utilise poetics to convey the silence and absence of infertility. I am also writing my own poems that experiment with poetics to convey this silence and absence.

My own experience with being tested for PCOS is my motivation and inspiration for change. We turn to poetry in terms of extreme emotions – poems are always read at weddings, funerals, and the Writing School's own Write Where We Are Now project has shown that poetry is powerful in times of uncertainty. Through my own writing, I want to create a space of diversity where previously silenced experiences are presented and represented.

Whitewashing, white saviours and white supremacy: reading YA fantasy

Author: Connie Hamilton, PhD

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Abstract

Whilst young adult fiction is diversifying, in that there has been an increase in BAME authors and protagonists, only 6% of protagonists in young adult fantasy fiction are BAME (Agosto, 2003). It is important that diversity increases across genres within YA fiction but particularly within the fantasy genre, as fantasy is important for readers to be ‘empowered and afforded a sense of transcendence that can be elusive within the real world’ (Thomas, 2019).

One of the global challenges we face is combatting racism and ensuring that future generations have the same access and opportunities regardless of their skin colour. Through analysing why the YA fantasy genre remains an exclusive space and writing my own novel within the genre, I aim to highlight why increasing positive and diverse representations of BAME people in YA fantasy fiction is important and what this would look like. This is particularly important in the UK publishing industry as Black children, specifically those like myself who are of Caribbean descent have the lowest levels of attainment in reading and writing in the UK, they are also the least represented in UK YA fiction (Gov UK, 2020).

PGR student diversity: mental health, well-being, stress, coping and resilience in the postgraduate community across the United Kingdom

Author: Andrea Stein, PhD Applied Psychology

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Abstract

This study addresses the limited research on postgraduate research (PGR's) student mental health. There has been more interest in undergraduate mental health with increasing demand for mental services, yet less understanding and research into PGR student community demands (Vitae, 2018). The Higher Education Academy's (HEA) PGR Experience Survey (PRES) calls for further investigation on PGR engagement and well-being. Well-being research is essential to the educational sector, as PGR's indicate higher stress levels, from additional and intensified requirements (Amponsah, 2010; Evans & Stevenson, 2011; RAND, 2017). This mixed method approach consists of multiple related studies. The first: interviews of students from two different universities; University of Salford (completed) and University of Manchester using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), an in-depth technique of interviewing individuals on their lived experience, reflections and individual journeys. The second uses the auto-ethnography technique which uses self-reflection (where the researcher's own journey is documented). The third quantitatively investigates trends using an online survey with established psychological assessments measuring mental health, wellbeing, academic and non-academic resilience. This longitudinal study remedies cross-sectional limitations providing richer narratives and multiple student reflections PGR's across the country will have the opportunity to complete the survey, adding to UK investigation.

Making sense of student experience: why motivations matter

Author: Richard Remelie, PhD

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Abstract

My PhD research seeks to improve our understanding of the experiential outcomes of university students. I hope to achieve this by exploring two key concepts: 1) *motivations* (i.e. why do people come to university); and 2) *reflexivity* (i.e. how do people make decisions as students). At the 2020 annual PGR Conference, I shared the personal experiences that inspired my research and I focussed on the first key concept: *reflexivity*. This time, I will present a theoretical understanding of *motivations*, which I have derived from Self-Determination Theory. I will explain how – in addition to being applicable to our daily lives – this theory of motivations and psychological wellbeing can help us make sense of the experiential outcomes of university students. This presentation will respond to questions about how students can influence the quality of their own experiences, and how universities can define and provide the conditions necessary to give every student the chance to flourish.

**Polyvocality in the communication of Art History: exploring forms of communication
for non-specialist audiences outside of academia**

Author: Sara Riccardi, PhD Art

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In this presentation I will practically demonstrate a case study, derived from my practice: I will illustrate the same artwork in two different formats – one more traditionally academic, the other more interactive and aimed at connecting the lived experience of participants with the art, followed by a brief commentary on my methodology. As a first year PhD student, I will focus on the origin, inspirations and motivations behind my research, and as a practice-based researcher I will directly show my practice. My research questions explore how art-historical subjects can be communicated outside of academia to the wider public, and the core of my project is my own professional practice as an Art History communicator and events creator. After demonstrating the two different formats of art-historical communication, I will present how I am using iterative methodology to draw meaningful material from my practice, to be analysed and used for the creation of models for the communication of Art History. The need I see for a reconsideration of the voices Art History can use and express in being communicated stems from current transformations in the world, and my approach aims at multiplying and diversifying those voices, and the stories artworks can tell.

Global Challenges Presentations

Study the influence of shear deformation on the flapwise vibration of horizontal axis wind turbine blade

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Abstract

Wind turbine blade sizes have been exploded in the recent years. Advancements in blade structure have been continued through to be more efficient design and material usage. To represent the complicated distribution characteristics of the structure and material of blades, a perspicuous model is necessary. In this study, free vibration analysis of horizontal axis wind turbine (HAWT) blade in the flapwise vibration is investigated. Rotating Timoshenko model is adopted to study the effect of shear deformation on the transverse vibration of the blade. The governing equations are derived using vibrational principles to determine the influence of shear deformation, rotary inertia, hub radius and rotational speed on the flapwise vibrations. The natural frequencies and mode-shapes are used as a yardstick to compare the influence of the incorporated parameters. Findings are based on the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) 5-MW wind turbine. Identifying the mode shapes of the blade's oscillations during the turbine operation could be used to detect abnormalities in the measured vibration that may be caused by blade structural problems.

**Co-creating meaning in the space between screens: remote data collection interviews
with people who have communication difficulties**

Author: Katherine Broomfield, PhD

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University, United Kingdom

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Abstract

The Unspoken Voices Project is concerned with people who have difficulties speaking and who use an external communication aid, also known as augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), to help get their message across. People who use AAC may have complex physical and cognitive needs associated with the conditions that cause their communication difficulties. This project aims to learn from the experiences of people who use AAC in order to develop and improve the healthcare services that support them and their aids.

Prior to the COVID pandemic, data collection interviews took place in person, capturing a range of communication media from participants using audio-visual recording equipment. Data transcribed for analysis included speech, synthetic speech from communication aids, text, pictures and non-verbal communication. Representing the co-construction of meaning inherent in interactions between people who use AAC and their communication partners was fundamental to the authenticity of the analyses of these data.

Following the pandemic data collection had to move online, engaging video-call technology. This presentation will discuss the challenges of conducting interviews remotely with people who use AAC, how the researcher maintained the quality and integrity of the data, and the impact that technology has on the development of shared meaning.

The efficacy of translocation for conservation in African large and megaherbivores: a review

Author: Anita Hashmi, PhD Conservation Ecology

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Abstract

Translocation is an oft-used technique in conservation, and one of the most invasive. Defined as ‘the human-mediated movement of organisms from one area, with release in another’ (IUCN/Species Survival Commission, 2013), translocation has been used for decades to satisfy different aims, from recreational hunting to resolving human-wildlife conflict (Griffith et al, 1989; Fischer & Lindenmeyer, 2000). Successful conservation translocations can mean the establishment of healthy, self-sustaining populations, important for the preservation and recovery of endangered species and for the human populations that rely upon them. Translocations take place on an intranational, intracontinental or global scale with a variety of participants, from non-governmental organisations to zoological institutions. Yet judging success of such operations from published literature can be a complex task, especially with no agreed criteria for success (Fischer & Lindenmeyer, 2000). This is important, especially in the case of charismatic species in which the public are invested. These charismatic taxa include African large and megaherbivores, such as elephants and rhinoceroses. In this study we investigated the efficacy of translocation as a conservation strategy for African large and megaherbivores, the representation of different species in translocation studies and events, and factors influencing their representation in conservation literature.

Exploring feelings of wellbeing within an Irish prison environment

Author: Cathy Jones, PhD Psychology

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Abstract

“Do prisons damage or repair? Under what circumstances, and by what mechanisms? ... No single theory has been able to adequately conceptualize what happens inside the ‘black box’ of imprisonment.” (Auty and Liebling 2019:358).

Liebling (2011:530) suggests that some prisons are ‘more survivable’ than others and differences in the moral and social quality of prisons can be directly linked to personal growth, wellbeing, and levels of distress experienced by men and women in custodial care.

There is also mounting evidence that the built environment of the prison could have a significant bearing upon behaviour, rehabilitation and wellbeing (Shepherd and Lenton 2016, Jewkes 2018). However, these insights are rarely reflected in the way prisons are commissioned, designed or upgraded.

Over the last 20 years, UK and Irish prisons have been seeking to re-orient themselves from being places of punishment towards more rehabilitative environments (Costelloe, 2014). However, the role that prison plays in rehabilitation is failing to meet expectations of this current reform ideology (Karthaus et al, 2019). “With nearly half of adult prisoners reoffending within a year of release, the cost of not tackling the root causes of crime has never been higher” (Shepherd and Lenton 2016:1).

However, as Auty and Liebling (2019) note, reoffending rates have inherent problems when it comes to recording. They instead suggest prisons have the capability of either facilitating or damaging “emergent personhood”.

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This presentation will be asking the question ‘how does the prison environment influence feelings of wellbeing for men and women in a prison context?’ The presenter will refer to her PhD study, which will explore these factors in an Irish prison context in development.

Using glaciers to identify, monitor, and predict volcanic activity

Author: Michael Martin, PhD

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Abstract

Many (about 250) volcanoes worldwide are occupied by glaciers. This can be problematic for volcano monitoring because glacier ice potentially masks evidence of volcanic activity. Both the deadliest and most costly volcanic eruptions of the last 100 years involved volcano-glacier interactions. The 1985 eruption of Nevado del Ruiz killed 23,000 people, and the 2010 eruption of Eyjafjallajökull led to the closure of many European airports. Therefore, improving methods for monitoring glacier-clad volcanoes is of clear societal benefit. Amongst several methods, satellite based remote sensing techniques are perhaps most promising, since they frequently have a relatively high temporal and spatial resolution, and are mostly freely available. They can help to identify the effects of volcanic activity on glaciers, including ice fracturing, ice surface subsidence and glacier acceleration potentially due to subglacial melt or subglacial dome growth. This study aims to link pre-, syn- and post-eruption glacier behaviour to the type and timing of volcanic activity, and to develop a satellite based predictive tool for monitoring future eruptions. Despite several studies that link volcanic activity and changing glacier behaviour, the potential of using the latter to predict the former has yet to be systematically tested. Our approach is to use satellite imagery to observe how glaciers responded to past volcanic events, and to build a training database of examples for automated detection and forecasting on a global scale.

An analysis of the associations between Vitamin B12 and folate insufficiency, and Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME/CFS)

Author: Salma Miyan, PhD Healthcare Science

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Abstract

2020 has been a challenging year for researchers, but also an opportunity for innovation and discovery surrounding the Covid-19 virus (SARS-CoV-2), not least regarding post-Covid-19 viral exposure, or “Long Covid”, which presents striking similarities with the development and symptomology associated with post-viral fatigue syndrome (PVFS) and Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME) (Ashton, 2020; Mahase, 2020).

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME) and associated disorders (CFS, PVFS) affects some 17 million worldwide (NICE, 2020). However, gold standard diagnostics and treatment approaches remain disputed. As a result, many complimentary alternative medicine practitioners have explored and developed novel and holistic approaches, including addressing B12 and folate deficiencies. However, the efficacy and mechanisms by which such practices may operate remain unexplored, as do their potential application in treating those suffering from Long Covid.

This study aims to explore potential associations between vitamins B12 (cobalamin) and folate (B9) deficiency and ME or PVFS, specifically Long Covid; through the exploration of the English Longitudinal Study of Aging (ELSA) and ELSA Covid-19 sub-study. We hypothesise that we will see a strong correlation between vitamin deficiency and the onset of fatigue related disorders, as well as the longevity and severity of post exposure chronic states. This study may uncover vital data towards the ongoing fight to treat and prevent long term implications of contracting viral infections such as Covid-19.

Care work needs fixing: an overview of emotional labour and boundary management in care work

Abstract: Harriet Slater, PhD Psychology

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Abstract

Care work is physically arduous and emotionally draining. Workers are typically underpaid, work long hours, and express poor job satisfaction. Workers are often expected to do multiple 15+-hour shifts in a row and maintain a professional attitude despite this. One can imagine the physical and emotional exhaustion incurred after sustained periods of work. This work commonly lacks breaks, recognition, or financial reward.

My research focusses on how care workers manage emotions and boundaries. For my preliminary research, I got diaries from and interviewed six carers, exploring their experiences of emotional labour in care work. This data was analysed using Template Analysis, with the use of *a priori* themes such as burnout, job satisfaction and masking emotions, all developed from the emotional labour literature.

I found that participants focussed on boundaries within their work. Boundaries are an umbrella term referring to the management of oneself and the boundaries set in work, to present oneself appropriately. For example, gifts, use of touch and professionalism. The preliminary findings, alongside the literature, were utilised to develop a study surrounding boundaries in care work. This presentation will disseminate the findings of the preliminary study and introduce the literature of the second stage of research.

Towards healing anxiety disorders in young adults with shinrin-yoku (forest bathing) and nature based expressive art activities: a proposal for a systematic review

Author: Laura Wall, MSc Counselling and Psychotherapy

Institution: Department of Health and Social Care, Edge Hill University, United Kingdom

Contact details: LinkedIn Laura-Wall

Abstract

My Masters research is concerned with shinrin-yoku, also known as forest bathing, and the differing expressive arts based techniques that have been incorporated in to the different models and practices already studied. While this project is still in its early stages, I have so far been able to find numerous studies which apply a specific model of practice to time spent within a forest environment, in which the outcomes highlight the benefits on various health and wellbeing outcomes with particular positive implications for anxiety disorders in young adults. Given the need for individuals to restore and regulate, particularly during times of uncertainty such as Covid 19 lockdown, my aim is to evaluate the specific therapeutic activities conducted within a forest setting which helped alleviate anxiety.

In this presentation, I would like to share with you my motivations for this particular choice of topic and the direction in which I would like to take it going further.

Poster presentations

The Creative Voice: using art therapies for healing racial trauma

Abstract: Claire Beerjeraz, MSc Counselling and Psychotherapy: Contemporary Creative Approaches

Institution: Department of Health and Social Care, Edge Hill University, United Kingdom

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Abstract

I will present the journey and motivations behind my current research exploring the 1980s Black Arts Movement, and the similarities in messages and expression in today's Black Lives Matter campaign, sparked by the death of George Floyd. I am considering the effects of racial trauma and how creative therapy/work might heal this. I will highlight how minority Black people like myself have turned to creative expression to evoke 'a voice' for ourselves as an outlet that amplifies our voices, so we are harder to ignore and oppress. Having our voices heard can in turn heal the interpersonal trauma oppression has caused us. My presentation will highlight current socio-political themes around racism in the UK. I want to share personal experiences that not only illustrate the conference themes, but also signifies how current and vital research for/around Black communities is and how creative expression can be a healing and liberating opportunity for change. This research stems from personal interest, however, it is imperative to share with fellow academics and bring much needed attention to it. Academia must be diversified and sharing work like my own in a conference which acknowledges this will help strengthen that message.

Population genetics of the black eyed tree frog – why I decided to swab frog saliva for my MPhil

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Abstract

A few years ago, I was fortunate to get the opportunity to work in the Amazonian rainforests of Ecuador. There I experienced first-hand the beauty and biodiversity of the Amazon, but also the rapid deforestation and urbanisation that is consuming it, developing an acute appreciation of the amphibian denizens of the forest. Unfortunately, it is well known that amphibians are currently facing a rapid decline worldwide, and undoubtedly are the most threatened vertebrates in the world. Back in the university, I discovered how advances made in genetics have opened a new horizon of possibilities for conservation although we are still just scratching the surface. I have developed several ideas that I believe have the potential to use genetic tools in a highly effective way to conserve the severely threatened amphibians that I have come to love. One of them and my current project involves the black eyed tree frog *Agalychnis moreletii*, which has been recently downgraded to Least Concern from Critically Endangered by IUCN Red List. Using microsatellite markers and next generation sequencing I wish to determine if the species really deserves the classification change or if it is actually a compilation of several potentially threatened evolutionary distinct groups.

Transport choice in a new world

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Abstract

While rooted in my own personal interest in cycling, this research considers the form of transport a person currently uses, and how to move them towards more sustainable choices. According to the Department of Transport only 3% of trips completed in 2019 were cycling instead of by car, and the Covid-19 pandemic presents a unique opportunity to change ingrained habits with regards to transport.

Research into modal shift is often inter-disciplinary, but from a psychological perspective has focussed on Azjen's (1991) theory of planned behaviour. While the social identity approach has informed studies around bicycle use (Hoekstra, 2018), few studies have explicitly sought to understand how social identity contributes to bicycle use as a transport choice and the discourses around it.

In the first of three complementary studies, I apply thematic analysis to media representations of bicycle users and how they may influence intergroup attitudes. Findings suggest that there are six key themes in newspaper representations – Activist, Criminal, Culture Vulture, Healthy Bodies, Outdoorsman and Transporter. In all six themes, the othering of bicycle users presents them as extreme examples irrespective of the type of article, further marginalising the minority transport group.

Exploring factors that predispose individuals with foetal alcohol spectrum disorder to involvement in the criminal justice system

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Individuals with foetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) are significantly more likely to be involved with the criminal justice system (CJS). Based on the existing and published literature, no single study has empirically explored factors that predispose the FASD population to encounters with the CJS. Employing three studies, I seek to contribute to the existing literature in this research area. The first study will be a qualitative study with an objective to explore the experiences of adults with FASD and parents/carers of children/teenagers/young adults with FASD regarding interrogative suggestibility and involvement with the criminal justice system. The objective of the second study is to, employing an epidemiological survey, compare the prevalence of the identified factors from study 1 in the autistic, ADHD, FASD and neurotypical population. Using psychological assessments, the third study will assess memory, IQ, impulsivity and interrogative suggestibility of adolescents with a history of FASD. The third study's objective is to establish the relationship between memory, IQ, impulsivity with interrogative suggestibility. The results from these studies could potentially impact the CJS's approach in the interrogation of individuals with FASD.

Cultural criticism beyond borders: Friedrich Nietzsche and Theodor W. Adorno

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Abstract

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Theodor W. Adorno (1903-1969) are two of Germany's most infamous cultural critics. They are often considered typically German thinkers, and for compelling reasons: the targets of their cultural criticism were often German figures such as the Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), and the troubling composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883). Though Nietzsche's and Adorno's interests in German cultural and intellectual history are indisputably clear, viewing the two critics as purely 'German' thinkers distorts our understanding of their thought by artificially limiting the scope of their interests.

In my presentation, aided by a poster, I will show how Nietzsche and Adorno were globally-minded thinkers whose thought engaged with global cultural developments. This argument is at the core of my doctoral researcher's method. I will demonstrate that, despite Nietzsche and Adorno writing in periods of significant German nationalism, both thinkers engaged with cultural issues from across a globalising New World. My poster will use different colours to represent the nationalities of the thinkers and artists with whom Nietzsche and Adorno engaged. This will emphasise the global focus of their works, and will highlight the advantage of viewing cultural and intellectual histories in the context of their reactions to global challenges.

Does strategic and business planning in the start-up phase improve the viability of a business?

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Abstract

Over 50% of Australian businesses fail in the first five years alone! Does strategic and business planning in the start-up phase improve the viability of a business? Surveys to 725 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in one Australian region harnesses 112 responses. A further twelve in-depth interviews and two focus groups triangulated the findings. Strategic tool use, consciously setting a strategic direction and ongoing business planning all had a direct impact on long-term business. Government policy insights to influence direction of support and education needed to reduce business failure rates was a key outcome. Then Covid-19 struck, putting businesses in disarray. Six follow-up Covid-19 impact interviews supported planning behavioural change. This behavioural change directly impacted business viability through these uncertain times. Could this be explored to understand whether the findings apply to the wider Australian landscape or even other countries as we learn to deal with the aftermath of Covid-19? Socially, business failure rates may be reduced by developing government policies and other mechanisms. Supporting and guiding the initial business planning phase may see more businesses survive. With SMEs accounting for over 99% of all Australian businesses and providing over 70% of Australian private sector employment, the value to the Australian community in reducing the failure rate is immense.

The Supreme Court and the management of revenue allocation in Nigeria

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Abstract

Revenue allocation has remained one of the most contentious issues in Nigeria. So contentious is the issue that the Federation is yet to review the revenue allocation formula for over two decades. Whereas, the 1999 Constitution stipulates the review of the formula for at least after every five years to be in tune with the changing realities, yet since the return to civil rule in 1999, despite several attempts, the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), the President and the National Assembly (NA) could not fulfil their constitutional responsibility of reviewing the formula guiding the process of revenue allocation. The contentious issues revolve around resource control, onshore/offshore dichotomy, first line charges on the Federation Account (FA), and the state joint local government account etc. Given most of these issues appeared to be constitutional struggles between the levels of government, the Supreme Court has been summoned relentlessly in the management of the often recurring and inevitable intergovernmental fiscal conflicts. This paper, deploying doctrinal research, examines the landmark judgements passed by the Supreme Court since the return to civil rule in 1999. Prominent judgements were identified and examined within the context of managing discords arising from fiscal intergovernmental transfers in the Federation.

What is the experience of adolescents who use art therapy to support the impact of social media use?

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Abstract

Social media is known to have many benefits such as social networking, communication and entertainment purposes. However, despite these benefits, some age groups, particularly adolescents have been reported to experience long lasting negative experiences which include mental health issues such as: low self-esteem, feelings of comparison and lack of control on social media use. The social media platforms that are the most popular and widely used among adolescents include Instagram and Twitter. These are the platforms that contribute the most to these issues experienced by adolescents. Research has shown that Art Therapy has a positive impact on adolescent mental health, such as a decrease in depression and increased feelings of empowerment and self-identity. This systematic review aims to explore the experiences of adolescents who use art therapy to support the impact of social media and understand the extent to which art therapy supports these negative adolescent experiences with social media. The investigations will also include the impact of Covid-19 which has enforced extended periods in isolation, resulting in an increased use of social media, particularly amongst adolescents. Currently, there is limited research which links Art Therapy and the impact of social media on adolescents. This study, thus, aims to contribute to this gap, and contribute to wider research by providing an understanding which may possibly encourage the use of Art Therapy to alleviate the negative impacts of social media.

The quality of teacher education in Indonesia: stakeholders' views on preservice English teacher education in a state and private university in Indonesia

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Abstract

Teacher quality has long become a growing and competitive area of research to improve the quality of education. The reviews of national policies for education in 2015 called for more quality in teacher education to improve the quality of teachers. The purpose of this mixed-methods study is to explore how six types of stakeholders (student teachers, educators, Head of English Department, Dean of Faculty of Education, teacher graduates and their principals) perceive quality in teacher education regarding influential aspects, strengths, challenges, and possibilities for improvement at pre-service English teacher education in a private and state university in Indonesia. The study collected survey data from 509 student teachers and conducted 42 interviews. One of the results showed that the interest of student teachers in teaching profession is quite low. Meanwhile, the quality of inspiring educators and role model of effective teaching considered as the most significant factor in the quality of teacher education. The results of this study suggested the importance of educating future teachers beyond learning to teach to meet the demand of dynamic of education and linked the theory into practice throughout the program.

The impact of listening to trauma stories

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Abstract

Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) is a reaction to exposure to vicarious trauma seen in clinicians who work with survivors of trauma. The development of STS can result in a number of consequences such as professional burnout, maladaptive clinical practices, problems in personal and professional relationships and high staff turnover. The evidence for the severity, prevalence and predisposing risk factors of STS in helping professionals is unclear and therefore systematic implementation of interventions to prevent STS is not warranted as offering such help to individuals who may have never developed this psychological problem may have adverse consequences, and research needs to establish what factors may make an individual more likely to develop STS allowing treatment to be targeted at those who need it. Studies have investigated the use of a cognitive task in buffering the effects of exposure to trauma material and the development of intrusions at follow-up, however, this area is understudied in the context of STS compared to PTSD studies. The aim of this PhD project is to identify individual predisposing factors that make an individual more or less likely to develop STS, and investigate whether a cognitive task could protect practitioners against the possible adverse effects of vicarious trauma.

Podcast presentations

Independent advocacy and the Care Act 2014: a critical realist study of policy and practice

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Abstract

The Care Act 2014 created a statutory framework for adult social care in England. Within this, it introduced a duty for individuals to be supported by an independent advocate, where this is necessary to promote their involvement in processes such as needs assessment, care planning, and safeguarding. My research will provide the first scholarly exploration of independent Care Act advocacy (ICAA) that draws on the perspectives of various stakeholder groups including advocates themselves, social workers, and service users. It will engage with questions of how effective ICAA is and what factors affect this efficacy, taking critical realism as its paradigmatic approach and drawing upon methodological insights from realist evaluation. Hence, advocacy will be considered as a mechanism that aims to empower people so their ‘voice’ can be heard; this mechanism interacts with the diverse contexts of individuals’ experiences of adult social care, encompassing the relational and social aspects of needs, circumstances and identity. The study – for which data collection is due to start in Autumn 2021 – will address these issues at a time when Covid-19 has led to heightened awareness of the acute pressures and systemic shortcomings that afflict adult social care, long pre-dating the pandemic but intensified by it.

Under the radar: amplifying the voices of Black and Minority Ethnic children experiencing domestic abuse. Black Lives Matter X COVID-19 – a catalyst for change

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted inequitable racial disparities. Compounded further by the Black Lives Matter movement, whose chants can still be heard by a chorus of activists on an international campaign to dismantle systemic racism. The aforesaid collectively contributes to the motivation behind this research. Moreover, this backdrop highlights the intersectionality of inequalities, which includes gender-based violence (GBV) and the disproportionate effect on Black women and children. GBV is an underreported crime, research suggests Black Minority Ethnic (BME) women are at greater risk of experiencing GBV. Interestingly, ethnicity is negated from police reporting data at times, which has implications for policy and practice.

Omissions of ethnicity when collecting data on GBV is problematic and contributes to GBV amongst BME remaining hidden. Most concerning, this includes BME children who, as a result, are residing in high-risk households but are living under the radar. Further, negating the lived experiences of BME women who experience GBV leads to overgeneralisations of female victims' experiences of GBV and results in generic responses/services. Exposure to GBV in early childhood has many ramifications and contributes to intergenerational trauma. Whilst race is still under the spotlight, there can be a catalyst of change for BME women and children experiencing GBV.

Exploring the impact of expressive art techniques in the experience of acculturation

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Abstract

After moving to the UK to study creative psychotherapeutic approaches, I became deeply interested and curious on the complex process of settling in a new culture. Facing my own difficulties integrating, better known in the literature as ‘acculturating’, drove me to search and find underwhelming information on the subject. How to provide psychological support to this complex process from any psychotherapeutic approach is scarcely known. In this global world where we migrate to learn from each other more now than ever, how can we find new creative ways to provide the necessary support for wandering people to achieve emotional well-being? It is my aim to contribute to this under-researched area because it is my belief that our personal struggles can be the most powerful driving forces to create the change we wish to see in the world. For this, I recruited postgraduate international students to undergo a series of expressive art experiential workshops. We discussed their subjective experiences in depth and learnt about the impact of the techniques. Their journeys informed theoretical and practical suggestions for future psychotherapeutic interventions. My findings will be shared through a pre-recorded podcast: the interview of a multicultural psychotherapy researcher.

Art therapy in palliative care

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Abstract

I aim to do a systematised review to look at primary research investigating whether art therapy can reduce anxiety in individuals receiving end of life care. Coming from a nursing background and caring for service users at the end of their life, it became apparent that side effects from anti-anxiety medications were a concern for individuals, thus the increasing need for alternative approaches free from side effects became apparent. Lynch (2011) suggests that traditional pharmacological measures, which are traditionally used in the clinical setting, are being challenged by a rapid demand for alternative approaches.

According to the WHO (2020), approximately 40 million individuals require palliative care; 78% of these individuals are residing in low- and middle-income nations. According to Dain et al. (2015), alternative, creative therapies may be a cost-effective alternative way for treating anxiety in palliative care. This, in turn, may benefit the palliative community globally.

This review may encourage other postgraduate students to investigate other alternative creative approaches in treating anxiety in palliative care. I hope that the evidence which I find may offer healthcare professionals worldwide assistance in making informed decisions about alternative therapies, for the treatment of individuals who have a terminal illness and are experiencing anxiety.