



the note

Staff and Student magazine for the [School of Sociology and Social Policy](#)

Featuring contributions from:

Ian Shaw

Nick Stevenson

Cath Williams

Amal Treacher Kabesh

Scott Pacey

Rachel Fyson

Nicola Carr

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Cover: ['Boats on Highfield Lake with Trent Building'](#). Image supplied courtesy of The University of Nottingham ©.

A note from the Editor:

Welcome to the fifth issue of *The Note*, and my first as Editor. I would like to thank each of the contributors, as well as Angela Peer and Christine McDermott, who brought this issue to life. Remember that this is a magazine for both staff and students. If you have an idea for an article—about life in the School or beyond—please do get in touch!

For now, may you have a rejuvenating and fruitful summer.

Scott Pacey

A 'Vision Statement' from the Incoming Head of the School of Sociology and Social Policy

The School of Sociology and Social Policy is a vibrant, diverse and exciting centre for social science, with an established history dating all the way back to 1948. I myself have been working here since my appointment as a lecturer in the School of Social Sciences (as it was then called—on a 3 year contract) back in 1992. Over the succeeding 25-year period, the School has expanded in shape and form. It is now more multidisciplinary, covering criminology, public policy, social policy, social work and sociology. However, cutting across these (often blurred) disciplinary boundaries are two shared values: the promotion of global and social justice, and a desire in our teaching and research to 'make a positive difference' in the world.

I have also experienced 6 different Heads of School over that 25-year period—all of whom brought a unique style and focus to the role of School leader. However, the increased emphasis on quality assurance and management processes means Heads of School have less discretion (and perhaps more accountability) than they did in the past—and are less 'the captain of a ship' and perhaps more of a cog within a wider university quality assurance and improvement system. This means less management power than in the past, but Heads of School can, however, lead and nudge colleagues in preferred directions. This is important, as this School has an important role in helping achieve the University's [Global Strategy 2020](#).

A Head of School needs to lead in ways that will support 2020's core vision, principles and values. This involves improving the quality of everything that we do, with the resources we have at hand. There are significant challenges in providing high quality teaching at the same time as providing high quality research—all within the financial limits of the School's contribution to the wider University. Nevertheless, a Head of School needs to lead improvement in the quality of both education and student experience, as well as in research. This will involve supporting continuous professional development for colleagues at all levels, and encouraging a working culture where

colleagues can challenge themselves, and others, openly and respectfully.

With respect to learning and student experience, the School will undertake continuous reviews to ensure that we respond to changes in student demand and preferences, and I will support student engagement. I will seek to further develop the high quality research-led education programme for our undergraduate and graduate students within our shared values. This is very important for improving student experience, but also for meeting the demands of the government's proposed [Teaching and Excellence Framework](#).

For undergraduates, the aims are to equip students with the academic skills necessary to question critically, think logically, communicate their views clearly and have the moral foundation to conduct themselves ethically. I also want to develop our post-graduate programmes and explore what opportunities there are in a rapidly changing environment for recruiting international students. The aim of postgraduate programmes would be to further equip these students with the ability to innovate and lead in ways that will benefit society in the countries in which they work. I would also seek to develop the quality of teaching through staff development and training.

Research in the School ranges from global-level analysis of societal change all the way through to micro-level social interactions. This activity is channelled through the School's four Research Centres—the Centre for Applied Social Research; the Inequalities, Citizenship, Equalities and Migration Centre; the Institute for Science and Society; and the International Centre for Public and Social Policy. These centres themselves host wider research networks and provide an important forum for collaboration and the exchange of research ideas.

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The strategic aim of the School will be to promote knowledge exchange through close partnership with stakeholders. This involves working with service users, national and international organisations, government departments, advocacy groups, and the third sector. It will respect the worth of individuals, and value the diversity of opinions and ideas in the formulation of impactful research. I believe such collaboration provides research of the highest standard of rigour and ethics—and that it is meaningful and enduring. I will support staff at all career stages to develop their research portfolios, as well as encourage interdisciplinary research and (international) collaborations.

There are challenging times ahead, with respect to the wider context we are working in as a School, but we need to keep focused on our core values and to build quality improvements into everything that we do. The University and all our stakeholders are expecting nothing less from us.



Ian Shaw

Professor of Health Policy, School of Sociology and Social Policy

Punk Education

Last year was the 40th anniversary of punk rock's emergence in the UK. For me, punk was a transformative moment. This is perhaps difficult to understand now. Punk gets remembered as young people, sporting Mohicans, posing in the town square, but it was anything but at the time. What often becomes erased in the memory of punk was how dangerous it seemed. Punk was associated with a moral panic in mainstream society, and a supposed collapse of traditional values. Many newspapers and television news programmes ran features on how to spot the signs of a punk sensibility becoming evident in one's children, or in a young person. However, for me and many of my peers, punk was a direct attack on the prevailing common sense of the late 1970s. Of course it is easy to romanticise the past, and yet looking back I find myself thinking about the value of punk.

I can certainly see why my parents might have been worried as I went, overnight, from being a football-obsessed schoolboy to being someone who liked to walk around with a T-shirt that announced 'No Future'. This was a direct reference to the Sex Pistols single, 'God Save the Queen', which was infamously banned by the BBC. Why was this so disturbing?

Part of an answer to this question can be found in what we might describe as the pedagogic power of punk. Punk was not only a challenge to the then dominant music industry that allowed space for more independent forms of cultural production—it equally opened up a space in society to be critical and radical. This would not have mattered if it had only attracted a few people, but literally masses of young people were listening to songs and reading magazine articles that questioned the legitimacy of the system (or as Johnny Rotten called it, 'the sh*t-stem'). Unlike what we were taught in schools, punk had a direct connection to people's everyday lives. It asked questions like: why go to school? Or, why get a job? What kind of future was there in a society run by capitalism and driven by profit? Indeed, rather than providing answers to these questions, it simply asked that you make up your own mind.

Further, it made space for young women and men to experiment with their identities. Some of this went on through fashion and the development of a second-hand chic, but also through a rejection of some of the dominant ideas of femininity and masculinity. Of course, it all too quickly became sucked up and commodified by capitalism, but for a brief period it felt as

if a cultural revolution was taking place. Beyond the boredom of holding down a job (at the time I worked in a department store), going to school and mainstream television, there was something exciting and vital going on. Punk sought to interrupt what you might expect from popular music. Its abrasive quality suggested that if you have something to say, then make sure it's interesting and connects to the world around you. The music and the culture of the time was not always successful in this respect, but at least it made an effort to think beyond the usual cycles of the culture industry.

So what has this got to do with the life of the university in 2017? Actually, quite a lot. Indeed, I recently came across a collection of essays by Zack Furness called *Punkacademics* (2012, Minor Compositions), which gathers together some interesting critical reflections by scholars who were influenced by punk, and now find themselves working in sociology departments, interested in education. It seems I am not as unusual as I thought. Here, I have drawn upon some of the advice offered by the book.

Firstly, don't just sit in the seminars feeling bored or staring at your computers. Join in. If you disagree with what's being said, then say so. The reason that punk was so arresting is that it rejected the ease of conformity. Lots of punks radically disagreed with one another on the meaning of punk. This went well beyond disagreements about music, but involved questions of aesthetics, politics and identity. I was reminded of these antagonisms in an event I helped organise at the Five Leaves Bookshop in Nottingham last November. The theme of the evening was a discussion of the meaning of punk (as I remember, spitting was optional!) and perhaps not surprisingly, no one agreed. After a couple of presentations by me (and local author Graham Caveney), the evening descended into an entirely appropriate, disordered and sometimes passionate conversation.

Of course, all of our students want to do well and are prepared to work hard to get the grades. But a great deal of violence is done to the idea of education if it becomes reduced to a meaningless ritual where no one can really say what they think or disagree with one another. Instead, many of the modules in your degree offer the possibility of thinking from first principles. This is often missing from our increasingly instrumental culture, in which people often do things in order to achieve something else.

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So why not think about your own principles? What kind of person do you really want to be, and what do you want to do with your life? A university education means very little if both lecturers and students alike don't make an effort to think. Yet thinking requires both energy and passion, and of course the humility to recognise you may not always be right. At the end of my education module that ran in the Autumn Semester, I asked students to tell me what I had not gotten right, or how I might have done things differently. I was really pleased (and a little uncomfortable) to hear their suggestions, and yes, they made me think. Listening to people disagree with you is of course unsettling, but we all need to be able to take criticism.

Finally, make use of your time at university. There are lots of opportunities to get involved in campaigns and other activities that might become closed to you later. Of course, everyone wants to find a job and get good marks, but take the opportunity to do other things while you have the time. Universities should be places where you can take intellectual risks and question your own ideas without necessarily knowing where you will end up. If it loses that spirit, we are all diminished by the result. Punk back in the 1970s was so successful because music and the wider culture had stopped connecting to our lives and had become a bland form of consumerism. However, if you are studying sociology, you have the opportunity to explore more critical worlds beyond the 'project normalisation' that is preferred by our consumer society. So safety pins at the ready, prepare for your punk education, or as Joe Strummer of The Clash liked to say, 'the future is unwritten'.



'Punks close to the Electric Ballroom' by [Viosan](#) is licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](#).

Nick 'Nasty' Stevenson

Reader, School of Sociology and Social Policy

Reimagining the Past through the Present and Future

As I write this, I am about to celebrate another birthday. And no, I am not going to reveal how old I am, so don't ask! As my mum would say, I am a 'big person'. I always look forward to receiving birthday cards from family and friends. I'm one of those people who reads all the nice words and messages, and who displays their cards proudly on the mantelpiece. They will then sit there for at least a week.

I confess I have always been a bit nostalgic. I tend to hoard old cards, past photos and even bits of tat. Memories of old friends, and past events, thoughts of who I once was, or thought I was, often leave me staring at myself in the mirror, searching past the signs of age and decay and wondering. 'Whatever happened to that slim young black girl with the fierce eyes and ready smile?' And then, 'Ah, there she is!' I see her for just for a moment, before she melts away again. That brief re-connection with my past self is usually enough to restore the hope that I haven't changed too much—that despite the trials of life, loves and loss, I'm still me.

My youngest child has just turned 18, and now, seemingly more than ever, I find myself sentimental and nostalgic for the past. I'm preoccupied with replaying memories of long-ago events and people, even seeking to re-establish connections with them. Is this just me, or are others the same?

History and memory are, as David Glassberg describes, two convergent pathways to the past. One of them concerns a veridical account of a real historical event, and the other is a remembered, reimagined and personal recollection. Personal memory differs from factual evidence, but can still be true. When I share photos and cards with my children and family, I say things like, 'Do you remember that?' And, 'Oh, I had forgotten all about that.' Or, 'Let me tell you a story about that...' and so on. On such occasions, I'm transported back to the past through the lens of the present, as well as the future.

Storytelling is such a central part of how we find meaning as humans—how we make sense of our lives, and communicate important messages to

others. Our memories play an indispensable part in this. For Mark Freeman, the process of exploring our own histories is fundamental for our self-understanding and selfhood. It is this preoccupation with recollection that interests me—that is, how in gazing backwards, we are able to chart our own (re-) interpreted and fictionalised understandings of our own life-stories.

Tolstoy cries, 'Why remember the past? It is no longer here!' He reminds us of the politics of memory, and that the deeds of our past can often continue to haunt and torment us as we blind ourselves to the truth of our past actions, and consciously or not, struggle to disentangle facts from the stories we tell about them. We must redeem the past to fully understand and learn from it.



'[Birthday Cards](#)' by [Open Grid Scheduler/Grid Engine](#) is in the [public domain](#).

Cath Williams

Assistant Professor, School of Sociology and Social Policy

Egyptian Revolution: Revolution or Repetition?

Hisham Matar (a Libyan novelist) wrote recently about the pain and difficulty of being a citizen from the Arab region. He writes:

I don't think people realise how hard things are for Arabs now. And how hard they have been for a long time...I don't think we realise to what extent that long and drawn-out corrosion has distorted our politics (2017, p. 39).

The Arab region is dealing with deep-seated problems, including overwhelming corruption (financial, political, emotional), the struggle with democracy, and multiple conflicts. These problematic socio-political matters have a long history and remain stubbornly present.

During the winter of 2011, the political activity that took place in Egypt was celebrated and heralded as a positive move towards democracy and social justice. This optimism was heartfelt, and as the Mubarak Regime collapsed, we (Egyptian citizens) were convinced that Egypt was about to become a society based on social justice. This optimism was misplaced and Egypt is, as it always has been, marked by an atmosphere of oppression, fear and despair. While the term 'revolution' has a double meaning—break and repetition—here I will concentrate on analysing some of the underlying reasons as to why revolutions in Egypt are marked by repetition.

On January 25th 2011, Egypt erupted in political activity. The demonstrations that took place in that year and beyond have a history; they did not come out of nowhere. Midan Tahrir (Liberation Square) was taken over by protestors who cut across lines of class, gender, age and religious faith, all demanding the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak and his government. This regime was widely perceived as corrupt and deficient, due to their failures to tackle the acute problems that the Egyptian population was suffering. Unemployment was soaring, inflation was high, manufacturing was in severe decline, and education, and health provision, were in a dire state. Finally, the decision to install Gamal Mubarak (Hosni Mubarak's son) as the next president led to public outrage, which had no impact whatsoever on the decision.

I aim to open up some aspects of the socio-emotional complex in Egypt that impede at best, and/or paralyse at worst, an effective society from being established. I concentrate on interior and psychic life as one route to deepening our understanding of the dire state of contemporary Egypt.

I want to make clear that my explorations add to, and should not be seen as displacing, political theory. Rather, I argue that we must 'look inward, name and confront those attitudes, norms, practices and relations that cannot be simply explained away by external and structural patterns, forces and processes' (Al-Ali, 2014, p. 125).



'[Tahrir Square - February 9, 2011](#)' by [Jonathan Rashad](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).

I will endeavour to look inward in two different ways. First, by positing that processes of colonialism have been internalised in Egypt, which hinders full and adequate political authority from taking place. Instead, relentless authoritarianism and patriarchy exist. Second, looking inward requires opening up an exploration into matters of subjectivity in an effort to avoid perpetuating denial that socio-political conditions will improve. Looking inward attempts to restore a full subjectivity to Egyptian citizens, and to pay full due to Fanon's plea that conceptualisations of interiority take into account the more disturbing and negative aspects of human beings. Colonisation does not, alas, just float on the skin, but rather goes to the heart of human beings as contempt, denigration and refusal is internalised. This affects various aspects of life—such as the capacity to live with confidence and not from a position of perceived 'inferiority', and to work towards building a good society. As Fanon expresses poignantly, 'All I wanted was to be a man among other men. I wanted to come lithe and young into a world that was ours and to help build it together' (1986, p. 113).

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Egyptians, on the whole, are disappointed, and many depict the revolution of 2011 as the 'Stolen Revolution'. The military is once again in power. President Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi is loved by many Egyptians, and admired for his ability to rule with leadership and authority. The reasons for Al-Sisi's popularity are numerous: he is a member of the widely respected military; he is perceived as beyond corruption and as a leader who can act; and, above all, it is widely believed that Al-Sisi will develop and consolidate an anti-imperialist agenda and enhance Egypt's status internationally.

The difficulty is that a colonial past is difficult to overcome. Colonialism endures; it cannot be safely relegated to the past because it is internalized, perpetuated and endured. An insistence that the past is behind us reveals an anxiety that the past is profoundly in the present. The assertion that all has changed—that colonialism has been overcome—stalls the capacity to think about the various subtle ways in which colonialism endures. We are in the arena of the 'colonial boomerang', a process elucidated by Arendt (2004/1951) as the bringing of the colonising practices of coercion and domination from the colonies back home. I am using this depiction of the 'colonial boomerang' to trace through the process of internalised colonialism in an attempt to elucidate the colonial violence and brutality inflicted on Egypt by Egyptians. It is not so much a return—rather, it has never been absent.

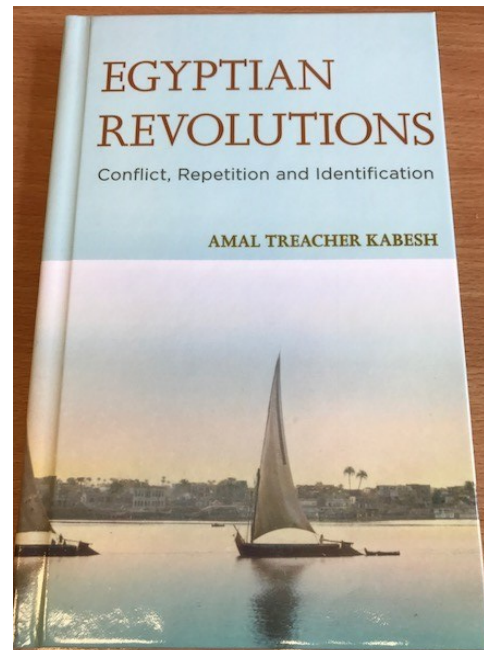
Political and emotional imperialism colonises the imagination, as well as our thoughts and actions, as the colonial past is absorbed and perpetuated. It has to be endured and understood, lived with and thought about as the only way through to effective political action. The tragedy of a nation is always simultaneously a personal tragedy. Political activity will not deliver an effective future if the past is not dealt with in a way that allows different political judgements to be made.

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Amal Treacher Kabesh

Associate Professor, School of Sociology and Social Policy



Watching *Star Trek* with a Sociological Eye

I'd always vaguely enjoyed *Star Trek*, and watched the occasional episode on TV when I was growing up. But I had never delved into it too deeply—until one night about a year ago. I was convalescing in bed, suffering (I was convinced) from the flu, unable to sleep. For some reason, I decided that *Star Trek* would be the answer to my insomnia. Spock with his calm logic, the purple skies of strange planets, and the show's questionable scientific credibility would soon send me into a deep slumber. Like an intoxicating melody from a Vulcan lute, a now-forgotten episode had me drifting off about halfway through. However, a seed was subliminally implanted in my feverish brain. I became fascinated by the programme, and decided to watch each episode of the original series over time. Now, having accomplished that task, I feel sufficiently qualified to offer some thoughts on the *Star Trek* world, and in particular, the picture it paints of humanity at the individual and social levels.



'[Star Trek Motorcycle.2](#)' by [Tim Williams](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).

For those of you who might not know about *Star Trek*, I shall briefly explain. The series begins in the middle of the twenty-third century, when Earth is a member of the Federation—a kind of planetary United Nations. It concerns the 5-year mission of a starship, the Enterprise, to explore the galaxy. The programme centres on three main characters: the ship's captain, James T. Kirk; the science officer, Spock; and the chief medical officer, Leonard McCoy. A host of other characters round out the crew: Scotty the engineer, Lieutenants Uhura and Sulu, and Ensign Chekov. The programme was first screened in the United States in 1966, and it lasted for three seasons (and 79 episodes) before being cancelled due to poor ratings. Despite expiring before the Enterprise's mission had finished, the show lived on in reruns, which allowed it to grow its fan-base over time. Eventually, *Star Trek* gained a sort of immortality, becoming a social and cultural phenomenon. Enthusiasts, known as

'Trekkies', began holding conventions where they dressed up as the characters and celebrated their love for the show. Since then, multiple movies and additional TV series (and a cavalcade of books, toys, computer games, and so on) have followed.

The programme introduced an optimistic vision of humanity's future during a time of social and political upheaval. It suggested that the source of progress was the struggle with, and transcendence of, human deficiencies. Indeed, a recurring theme in the series is that humanity's imperfection is the source of its greatness. During their voyage, Enterprise crewmembers met powerful beings capable of great—almost magical—feats. They encountered an entity who claimed to be Apollo, as well as androids and trans-corporeal intellects. At first glance, these beings appeared superior to humans because they were astonishingly capable, intelligent, and rational. But in the end, Kirk and his crew always demonstrated that their seeming perfection was false. Humanity's flaws meant that it had a greater range of experience, which enabled us to make genuine moral and ethical judgements. Super-computers, on the other hand, had a pre-packaged outlook that prevented true progress.

The crew also found that easy answers to human problems were never what they seemed, or led to even worse outcomes. And while our failures pointed the way to horrible dystopias—hinted at through references to a fictional past in the show—our successes had illuminated a path to the progressive reality that comprised *Star Trek's* fictional world. The Enterprise was technologically sophisticated, but it was socially sophisticated too. There, people from all countries and planets could work and live alongside each other. Difference was celebrated—war, tyranny, and inequality had been relegated to history. And the Enterprise itself was not on a mission of conquest; instead, the Federation had charged it with exploring uncharted territories and making peace with new alien civilisations, believing that each part of our galactic society enriched the whole.

The *Star Trek* universe wasn't perfect, though, and social problems and prejudices from the 1960s could be seen in its imaginary future. For example, in the final episode of the third season, 'Turnabout Intruder', Kirk's former partner, Dr Janice Lester, remarked: 'Your world of starship captains doesn't admit women. It isn't fair.' Lester then used alien technology on the planet Camus II to swap bodies

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with him in an attempt to commandeer the Enterprise. Even in the Federation, then, gender inequality remained. And indeed, until the fourth feature film was released in 1986, there were no female captains in *Star Trek*. Years later, another *Star Trek* series, *Star Trek: Voyager* (which aired in 1995 - 2001), did see a woman helm a starship—Kathryn Janeway. The history of *Star Trek*'s captains, then, provides us with a window on our own, real society. It mirrored social change in the later decades of the twentieth century, and the gradual acceptance of women into executive roles in the workforce—even as the original series itself ostensibly imagined a future in which gender inequality didn't exist. Other aspects of the programme can be analysed in this way, too.

We can speculate about why *Star Trek* was cancelled, but later became so popular. Some have suggested that its progressive aspects meant the show was ahead of its time. Or, maybe audiences just grew tired of humanoid-lizards, Tholian energy webs, and distant planets resembling Earth. As William Shatner—the actor who portrayed Kirk—said to a crowd of fictional Trekkies in a 1986 skit on *Saturday Night Live*, 'it's just a TV show!' Maybe he's right, and we shouldn't take it too seriously. But I think that perhaps the most important message we can draw from *Star Trek* is that popular culture is a lens on society. Through it, we can see what society aspires to, and the issues it is dealing with at a particular point in time. This is not just the case with *Star Trek*—other TV shows, as well as films, music and books, are cultural and social artefacts that can tell us a lot about social history. So, my foray into *Star Trek* wasn't just an excuse to watch tribbles, space amoebas and unicorn-dogs. Watching it with a critical eye, I actually learned something.

Who said intellectual life had to be serious—*all* of the time?

Scott Pacey

Assistant Professor, School of Sociology and Social Policy

University of Nottingham Joins Social Work Teaching Partnership

Shortly before Christmas in 2016, the Centre for Social Work team was delighted to hear that our bid to be part of the government's flagship Social Work Teaching Partnership programme had been successful. This article will explain why we are so pleased about this, and how this new way of working will benefit our students.

About Social Work Teaching Partnerships

Social Work Teaching Partnerships are a key part of the government's strategy to increase the quality of social work teaching and practice. The partnerships work by creating closer working relationships between the universities that train social work students, and the local authorities that employ qualified social workers.

About the D2N2 Teaching Partnership

The Social Work Teaching Partnership which we are now part of is known as the D2N2 partnership because it spans Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. It involves two universities, four local authorities, two user-led organisations, a health trust and a major local voluntary sector organisation. The complete list of partner organisations is as follows:

- University of Nottingham
- Nottingham Trent University
- Nottingham City Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Derby City Council
- Derbyshire County Council
- Services for Empowerment and Advocacy (SEA)
- Making Waves
- Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
- Framework Housing Association

The D2N2 partnership aims at improving the quality of social work for the local population through the integration and exchange of knowledge gained from experience, practice and research. This will be achieved by training high quality social workers, enhancing opportunities for ongoing learning and career development, and using research to

understand 'what works' and thus achieve good outcomes.

Every organisation that has signed up to the partnership is committed to working together and enhancing the quality of social work education in universities, to supporting closer links between research and practice, and to helping local authorities recruit and retain the best social work practitioners.

The D2N2 Social Work Teaching Partnership was officially launched with an event on January 26 this year. This brought together practitioners, students, service users and academics for a day of workshops and networking. Highlights included presentations from social work students Zoe Dean and Ashlee Smith on their MA dissertation findings, a workshop led by Professor Harry Ferguson, and a keynote speech from Professor Ray Jones.

Since the launch, a lot of behind-the-scenes work has been going on between partner agencies to begin the process of implementing the promised improvements to qualifying and post-qualifying social work education in the East Midlands. This work involves a number of strands, including

1. creating a D2N2 Social Work Academy for Excellence to promote local knowledge-sharing between universities and local authorities;
2. enhancing the admissions process for BA and MA Social Work programmes by introducing a Communication Skills Exercise;
3. working towards all students having two statutory placements during their qualifying training;
4. increasing the amount of teaching in universities that is delivered by current social work practitioners;
5. ensuring that social work academics retain up-to-date practices and knowledge by supporting periods of return to practice; and

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6. embedding the *Knowledge and Skills Statements* of the Chief Social Worker for Children and Families, and the Chief Social Worker for Adults, into the BA and MA Social Work curriculum.

Benefits to Students

Although it is early days for the D2N2 partnership, some of the expected benefits to students are already evident. For example, a half-day symposium on adoption was held which was open to all students on placement. Other training events are being planned.

With the help of some of our current students, we have piloted the Communication Skills Exercise. This will be used in our admissions process next year. The exercise will involve applicants being observed while they interview an actor playing the role of a service user—this will test how well applicants are able to engage with people and demonstrate empathy, as well as communicate clearly, accurately and appropriately.

Plans are also being made for academic staff to spend time back in practice. One colleague—Assistant Professor Kirsten Morley—is already doing this; she spends one day every month working for Nottingham City Council as an Approved Mental Health Practitioner.

Perhaps of most direct relevance to our students is the fact that the partnership has already led to a substantial increase in the availability of statutory placements for those on both BA and MA Social Work programmes. Statutory placements are those in which students either work directly for a local authority or health trust, or they work in a company that undertakes statutory work on behalf of these organisations. This might include child protection work undertaken by the NSPCC, or work in secure adult mental health facilities provided in the independent sector. The proportion of student placements that were in statutory settings increased from 65% last year to 86% this year. And, we were able to ensure that *all* final year students had a statutory placement.

This is important because having a final placement in a statutory setting increases students' employment prospects.



'Civil work' by [João Lavinha](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).

The Future for D2N2

The current funding for D2N2 lasts for another year—until the end of March in 2018. Over the next twelve months, we are planning a range of training and knowledge exchange events, as well as a review of the curriculum for our BA and MA Social Work programmes. We don't yet know whether there will be further government funding for the partnership beyond March 2018. However, we are confident that many aspects of the partnership will continue regardless of future funding, because everyone involved is convinced that this is a better way of working together.

Rachel Fyson

Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Social Work

Spotlight on ... Nicola Carr



What is your role in the School?

I started in the School in January of this year as an Associate Professor in Criminology. I teach on the criminology undergraduate programme and the MA Criminology. We will be launching a single honours criminology degree in 2018/19, which is an exciting development, so I will be involved in this. I am also involved in research and I will be working with colleagues to develop capacity in this area.

What do you teach?

I am currently teaching on the undergraduate programme and convening modules on the MA Criminology. Next year I will be contributing two new modules, based on my expertise and research interests: 1) Youth, Crime and Justice and 2) Rehabilitation, Risk and Desistance.

Describe your research, and how you go about it.

My research has focussed on various aspects of the criminal justice system and people's experiences of this. I am particularly interested in how people experience penalty and the impact involvement with the criminal justice system has on other aspects of people's lives. I have recently conducted research on young people's understandings of criminal records and how having a record affects their lives. I have also researched young people's experiences of custody and what it is like for young witnesses to give evidence in court. I am also interested in practitioners' experiences of the criminal justice system, and what it means to rehabilitate peo-

ple, and to be involved in punishment and so forth. Most of my research involves qualitative methods. This has included using life-history approaches, oral histories, focus groups and action research methods. I am also interested in visual research methods.

What led you to academia?

I am professionally qualified as a probation officer and I worked for a number of years with adults and young people both in the community and in custody. My PhD research was prompted by my experience of working both in practice and policy in youth justice. I began my PhD while I was still working, and then moved into a research post in Trinity College Dublin. In this job I learnt a lot more about research, particularly the challenges and benefits of in-depth qualitative work. From there I moved into a full-time academic post in Queen's University Belfast and now here to Nottingham.

What interests you most about your work?

I am lucky to be doing a job that is interesting and highly varied. It is great to be able to carry out research on topics of interest, and there are always new avenues of inquiry and areas to develop.

What do you do in your spare time?

I like to run, and try to do a few races a year (not very fast), so I'm usually training for something. I also have three dogs, so there is often one in tow, dragging me along.

What advice do you have for students?

Learning is lifelong; if you haven't found what you like yet, you will at some stage. If you are going to do research, find what interests you. This will sustain you over the long stretches.