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Welcome to INSIGHT Spring 2015

Welcome to the 4th edition of **INSIGHT**

This edition includes information on past and future events, some examples of good news, profiles on various IHC and Research Centre members, an interview with one of our external speakers and an ‘on my bookshelf’ item.

As you will see, we already have some exciting events planned for the coming academic year. Please see page 2 for information on our forthcoming events; page 8 for highlights from the CMI Conference 2014 and CMI Auto/Biography Cluster; and page 20 for Good News Stories from our research centres.

Please remember to use the good news form on the Faculty of Health and Human Sciences/Research/IHC page so that we can accurately capture all our activity in forthcoming publications. We would also welcome any articles, comments or ideas for our next issue.

With best wishes,
The IHC Team.
IHC CCCS Seminar
Navigating Transitions in Life and Learning
19 September 2014

CMI Auto/Biography Research Cluster
Emotions
30 September 2014

IHC U3A Autumn Event
Food
Dr Clare Pettinger and Dr Julie Parsons, Plymouth University
08 October 2014

IHC CHeSCI Seminar
BSA SWR MedSoc ‘Using Secondary Sources to Support Social and Health Research’
Professor Rod Sheaff and Dr Mike Sheaff, Plymouth University
17 October 2014

IHC Seminar
The History of Being Middle Aged
Professor Judith Burnett, University of Greenwich
28 October 2014

IHC CCCS Seminar
Communicating Risk and Uncertainty in the Context of Climate Change
Professor Brigitte Nerlich, University of Nottingham
03 November 2014

IHC CCCS Workshop
Research Impact and Maximising your Reach and Visibility Using Various Media Tools
Professor Brigitte Nerlich, University of Nottingham
06 November 2014

IHC CCCS Seminar
The Post Humanist Methodological Affordances of Researching Sexualities with Young People in Schools
Dr Kathleen Quinlivan, University of Canterbury, New Zealand
07 November 2014

IHC Seminar
Ambivalence as an Immigrant Condition: Exploring Seniors’ Lives and Relationships
Professor Nancy Mandell, York University
12 November 2014

CMI Auto/Biography Research Cluster
Exploring the Experiences of Lifelong Learners and their Journeys to School: A Narrative Study
Dr Cath Grisy, Plymouth University
13 November 2014

IHC Seminar
Organizational Image and the Emotional Labour of Organizations: Intimacy, Identity and the Politics of Privacy in Organization
Professor Ann Brooks, Plymouth University
19 November 2014

School of Health Professions Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
Vestibular Rehabilitation and Visually induced Dizziness
Dr Marousa Pavlou, Kings College London
26 November 2014

IHC Winter Networking Event
Chris Parsons, Manager of Dartington LandWorks
05 December 2014

CMI Methodological Innovations Conference
Creative and Critical Possibilities: Methods, Methodologies and Epistemologies
Keynote Speaker: Dr Angela Meah, University of Sheffield
09-10 December 2014

Institute of Education’s Professional Theory and Practice Research Cluster & IHC CCCS Seminar
Video Enhanced Observation App Seminar
Jon Haines, Newcastle University
14 January 2015

IHC CCCS Seminar
Climate Action and Engagement: The Need for Effective Climate Communication
Dr Candice Howarth, Global Sustainability Institute, Cambridge
21 January 2015
School of Health Professions Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
Effective and Positive Approaches to Working with Aggression and Violence from Service Users in Health and Social Care
Professor Brian Littlechild,
University of Hertfordshire
28 January 2015

Dementia: Towards Co-ordinated Social and Health Care Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
Perspectives
Dr Ian Sherriff, Professor George Giarchi and Keith Bucknall, Plymouth University
17 February 2015

Dementia: Towards Co-ordinated Social and Health Care Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
Interventions for Dementia
Professor Ray Jones, Plymouth University
and Kate Smith and Laura Walker, Memory Matters South West CIC
24 February 2015

CMI Seminar and Auto/Biography Research Cluster
‘Autoethnography as a Feminist Method: Sensitising the Feminist I and Raising Oppositional Consciousness’ followed by A/B Research Cluster Discussion focusing on ‘Memories’
Professor Betsy Ettorre
11 February 2015

Dementia: Towards Co-ordinated Social and Health Care Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
Models of Dementia Care
Alieke Scholten and Gertje van Roessel,
Buurtzorg Netherlands
10 February 2015

School of Health Professions Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
The Challenges of Researching Participation
Dr Katrina Bannigan, Plymouth University
25 February 2015

Dementia: Towards Co-ordinated Social and Health Care Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
28 January 2015
Dementia: Towards Co-ordinated Social and Health Care Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
Interventions for Dementia
Dr J Wenborn, University College London and Professor Rod Sheaff, Plymouth University
03 March 2015

Dementia: Towards Co-ordinated Social and Health Care Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
Neuropsychology Screening and Pharmacology
Professor Jonathan Marsden, Plymouth University and Dr Denise Taylor, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology, Bath University
10 March 2015

School of Health Professions Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
Reversing Ocular Ageing - The Demise of Reading Glasses
Professor James Wolffsohn, Aston University
18 March 2015

IHC CCCS Seminar
‘Accepted pressure? Elite news journalism, interest groups and climate change coverage’
Dr Julian Matthews
26 March 2015

School of Health Professions Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
Being and Becoming a Reflective Practitioner
Professor Chris Jones, University of Bedfordshire
22 April 2015

Institute of Education & CCCS Seminar
Classroom Creativity with iPads Seminar
Joe Dale, Independent Languages Consultant
18 May 2015

IHC CCCS/Learning Outside Formal Education Research Cluster Event
‘Insider/Outsider in Education’
Speaker TBC
20 May 2015

School of Health Professions Lecture Series, co-hosted by IHC
Airway Equipment in UK Ambulance Services
Dr Tim Kilner, University of Worcester
24 June 2015

IHC CHeSCI Presentation
‘Multiple Sclerosis Falls Prevention Research: Some Answers and Many New Questions’
Professor Marcia Finlayson
14 April 2015

IHC Seminar:
‘Physicians’ causal attribution in medical diagnosis. Where is the clinical evidence?’
Dr Lin Adams
20 April 2015

CCCS/VIP/LoFE Event:
Creative Approaches to Democratic Education across the Life Course – Working Together for Change
13 May 2015

CMI Auto/Biography Research Cluster
Memories
21 May 2015

IHC CCCS/Learning Outside Formal Education Cluster – Children’s Experiences of Visiting their Parents in Prison: Research with 6 Prisons
Julia Morgan
3rd June 2015
British Sociological Association (BSA) Medical Sociology South West Group

Using Secondary Sources to Support Health and Social Care Research

Plymouth University 17th October 2014.

This afternoon event organised by MedSoc South West (in association with CHeSCI) focused on approaches to using secondary sources. There were two presentations along with questions and a lively discussion.

The first session was led by Rod Sheaff. Rod is Professor of Health and Social Services Research, at the Plymouth University. His research interests are in health policy and its implementation, and in the relationships between organisational structures and health policy outcomes. His current research involves collaboration with German, Italian and Swedish researchers, and he has worked in many other countries. Rod’s presentation entitled, Second thoughts: re-using secondary health care data for sociological analysis focussed on a number of examples from his research using secondary sources. This included using NHS activity data held by the NHS Information Centre, including patient-level data from HES and general-practice level data; individual and patients’ health careers and continuity of care, recorded in personal medical records; and, Grey’ managerial and policy documents.

For each of these, Rod discussed issues that arise and strategies for accessing the data, extracting and cleaning the data, and the types of analyses - especially sociological analyses - that the data can be used to feed. The worked examples are taken from recent and current health research, mainly in the UK.

The second session was led by Dr Mike Sheaff. Mike is Associate Professor of sociology at the University of Plymouth and a Staff Governor of the University. Mike’s presentation, ‘Giving accounts’: use of documentary evidence to explore information and secrets relating to a case of organisational failure focussed on how information held by NHS organisations might be used to gain accounts that differ from those offered in public accounts. His particular focus was the collapse of a social enterprise in 2009, which had won contracts with a Primary Care Trust and the Department of Health. In his presentation Mike demonstrated how the DoH response to the organisation’s collapse illustrated Erving Goffman’s observation about situations where, “the audience must not acquire destructive information about the situation that is being defined for them... a team must be able to keep its secrets and have its secrets kept... one overall objective of any team is to sustain the definition of the situation that its performance fosters” (Goffman, 1959/1990: 141). Using documentary information available through public sources and other documents obtained through disclosures made in response to Freedom of Information requests, Mike compared different accounts, demonstrating the management of what Goffman described as “dark secrets through the control of information”.

ROUND UP – BSA SWR MEDSOC SEMINAR
Ambivalence as an immigrant condition: understanding senior Canadian immigrants

What is your current position and how did you get there?

I am a Professor of Sociology at York University in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. I had a rather boring and straightforward path to York, almost directly from graduate studies at Northeastern University in Boston where I did my PhD with Blanche Geer, a close colleague of Howard Becker and Everett Hughes. In the 1970s, both Becker and Hughes had academic positions at Boston universities. They recruited Blanche Geer to Northeastern in order to consolidate their collegial connection which began with their research collaboration on their classic Symbolic Interactionist fieldwork project entitled *Boys in White: Student Culture in Medical School* (see below for further detail). Since I wanted to study in the area we now loosely refer to as ‘social constructionism’ in sociology, I migrated to graduate school in Boston where I received what the Americans call a ‘full ride’ through graduate school, mentored by Professor Geer. Through this network, which extended across the United States, I was thoroughly trained in a school of sociology based on examining the links between agency (individual actions) and social structures (the institutions such actions constitute and are constituted by). This approach has provided the foundation for
most of my academic work in the areas of school-home-work transitions, diverse forms of family structures and intergenerational interactions, and the ways in which race, class and gender shape age relations.

What are your key research interests and activities?

I am a Professor of Sociology and Women’s Studies at York University and a former Director of the Centre for Feminist Research and former Chair of the Sociology Department. My research and teaching interests include gender, aging, schooling and family. Recently I have published articles and book chapters on parental involvement in monitoring children’s homework, aging and embodiment, gendered and racialised forms of carework, and patterns of economic security among aging immigrant families. I am an expert on community-based research and my community-academic research protocol (Mandell and Whittington-Walsh 2004) is widely used across Canada. I have a wealth of experience working with marginalized communities in the areas of classroom equity, family violence, feminist methods and women’s rights. My most recent book on Canadian midlife women uses a postmodern life course analysis to examine the role of paid and unpaid labour, health and well-being and historical and social contingencies shaping women’s lives. My most recent SSHRC grant entitled ‘Worked to Death’, examines patterns of economic security among twelve different types of ethno-racial aging immigrant families. I am currently writing a book on the findings from this project.
Annual Conference

A conference on the theme ‘Creative and Critical Possibilities: Methods, Methodologies and Epistemologies’ took place on the 9th and 10 December 2014. This highly successful annual conference now in its 9th year attracted a diverse audience of 58 delegates from across different disciplinary areas locally, nationally and internationally.

The Conference Keynote was delivered by Dr Angela Meah, University of Sheffield

“Good morning video diary…” Co-producing meanings of domestic ‘masculinities’ using participant-generated videos

Angela spoke to the following abstract:

Although visual methods – photography and video-recording in particular – have a long history, they are gaining increased prominence in the social sciences. Their use, however, presents a number of challenges to researchers, including complex ethical considerations, questions concerning the representation of participants and the subjectivity of researchers (and audiences), all of which require greater reflexivity regarding the politics and practices of looking. Having previously relied on visual data that I had collected myself to develop ideas about gendered performances in cooking and other food-related practices, earlier this year I started a new project, equipping my participants with video-recorders. This presentation explores what happened when I involved my participants as co-producers in a pilot project concerned with the lived reality of ‘being’ (or ‘becoming’) a man. While not providing unmediated access into people’s lives, participant auto-video ethnography not only provides a means of accessing aspects of social life that are relatively inaccessible (invisible) via other methods, it also unsettled the power relations between the researcher and the
researched and what they each claim to know, raising important epistemological questions concerning who says what, about whom, and how this knowledge is legitimised.

A wide range of research themes and methodological interests were explored in the conference. There were papers on evaluation research; use of digital technologies in research; exploring creative methodologies and visual methods; sensitivities and emotions in research; reflection and ethics; researcher/respondent relationships; narrative inquiry, and grounded theory situational analysis.

The conference ended with a lively and informative panel discussion facilitated by the Centre for Methodological Innovations Auto/Biography Cluster on ‘Creating Creative Auto/Biographies’. Chaired by Professor Gayle Letherby the four panel members spoke briefly about their creative auto/biographical approaches. Heather Knight spoke on ‘The Art and Silence of Anti-Racist Education’; Mike Murphy explored processes of creative subjectification as the pursuit of new ways of existing or ‘new possibilities of life’; Julie Parsons discussed the use of ‘i-poems’ and word clouds to explore auto/biographical relationships with food; and, Suzanna Rance explored feelings about bodily and textual fragmentation after concluding an ethnographic study in a Bolivian Medical School.

A copy of the conference programme, abstracts and presenters can be found at the IHC/CMI website at https://www1.plymouth.ac.uk/research/ihc/Pages/default.aspx

“Complexity of Neuroimagery, ethics and public understanding explored by Amedeo D’Angiuli”

“Kevin Meethan tagging visual images alters how we can display tourism photos”

“Learning a lot on the use of SMMS for public engagement”

**CMI Auto/Biography Cluster**

In addition to hosting a panel for the CMI Annual Conference 2014 (see above) the Auto/Biography Cluster met twice in the autumn term. In the first meeting we had a lively discussion on the relationship between auto/biography and emotions and at the second Cath Gristy gave a talk entitled ‘Exploring the Experiences of Lifelong Learners and their Journeys to School: A Narrative Study’. The paper was based on Cath’s research with members of the local USA group.

So far this year the AutoBiography cluster has hosted a successful meeting which included a talk by Professor Elizabeth ‘Betsy’ Ettorre of the University of Liverpool entitled ‘Autoethnography as a Feminist Method: Sensitising the Feminist I and Raising Oppositional Consciousness’ followed by a discussion focusing on ‘Memories’.

A further meeting, also focusing on Memories is planned for 21st May - please contact IHC@plymouth.ac.uk for further information.

“Deborah Butler highlights challenges/dilemmas using digital technologies for connecting producers and consumers.”

“Interesting talk by Carla Willig on pros and cons of using object elicitation methodology to explore lived experiences.”
Prior to fifteen years as a science teacher in various schools in and around London, my Higher Education career started in 1988, with a Lectureship in Education at the University of Exeter, followed in 1999 by a Senior Lectureship at the University of Bristol. I am currently Professor of Biology in Education and Associate Head of the Plymouth Institute of Education, Plymouth University, with responsibility for research.

My personal research interests are in the areas of teacher education and professional development in general and science education (pedagogy, new technologies and ethical issues) more specifically. Although my own background is in secondary education, I firmly believe that pedagogic issues and enquiry span the educational phases and transferability is the key to research-based improvement of outcomes for all learners, through the life course. Recent research includes the HEFCE-funded Action on Access project (2009-10); Comenius Regio-Funded projects (2011-13) with UK school partners: Active Inclusion for Sustaining Communities (with the Ministry of Education in Cyprus) and Towards the development of deeper learning and transferable lifelong skills through the use of European Key Competencies (with the University of Santiago de Compostela in Spain). Projects for 2013-14 include a further Comenius project with Devon County Council and Santiago University: Improving attitudes and learning in a second language through the increased use of ICT.

Publications since 1987 include four authored books; six book chapters; ten official reports; 27 papers in international refereed journals and 33 international conference presentations/papers. Grants as Principal Investigator or co-applicant since 1988 total some £2.7M from e.g. HEFCE, ESRC, Wellcome Trust, Nuffield Foundation, Teaching Agency, Royal Society.
Can we assess Transition’s Health Impacts? An Interview with Janet Richardson, CHeSCI

Janet Richardson (CHeSCI) was interviewed recently by Rob Hopkins of Transition Town Totnes and Transition Network. The piece begins:

Is Transition good for a community’s health? Janet Richardson is Professor of Health Services Research at Plymouth University in the Faculty of Health and Human Sciences and is the first person to do a Health Impact Assessment of a Transition initiative. In 2011 she did a ‘rapid’ Assessment for Transition Town Totnes. What did it discover, and what can we learn from that?

To read more go to:
http://tinyurl.com/nsu8uvs

“What we found was that on a range of health and wellbeing measures the initiative itself had enormous capacity to increase the health and wellbeing of the people who were participating in that particular project, the Transition Streets initiative. Primarily that health and wellbeing benefit was through community engagement and engaging with immediate neighbours.”
The IHC Food Event took place on 8th October. Members from across the university and from Plymouth U3A group attended. Following lunch, two papers were given by Dr Clare Pettinger and Dr Julie Parsons, each of these prompted a lively and engaged discussion. Brief abstracts follow:

Food as a Lifestyle motivator (FLM) project (funded by ISSR)

Dr Clare Pettinger (ISSR, SSHRG),
Dr Julie Parsons, Ms Carole Sutton,
Miranda Cunningham, Andrew Whitehouse & Dr Richard Ayres

Food poverty is high on Plymouth’s agenda to ensure ‘access to healthy and affordable food for all’ (Fairness Commission 2014). Whilst food is an excellent way to bring people together, as evidenced in the recent ‘Food Cultures Project’ (Pettinger & Whitelaw 2012), disadvantaged communities are traditionally ‘hard to reach’. Community engagement interventions are popular and can improve health behaviours and self-efficacy (O’Mara Evans et al 2013) but evidence is lacking for successful engagement approaches in certain ‘marginalized’ populations (Olivet et al 2010).

The recent Plymouth ‘Food Cultures project’ engaged marginalized men (including homeless youth) and its evaluation demonstrated that participation in food projects can build trust, self-esteem and improve food skills. Findings from this project have been developed and the current research project explores the role of food as a potential ‘lifestyle motivator’ to support wellbeing and life skills in marginalized individuals in a Plymouth based homeless centre.

This exploratory project, currently in its infancy, will run until June 2015. Using innovative methods, insight will be gained into the food practices and preferences of residents using a homeless centre in Plymouth. Staff (n=10) and service users (n=10) in the centre will be involved in participatory qualitative methodological approaches, consisting of:

i) observation of the food environment
ii) consultative surveys
iii) adapted photo voice method (photo elicitation)
iv) focus groups

By investigating these aspects from a multi-disciplinary perspective, findings will be yielded that will feed into a subsequent research bid to target a wider range of marginalized communities in Plymouth. This will enable more sustainable ways of engagement through tailor-made intervention design, strengthening of social assets and enhanced wellbeing by supporting personal development. This project will inform local practice and policy, it already complements other local projects currently underway to explore some of the many issues underlying food poverty.

1Food poverty is defined as a poor quality diet and no resources or access to sufficient and/or appropriately nutritious food necessary for a healthy life (Maslen et al, 2013).


Gender, Class And Food: accounting for taste and dis-taste in autobiographical food narratives

Dr Julie Parsons (CMI)

This paper draws on findings from my doctoral study, ‘Ourfoodstories@e-mail.com’, an Auto/Biographical Study of Relationships with Food, soon to be published as a monograph with Palgrave MacMillan (2015). I conducted a series of asynchronous online interviews over nine months from the end of 2010 with 75 respondents. The extent to which these food narratives were saturated with gender and class was surprising. Respondents conformed to cultural scripts of what might be considered ‘appropriate’ middle class and highly gendered foodways, particularly regarding the pursuit of ‘good’ food, whether this was for ‘health’ as was the case for most of the women or for ‘pleasure’ as it was for most of the men. I therefore discuss how issues of class and gender are interwoven and embedded in our everyday foodways by highlighting some of the key themes, notably family/maternal identity, a gourmet or foodie identity, healthy foodways/food as CAM and embodiment or issues to do with body weight.
I am new to Plymouth University; I started work here at the beginning of the academic year. Before moving to Devon I lived and worked in North Yorkshire for 18 years. This was the longest I have stayed in one area because I was brought up within an army family; the Queens Own Hussars regiment. We were always on the move — Hohne, Warminster, Detmold, Bovington, Detmold, Sandhurst, Detmold, South Cerney — with a period of time at boarding school in Loughborough. Being constantly on the move means I did not make lifelong childhood friends; I was amazed by people at University who had friends they had known since kindergarten. I met my oldest and best friend, Anne-Frances, when I was studying my first degree in Divinity at the University of Aberdeen.

I struggled at university. Divinity at Aberdeen was an odd choice for someone with a family background in Roman Catholicism. It was not an informed choice. Divinity was suggested by a teacher; Sister Eleanor. She thought that, as a range of subjects are studied it would be useful for someone like me who did not know what they would like to do. I did not really understand what I was signing up to. Being educated alongside right wing Protestants who were constantly trying to convert me was an education in itself. I learnt more about Roman Catholicism, even though it was not on the curriculum, than I had throughout my childhood because my family’s faith was a blinkered faith. I did not convert to Protestantism but I did lose my faith. This was prompted partly by a module on feminist theology. It was taught by Dr Ruth Butler who had just published a book about women in the ministry. She was embroiled in the campaign for the ordination of woman in the Anglican Church. So she was teaching material related to the live, radical debates she was actively involved in. As well as having my faith and culture challenged (I have always felt Roman Catholicism is as much a way of life as a faith) it was during my time at Aberdeen that I began to understand my childhood was far from ‘normal’ and this had an impact on my mental health. This was one of the benefits of studying Divinity; in a small faculty I was held by some good, kind people who I am extremely grateful to.
It was whilst studying for my Divinity degree that I discovered occupational therapy. Divinity students at Aberdeen were expected to do voluntary work. My placement was at a psychiatric hospital — the Royal Cornhill Hospital Aberdeen — supporting people with dementia to feed, use their long term memory through reminiscence, and going to church services. It was an interesting experience. I worked with women who had been institutionalised following a pregnancy outside marriage. They had lived their adult lives in an institution for flouting social mores now regarded as antiquated. One day I was asked to take someone to occupational therapy. I didn’t know what it was but I went along and helped out for the morning. I co-facilitated an activity group for older people and was invited to help out in the department on a regular basis. Over the next few weeks I discovered a profession that enables people to live rich, rewarding lives following illness or disability by supporting them to engage in the everyday activities that are meaningful to them. It made inherent sense to me so I found out more. I read the Blom-Cooper report — Occupational Therapy – An Emerging Profession in Health Care — and visited a range of other settings where occupational therapists worked. I was hooked and so three months before my finals (It is hard to remember that a degree used to be awarded based on one week of exams in June) I applied to study a second degree in occupational therapy. In those days you could apply to 10 universities/polytechnics through the UCAS and PCAS systems. Three weeks later I had been rejected by nine institutions and was invited to an interview at the tenth. One week before my finals I blew all the money I had to fly from Dyce in Aberdeen to Birmingham International and took a train to Derby to attend an interview at the Derbyshire College of Higher Education. The following September the Derbyshire College of Higher Education had morphed into the University of Derby and I started studying at The Cedars on Whittaker Road. The Cedars was a large detached house in a residential area of Derby, well away from the main University campus. It was the complete opposite to the Kings College quadrangle in Aberdeen. Studying at The Cedars I learnt the skills I needed to practise as an occupational therapist but it was also a transformative experience for me personally. Alongside university modules, and placements in Sheffield, Chesterfield, Derby and Bakewell, I spent the first two years in an experiential group. The skills honed during the experiential group work have stayed with me the longest and I still use them today in my work as a researcher. Yet this was the aspect of the curriculum that did not survive the transition of occupational therapy education to degree level within the University sector. This still concerns me because group work is a core occupational therapy skill. I am not sure how you can learn about the therapeutic potential of groups without prolonged experience of one. However, when I make this argument, I wonder whether I sound like someone in their middle age that is pining for what is past? Or should I start a campaign? With colleagues I have conducted a systematic review into the use of group work within occupational therapy and hope to explore this further in my work with students at Plymouth University.

From my initial voluntary work at The Royal Cornhill Hospital Aberdeen, and throughout all my practice placements, my interest in mental health has never wavered. On qualification I worked in mental health settings in Central Scotland and North Warwickshire. I believe I would have remained working in clinical practice throughout my working life except that, in
an effort to get some temporary respite from a difficult work scenario, I applied for a temporary post as a research assistant at the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, University of York. This was a turning point. As well as learning about research from world-leading researchers my experience and knowledge of health and social care was broadened. There was no going back.

Although mental health was my passion I had to concentrate initially on building research capacity in occupational therapy and other allied health professions. I have been involved in supporting the development of critical appraisal skills to enable therapists to use research findings and teaching research methods to enable them to conduct research. This was the focus of my PhD at the University of Hull and teaching at the Universities of Teesside and York St John. Along the way I have engaged with the wider professional body; I was the first elected chair of the College of Occupational Therapists Research & Development Board, Vice Chair of Council and oversaw the establishment of the UK Occupational Therapy Research Foundation. In recent years I have been able to rekindle my interest in mental health. I have been involved, on behalf of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists, in a global survey of occupational therapy and mental health, conducted systematic reviews of measures of participation in mental health and studies of occupational therapy intervention in adult mental health. I am just in the process of launching The IHC Plymouth Case Study Research Project which will enable occupational therapists to document case studies using a common framework that documents the logic and process of their interventions as well as outcomes data (see figure 1). All of this work provides a foundation for establishing a programme of research in mental health under the auspices of the occupational science cluster in CHeSCI.

### The IHC Plymouth Case Study Research Project
Supported by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists

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<th>Stage 3</th>
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<td>Develop common framework to document case studies.</td>
<td>Design and populate an open access database of case studies.</td>
<td>Pooling case studies to create larger studies.</td>
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<td>Agree and document criteria for recording 1. The logic and process of occupational therapy intervention. 2. What outcome measures to record? and when to record them?</td>
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Figure 1: An overview of the The IHC Plymouth Case Study Research Project
Public Memories and Visions

The renovation of Drake’s Place Gardens & Reservoir

Carole Sutton, Director of the Centre of Methodological Innovation is currently working on an exploratory study of public memories and visions of the restored Drake’s Place Gardens and Reservoir. The £1.4 million renovation work funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Big Lottery Fund and Plymouth University saw the fountains in the reservoir reinstated along with the cascade and stream which run through the gardens. Listed features, such as the watch house, were restored, the gardens replanted according to the original 1910 design and information signage included around the site.

Closed to public access for many years it offers a green space with running water in an inner city area and promotes an image of escape from the urban city. New access points from North Hill were also introduced to improve accessibility.

Data was gathered on visitor perceptions at the formal re-opening in June 2014. Initial analysis of 31 semi-structured interviews with individuals, partners and friendship groups revealed a range of different public memories, providing insights into both a sense of place, personal memories and emotions. The individual narratives revealed stories of tragedy and joy, intrigue and curiosity about the past and the restoration. The historical and the rejuvenated situated in family histories, personal biographies and the new experience of the space.

Utilising a walking ethnographic approach follow up interviews are currently being undertaken to explore in greater depth how visitors navigate the spatial dimensions of the reservoir and gardens alongside their personal emotions and memories. It is envisaged that this project will also provide the University with insights into how the space can be maintained and developed for the different stakeholders who access the site.
Co-researching CAF: crossing boundaries and sharing strategies

Supported by funding from the Voice, Inclusion and Participation research cluster (affiliated to the Centre for Culture, Community and Society (CCCS)) and the IHC over the past three years, a group of researchers from Plymouth Institute of Education and local authorities partners from Devon, Cornwall and Plymouth have been working together to explore local implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). CAF formed a key part of the Change for Children Programme that attempted to transform services for children with additional needs by putting the child’s, rather than the services’ needs at the centre. The current policy and financial context of targeted support for improving outcomes for children and young people (particularly those from the poorest families) means that this now has to be achieved with reduced funding across the public sector. While CAF has been recognised as a cost effective tool to support early intervention (LARC3, 2011), its status remains uncertain (see DfE, 2011 and Munro and Lushey, 2012) and local practices have been evolving in something of a vacuum.

A successful symposium A critical engagement with the Common Assessment Framework system in the UK hosted by the Voice, Inclusion and Participation Cluster in March 2012, offered participants the opportunity to examine current practices in integrated working and in particular the effect of the CAF process on the assumptions, behaviours and thinking of the professionals involved. Following the symposium, a research project was set up, also supported by Voice, Inclusion and Participation Cluster to critically examine the CAF process from a range of perspectives through co-operative research with local authority partners. Professionals working for Children’s Services in neighbouring Local Authorities were very interested in examining the way CAF happened in each other’s services. Together we agreed topics concerning the CAF and co-designed questions for discussions, which were recorded and transcribed. We then worked together as a group to analyse the data, drawing on Activity Theory as a framework. Our findings have revealed shared issues around rules and boundaries (both geographical and professional) which can sometimes constrain practice, but which professionals negotiate by finding ways to flex rules and cross boundaries, so that they can operate in ways that ensure they stay true to their values.

The research team from Plymouth University and their local authority partners were invited to share the experience of working together on this topic with other practitioners and managers working in children’s services. With support from the IHC Pump-priming Impact Fund and in association with Herefordshire Local Authority, Cath Gristy and Jan Georgeson organised an ‘Early Help Summit’ for the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board. We originally invited 25 delegates, which was increased to 50, and then more people arrived on the day so that in the end over 65 delegates attended.

Cath Gristy and Jan Georgeson introduced the project and offered a brief explanation of Activity Theory, which would be used later in the day to frame discussions about how and why people use their knowledge, skills and experiences to carry out CAF processes. Then Georgina Glenny from Oxford Brookes University talked about
interagency working in Local Authority contexts, drawing on her extensive research of the effectiveness of multi-agency networks, and focusing on the future with reduced services and the challenges this may bring. The final presentation before lunch was from John Roughton, head of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board, sharing the developments of re-structuring in Herefordshire, including developments of local Multi-agency group meetings (MAGs) and how these groups offer an important space for professionals to look at cases, resources and thresholds.

After lunch and networking time, Cath shared information provided by our local authority partners about how CAF is happening in their local authority, and then Jan introduced the format of the afternoon’s workshop in which delegates would have the opportunity to talk about how they work together and might manage the changes that were happening in their local authority. Round table group discussions, facilitated by the team, focussed on issues raised during the day to generate ideas about what works/what could be better with CAF and what works/what could be better with MAGs. Delegates worked in their local Multi-Agency Groups; Herefordshire is a large, mainly rural authority and many services operate at a local geographical level. Each group considered how they were working together using the nodes from Activity theory:

**Subjects** – who is involved?

**Tools** – things/ideas/processes/structures that help their work

**Rules/Values** – things that shape/constrain the way people work

**Division of Labour** – who is doing what?

**Object of Activity** – what they are really working on and what they hope to achieve

**Community** – who else is involved (or should be involved)

We were supported by Hoayda Darkal, a PhD student, who acted as observer to capture what happened during the discussions. Judging by the amount of talking that was going on and the feedback from evaluation forms, it was clear that the delegates found the discussions during this part of the day very useful. They were able to talk about some of the difficulties that they were facing and the Local Authority managers present took away the record of each group’s discussion to use to shape the way changes will be rolled out in the coming year.

So, reflecting back on the whole project, we can see the significant value of the university being able to provide a safe, independent space for hard-pressed professionals to talk together about shared and difficult issues in their practice. We have also learned a great about how to work ethically with LA partners to research such difficult issues, and will be writing about the methodological implications in a forthcoming journal article.

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**References**


Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Festival of Social Science Event ‘Profoundly Social: Social Science Conversations with Health and Social Care’

Health and wellbeing are profoundly social. In spite of the widespread acceptance of the social nature of health and wellbeing, healthcare practice continues to be predominantly ‘perceived’, ‘managed’ and ‘informed’ by clinical evidence and practice. As part of the ESRC Festival of Social Science and in collaboration with the Faculty of Health and Human Sciences and Plymouth University Peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry, the Plymouth University Institute of Health and Community supported these events with the aim of addressing the disjuncture between health experience and healthcare through actively promoting better engagement with the social sciences and between health and social care practitioners; teaching colleagues, patients, service users and carers.

On 4th November, a two hour facilitated panel discussion entitled “Integrated Understanding, Integrated Care”: Conversations between Patients and Service Users, Healthcare Practitioners and Social Scientists’ was held with participation from the audience and chaired by Mel Joyner, member of the Centre for Culture, Community and Society, and Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Health and Human Sciences.

The multidisciplinary panel comprised of eminent professors with social science and health backgrounds, experienced patient representatives and doctors practised in utilising social science research for the benefit of patients locally and nationally, including Gayle Letherby (Professor of Sociology and Director of the Institute of Health and Community), Dr Tony Davies (Associate Professor and Consultant in Pain Management) and Dr Jonathan Pinkney (Professor of Endocrinology and Diabetes).

The panel discussion focused on the value of social science research in healthcare and how a stronger voice for patients and service users might enhance evidence-informed health and social care practice. One of the key aims of the panel was to strengthen existing communities of practice: to ‘make links’.

A round table event open to social researchers, patient groups and clinicians with an interest in health and service user research was also held on 5th November as part of the ESRC Festival of Social Science. This event was designed to generate conversation, ideas and in particular to strengthen networks and was attended by Professor Alison Anderson, Professor Ruth Endacott, Professor Gayle Letherby; Adrian Barton, Mike Sheaff, Tracey Collett and Mel Joyner, Heather Eardley from the Patients Association and Professor Brigitte Nerlich.

This event has led to the creation of an IHC ‘Social Science, Medical Professionals and Service Users Network’ which will meet four times a year with the aim of developing links and pooling resources for the benefit of ethical health research. If you would like any further information regarding this group please contact: Tracey Collett (tracey.collett@plymouth.ac.uk) or Mel Joyner (m.joyner@plymouth.ac.uk)
Green is the colour as Plymouth University claims three sustainability awards

Plymouth University is celebrating after winning an unprecedented hat-trick of prizes at higher education’s biggest awards ceremony devoted to green issues and sustainability.

The University won three Green Gown Awards – for Enterprise, Courses and Learning, and Food and Drink – cementing its reputation as one of the most sustainability-minded institutions in the country.

The event, held at Whitworth Hall, University of Manchester, and introduced by author and television presenter Simon Reeve, saw Plymouth take one fifth of all the awards on the night.

In the Enterprise category, the University won for its Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise (PDSE), which provides dental outreach services and treatment to a wide range of community groups. Staff and students run brushing clubs at local schools, work with some of the most vulnerable members of the community such as the homeless and drug addicts, and have been developing learning resources and tools so that these practices can be adopted by other organisations and universities.

The PDSE also oversees all of the NHS treatment that students, under supervision, provide to the 16,000 registered patients at its four dental facilities in Plymouth, Truro and Exeter, and it also orchestrates student volunteering in the community.

A teaching module that brings together nursing and design students to work together on tackling issues of sustainability in the health sector impressed the judges in the Courses and Learning category. Created by Professor Janet Richardson (CHeSCI) with colleagues in the School of Nursing and Midwifery, the project challenges nursing students to view products and practices in the health sector through a sustainability lens and to consider those that might be at risk to resource shortages and disruptions. The students then work with their contemporaries in the School of Architecture, Design and the Environment to see how new designs might create innovative solutions. Launched in 2013, the project has already seen several prototypes put into development.
GOOD NEWS
From IHC Researchers

Gen-Equip: Equipping European Primary Care Health Professionals to Deal with Genetics
Heather Skirton, CHeSCI/CMI

It is estimated that approximately 7% of Europeans are affected by a rare disease: totalling 30 million individuals. Of all rare diseases, 80% have a genetic component http://www.raredisease.org.uk, requiring significant proportion of the healthcare budget. There is evidence that patients at risk of genetic disease may not be recognised, while those who seek advice about their risks of rare genetic diseases may not be referred or managed appropriately by health professionals (Baars, Henneman & Ten Kate, 2005). This may relate to lack of awareness of the family that a condition may have a genetic component, or may be due to lack of knowledge in primary care professionals that this may be so. Undetected genetic risk can have serious consequences for the entire family, for example through preventing access to screening or preventive drugs or surgery (e.g. for cancer), resulting in increased morbidity, mortality, family burden and healthcare costs. Thus, raising awareness of the risks and potential management of such cases is important for the patient and the wider family.

In the autumn, the Applied Health Genetics team was successful in obtaining European Erasmplus funding for the Gen-Equip project. We are working with partners from five organisations: VUMC (Amsterdam, Netherlands), Charles University (Prague, Czech Republic), Landspitali Hospital (Reykjavik, Iceland), University of Bologna (Italy), IBMC (Porto, Portugal) and the Genetic Alliance UK. Only 19.7% of the 76 applications were funded, so we felt very pleased to have achieved this success.

The aim of the project is to implement adult education via an innovative Train the Trainers programme in genomic healthcare among European primary care practitioners. The programme will be based on the European core competences in genetics (Skirton et al., 2010) and the education will be embedded in a Care Bundle that includes appropriate tools and resources for use in daily clinical practice. This project will be achieved via a partnership between expert patients and specialists in adult education, primary care and health genetics to achieve the long-term outcome of improvement in care of patients with genetic conditions or concerns. In an era where genetics and genomics are becoming increasingly relevant to mainstream healthcare, but where relevant training is unavailable to many practitioners, we plan to deliver innovative education and training via flexible arrangements that can be accessed by practitioners in at least six countries without cost or travel. The delivery of training within a ‘Care Bundle’ and the use of real and simulated patients and case-based scenarios grounds the training in clinical practice and is innovative in this field.

This project fits into the European innovation strategy (Barruso, 2011) to create new ways of working to save valuable professional time and create reusable resources. The project team has extensive experience in offering adult education via face to face courses in practical genetics for health professionals, however this project will enable expertise to be pooled and resources shared. While these have been very highly evaluated by participants, such courses necessitate travel and time away from practice and therefore can be accessed by limited numbers of practitioners. Online synchronous courses offered by the project leader (Heather Skirton) have been successful in attracting practitioners from seventeen European countries and were well evaluated, while
a unique case-based course on cancer genetics for general practitioners in the Netherlands delivered by Isa Houwink (one of our partners) was highly effective in influencing practice (Houwink et al, 2011; 2012; 2014). In that course, simulated patients were used for both training and assessment of skills. We therefore wish to build on our experience of offering courses on genetics to health professionals to an interactive online course, which we feel will offer maximum educational benefit if taken using synchronous technology. In addition, we will create online resources that can be used by practitioners asynchronously. This will enable reinforcement of the education received previously, or enable other practitioners to access education in their own time.

Also unique to this course is that the training will be embedded in a ‘Care Bundle’. Experience at Plymouth University (Dawson & Endacott, 2011) has shown that training is more useful and likely to be integrated into practice if it is provided alongside a bundle of practical resources, for example, family history tools and templates, clinical algorithms for assessing genetic risk, sources of patient support and signposts to specialists in each country. This approach has been shown to be effective in improving quality of care across diverse organisations and so will be used to address the issues of quality of genetic health care in a range of countries with different educational and healthcare systems. A full evaluation of the programme will be ongoing, using a mixed methods approach to assess changes in knowledge and changes in practice.

Running alongside this project is a similar programme to develop genetics education for professionals involved in cancer care, for which we have also received external funding. What is pleasing about these programmes is that they enable us to utilise our expertise in research and our experience in offering postgraduate education in this field.

For further information, contact Heather Skirton at: heather.skirton@plymouth.ac.uk or follow the project on Twitter @GenEquip.

References


PROFILE ON
GAYLE LETHERBY
CMI, CCCS, CHeSCI

I came to higher education later than many and began my first degree in the late 1980s when I was 28. Following studying for and obtaining a couple of (lacklustre) A’ Levels, I trained to be a Nursery Nurse and then worked for six years, first in a postnatal ward of a large city hospital, next in a university day nursery and finally as a private nanny. I enrolled for an A Level in sociology at my local FE College in 1984. I couldn’t get enough of studying or of sociology and the effect it had on the way that I felt about the world and my place within it. The class was on a Monday and there were two TV programmes on later in the evening; one following a couple through their first year of marriage and another focusing on individuals who had survived in difficult circumstances. I’d rush home to catch them, watching them with new, enlightened eyes. This was the start of the development of my ‘sociological imagination’ (Mills 1959). In this first year of sociological study I also became much more interested in the experience and consequences of personal politics and my exploration of and relationship to feminism also began at this time. From the very first day of studying for my BA Sociology at North Staffordshire Polytechnic (now Staffordshire University) I knew that I wanted my approach to be auto/biographical and both my undergraduate final year project and my PhD focusing on disruptive reproductive experiences (miscarriage and infertility/involuntary childlessness respectively) were relevant to my own experience.

In July 1994 I began my first permanent position as a lecturer in sociology at Coventry University, moving to Plymouth in October 2005 as professor. Throughout my career I’ve held roles as associate head of school (research), deputy head of school, head of school, research centre deputy director and most recently Director of the Institute of Health and Community, Plymouth University. Despite my peripatetic lifestyle (I have lived in various places in England, Scotland and Wales and the Bahamas; 26 residences in all) I have not wanted to move about more within the academic labour market. Rather I have nurtured my need to travel, meet new people and experience different things through my volunteer work within the British Sociological Association (BSA) and via conferences, examining and other medium and long-distance collaborations. In addition to my continuing research interest in reproduction and the associated identities and experiences as non/parent, I’ve researched and written about working and learning in higher education, gender and health, crime and criminology, transport mobilities and loss and bereavement.

Much, not all, but much, of my work is relevant to my own experiences, my own sense of self. Sociology, specifically feminist and auto/biographical approaches and writings, have provided me with the opportunity to critically engage with issues that are central to my own life and to the lives of others that I share personal and professional identities with. This is both a privilege and a responsibility that I take very seriously and something that I continue to defend as vital to the sociological project. I have always been interested in the relationship between the research process and product / the knowing/doing relationship and I have argued for a position I call ‘theorised subjectivity’, which requires the constant, critical interrogation of our personhood – both intellectual and personal – within the production of knowledge and starts by recognizing the value as in worth (rather than moral
value) - both positive and negative - of the subjective (Letherby 2003, 2013). This helps me, and I hope other researchers, to reflect meaningfully on the research experience and to take responsibility for the ‘knowledge’ I/we produce. Recently I have also become interested in the different, creative, ways in which we can present our findings beyond traditionally sanctioned methods and in some of my academic writings I have begun to utilize fiction writing to represent respondent voices; to tell academic stories.

I enjoyed very much my period as Director of IHC, not least because of the multi-disciplinary, impact focused agenda. I am grateful to have met and worked with so many interesting colleagues and students. When meeting new students I often say that in order to be a successful sociologist one needs to be nosy. Nosiness seems to have worked well for me and has led to interesting research on issues that I, and I know those volunteer to participate as respondents, feel is important. One personal sorrow in my life has been my lack of biological children (please note I don’t write childlessness here for I, like many similar others I have met through my research, have been lucky to have close relationships with children in other ways). My role as tutor and mentor is significant here in that it has brought me, brings me, much pleasure, fulfillment and challenge.

Having left my substantive position at Plymouth at the end of 2014 I am now working freelance. Much of this time will be spent on academic activities – supervising, mentoring, examining, teaching, researching and writing (maybe at last I’ll get through the backlist of pieces I’ve promised to produce) – some at Plymouth, much of it elsewhere. Towards the end of last year, I also undertook some retraining and it was exciting to be a student again. So in addition to my other roles, I am now a qualified Civil Celebrant which means I am able to officiate at non-religious and semi-religious funerals, weddings/commitment ceremonies, renewal of vows ceremonies and namings. This venture, people focused as it is, feels like an extension of my sociological work not least because a celebrant’s imagination is not unlike a sociologist’s, concerned as it is, or should be, with biography, history and the social structure. This activity includes more writing too as I’ve recently discovered the joy of blogging. If you’re interested you can see what I’ve written so far at Arwenack Celebrants http://www.arwenack.co.uk/p/home.html

References
Education as an academic pursuit means for me working at the mucky interface between theory and practice. Some education academics aspire to the production of sublime logical propositions and rhetorical criticism, but I aspire to being of use. When I started my PhD one of my supervisors, Elody Rathgen, gave me the poem entitled To Be of Use by Marge Piercy. This is the second stanza:

I love people who harness themselves, an ox to a heavy cart, who pull like water buffalo, with massive patience, who strain in the mud and the muck to move things forward, who do what has to be done, again and again.

Another of my supervisors, Jean McPhail, introduced me to the work of John Dewey. I’ve just re-read the poem for the first time in many years, no disrespect to Elody who has influenced me in other ways, but Dewey I still read and refer to continually in my work. Dewey’s pragmatism inspires my methods of inquiry, is significant in my theorising of the social world and informs the way that I promote and foster understanding of education when working with educational practitioners. Indeed, like Dewey I see these different aspects of my work as ‘...intimately connected’, as through the process of inquiry ‘...knowledge emerges from action and feeds back into action’ (Biesta & Burbules, 2003:15).

The book of John Dewey’s that was of most worth to me for my doctoral research was his major work on aesthetics Art as Experience (1934). My thesis was in art education, but since then I have steered more towards the political dimensions of education, developing a keen interest in educational policy, publicity (in the sense of the condition of being public) and democracy. A book of greater importance to my current work
is Dewey’s *Education and Democracy: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (1916). Within this book Dewey outlines chapter by chapter the nature of education, from education as an essential biological function through its formative role in societies and its relationship with specialist areas of knowledge and activity, such as geography or play. While the ambition of the book is broad, its two most important features for me are 1) its self-conscious articulation of a moral purpose for education; that it should contribute to the desirable or democratic society, and 2) that it deliberately puts in balance relationships between the individual and the social.

These points are important in understanding not only the political dimension of education, in that the politic of education is integrally related to the nature of the social world and its inhabitants, but that there is a preferred politic that involves participation, freedom and common interests. While these three elements appear to be unquestionable goods, Dewey’s definition of democracy recognises potential tensions that emerge when common interests are imposed from without or through hierarchical social relations, participation restricts the best interests of another or freedom is conceived as an individual good. A democratic society is defined by diversity, diversity in terms of the number of shared and common interests of its members and the free association and interchange between social groups different from one another. It is through association with different others that an individual develops and grows. It is not however, for one social group to decide how interaction with another will shape development and growth of the other. Biesta and Burbules (2003) refer to teachers and educationists (education academics) to exemplify democracy in action. Deweyan interaction between the two groups would not allow educationists to dictate educational practice, but neither would it allow educational practitioners to dismiss the significance of educational theorising and research. In other words, you can’t expect in democratic relations for everything to go your way or that it will always feel comfortable.

I recently used *Chapter Six: Education as Conservative and Progressive* with a group of Masters students who are professional educators. Together we harnessed ourselves to the task of understanding Dewey’s conceptualisations of education as either retrospective or prospective. I’ve read the text numerous times, but through this discussion I again found new enlightenment in the work. We marvelled at the relevance to our educational lives of a book published 98 years ago.

References
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