

Movements 2018

Abstracts



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Keynotes

'Is that me in the Picture? Reflections on the London 2018 March 4 Women'

Anita Biressi

On Sunday 4th March 2018, I joined thousands of people in the annual March 4 Women. The march, which was held in central London, called for gender equality and celebrated the 100th anniversary of some women getting the vote. Organisers promised an uplifting and inspiring event, which aimed to highlight the inequality women and girls face worldwide. It was reported that 'Politicians from different parties, as well as groups representing all religions stood shoulder to shoulder as they marched on the same historic route taken by the suffragettes last century.' As luck would have it, the following day my face appeared in several of the crowd-shot photographs used by the London press. When asked, I could say that, yes, quite literally, that was me in the picture.

In this keynote, I am going to use the march as inspiration to reflect on two major constraints which impact on the experience and the aspirations of women seeking to contribute to the political field; constraints which stop them from being both recognised and respected. By constraints I am referring here to the politics of voice and the politics of the public sphere and the ways in which these two knit together to silence, undermine or ridicule women in public. Considering both the historical legacy and the current gendered dynamics of standing up and speaking out I'm going to outline how these complex forces potentially deter women from even imagining themselves in the big picture of public life but also how, in response, so many continue to meet the challenge with ingenuity and fortitude.

Biography: Anita Biressi is Professor of Media and Society at the University of Roehampton, London. She is the author of books and articles on a variety of topics including tabloid culture, popular factual television, social class and cultural studies and gender, politics and voice.

'Grenfell, Austerity and Institutional Violence'

David Whyte & Vickie Cooper

The complex chains of decisions that produce disasters like the Grenfell Tower fire are not readily described as 'violence.' 'Violence' is something that remains largely understood in popular consciousness, and in sociology, as an interpersonal phenomenon, and as the result of a deliberate attempt to cause harm. This is largely because our understanding of violence is always somehow connected to legal concepts and principles. In this paper we argue that the Grenfell fire was produced by a form of collective decision-making that we describe as institutional violence; it reflects the routine order and detached

administration of a form of violence that is intimately connected to a more insidious targeting of subject groups and populations in ways that produce and increase the likelihood of other, ongoing, violent circumstances occurring.

Biographies: Vickie Cooper is a Lecturer in Social Policy and Criminology at the Open University. Vickie is the co-director of Harm and Evidence Research Collaborative (HERC), which is an interdisciplinary, cross-faculty research centre concerned with developing and supporting research projects which think critically about problems of crime and justice. Her current research explores the relationship between the rise in evictions, homelessness and austerity.

David Whyte is Professor of Socio-Legal Studies in the Department of Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology at the University of Liverpool. David's research focus is on the connections between law and corporate power. He is the author of several books including: *Safety Crimes* (with Steve Tombs), *Crimes of the Powerful*, *How Corrupt is Britain* (as Editor), as well as many others. David and Vickie co-authored *The Violence of Austerity* which was published in 2017.

Performance: Bread & Roses, 'A Second Opinion'

The NHS born in 1948 – she works hard, and doesn't expect a thank you, but now she needs our help. The big wigs in the suits are slowly burning her out by cutting her wages, supplies and staff.

Delve into the history of how the NHS was born and what it is up against in order to provide everyone with free healthcare.

Biography: Bread & Roses is a Theatre Collective in Nottingham that combines performance and politics. It is theatre that's straight to the point; Theatre that encourages change; Theatre that will not be ignored!

Screening: *Austerity Fight*

The austerity policies of the Tories have targeted young and old. The NHS is chronically underfunded and is being privatised. Students are leaving college with huge debts. Children, pensioners and the disabled are living in poverty and millions live precarious lives on 'zero hour contracts'. *Austerity Fight* challenges the notion that we have to live in a world where public services are cut, worker's rights removed and poverty is a daily reality for millions. *Austerity Fight* champions equality, practical alternatives to Austerity and a vision of a world based on co-operation rather than the greed of a global super elite.

Biography: *Austerity Fight* is directed by Phil Maxwell & Hazuan Hashim and received its world premiere at the 2017 East End film festival.

Speakers

(Listed Alphabetically by Author)

'From Literary Activism to Political Protest in Iran'

Ali Abdolrezaei & Abol Froushan

An account of a new grassroots movement in Persian Literature, prepared by two of its activists based outside Iran was published by Abol Froushan, in the November 2017 issue of [Poetry of International Web](#). The movement has rejuvenated modern Persian poetry and fiction by delivering to the public a new generation of writers who were others destined for the margins.

The college – available on the web and via the collaborative messaging platform Telegram, was established in 2016, i) to expand poetry readership beyond a social elite and to educate the public on how to read poetry, and ii) to develop a new generation of poets not bound by traditional perspectives on poetry despite implicit cultural and explicit political constraints. A selection of young college poets were translated to English and introduced by Abol Froushan in [Poetry International Web](#).

The fate of the Persian Poetry and Fiction College was intricately bound up with the eruption of a series of public protests in various cities throughout Iran between December 2017 and January 2018. The literary grassroots movement turned political and the Persian Fiction College – a channel on Telegram running up to 10,000 members, was converted into the Revolutionary Workshop now carrying more than 31,000 members.

This paper focuses on the mechanisms behind this transformation of a literary movement into a political one and its contributions on the language of protest and its dynamics. We explore how the literary critical basis of the movement, including Derrida's notion of Difference and Deleuze and Guattari's notion of Rhizome inspired a new design and a new dialogue that has gone viral in the protest movements around Iran. We examine leadership and innovations that a literary consciousness can bring to a protest movement, creating neologisms, a new sense of citizenship in favour of a radical advocacy of democracy, communalism and a regime that adheres to human rights and values.

Biographies: Ali Abdolrezaei is an Iranian poet and writer. He helped to found the 'Persian New Poetry Movement' and was Chair of Exiled Writers Ink in the United Kingdom between 2014 and 2016. His work includes: *In Riskdom Where I Lived* (Trans. A. Froushan), *Sixology* (Trans. A. Froushan) and *Hidden Camera* (Trans. A. Froushan).

Abol Froushan is an Iranian poet who has publicly performed his work at the National Portrait Gallery, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Scala Theatre. His published

work includes: *Language Against Language, Silver Throat of the Moon* (Edited by Jennifer Langer), and the bi-lingual volume *I Need Your Desert For My Sneeze*.

Since 2006 Ali Abdolrezaei and Abol Froushan, along with Parham Shahrjerdi and Mansor Pooyan, formed London Skool, a band of multilingual poets and critics whose aim is to create poetry and texts through a hybridisation of languages, genres and lifestyles.

'The Umbrella Revolution: Hong Kong's Civil Disobedience Movement' **Aaron Anfinson**

Hong Kong's protest movement has forever changed life in one of the world's least affordable and most densely populated cities. In 2014, an unprecedented sit-in lasted nearly eighty days, involved more than 100,000 participants (at its peak) and occupied three districts within this global financial centre and Special Administrative Region to the People's Republic of China. Within this talk, I demonstrate how Hong Kong's protest movement exemplifies the extremes of our contemporary condition. I illustrate how this insurgent mobility was predominately directed at the austerity of global capitalism and overwhelming feelings of political disenfranchisement—a lack of both economic justice and 'real democracy'.

Drawing upon a personal corpus of published and unpublished reportage photography taken throughout the movement, I position civil disobedience in Hong Kong as a counter space to China's encroaching nation-state project and the hegemony of aggressive forms of neoliberal spatiality that have targeted this 'World City' as the centre for the investment of transnational capital. I detail how the mass movement of bodies, the appropriation of urban space and the emplaced signage of the Umbrella Revolution encompassed reflexive performances of place that temporarily subverted the technologies and discipline of social order. I conclude by summarising the ongoing challenges to free speech and political expression in Hong Kong, considering how the (self) censorship of dissent after the Umbrella Revolution may be indicative of reactions to future global protest movements in an era increasingly defined by securitisation.

Biography: Aaron Anfinson is a doctoral candidate in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Hong Kong. Additionally, he is a documentary photographer who has spent the last several years documenting challenges to free speech in Hong Kong. The photography featured is part of an upcoming photobook project.

'Internet Activism: Site of Protest or Means of Protest: A Critical Study of Girls at Dhabas and Why Loiter'

Arundhathi & Sarah Zia

The last decade has seen the rise of several feminist protests that have either been conducted virtually or have at least mobilised masses on social media. The rise of Western digital media outlets focusing on gender have brought to South

Asian computer screens examples of how the Internet could be mobilised as a safe, feminist space. In the context of South Asia, feminist struggles have been fore-grounded within the feudal mindsets operating in a neo-liberal political economy and they have largely centred on institutions like family and marriage. The rise of the Internet where individuals put out mediated responses and forms of themselves on a supposedly collective medium that creates connections have once again brought to the forefront tensions between the individual and collective. It is in this context, that we seek to examine how the Internet has transformed feminist activism in South Asia through two key online movements, Why Loiter and Girls at Dhabas. The two movements, broadly, espouse the cause of women and other marginalised identities reclaiming public space by using the digital space as a platform for not just mobilisation but also as a site of performance. In being the medium of amplification, the internet becomes a parallel site of protest as the non-protesting audience witnesses the embodied performance of the protest on the medium. A key question to examine is how the structure of social media is central to digital protest and whether protests can be conducted online minus the usage of social media platforms' architecture. Increasingly, as audiences outside the two countries also engage with these movements, we wish to understand if the Internet could replace translocal and transnational feminism with a global feminism. In this sense, how do digital feminist protests then impact the reorientation of spatial dynamics between genders both physically and virtually and what are the strategies of inclusion for building feminist solidarity in a digitally divided world?

Biographies: Arundhathi is a PhD scholar at the Advanced Centre for Women's Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai. Her MPhil thesis was titled 'Drivers of Change: Women Loco-Pilots in Indian Railways'. Her research interests lie in exploring the intersections of gender, mobility, culture and identity.

Sarah Zia is a journalist at a leading Indian daily and an independent researcher. Her research interests include mobility studies, media and identities.

'Onwards: the Journey to Justice'

Tania Aubeelack and Pat Boyer

Tania and Pat will be presenting work from the national charity 'Journey to Justice'. Aiming to bring to life the charity's aims, vision and mission 'to galvanise people to take action for social justice through learning about human rights movements and the arts', Tania and Pat will describe the different Journey to Justice projects undertaken around the UK in places such as Newcastle, Sunderland, Nottingham, Sheffield, Newham and Tower Hamlets in London.

In the first half of this presentation, Pat will be speaking about the power of stories to inspire social activism and in the second half, Tania will describe the work and impact of Journey to Justice volunteers.

Biographies: Tania is originally from Mauritius and is passionate about education, achieving her baccalareat in 2013. This passion for education extends to the local community, where she spends her time volunteering with Diabetes UK and Journey to Justice. At Diabetes UK, she help the Engaging Communities team three times a week. She is also a trustee of MSN, a family-fund helping grassroots and hard to fund projects to carry on or to get to their next stage.

Born in Manchester, Pat has taught in inner London schools for more than 40 years (20 as a Headteacher) and has lectured on Equity, Achievement and Global Citizenship in the US and UK. The school where Pat was Head is twinned with Xolani School, Guguletu, South Africa. Pat is Vice-Chair of Southwark Citizens' Advice and Secretary of Journey to Justice, a charity with the mission 'to galvanise people to take action for social justice through learning about human rights movements and the arts'.

'Pragmatic Prefiguration: Agents and Acts of Dissent under Stagnant Neoliberalism'

David Bailey

Neoliberal capitalism entered a crisis of low or stagnating growth in 2008 that it has so far been unable to exit. This period of secular stagnation, or stagnant neoliberalism, has witnessed a response by political elites that focuses on further reducing welfare generosity and public sector employment, supporting the erosion of labour market security, and seeking to ensure that such measures go ahead by reducing the scope for democratic choice. The traditional defenders of the welfare state and job security - social democratic parties and trade unions - have been largely ineffective in challenging these trends. It is in this context that we have seen a turn towards more radical methods of resistance - direct action, prefigurative politics, self-organising beyond the institutions of parties, trade unions and the state - but often as a last resort, rather than as a result of a principled commitment to autonomous or 'anti-state' politics. This 'pragmatically prefigurative' subject has therefore contributed to a new and ongoing wave of dissent, which will be explored through a discussion of trends in protest events in the UK between 2008 and the present.

Biography: David Bailey is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Birmingham. David's research focuses on the political economy of left parties and protests movements in a European context. David has published several books including: *Protests Movements and Parties of the Left: Affirming Disruption*, *The European Union and Global Governance: A Handbook* (as co-editor with Jens-Uwe Wunderlich) and *The Political Economy of European Social Democracy: A Critical Realist Approach*.

'Educate, Agitate, Organise: Dalit Activism and Writing in the 21st Century'

Daniel Bilton

'Educate, Agitate, Organise' was the call to arms for the millions of Dalits across India by the politician and activist of the 20th century Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. Ambedkar, the leader of the former 'untouchables' of Indian society, fought for the rights of Dalits during the independence period, committed to shaping the new nation state into one which would protect Dalits from all kinds of caste based discrimination. For these reasons, Ambedkar became a catalyst for contemporary Dalit activism, with the activist group the Dalit Panthers using Ambedkar as their ideological figurehead. The Panthers, taking inspiration from the Black Panthers of the Civil Rights movement, were a radical group of the 1970s, whose activism was rooted in both political and literary forms of activism. It is through the Dalit Panthers that we are able to see the beginnings of contemporary Dalit activism and literature, with Dalit writers from across India taking up the pen to show their anger at the caste system. Dalit literature, then, has been inextricably tied to Ambedkar and the activist movement. This paper seeks to examine this relationship within the context of 21st century India, and will analyse how contemporary Dalit writers have presented Dalit issues within their literature. In light of atrocities continuing to take place against Dalits throughout the 21st century, culminating in the suicide of a Dalit PhD student in 2014, this paper will question whether Dalit writing published post-2000 is as tied to the world of Dalit political activism as it once was. It will analyse a range of texts, from novels to poetry, and will view them within the context of contemporary activist movements, such as the many student-based movements that have appeared since the events of 2014, to explore how the two are aligned in today's India.

Biography: Daniel Bilton is an AHRC-M3C-funded student based in the School of Arts at Humanities at Nottingham Trent University. Daniel's research explores the current relationship between Dalit literature and activism through an analysis of literature published in the Twenty-First Century.

'Freedom of Speech, Faith Communities and Media Coverage'

Sara Cannizzaro & Yasmin Alibhai-Brown

We used content analysis to investigate the coverage of freedom of speech protest stories involving Muslim, Christian and Jewish faith communities. We extracted the sample coverage from 9 national newspapers, and this ranged from 1 July 2014 to 30 September 2016. The sample included specific controversy areas including Muslim protests about cartoons, Jewish protests about the Trydent film festival and the cancelled Southampton academic conference on Israel, and Christians protests on gay marriage and abortion. This study was framed by the protest paradigm (Gitlin 1980, Chan and Lee 1984), a pattern of representing protests which "expresses disapproval toward protests

and dissent (Lee 2014: 2727)", "downsizes the scope, claims and mobilisation effects of the protest movement" (Spyridou 2015: 71) and generally "disparages protesters and hinders their role as vital actors on the political stage (McLeod, 2007: 185). The variables against which the sample was evaluated were 1) the negative language used to describe the protest, 2) the presence of protesters' voice and 3) the invoked public opinion. Our analysis showed that Muslim protests score negative on all 3 variables, while Christian and Jewish protests score negatively only on one variable (public opinion and protesters' voice respectively). Therefore, Muslim protests are covered more negatively than those of other faith groups. We will argue that sociologically, the results of this study are concerning because a systematic discrimination of the Muslim protestors may cause a loss of trust in the mainstream press. Finally, we will argue that this finding also adds to a more nuanced understanding of the protest paradigm as a variable pattern.

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Gitlin, Todd 1980. *The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lee, Francis. 2014. "Triggering the Protest Paradigm: Examining Factors Affecting News Coverage of Protests." *International Journal of Communication* 8: 2318–2339.

McLeod, Douglas. 2007. "News Coverage and Social Protest: How the Media's Protest Paradigm Exacerbates Social Conflict." *Journal of Dispute Resolution*, 1(12): 185–194.

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Biographies: Sara Cannizzaro is a Research Fellow in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Warwick.

Yasmin Alibhai-Brown is Professor in Professional Practice in the Department of Media at Middlesex University, London as well as an award-winning journalist and author. Yasmin's books include: *Who Do We Think We Are? Imagining the New Britain*, *After Multiculturalism* and *Some of My Best Friends Are...*

'Activism in Chile in the Context of the Democracy Crisis: The Student and Mapuche Movements'

María Fanjul-Fanjul & Clara del Río Lanchas

Despite Augusto Pinochet's regime coming to an end in 1990, many of his neoliberal reforms have remained in place until the present. Such reforms led to marketisation of the education sector. Within this context, the student movement alongside other relevant social movements culminated with the protests of the year 2011. The student movement for "free and quality public education" was responding to the marketisation of the education system, re-signifying it as a social right, and calling for the democratization of educational institutions. The relevance of the student movement went beyond the scope of education and acquired the socio-historical character of a foundational demand when raising the need of an educational, political-institutional and cultural transformation. As such, the student movement encapsulates a broader range of activism in Chile, from which the Mapuche movement stands out.

Although the Mapuche conflict has its roots in a historical process that goes back to the Spanish Colonial period and the later annexation of the ancestral territory by the Chilean State in 1883, the term is currently used to refer to the clashes that have occurred in the Aricaunía region since the 1990s to the present day, between the Mapuche communities on one side, and large corporations, land owners, the police and other State/government institutions on the other. Currently the core of the conflict is the ownership of the land in the Mapuche region, ancestrally controlled by indigenous communities, which historically faced a process of dispossession that was accelerated by the agricultural counter-reformation during Pinochet's military dictatorship (Decreto de ley 2.568) and the expanding volume of capital that derived from the forest industry.

This proposal intends to frame both social movements within the context of globalization, neoliberalism and a democracy crisis in Chile. We aim to analyse the extent to which the imposition of neoliberalism in Chile during Pinochet's rule has shaped the two movements into their current form in the 21st century, as well as to assess the legislative efforts made during democracy to address the demands presented by both collectives.

Biographies: Maria Fanjul-Fanjul is a Senior Lecturer in Spanish at Nottingham Trent University. Her research interests include contemporary women's writing in Spain and Latin America and she has written on the fiction of Isabel Allende.

Clara del Río Lanchas is a Lecturer on Contemporary Latin American Society at Nottingham Trent University.

'Protests, Movements and Social Change: Current Trends in the Spain'

Alessandra Farné

In this decade, Spanish activism has been characterised by the *Indignados* [outraged] movement of the 15-M in 2011. Those protests, which occurred in the midst of the (financial) crisis and the imposition of austerity measures, focused on social and democratic demands, such as political transparency, housing, and employment. After traditional political parties disregarded those protests for criticising without proposing, the spirit of the 15-M movement evolved and was gathered by a new party, *Podemos* [We can]. In the general elections to the Spanish Parliament (in 2015 and 2016), *Podemos* was the third most voted party and it altered the traditional bipartisan system, although centre-right parties eventually established a conservative government. This outcome, along with the peculiar context in Catalonia (pro vs. against independence discourse) that monopolised the political debate, caused that all the social demands –raised by the 15-M and collected by *Podemos* to work on at institutional level– disappeared from the political and media agenda throughout 2017. This disappointing context for social claims suddenly has been fissured in early 2018 by two main waves of protests: the feminist and the pensioners' movements. This paper addresses these two movements, also known as *Mareas* [tides] that have succeeded in reactivating protests with social demands, mainly in terms of equality from a gender and elderly perspective. Specifically, the study adopts a Communication for Social Change approach to delve into the main features of these two "tides" in order to explore why and how they have been able to re-introduce social claims in the political and media agenda, and already started to achieve some change and undertaken commitments by politicians.

Biography: Alessandra Farné is a Post-Doctoral Researcher in the Department of Communication Science at the Universitat Jaume I in the city of Castelló de la Plana, Spain.

'Citizenship and Media Activism in Brazil: An Analysis of the Potential Articulations between Indigenous Activists and the Movement of the Homeless Workers (MTST)'

Adilson Vaz Cabral Filho, Andrea Meyer Landulpho Medrado, & Simone do Vale

In the wake of the authoritarian backlash in Brazil, the Movement of the Homeless Workers (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Teto, MTST) and the indigenous movement are cooperating through a presidential campaign. Despite their differences, both movement's leaderships are running mates for the upcoming elections. In an unexpected move toward institutionalization, the activists Guilherme Boulos and Sônia Guajajara have joined the left-wing political party PSOL (Socialism and Liberty Party). As the political careers of late indigenous Chief Mário Juruna and even of former president Luís Inácio "Lula" da

Silva remind us, this is not the first time that indigenous or grassroots activists become political representatives in Brazil. However, having a political coalition comprised of activists who advocate for such diverse causes is unprecedented in Brazilian history. Therefore, given the severe institutional crisis in Brazil and the recent assassination of activist and city councillor Marielle Franco (PSOL), this paper aims at identifying potential articulations between these movements. Considering that PSOL represents an institutionalized left which claims the legacy of the PT (Workers' Party), do both movements articulate together outside the campaign? And if so, how do they connect their different struggles and claims? At the discursive level, which media activism strategies do they employ in order to engage support? How does the public relate to their perspectives on democracy, citizenship, and social justice in the current Brazilian dystopian context? To address these questions, this paper is divided into three sections. Firstly, it provides a background on the relation between citizenship and Communication as a Human Right. Secondly, it discusses the role of media activism for disenfranchised groups in Brazil. Thirdly, it analyzes the audiovisual narrative shared by both movements on YouTube, focusing on the networks comprising two videos featuring Guilherme Boulos and Sônia Guajajara.

Biographies: Adilson Vaz Cabral Filho is Professor of the Fluminense Federal University-UFF at the Social Communication Course and in the Graduate Programs of Media and Everyday Life and of Post-Graduate Studies in Social Policy. Post-doctorate in Communication at Carlos III University of Madrid. Doctor and Master in Social Communication at Methodist University of São Paulo - UMESP. Coordinator of the research group EMERGE - Research and Production Center in Communication and Emergence.

Dr Andrea Medrado is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Communication and the Postgraduate Programme in Media and Everyday Life at Federal Fluminense University (UFF), in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She is currently the Co-Chair of the Community Communication and Alternative Media Section of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) and the Co-Investigator of the eVoices Redressing Marginality international network, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), UK. She has extensive experience conducting research in Brazilian favelas, analysing the impacts of the recent mega events on marginalised communities. Prior to returning to her native Brazil, she has also worked as a lecturer and researcher at various universities in the UK.

Simone do Vale holds a PhD in Communication & Culture from Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). She is currently a Postdoctoral Associate at the Programa de Pós-Graduação em Mídia & Cotidiano at Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), Brazil, and is a research member of the group EMERGE (Centro de Pesquisas e Produção em Comunicação e Emergência/Research and Production Center on Communication and Emergence) also based at UFF.

'Video Games as Tools for Activism and Political Engagement'

Martin Flintham, Anja Neundorf, Tom Rodden & Hanne G. Wagner

We present ongoing work in the space of political engagement and activism through novel methods. Specifically, how video games can be used to further activist causes, while also attracting new audiences and creating engaging, educational and thought-provoking experiences.

Contemporary games have evolved from being predominantly perceived as an entertainment medium, to being an accredited platform for creative and artistic expression by enabling game creators in ways impossible with other media. However, as is commonly the case with self-expression, the mindset and ideology of the game designers can be observed in the final product. Therefore, it is not surprising that a lot of games can be quite political, whether explicitly so or through more subtle or implicit ways. From an academic point of view, politics in games has however only recently become a topic of interest. Based on ongoing interdisciplinary doctoral research, we argue that games can be a highly effective way to engage individuals in politics and other related activist actions, as long as certain design elements and engagement strategies are employed.

A 'Politics in Games' Conceptual Framework was developed to analyse games and game design through a Political Science lens, and to create a common language between researchers, developers and activists. This was validated through a series of workshops with activists and game designers which raised their awareness of games' potential and engaged them in the design of games beneficial to their cause. This was facilitated by the creation of a card-based design tool which gave participants the opportunity to rapidly create concepts for their own game prototypes focusing on an activist issue important to them, which incorporated the elements identified by the Framework as being effective in engaging audiences in politics. The presented workshop findings provided crucial insights for further iterations and practical application of the work.

Biographies: Martin Flintham is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Nottingham.

Anja Neundorf is an Associate Professor in the School of Politics and International Relations at the University of Nottingham.

Thomas Rodden is a Professor of Computer Science in the Faculty of Science at the University of Nottingham.

Hanne Wagner is a PhD Student in the Mixed Reality Lab, an interdisciplinary group exploring the potential of ubiquitous, mobile and interactive technologies to shape everyday life, at the University of Nottingham.

'Women's Activism and Political Transformation Through the Lens of the 1984 Miners' Strike'

Patricia Francis

The 1984-5 miners' strike is often depicted as a bitter clash between Ian MacGregor and Margaret Thatcher on one side, and Arthur Scargill and the National Union of Mineworkers on the other. The battle lines were drawn up and down the country as flying pickets and the police went head to head. Not even the 1980s or 2011 'riots' compare to this year-long confrontation.

Much has been written about this strike, but what is often missing, outside of academic circles, from this story of rage and dissent are the voices of the women involved. This was a pivotal moment in Britain and the women, often absent from the media's gaze and now from the public's memory, were fighting too. In this paper, I will explore the political effect of the strike by focusing specifically on the women, and how their dissent resulted in the transformation, not just to the social order the strike protested, but also in the women themselves.

The 1980s was a different time socially, economically and politically for women. Despite having a woman Prime Minister, women were discouraged from working and an arrogant, male culture pervaded. But the women who took part in the strike were strong working-class activists whose actions undermined the narcissistic culture of the time. Their livelihoods, their families, their communities and their way of life was under threat and this fuelled their anger. They mobilised, and together, their actions, it could be argued, gave the strike longevity, nearly bringing down the government for a second time.

In an article in *The New Statesman*, Paul Routledge suggested: '[w]e shall not see their like again'. He may be right, this fight was literally taken to the street, both verbally and physically and the women were side by side with the men. Ironically, Thatcher and the strike helped to liberalise gender relationships. The women's collective voices created their own working-class feminism that spoke of protecting their community, their family and their husbands whilst also claiming a space in the work place and education.

Biography: Patricia Francis is an AHRC-M3C funded PhD student in the School of Arts and Humanities at the Nottingham Trent University. Patricia's practice-led research investigates the impact that social activism has on women's lives and involves the production of a documentary film exploring the role of women insurgents in the 1984-85 miners' strike and the Black Lives Matter movement.

'The Border Regimes of Welfare Conditionality: EU Migrant Claimants between Austerity Politics and Hostile Environment'

Alessandro Frolidi & Arianna Introna

This paper will explore the logic of welfare conditionality and the creation of a hostile environment for migrants as two complementary sides of British austerity politics. The 2016 Brexit referendum has expanded and connected the logic of border repression that was initiated through a series of the immigration bills and welfare reforms between 2013 and 2014 that reshaped social security for migrants. Assessments such as the "Genuine Prospect of Work Test", introduced in 2014, normalized the denial of legal rights in the benefit-claiming process that was already legitimated in the public imagination through the dissemination of fabricated stories of benefit holidays. However, we will argue, discussion of state-sanctioned social and economic starvation of migrants needs to take as its starting point attempts to understand and resist structural transformations. Migrants can be usefully approached as revolting in Imogen Tyler's double sense of the term: they are 'imagined and configured as revolting and become subject to control, stigma and censure' as the most undeserving of help within poor populations, but are also uniquely positioned to 'resist, reconfigure and revolt against [the] abject subjectification' that attaches to claiming benefits. Focusing our discussion on the context of EU migrants in Scotland, we examine how access to education, housing and welfare provides a central arena for constructing practical forms of opposition and re-imagining of welfare and anti-austerity action. We argue that a discussion of migrant organizing practices needs to be associated with a critical understanding of populist and nationalist categories in order to assess how limitations to the freedom of movement, work, study and reside can be contested and resisted as part of both everyday strategies and collective organizing. By doing so our intention is to re-frame the ways in which we think about Brexit, borders and sovereignty in our everyday life through the specific optic of anti-austerity and welfare action.

References: Imogen Tyler, *Revolting Subjects: Social Abjection and Resistance in Neoliberal Britain* (London & New York: Zed Books, 2013), p. 4.

Biographies: Alessandro Frolidi received a doctorate from Loughborough University in 2015. Alessandro now works as an independent researcher and homelessness activist.

Arianna Introna is a PhD student in Scottish Literature at the University of Stirling. Arianna's research interests lie at the intersection between Scottish cultural and literary studies, disability studies and Marxist autonomous theory.

'Art and Activism: A Fresh Wave of 21st Century Protests in Nairobi, Kenya'

Craig Halliday

This paper aims to critically examine the role of artistic forms of civil-disobedience employed in a new wave of protests in Nairobi, Kenya.

Kenya's turbulent political history has been shaped by activists engaged in social movements for human rights and democracy. Following the end of authoritarian rule, and with the victory of a pro-reform government elected in 2002, the spirit of activism and protest waned. However, despite the jubilant hopes by citizens that socio-political freedoms would transpire – this didn't fully materialise. Following a lack of democratic gains, the worst electoral related violence in Kenya's history, and a new constitution, a fresh wave of 21st century activism took hold. Artists worked together with activists bringing creative forms of demonstration onto the streets of Nairobi - protesting corruption, extra judicial killings, the political elites' greed, and social injustices. Through art and activism (what they term 'artivism') these protests represent new forms of action which incorporate performance, symbolism and ritual. This 'artivism' also employs the innovative use of public space, as well as tactics of surprise and shock, in order to create a spectacle and to take the authorities by surprise.

Following a period of extensive field work in Nairobi, interviews with activists and artists, and an analysis of newspaper reports and social media engagement; this paper will critically reflect on the role that art has played in these protests, the different rhythm to activism that art brings, and the impact of these protests on the socio-political landscape.

Biography: Craig Halliday is a PhD candidate at the Sainsbury Research unit for the Arts of Africa, Oceania & The Americas, University of East Anglia. Craig's research explores culture and democratisation in Kenya with a particular focus on the visual arts in Nairobi since 1980.

'Communicating for Change in a Changing Media Ecology: Environmental and LGBTI+ Activism in Chile'

David Jofré

This paper explains how social movement organisations' (SM) communicate for their activist purposes through complex blends of different media practices. The analysis is based on the case of contemporary environmental and LGBTI+ activism in Chile. Past literature on social movement communication has been criticised for its techno-determinism: scholars have paid attention to each new fashionable media platform in causal connection with social change. The recently developed concepts of media practices, blending and ecology came to move from 'what' to 'how' questions in relation to activist praxis in a rapidly changing ecology. To date, empirical accounts of activists' media practices remain fairly descriptive, mostly focused on European experiences, while possible blending

process across these different media practices are scarcely known despite an increasing body of research on media hybridity. Joining these debates, this study carried out semi-structured interviews with representatives of 41 SMOs based in Chile. This analysis was triangulated with print documents, websites and social media accounts. The research finds that nearly all the SMOs under study blend supposedly fixed media practices to a great extent under the influence of their media ecology. The data reveals the existence of four blending patterns: a) transfer of content from the mainstream news media to SMOs online forums; b) transfer of salience from trending online topics to the mainstream news reports; c) polling citizen opinion via digital media to coordinate other communicative action; and d) multi-layered marketing campaigns with simultaneous offline-online impact. While some SMOs develop these blends in an innovative manner, creating new modes of media blending for their activist purposes, the majority of the organisations tend to react in a less conscious or emulative manner to their environment. The findings help propose an empirically grounded framework of media blending, and situate agency and praxis in the analysis of social movements and media.

Biography: David Jofré is a PhD candidate in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Glasgow. David's research explores the role of social movements and media practices in a changing media ecology with a particular focus on environmental and LGBTI+ activists in Chile.

"It's All Good, It's All Fucked": The Precarious Commons in Contemporary Anti-Capitalist Poetry'

Raphael Kabo

Cultural critic Lauren Berlant has powerfully characterised the period extending from the 1990s to now as the "ongoing present" – a time overwhelmingly conditioned by neoliberal governmentality and its attendant affects of precarity, anxiety, continual adjustment, and survival. This is a time of "crisis ordinariness", when vast global populations cope and get through by weathering continual and barely differentiated crises; a process powerfully described by multi-species feminist theorist Donna Haraway as a "staying with the trouble". Moreover, the ongoing present appears to have no end, replacing the future with, in the words of critic Mark Fisher, a "capitalist realism" which promises only more of the same for those trapped within it.

Despite this hopeless picture, cracks and fissures exist even within the slick, privatised ontologies of capitalist realism. Resistance and activist movements in the ongoing present have been forced to develop local, directly democratic, and horizontally distributed forms of resistance, from occupations and squats to freeway blockades, which can be understood holistically as a form of *communing*, or the construction and inhabiting of *commons*, forms of social, economic, and ontological organisation which are radically anti-capitalist in nature.

This paper will explore the depiction and poetics of the commons as a form of anti-capitalist resistance in contemporary poetry. The poetry and critical discourse of poets including Juliana Spahr, Joshua Clover, and Stephen Collis is less concerned with formal and generic practices as it is with responding to the political climate of the ongoing present. Thus, their poetry locates its resistant poetics firmly within an anxious and precarious capitalist realism, and simultaneously extends itself, via its focus on radically multi-species, post-capitalist relations of communing, into what I term an *ongoing future* – the Prefiguration of a post-capitalist, utopian horizon in the present. Or as Spahr succinctly puts it: “it’s all good, it’s all fucked.”

Biography: Raphael Kabo is a PhD candidate in the Department of English and Humanities at Birbeck, University of London. Raphael’s research explores the manifestations of precarity and utopia across a range of contemporary speculative fiction, zines and poetry.

‘Depoliticisation of Environmental Discourse: Dangers and Opportunities, Lessons from Israel’

Shai Kassirer

This paper offers a critical reading of the Israeli Environmental Movement as promoting a depoliticised discourse for addressing local and regional environmental problems. By using a post-political critique of several case studies from the 1990s to today, I will argue how depoliticisation stands in the way of this movement’s ability to address ‘bigger-issues’ such as climate change, environmental-justice and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The case studies/campaigns reviewed are: anti-highway construction, closure of polluting factories, the ‘non-campaign’ against the construction of the Israeli-Palestine segregation wall and my own studies of seafront nature protection campaigns, improving public-transport and the 2001-2013 water crisis.

Extensive literature across the social sciences has conceptualised in recent years a political zeitgeist in western societies described as “post-political”, “post-democratic” or “post-ideological” (Maesele, 2015; Mouffe, 2005; Wilson & Swyngedouw 2014). These terms represent the idea that in the post-cold war era there is no alternative to the established social and political order of (neo)-liberal-democratic-capitalism. More specifically, over the past decade, an emerging literature in western Europe has been concerned with the identification and critique of the depoliticised nature of environmental discourse and politics. According to this literature, depoliticisation of environmental crises leads to technical consensual ‘solutions’ with a hidden neo-liberal agenda. In many cases, this ‘solution’ offers a socio-ecological *fix* (in both senses of the word) of the conditions that produced the problem in the first place (Kenis & Lievens, 2015; Swyngedouw 2010).

In this paper, I will use the post-political perspective to review past research on environmental campaigning in Israel and my own research on newspaper

coverage of environmental discourse in Israel, to discuss missed opportunities of this movement to attract wider support and to offer alternative respective for other issues on the Israeli public agenda.

Biography: Shai Kassirer is a PhD student in the Centre for Research in Spatial, Environmental and Cultural Politics at the University of Brighton. Shai's research is entitled: 'Media Analysis of Hydro-Policies for Climate Resilience in Israel: Depoliticisation of Desalination Discourse'.

'Airport Actions, Anti-Racist Activism and Afrofuturism: Connections between UK Political Activism and Dystopian Fiction in Resisting Racism and Climate Change'

Kate Meakin

Over the past few decades, various UK activist groups have become disillusioned with more traditional political routes and utilised tactics of direct action such as disrupting the operation of numerous London airport runways (Joyce, 2016). This has ranged from climate activists chaining themselves together at Heathrow airport in 2015, Black Lives Matter UK blockading a runway in 2016 at London City Airport, and End Deportations activists at Stansted Airport in 2017 successfully preventing a charter deportation plane from taking off (Howard, 2015; Kelbert, 2016; Taylor, 2017). Little research, however, has related civil disobedience actions around climate and anti-racist activism in UK airports to themes in political science fiction. The aims of airport actions frequently relate to the two most prominent genres in activist science fiction: Afrofuturism and climate fiction. Whilst Afrofuturism reclaims and transforms narratives of past cruelties against the black and Afro-queer diaspora to imagine more powerful futures, climate fiction often revolves around a dystopian future where the necessary actions were not taken by present day societies resulting in "unsustainable life on Earth as we know it" (Brooks, 2018; Streeby, 2018: 2). Conducting discursive textual analysis of activist blog posts and press coverage, I will compare these airport actions in their aims, tactics and outcomes alongside *Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements* (Brown and Imarisha, 2015). Implementing theories on necropolitics around the state's creation of "death worlds" where certain individuals are disregarded as disposable, I will focus on the use of the activist body in precarious and publicised non-violent situations as evidence of their refusal to be ignored (Mbembe, 2004; Butler and Athanasiou, 2013). I will argue that connections can be made between UK airport actions and presiding themes within political sci-fi in resistance to neoliberalism, climate change, racism and neo-colonialism.

Biography: Kate Meakin is a PhD student in the Department of Media and Film at the University of Sussex. Kate's PhD project is entitled: 'Dystopian Feminist Fiction and UK Activism in an Era of Neoliberalism.'

'The Anti-Corruption Protests in Romania and the Counter Manifestations:
February 2017 Piata Victoriei versus Cotroceni, in Life Stories
Antonio Momoc

In February 2017 Romanians went out on the street to demand the abrogation of the Emergency Ordinance (OUG 13) through which the governing Social Democratic Party (PSD) tried to decriminalize the abuse of power and other acts of corruption. In the evening when OUG 13 was repealed, 350'000 people protested peacefully in Piata Victoriei (Victoriei Square), mobilized via social networks, especially on Facebook: the #rezist movement and the #coruptiaucide hashtag became the symbols of the protests organized in front of the Government building through social networks. PSD protests were organized in front of the Presidential palace at Cotroceni, as response to the Piata Victoriei manifestations. In this counter-protest, approximately one thousand sympathizers of the Socialist Party holding power were shouting that they were fighting to defend the democratic vote they gave on December 2016.

In the spring of 2017, together with a team of university assistant professors from my Social Sciences class (Ionut Butoi, Dan Podaru, Adriana Stefanel), I have initiated a series of social investigations within the two groups. We noticed that the participants to the two types of protests seemed to belong to different social categories: the ones in Piata Victoriei were represented by youth and adults from companies, banks or multinational companies, entrepreneurs or managers; among the protesters from Cotroceni were those who fought during the economic crisis in 2010-2012 against the liberal austerity measures and were in favour of the social care services: they were adults and elderly people, unemployed or retired.

Thus, 250 students attending year two in the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Sciences received a class assignment to identify a protester and conduct an oral history interview with him/her. The most representative life interviews with grown up or elderly people from these two groups were analyzed in this research. The life stories interviews revealed, on the one hand, the networks and the means they used for mobilizing and organizing themselves for the protests and, on the other hand, the profound values, beliefs, convictions, political opinions shared by the members of the two protesters' typologies: pro or against EU, pro or against social services, pro or against austerity measures, pro or against the free market economy, pro or against liberalism.

Biography: Antonio Momoc is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Sciences, University of Bucharest. His research focuses on media relations, public communication and leadership.

The authors of this paper also include: Dr. Ionut Butoi (University of Bucharest), Dr. Dan Podaru (University of Bucharest), Dr. Adriana Stefanel (University of Bucharest), and Dr. Antonio Momoc (University of Bucharest).

'Drama and Activist Discourses in the Postcolony: Reading Bole Butake's *And Palmwine Will Flow* and Niyi Osundare's *The State Visit*'
Eunice Ngongkum

From its very inception, written African literature has played an important role in the socio-political emancipation of the continent and its people. Considered as part of the social order, both its writers and critics normally expect it to contribute to the proper functioning of the society. From the pre-colonial period through the colonial to the post-colonial eras, this literature has, in the words of Oyeniyi Okunoye, "made a strong statement on the primacy and urgency of the social responsibility of art" (108). In other words, this literature is socio-politically committed to exposing anti-democratic structures in the postcolony responsible for the dystopian condition of the masses. This perspective becomes all the more visible when one brings together two dramatic pieces by playwrights from different socio-political contexts, namely, the Cameroonian Bole Butake, and the Nigerian Niyi Osundare, known, in their different contexts, for their commitment to socially relevant but aesthetically accomplished art.

Reading Bole Butake's *And Palmwine Will Flow* and Niyi Osundare's *The State Visit* from a Marxist paradigm, this paper seeks to underscore the extent to which contemporary African drama continues to participate in protest and activism discourses through their capacity to effectively challenge hegemonies, raise awareness about different kinds of injustices while proposing avenues for social change. The concern of these playwrights with activist discourses informs not only their ideological project but also their aesthetic vision.

Biography: Eunice Ngongkum is a Professor at the Department of African Literature and Civilisations at the University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon.

'Panel: Film as Activism: A Case Study of Inside Film and The Acting Class'

Deirdre O'Neill & Michael Wayne

This panel will look at the work of Inside Film, the film education and production company run by Deirdre O'Neill and Mike Wayne. It will also look at the latest award winning feature documentary *The Acting Class* produced by Inside Film, as an example of documentary and research practice that has been rolled into an activist campaign for social change. The panel is in three parts.

Part one: Deirdre O'Neill will introduce the political and pedagogic principles and cultural critique behind the educational work that Inside Film does and why it uses film as a radical tool for subaltern groups. Deirdre argues that the contemporary working class in the UK are in a position of cultural, political and economic 'underdevelopment'. Their images and representations are controlled and filtered through a public sphere dominated by middle class producers and value systems. This is why self-representation, which the educational arm of Inside Film facilitates, is so crucial. Deirdre then introduces *The Acting Class*, the

latest feature documentary directed by O'Neill and Wayne, about class stratification in the acting profession in the UK.

Part two: approximately 15 minute extract from *The Acting Class*.

Part three: Mike Wayne discusses documentary film as a form of creative practice and academic research that can easily work as an activist campaign in its own right. Wayne discusses how film and creative practice facilitates a more democratic practice than conventional scholarly work in the written form; how digital technologies can overcome asymmetries of power in the cultural and media industries and how specifically the directors of *The Acting Class* have turned it into a campaigning vehicle raising awareness for the need for change amongst industry stakeholders, the public and national policy makers (by for example partnering with Equity, Just Fair and the Equality Trust).

Biography: Deirdre O'Neil is a lecturer and filmmaker. She is the co-ordinator of the Inside Film Project and has made films with serving prisoners and ex-prisoners, as well as groups of food bank users in South London.

Mike Wayne is a Professor of Film and Television Studies at Brunel University, London. He is the author of *England's Discontents: History, Politics, Culture and Identities* (Pluto Press, 2018).

'The Abolitionist Imagination: Finding Meaning in London's Prison Abolition Movement'

Hannah Pittaway

This paper explores how prison abolitionism is understood by anti-prison activists. Over the last 30 years, England and Wales has undergone a period of expansionist penal policy, and a rising prison population. Early and neo-abolitionists who were active in abolitionist social movements during the 1970s and 1980s, have claimed that both anti-prison activism and abolitionist theory has dissipated during this expansionist period, and failed to challenge penal policy in comparison with previous decades (Ryan and Ward, 2015; Sim, 2012). In response to this, scholars have called for a renewed social movement for prison abolition to advance abolitionist goals. Recent literature in critical criminology and social movement studies shows the development of an abolitionist social movement, which challenges the claim of early and neo-abolitionists, that abolitionist praxis had dissipated (Berger et al, 2017; Braz and Gilmore, 2006; Dixon, 2014). Despite this, there is little research on contemporary anti-prison activism and the abolitionist movement in England and Wales. This paper explores anti-prison activists' perspective through three main areas; firstly, their *motivations and meanings* of abolitionism; second, how they *mobilise and participate* within the abolitionist movement; and thirdly, how they perceive the *effectiveness* of the abolitionist movement overall. The findings are based on six semi-structured interviews with abolitionist activists, who are actively involved in anti-prison work in London. Overall, this paper will posit that

anti-prison activism has not dissipated. Contemporary anti-prison activists' have expanded their understanding of abolitionism beyond the prison to *carceral* abolitionism (Piché and Larsen, 2010), are engaging in growing opportunities to resist, and are prioritising coalitional work and movement building. However, strategic thinking on how to achieve a basic set of abolitionist demands seems limited, and creating a shared vision for a post-abolitionist society between movement actors poses a challenge to the effectiveness of the social movement.

Biography: Hannah Pittaway is on the steering group of Reclaim Justice, a collaboration of individuals, groups, campaigners, activists, trade unionists, practitioners and researchers as well as those most directly affected by the criminal justice system, who are working together to radically reduce the size and scope of criminal justice systems and to build effective and socially just alternatives.

'Damage to Catalonia? State Power and Notions of Democracy, 1937 to 2017'

Stuart Price

This illustrated paper examines the recent crisis in Spain, in which an element of Catalan society, using the mechanism of electoral politics but the ideological tropes of democracy, independence and freedom, organised a referendum on regional sovereignty. This was countered by the central government under Article 155 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution. Leading figures in the ruling *Partido Popular* government mobilised ideas about the Rule of Law, but found that this discourse was undermined, not only by the fact that the Party was mired in corruption scandals, but because of its historical connection to the authoritarian practices common during the Francoist dictatorship. Based upon a series of research visits to Spain (conducted from 2013 to 2017) which studied both public demonstrations and the 'memory movements' that attempt to obtain justice (or at least recognition) for the victims of the Civil War, this presentation recognises the constant intrusion of the militant past into the 'democratic' present.

Biography: Stuart Price is Professor of Media and Political Discourse at the Leicester Media School, De Montfort University, Chair of the Media Discourse Group, Co-Editor of the book series *Protest, Media and Culture*, and the author of a number of monographs, book chapters and articles on Media, Communication and Politics.

'Novelty and Repetition – The Aesthetics of the Portuguese Revolution'

Carolina Rito

Novelty and Repetition – The Aesthetics of the Portuguese Revolution looks at the aesthetics of novelty in the Portuguese Revolution, through the documentary film *Torre Bela* (1975) – shot in Portugal in the wake of the Revolution by German director Thomas Harlan. By looking at the mechanisms of image

production in the documentary film, this paper problematises the novelty in revolutionary movements and what it effaces in its reading and identity. Considering that the new needs to be recognised as novelty in order to signify, this paper investigates the aesthetic manifestations of the 'new' as a historical and situated constructs. As for a cultural manifestation of the new, the Portuguese Revolution (1974-1976) serves as the conceptual and material framework of this paper. The Portuguese Revolution provides the aural and visual material to grasp the 'visible, sayable and thinkable' of the historical event; and, most importantly, the contained aesthetic tensions of what is left invisible, unsayable and inaudible in the post-revolutionary present. Actualised in the present via contemporary image production (Filipa Cesar, Conakry; Pedro Costa, Horse Money), the continuities of fascist ideology are mapped in Portugal present days. This paper draws on documentary, essay and militant cinema related to the Portuguese Revolution, and directed during the PREC (Ongoing Revolutionary Process) and in the present.

Biography: Carolina Rito is the Head of Public Programmes and Research at Nottingham Contemporary and Research Fellow in the Institute for Contemporary History at Nova University of Lisbon. She is also a researcher and curator with a PhD in Curatorial/Knowledge in the Visual Cultures Department at Goldsmiths, University of London.

'Young People in Old Archives: Re-visiting the Stop the War Demonstrations'

Dr Pollyanna Ruiz

Much of the recent coverage surrounding the 2017 general election in the UK as well as ongoing debates about gun control in the US, position young people as tech savvy saviours of the wider (and older) population. However, until recently young people tended to be represented in the news as politically apathetic consumers of popular culture rather than as citizens actively engaging with issues of national importance. Moreover, young people who did participate in public demonstrations were highly susceptible to being framed as either manipulated by sinister others or as a menacing threat in their own right.

In this paper I will examine Cushion's 2007 content analysis of the UK newspaper's coverage of young anti-Iraq war protesters alongside my own content analysis of 'ordinary people's' responses to a directive produced by the Mass Observation Archive project. Cushion examined 208 articles about young people's participation in anti-war protests published in British daily and Sunday newspapers between the first of January and the thirtieth of April 2003. The Mass Observation directive which was circulated in the spring of 2003 asked observers to comment upon the possibility of war with particular reference to their (personal or mediated) experience of the anti-war demonstrations. I will argue that while many of the themes identified by Cushion's (such as truancy, violence and the need for law and order) are echoed in respondent's accounts,

the material held by the Mass Observation Archive reveals a far more complex and nuanced understanding of the role played by young people the Stop the War demonstrations. I will conclude by suggesting that the familial and everyday accounts captured by the Mass Observation offer an important corrective to more traditionally researched understandings of young people as cynical and disenchanting with politics.

Biography: Pollyanna Ruiz is Senior Lecturer in Media and Communication at the University of Sussex. She is interested in the media's role in the construction of social and political change. Her book, *Articulating Dissent; Protest and the Public Sphere*, focuses on the ways in which protest movements bridge the gap between their own familiar but marginal spaces, and a mainstream which is suspicious at best and downright hostile at worst. Her current work takes some of these dynamics and extends them over time by asking whether the internet can maintain memory across different generations of activists and therefore transfer knowledge from the past, through the present and into the future.

'Postcolonial Narratives, State Terrorism and Trauma: A Reading of Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel* and John Nkengasong's *Across the Mongolo*'
Eric Nsuh Zuhmboshi

The relationship that exists between the state and her citizens has been described by Jean Jacques Rousseau as "a social contract". In this contract, citizens are bound to respect state authority while the state, in turn, has the bounden duty to protect her citizens and guide them in their aspirations. In fact, any state that does not perform this duty is guilty of violating the fundamental rights of her citizens. This, however, is not the case in most postcolonial African societies where the citizens see the state as an aggressive apparatus against their wellbeing. This unfortunate situation has laid the foundation for protest, activist, and anti-establishment writings in post-colonial societies – especially in Africa. In this connection, most postcolonial African citizens see the state as a liability and not an asset to their development. Since literature, as a semiotic resource, is coterminous with its socio-political context, this attitude of the state has drawn inimical criticism from key postcolonial African writers such as Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Mongo Beti, and Nadine Gordimer. Using Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel* and John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *Across the Mongolo*, this paper shows the relationship between state terrorism and the traumatic conditions of the citizens in contemporary Africa. Informed by the theoretical models of postcolonial discourse and trauma theory, this paper defends the premise that the postcolonial subjects/characters, in the novels under study, are traumatized and depressed because of their continuous victimization by the state. Due to this state-imposed terror and hardship, the citizens are forced to indulge in activities such as political radicalism, violence, and migration.

Biography: Eric Nsuh Zuhmboshi is a senior lecturer in the Department of African Literature and Civilizations, the University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon. His areas of research interest include cultural studies, critical theory, and political ideology.

Conference Organisers

Richard Bromhall

Twitter: @richardbromhall

Richard is a final year PhD Candidate at Nottingham Trent University, funded by the M3C-AHRC DTP. His research focuses on social class and the novel about England between the 2008 financial and economic crises and Brexit. More specifically, Richard is interested in finding ways in which to read class in the novel now.

In 2017, Richard was the postgraduate lead for the Journey to Justice: Nottingham project, which sought to tell less well-known stories about social activists in the US Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s and in Nottingham through the postwar period to the present.

David Civil

Twitter: @Civil_93

David is a PhD student based in the Department of History at the University of Nottingham and funded by the M3C-AHRC. His research explores the origins and development of the concept of meritocracy in post-war Britain. He is interested in how political ideologies deploy the language of social mobility, equal opportunity and class. More recently, he has written for *The Conversation* on the relationship between Theresa May's Conservatism and meritocracy as well as on the themes of post-war capitalism, 'ethical socialism' and the history of sociological research.

Abi Rhodes

Twitter: @AbiRhodesUoN

Abi is an M3C/M3C-funded PhD candidate at Nottingham University addressing the role of discourse in campaigns by social movements for a more equal society and how such discourse is mobilised in the news media and by political parties, with a particular focus on election time.

Prior to this, for over ten years, Abi was a writer and publishing executive at the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation and its imprint Spokesman Books, where she sits on the editorial board. Abi has written several reviews and articles for *The Spokesman, Review 31* and *WorkingJournalUSA* and contributed a chapter to 'Corbyn's Campaign' published by Spokesman Books.