

# Network

School of Social Sciences Supplement  
Nottingham Trent University Alumni Association

Summer 2011

## Welcome



Welcome to this special *Network* supplement for all former students of NTU's School of Social Sciences.

Like the University itself, the School of Social Sciences has gone from strength to strength in recent years. I first encountered what was then Trent Polytechnic back in 1980 when I enrolled as a student onto the Diploma in Careers Guidance, and I've seen many changes since then. As I sit in our refurbished department in the Chaucer building, overlooking the stunning Newton and Arkwright development, I still have fond memories of studying in York House in the 80s, and going on to work as a guidance professional before returning to the University as a member of staff in 1993.

Our course portfolio and research activities have expanded tremendously since then and you can read about some of the developments in this magazine. However one thing that has stayed the same is our commitment to producing well-rounded, successful graduates who really can make a difference to people's lives.

I hope this supplement gives you a taste of life in the School today, and also the opportunity to reminisce about your time here. I also hope that it inspires you to keep in touch – we'd love to hear your memories, stories and successes and to celebrate our achievements together.

Best wishes,

Ann Allen (Careers Guidance 1981)  
Acting Dean of the School of Social Sciences



Sir David Attenborough with Chancellor Sir Michael Parkinson at the opening of Newton and Arkwright

## Inspirational surroundings

World famous broadcaster and Britain's best known natural history film maker, Sir David Attenborough, has officially opened Nottingham Trent University's Newton and Arkwright buildings.

Visitors to Nottingham Trent University over recent years could not fail to notice the ongoing transformation of our landmark buildings. The Grade II\* listed Newton and Arkwright buildings have been part of an ambitious regeneration programme to create a vibrant heart for the University's City site. Designed by the internationally renowned Hopkins Architects, the scheme has delivered world-class teaching and learning facilities as well as reinvigorating the Nottingham cityscape.

Above all, the campus has been revitalised, creating an inspiring working environment for students, staff and visitors and a clear entrance to the University.

Since its completion, the project has won a number of awards, including a prestigious national Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Award 2011.

It has also triumphed against international competition to receive a Civic Trust Award for the outstanding contribution it makes to the quality and appearance of the environment, and for bringing social, cultural and economic benefits to the local community. In addition, the scheme received the title of Project of the Year at the East Midlands Centre for Constructing the Built Environment Awards, and helped the University's Estates and Resources team to receive a prestigious nomination for the Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Awards 2011.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Neil Gorman, said: "Newton and Arkwright are a showpiece for urban renewal and include some of the most far-reaching green initiatives any university has ever seen."

# Margaret's story

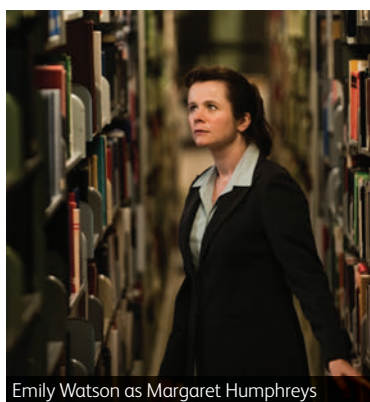
Founder of the Nottingham-based Child Migrants Trust, Margaret Humphreys CBE was awarded an honorary degree by NTU in 1996 for her contribution to knowledge of child care, social policy and practice. Now her story is the subject of a film – *Oranges and Sunshine*.

With some scenes filmed in Nottingham, the £3 million film tells how Margaret uncovered one of the most significant social scandals of recent times – the deportation of thousands of children from the UK to Australia. Almost single-handedly, against overwhelming odds and with little regard for her own well-being, Margaret reunited thousands of families, brought authorities to account and drew worldwide attention to an extraordinary miscarriage of justice.

Actress Emily Watson, who plays Margaret in the film, said: "It's an amazing story – very powerful and compelling. It was one of those things that just felt right from the off. It's about bearing witness to the terrible abuse of innocent children that could have gone without notice

and one person's fight to have that story known, and to give those people some sense of identity."

*Oranges and Sunshine* opened at cinemas on 1 April 2011, and is available to buy on DVD from 25 July 2011.



Emily Watson as Margaret Humphreys



Actors Hugo Weaving and Emily Watson star in the film

## Health and Social Care student shines in British Council international awards



Health and Social Care student Sabrina Bhundoo has picked up a top accolade in a prestigious competition organised by the British Council by being named as the East Midlands Shine International Student of the Year 2011.

As part of the competition, international students across the country were required to share stories about their extra-curricular achievements, which illustrate how they are making the most of their time in the UK. Each student was asked to write a personal 'letter home' in English, detailing the out-of-class achievements that help make their time in the UK so rewarding.

Mauritian student Sabrina included information about her voluntary experience within health and social care. She has worked in a residential home, learnt sign language and joined the Nottinghamshire Healthcare Community Befriending Scheme in addition to her studies to gain a real insight into the caring profession. As one of 12 regional winners she travelled to London on Wednesday 13 April to have her extraordinary achievements honoured in a national awards ceremony.

Sabrina was one of more than 1,200 individuals from 118 countries to enter the ninth annual International Student Awards. The awards are a major initiative from the British Council that shines the spotlight on international students and their contributions to life in the UK.

Sabrina said of her voluntary work: "I related to people in the residential homes in which I worked by listening to them actively, showing empathy and valuing them for what they are. It is the people who I support that have made me a winner and I have gained a lot of self-esteem and confidence." Sabrina receives a £1,000 prize for winning the regional award.

"I am delighted to have won this competition, I was really not expecting to do this well but thought I would give it a go," said Sabrina.

Martin Davidson, Chief Executive of the British Council, said the letters home written by the entrants were both poignant and inspiring.

He said: "The students have immersed themselves in life in the UK and are making a huge contribution not just to their campuses but to the wider community. The British Council is delighted to recognise their considerable achievements."

*"I witnessed how service users felt important when they were listened to, shown respect and treated with dignity. They grew in self-esteem and their faces lit up with smiles."* Sabrina Bhundoo



# Exploring religion, youth and sexuality

For the first time, researchers have carried out a detailed study around sexuality and religion and how these issues affect and influence the lives of British 18-25 year olds.

Experts, including Dr Michael Keenan from Nottingham Trent University's School of Social Sciences and Dr Andrew Kam-Tuck Yip and Dr Sarah-Jane Page from the School of Sociology and Social Policy at The University of Nottingham, spent two years investigating the attitudes, values and experiences of sex and religion among young adults.

The project "Religion, Youth and Sexuality: a Multi-faith Exploration" received funding of nearly £250,000 from the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Economic and Social Research Council. It involved nearly 700 young people from six different religious traditions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism), as well as young adults of mixed-faith. It highlighted the challenges they face in reconciling their sexuality and their religion, and the concerns they have about the stigmatisation of religion and the increasingly sexualised culture in British society today.

Participants were asked about their sexual and religious values, attitudes, experiences and identities. The researchers looked at their family background, social and cultural expectations, and participation in religious communities. They also

examined young people's experiences of living in British society and how they understood and managed their gender identity in relation to their religious faith.

The research shows that nearly a third of young people think celibacy is fulfilling, while nearly two thirds are committed to treating heterosexuality and homosexuality on equal terms. Meanwhile lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered participants reveal that there are psychological and social costs to living their everyday lives, particularly within religious communities.

Dr Yip said: "The aim is to document and disseminate the voices of religious young adults - exploring how they understand their sexuality and religious faith, and the significant factors that inform such understandings, as well as the strategies they have developed to manage their sexual, religious, youth and gender identities."

More than half the participants (65.1 %) were involved in a religious community and just over half (56.7 %) attended a public religious gathering at least once a week.

Most thought that the expression of one's sexuality was desirable but opinions varied with some believing that consenting adults should be able to express their

sexualities however they wished, while others believed sexual expression should be limited to marriage or a committed relationship. Despite the diversity in opinion, most salient was the support expressed across the board for monogamous relationships by 83.2 % of the sample.

Their experiences in connecting their religious faith and sexuality were diverse. Some had experienced tension and conflict. Others were able to deal with any conflict by compartmentalising faith and sexuality. While there were also participants who had found a way of accommodating both. NTU's Dr Keenan said: "The majority of the religious young adults felt their religion was a positive force in their lives, and many felt that their faith was the most important influence on their sexual values and practices. The study also shows that the negotiation of religion and sexuality can be difficult and that there is a real diversity of experience among young religious adults. We hope the research findings will lead to greater discussion of these important issues and stimulate dialogue between religions and between religious and secular organisations."

# But will they vote?

Researchers analyse young people's engagement with politics



Professor Matt Henn and Nick Foard from the University's Business, Law and Social Science Graduate School are currently undertaking a major study into young people's engagement with politics. They explain the background to their research here:

Over the past decade, there has been growing anxiety within government circles that people in Britain are becoming increasingly disengaged from the formal political process. This concern has come to the fore largely as a consequence of the recent decline in voter participation rates. For instance, at the landmark General Election of 2001 only 59% of the eligible electorate voted – which was in stark contrast with previous elections where turnout was significantly higher (71% in 1997, 78% in 1992, and 75% in 1987).

A year on from the 2001 General Election, we conducted a national research study of over 700 young people that considered their engagement with the political system. A detailed analysis of the data from this study indicated a general sense of unease with the conduct of the political classes based in Westminster.

Although British youth expressed an interest in a range of political issues and had a desire to play a more active role within the political system, they also found 'politics' to be remote and inaccessible – and regarded politicians and the main political parties to be a group with self-serving interests, in whom young people had little faith or trust.

Since that research study, democratic engagement has remained sluggish. Young people in Britain are even less likely to participate in elections, and only 44% voted at last summer's contest. Those young people that did vote, however, seemed to be attracted to the promise of something new. Throughout the election campaign, Nick Clegg talked of a 'new politics' and the need for ending the traditional, two-party system which he and others claimed was outmoded and out of touch with the aspirations of the public. It is perhaps no surprise then, that analysis of the British Election Study post-campaign survey reveals that the Liberal Democrats attracted the largest proportion of votes from 18-24 year olds – a group that was disenchanted with the two main parties. Come election night however, many of these Lib Dem votes did not translate into seats in Parliament. Instead, the emergence of the coalition government has arguably led to compromise on those very areas (such as education) which affect young people most.

We are now conducting another national study to try and understand why so many young people choose not to vote. This project has received £96,000 of funding from the Economic and Social Research

Council, and the results will be reported back to political parties and key citizenship organisations and agencies. We will explore the extent to which young people's political outlooks are shaped by factors such as gender, social class, education, ethnicity and the degree of party competition in constituencies. We will also assess young people's political disengagement over time, by comparing the results to the 2002 previous study.

Young people's disengagement with politics is still a major problem despite attempts by recent governments to address the issue. We do know that many young people are very serious about democracy and voting but choose not to vote because they are concerned about the way in which politics is being run. Finding ways of encouraging young people to engage with politics isn't just about making it easier to vote, it's about changing political culture too; we need a concerted effort by parties and politicians, not just in the run up to an election, but beyond.

Professor Matt Henn and Nick Ford also supervise MPhil / PhDs in the Graduate School. Visit [www.ntu.ac.uk/research](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/research) to find out more about the opportunities available.

It's an exciting time for politics at NTU. If you're interested in this story you can browse lecturer Dr Matt Ashton's media politics blog at <http://drmatthewashton.com> or take a look at our voting reform blog that includes articles written by academics from across the division in the run up to the national referendum. View the blog at <http://ntureferendum.wordpress.com>. You can also find out about our new MA Politics on page 8.





# New crime programme to target repeat youth offenders

A new youth justice programme which aims to reduce the number of young people re-offending in Derby has been developed with NTU's help.

The development of the Acquisitive Crime Programme – which will be introduced by courts later this year – was headed by David Ellicott, a senior lecturer in youth justice and youth studies with more than 20 years' experience within criminal justice as a practitioner, probation officer and manager. It builds on an already well-established resource, The Jigsaw Programme, which was previously written by youth justice professionals and employed across a number of UK youth offending teams.

The programme, for 15-17 year olds, has been developed for the Derby Youth Offending Service and is designed to address trends in Derby city relating specifically to domestic burglary, personal and business robbery and vehicle crime. The reduction of such crimes is a key element of the government's public service agreement regarding making communities safer, and the new programme comes as

suitable youth justice initiatives were sought by the Derby Community Safety Partnership.

It will be offered during sentencing as part of a youth rehabilitation order, and it will be a requirement to attend and complete all the sessions, which will be led by youth offending service workers. The sessions will be interactive and aim to get to the root of why an individual is offending, as well as providing them with the knowledge and necessary skills to help them to make better decisions and prevent re-offending.

The programme will address issues such as moral reasoning, interaction skills, self-management, self-esteem, victim empathy, patterns and consequences, values, beliefs and relapse prevention.

NTU's David Ellicott said: "The programme will target those offenders who are at most risk of receiving a custodial

sentence, and are believed to pose a threat of serious emotional or physical harm to either themselves or others.

"Currently many court orders involve intensive surveillance and supervision such as tagging or curfews, whereas this is a cognitive programme which, while complementing that, will seek to promote a positive change in attitudes towards offending and behaviour. We believe this additional measure will significantly help to address the government's aim of reducing the number of young people in custody."

Suanne Lim, Head of Derby Youth Offending Service, said: "The Acquisitive Crime Programme effectively targets some of the most prevalent aspects of youth crime in Derby city. It has already been requested as a programme requirement in many youth rehabilitation orders and we hope it goes from strength to strength."

## Working towards a sustainable future

Nottingham Trent University is committed to the promotion of environmental awareness and sustainability through education, and researchers in the School of Social Sciences are helping the University to deliver this.

More and more people in the United Kingdom have a sedentary lifestyle that could be damaging their health. To try and combat this, a team of researchers from the School of Social Sciences are undertaking an innovative study into how to encourage active travelling habits among staff and students. The investigation will focus attention on levels of active travel, as well as looking at the potential for being more physically active when travelling between home and campus.

The team of researchers, including Sian Buckley, Richard Howarth, Hugh Miller, Professor Jean Underwood and Glenn Williams, will be applying their knowledge and expertise from a variety of disciplines ranging from community psychology and

transport psychology, to public health and sustainability.

Members of staff have also been involved in other valuable projects to help the University and wider community achieve a more sustainable future. These have included research into the provision of environment related support for small and medium enterprises, an analysis of the notion of "big society" and food and land share projects, and the provision of sustainable food here at NTU.

The University is also home to the Future Factory – a project that offers small to medium sized companies (SMEs) in the East Midlands a fantastic opportunity to draw on the expertise they need to develop more efficient and sustainable ways of doing business. If you work in the East Midlands and want to find out how they can help your organisation visit

[www.ntu.ac.uk/futurefactory](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/futurefactory) for more information.

# New opportunities

The School of Social Sciences has launched a number of exciting new courses over the past year and if you're considering advancing your skills there are a number of options to choose from.

Leading the way are our new Masters courses in Sociology, Criminology and Politics. These build upon the varied research strengths of our staff and allow you to critically explore the contemporary issues and debates.

Our MA Sociology develops students' understanding of a range of global issues and explores the debates surrounding social inequalities, social division, the environment, and social impact. The MA Criminology has a specially designed Policy pathway that will be pertinent to those seeking a related career in the Home Office, government or crime reduction partnerships and specialist units in the Division conduct high-quality applied criminological research. Finally the MA Politics spans political science, political theory, comparative European, and global environmental politics to deliver a lively, informed and analytical programme.

All three of these courses provide the skills required for a variety of roles in the public services, policy or research and there is the opportunity to apply for a Masters Scholarship worth up to £2,000. Visit [www.ntu.ac.uk/s3postgraduate](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/s3postgraduate) to find out more.

The School has a long tradition of delivering excellent guidance education and we have utilised our expertise to provide the BA (Hons) Youth and Professional Career Guidance. This unique course enables students to gain an honours degree in Youth Studies and a professional qualification in careers guidance in just three years. This also means students benefit from a significant financial saving in relation to studying the two qualifications separately.

Similarly our suite of professional courses in Risk Management have helped to maintain our well-respected reputation in the industry. These innovative and flexible courses allow you to build up your qualifications at a pace you control. They are delivered via distance-learning with optional attendance days every five weeks for those who want to incorporate face-to-face learning. Alternatively you can choose to study individual modules for CPD purposes. Visit [www.ntu.ac.uk/riskmanagement](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/riskmanagement) for all the options available.



# Stay connected

Our exclusive Online Community of over 12,000 alumni members – at **[www.ntualumni.org.uk](http://www.ntualumni.org.uk)** – continues to provide visitors with news and nostalgia.

Members now use the Online Community to access a range of benefits and services, join discussion forums and view the nostalgia photo galleries.

We also encourage you to update your details online so that we can keep in touch with the latest news from your University and your fellow alumni. Also, if we know where you are, then we can track you down if any of your friends are planning a special get-together.

If you update your details online before 31 August 2011 you will automatically be entered into a prize draw to win £50 in Amazon vouchers.

Through the Online Community you can also search for your 'old' university friends and help us regain contact with alumni we have lost touch with.

New members can join at **[www.ntualumni.org.uk](http://www.ntualumni.org.uk)** – just select 'Log in / Register', click on 'Register as a new user' and complete the form.

Remember you can also join us on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter too!

## Support your University

There are many ways you can support your University: volunteering to be an online careers mentor, offering to take current students on work placements at your company, helping out at NTU Open Days, or making a donation to one of our priority projects.

The continued support of our alumni and friends is valued and ensures that we provide the best opportunities for our current and future students, to give them the knowledge, skills and experience to shape lives and society.

However you would like to become involved we would love to hear from you. Please contact the Development and Alumni Relations Team on **[alumni@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ntu.ac.uk)** or call **+44 (0)115 848 8777** to discuss how you can support your University.



## Benefits for you!

As a valued member of our 95,000-strong alumni community, don't forget to check out the exciting range of exclusive benefits on offer to you.

There are plenty of benefits, services and discounts available. For example, cottages4you offer NTU alumni 10% off a superb collection of holiday properties scattered throughout the most desirable spots of the UK, Ireland, France and Italy. Visit **[www.ntualumni.org.uk/netcommunity/cottages](http://www.ntualumni.org.uk/netcommunity/cottages)** for more information.

Meanwhile, discounts on some of Nottinghamshire's favourite attractions can be obtained by presenting your Venture Card. Your Venture Card also entitles you to 10% off products at Blackwell (both in store and online at **[www.blackwell.co.uk/ntualumni](http://www.blackwell.co.uk/ntualumni)**) and 15% off your final bill at Nottingham's Chino Latino restaurant. Cards are available to alumni on request – just email **[alumni@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ntu.ac.uk)**.

For a full run-down of the benefits and services you can enjoy visit **[www.ntualumni.org.uk/netcommunity/benefits](http://www.ntualumni.org.uk/netcommunity/benefits)**.

