

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023-2024



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

THE SENATOR
GEORGE J. MITCHELL
INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL PEACE,
SECURITY AND JUSTICE





THE QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY OF BELFAST

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Senator George J. Mitchell

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

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The 2023-24 academic year again saw Mitchell Institute colleagues and students pursuing important, innovative and wide-ranging work in the fields of peace, security and justice. Newly established Professorial posts have transformed the scale of our work: Professor Louise Mallinder was appointed Institute Deputy Director; Professor Marsha Henry was appointed Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair in Women, Peace, Security and Justice; Professor Kieran McEvoy was appointed Senator George J. Mitchell Chair in Peace, Security and Justice. All three distinguished scholars bring a wide range of expertise and experience to the work of the Institute, and it has been exciting to see the innovative work that they have already developed.

Partnership, both within and beyond Queen's University, is crucial to our approach. As this Annual Review demonstrates, we have collaborated productively across Queen's, as well as with colleagues from, among other institutions, the University of Notre Dame, Harvard University, the London School of Economics and Political Science, the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Edinburgh, and the Royal Irish Academy. And our work involves people whose vital expertise is drawn from fields other than the academic, as is evident throughout this Annual Review. This latter point is very important to us, and has strengthened our ability to respond to societal challenges, whether in Northern Ireland, or internationally in Israel-Palestine, Afghanistan, Ukraine-Russia and beyond.

Our approach is also based on three crucial convictions: that it is impossible properly to understand peace, security or justice without understanding them all; that it is vital to support inter-disciplinary research and education; and that research, education, societal engagement and real-world impact are all necessarily interwoven with each other. We are also committed, as this Annual Review demonstrates, to our work with students from across many disciplines. Their contributions continue to be vital to the Mitchell Institute.

I'm grateful to Institute colleagues for their continued commitment and skill: Professors Mallinder, Henry and McEvoy; Theme Lead Professor Fiona Magowan; and the Institute team of Dr Wendy-Louise Smith, Valerie Miller, Louise Milligan and Brett Walker.

Senator George J. Mitchell's enthusiastic backing remains hugely appreciated, and I would also like to thank the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Ian Greer, and the Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nola Hewitt-Dundas, for their ongoing strong support.

We hope that this Annual Review provides a valuable insight into what we do, and that you will see your way to engaging with the Mitchell Institute in our future work.

*Professor Richard English
Director*



01

RESEARCH



A home for interdisciplinary research, the Mitchell Institute collaborates with internationally renowned partners and researchers to deliver a range of local, national and international events.

LECTURE

Protesting Jordan: Geographies of Power and Dissent

3 October 2023
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Professor Jillian Schwedler
New York's Hunter College

Chair: Professor Louise Mallinder
*Mitchell Institute Deputy Director
and Theme Lead: Legacy*

Protest has been a key method of political claim-making in Jordan from the late Ottoman period to the present day. More than moments of rupture within normal-time politics, protests have been central to challenging state power, as well as reproducing it—and the spatial dynamics of protests play a central role in the construction of both state and society.

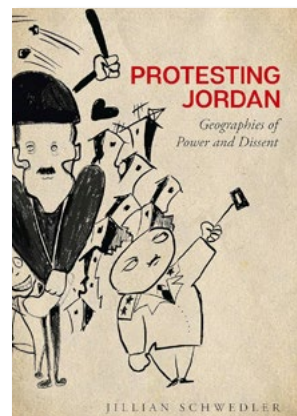
In this talk based on her new book, *Protesting Jordan: Geographies of Power and Dissent* (Stanford University Press, 2022), Jillian Schwedler considered how space and geography influence protests and repression, and, in challenging conventional narratives of Hashemite state-making, offers the first in-depth study of rebellion in Jordan.

Based on twenty-five years of field research, *Protesting Jordan* examines protests as they are situated in the built environment, bringing together

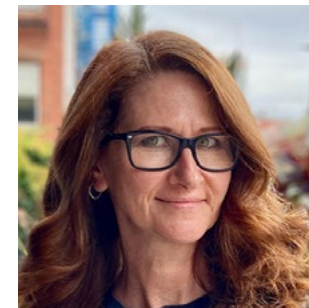
considerations of networks, spatial imaginaries, space and place-making, and political geographies at local, national, regional, and global scales. Schwedler considers the impact of time and temporality in the lifecycles of individual movements.

Through a mixed interpretive methodology, this book illuminates the geographies of power and dissent and the spatial practices of protest and repression, highlighting the political stakes of competing narratives about Jordan's past, present, and future.

This event was hosted in collaboration with the Human Rights Centre, School of Law, Queen's University Belfast.



Jillian Schwedler,
*Protesting Jordan: Geographies
of Power and Dissent*
(Stanford University Press, 2022)



Professor Jillian Schwedler

Professor Schwedler is a Professor of Political Science at the City University of New York. Her research engages questions of contentious politics, political geography, Islamist politics, policing, neoliberalism, and political dissent. She explores how these issues are manifest within the Middle East and North Africa. This has included conducting previous research in Jordan, Yemen, and Egypt.

She has published widely on these topics with her research appearing in *World Politics*, *Comparative Politics*, *Journal of Democracy*, and *Social Movement Studies*, among many others. In addition, she is the author of the award-winning monograph *Faith in Moderation: Islamist Parties in Jordan and Yemen* (Cambridge, 2006). She also co-edited (with Laleh Khalili), *Policing and Prisons in the Middle East* (Columbia/Hurst, 2010).

LECTURE

Die Standing: From Black Panther Revolutionary to Global Diversity Consultant

10 October 2023
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Elmer Dixon

Organisers: Dr Keira Williams

Reader, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding

Professor Olwen Purdue

Director of the Centre for Public History, QUB

His image—holding a rifle on the steps of the Washington state capitol building—is one of the most iconic photographs from the Black Power movement.

In 1968, Elmer Dixon co-founded the Seattle Chapter of the Black Panther Party to provide armed patrols to protect Black people from police beatings and killings.

More than a half-century later, Dixon is a popular diversity, equity, and inclusion consultant for companies, organisations and universities around the world.

In this Lecture, Elmer Dixon shared his remarkable history, and discussed his new book *Die Standing: From Black Panther Party Revolutionary to Global Diversity Consultant* (Two Sisters Writing and Publishing, 2023).

This event was hosted in partnership with the Centre for Public History, Queen's University Belfast.

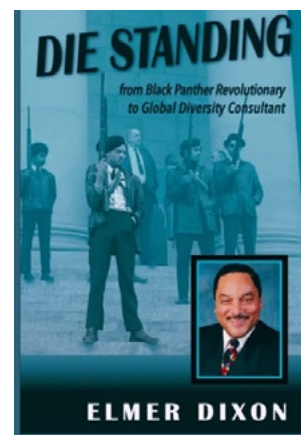
COLLOQUIUM

Strangers to Peace: Documentary Film and the Politics of Transitional Justice

8 November 2023
Queen's University Belfast

Organiser: Dr Des O'Rawe

Senior Lecturer, School of Arts, English and Languages and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy



Strangers to Peace
(Laura Àngel Rengifo and Noah Debonis, 2022)

Elmer Dixon
Die Standing: From Black Panther Party Revolutionary to Global Diversity Consultant
(Two Sisters Writing and Publishing, 2023)

In partnership with the Belfast Film Festival, this Colloquium included a screening of the critically acclaimed Colombian documentary, *Strangers to Peace* (Laura Àngel Rengifo and Noah Debonis, 2022), followed by a panel discussion responding to the film and exploring relations between documentary filmmaking and questions of post-conflict memory and transitional justice—both more widely, and closer to home. The film's producer, Colleen O'Brien, was in attendance to introduce the film.

About the film

Three ex-fighters of the Colombian guerilla army FARC face anxiety and fear as they try to reintegrate into a society that views them as terrorists.

For over half a century, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have been fighting to overthrow the Colombian government, which they blame for the corruption and inequality that prevails in the country.

This film is an intimate portrait of three people who made the difficult decision to demobilize and return to civilian life after years of bloody conflict.

Ricardo, a young man who does not hide his ideals; Alexandra, an indigenous woman who left her family at the age of 13; and Dayana, who is discovering her identity as a trans woman, all long for peace and acceptance but must carefully hide the truth about their past.

To the general public they are enemies, traitors to their former comrades-in-arms.

LECTURE

Seeking to Strategically Shape Socio-Spatial Relations: The Development of the Red Brigades, 1970-1980

22 November 2023
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Dr Lorenzo Bosi
Scuola Normale Superiore, Florence, Italy
Chair: Professor Richard English
Mitchell Institute Director

Today it is well acknowledged in the social sciences that social networks can serve to facilitate or inhibit processes of collective action, given we are mainly focusing on the effects of network structures.

This has for the most part tacitly implied picturing collective actors as passive objects of mobilising influences exerted by pre-given and persistent social networks.

In this Lecture, by tracing the interaction of different collective actors and their struggles, Dr Bosi demonstrated that there are considerable amounts of strategic initiatives on the part of collective actors who consciously seek to shape socio-spatial relations to succeed in their projects.

Multiple primary sources were employed to investigate the Red Brigade's (henceforth, BR) pre-existing social networks and self-perception of the Italian context, and how it has consciously

attempted to shape socio-spatial relations as a result of deliberate and goal-oriented actions of the BR itself, between 1970 and 1978.

By focusing on the BR, this Lecture explored how they sought to shape socio-spatial relations upon its pre-existing social networks and perception of the Italian context during the 1970s.

In answer to this question, Bosi drew attention to how the repression of the Italian state at the same time has re-configured the socio-spatial context where the BR operated its armed campaign shaping in turn its strategy, shifting from 'armed propaganda' to 'strike the heart of the State'.



Dr Lorenzo Bosi

Lorenzo Bosi is Associate Professor in Political Sociology at the Scuola Normale Superiore, where he is part of the COSMOS (Centre on Social Movement Studies) research team.

He received his PhD in Politics from Queen's University Belfast in 2005, and is the past recipient of the ESRC (University of Kent), Jean Monnet and Marie Curie (EUI) post-doctorate fellowships.

He is a political sociologist pursuing comparative analysis into the cross-disciplinary fields of social movements and political violence. He has directed and collaborated on a number of national and international research projects on topics relating to social movements, political violence, and political participation.

Since 2019, he is Director's delegate for SNS at the SAR Italia, RUNIPACE and UNHCR networks.

LECTURE

Why do Union States Fail?

27 November 2023
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Professor Alvin Jackson
University of Edinburgh

Chair: Professor Peter Gray
Director of the Institute of Irish Studies, QUB

The United Kingdom has been weakening, and this Lecture, drawing on Professor Alvin Jackson's latest book *United kingdoms: Multinational Union States in Europe and Beyond, 1800–1925* (Oxford University Press, 2023) helped to explain why.

Jackson examined the UK in the light of the experience of similar union states elsewhere, offering the first sustained comparative reflection across the 19th and early 20th centuries and beyond.

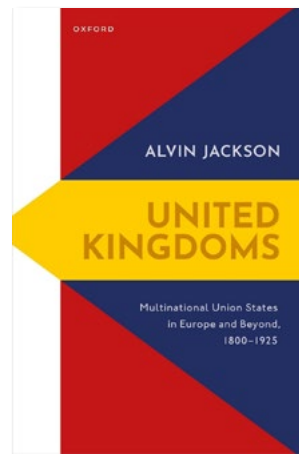
The UK was not in fact the only self-styled 'united kingdom' of the time: Jackson argues strikingly that Britain exported the idea of union through the advocacy or encouragement of other multinational united kingdoms at the beginning of the 19th century.

He drew together the histories of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England and explored the links between them and Sweden-Norway, the united Netherlands, Austria-Hungary, and many other union polities across the globe.

He looked at the institutions and agencies affecting the strength of unions—from monarchy, aristocracy, and religion through to class, money, and violence.

In this Lecture, Alvin Jackson offered new overarching arguments about the origins and survival of all union states, and in doing so, shed new light on the particular history and condition of the UK and Ireland.

This event was hosted in partnership with the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics and The Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University Belfast.



*Alvin Jackson
United kingdoms: Multinational
Union States in Europe and
Beyond, 1800-1925 (Oxford
University Press, 2023)*



Professor Alvin Jackson

Alvin Jackson is Sir Richard Lodge Professor of History at the University of Edinburgh. He recently wrote and presented the successful three-part BBC TV series on 'The Prime Ministers' (produced by Doubleband in Belfast).

Jackson was educated at Corpus Christi College and Nuffield College, Oxford. He has taught at University College Dublin, Boston College and as Professor of Modern Irish History at Queen's University Belfast.

He is the author of eight books, including (most recently) *United kingdoms: Multinational Union States in Europe and Beyond, 1800-1925* (OUP: 2023).

He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, a Member of the Academia Europaea, and an Honorary Member of the Royal Irish Academy.

He also holds an Honorary Doctorate from University College Dublin.

LECTURE

Afghanistan after the Americans: Understanding the Taliban's Islamic Emirate and Afghan and International Responses to it

4 December 2023
Queen's University Belfast

Speakers: Professor Michael Semple
Professorial Research Fellow, QUB
Dr Felix Kuehn
Project Manager
Tamim Asey
Researcher

Chair: Professor Fiona Magowan
Theme Lead: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding

Drawing on long-term original research, the speakers discussed how the Afghan Taliban Movement has sought to transform the state and society in Afghanistan since the US withdrawal in 2021.

They explored how Afghans have responded to the Taliban project and argued that developments in Afghanistan still have consequences for the region and the world.



Left to right:
Eireamhan Semple, Project Administrator;
Wahdat Wasel, Researcher;
Naqibullah Stanikzai, Researcher;
Tamim Asey, Researcher;
Professor Fiona Magowan, Theme Lead: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding;
Professor Michael Semple, Professorial Research Fellow;
Dr Felix Kuehn, Project Manager;
Jafar Darzai, Researcher.

LECTURE

Reconciliation by Stealth: How People Talk about War Crimes

31 January 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Professor Denisa Kostovicova
London School of Economics and Political Science

Chair: Professor Marsha Henry
Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair in Women, Peace, Security and Justice

Sustainable peace after conflict requires reconciliation of former adversaries. But, people in post-conflict societies often resist or even reject reconciliation both as a concept and practice. While reconciliation may be desirable, the question is: can people reconcile in the aftermath of mass atrocity, and how do we know they can?

In this Lecture, and drawing on her examination of the Balkans conflicts, Kostovicova presented a novel approach to evaluating the effects of transitional justice in post-conflict societies.

She explored what happens when former adversaries discuss legacies of violence and the policy implications of her findings presented in her latest book *Reconciliation by Stealth: How People Talk about War Crimes* (Cornell University Press, 2023).

Reconciliation by Stealth advances a novel approach to evaluating the effects of transitional justice in post-conflict societies. Through her examination of the Balkan conflicts, Professor Kostovicova asks what happens when former adversaries discuss legacies of

violence and atrocity, and whether it is possible to do so without further deepening animosities.

Reconciliation by Stealth shifts our attention from what people say about war crimes, to how they deliberate past wrongs.

This book is the first in the field of transitional justice and peacebuilding to measure the quality of discourse in inter-ethnic discussions about war crimes in a large textual corpus of real-life transitional justice consultations.

With its innovative research design, Kostovicova's transitional justice research connects with the latest advances in the scholarship on peacebuilding by adding measurement of discourse quality to the empirical study of everyday peace and its indicators.

Denisa Kostovicova discussed the findings and their implications for policy-making.

Professor Denisa Kostovicova

Professor Kostovicova is Associate Professor of Global Politics at the European Institute and Director of the South East Europe Research LSEE and Co-Chair of the Conflict, Justice and Peace Platform at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

She is a scholar of conflict and peace processes with a particular interest in post-conflict reconstruction and transitional justice.

She is the author of *Reconciliation by Stealth: How People Talk about War Crimes* (Cornell University Press, 2023) and *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space* (Routledge, 2005). Professor Kostovicova co-edited 8 volumes, including *Rethinking Reconciliation and Transitional Justice After Conflict* (Routledge, 2018).

Her research has been funded by a number of prestigious grants, including those by the Leverhulme Trust, MacArthur Foundation and Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), among others.

Professor Kostovicova currently directs a major research programme funded by the European Research Council (ERC), titled **Justice Interactions and Peace-building (JUSTINT)**.

She has authored a number of policy papers on issues concerning Western Balkans' European integration, post-conflict recovery and regional security. Her academic research and policy contributions have informed policy making at the EU, UN, and in the UK.



LECTURE

The Annual Senator George J. Mitchell Peace Lecture

The Fate of Civilians in War: The Effects and Effectiveness of International Conventions

13 February 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Professor Neta C. Crawford
University of Oxford
Chair: Professor Richard English
Mitchell Institute Director

The Senator George J. Mitchell Peace Lecture Series

The Senator George J. Mitchell Peace Lecture Series celebrates and recognises Senator Mitchell's contribution to the Northern Ireland peace process and to conflict resolution in the Middle East. His aim of transforming conflict and promoting social justice in Northern Ireland and across the world is shared by our Institute.

The Annual Peace Lecture Series was inaugurated in 2018 with a Lecture from President Mary Robinson reflecting on the life and career of Senator George J. Mitchell and his role in peace negotiations across the world.

2024 Lecture

In the wake of several episodes of mass atrocity in the twentieth century, the international community

articulated new legal conventions designed to prevent deliberate harm to civilians and other noncombatants in international and civil conflicts. These include the Genocide Convention (1948); the four Geneva Conventions (1949); the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Convention (1977) and the Responsibility to Protect (2005).

In this Lecture, Professor Crawford explored:

- What impact, if any, have those conventions had in either preventing or reducing the harm that civilians have suffered?
- Why are civilians still dying in large numbers in war?
- Who is morally responsible for those deaths and for the long term harm to civilians that occurs as a consequence of the destruction of infrastructure?

Professor Neta C. Crawford

Neta C. Crawford, FBA is the Montague Burton Professor of International Relations at the University of Oxford. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a Fellow of the British Academy. Her publications include *Accountability for Killing: Moral Responsibility for Collateral Damage in America's Post-9/11 Wars* (Oxford University Press, 2013). Her most recent book, *The Pentagon, Climate Change and War: Charting the Rise and Fall of U.S. Military Emissions* (MIT Press, 2022) won the 2023 American Book Award and the 2024 Grawemeyer Prize for World Order. Crawford is also the Co-Director of the Costs of War Project, based at Brown University.

Her research interests include:

- International relations theory
- Normative theory, foreign policy decision making
- Sanctions
- Climate change and climate security
- Military greenhouse gas emissions
- US foreign and military policy
- Peace movements
- Utopian science fiction and emotion

Previous Lectures

Human Rights, Justice and Negotiating Peace With Terrorists: The Case of Afghanistan

Mr Nader Nadery
Asser Institute, The Hague
October 2022

After Remorse, the Impossibility of Repair

Professor Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela
Stellenbosch University and Mitchell Institute
Honorary Professor
October 2020

Interconnectedness for Peace in Our Times

Dr Mamphele Rampela
Activist, Medical Doctor, Academic, Businesswoman and Political Thinker
October 2019

Senator George J. Mitchell: A True Champion of Peace

Mary Robinson
Former President of Ireland
November 2018



Left to right:
Professor Fiona Magowan, Theme Lead: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding;
Professor Louise Mallinder, Deputy Director and Theme Lead: Legacy;
Professor Marsha Henry, Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair in Women, Peace, Security and Justice;
Professor Neta C. Crawford, Montague Burton Professor of International Relations, University of Oxford;
Professor Richard English, Mitchell Institute Director;
Professor Kieran McEvoy, Senator George J. Mitchell Chair in Peace, Security and Justice, and Theme Lead: Rights and Social Justice.

IN-CONVERSATION

Fractured Union: Politics, Sovereignty and the Fight to Save the UK

5 March 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Professor Michael Kenny
University of Cambridge
Chair: Professor Richard English
Mitchell Institute Director

In this In-Conversation event, Professor Michael Kenny discussed the themes of his latest book *Fractured Union: Politics, Sovereignty and the Fight to Save the UK* (Hurst, 2024) including the fluid politics of the UK, reflections on English national identity, Brexit, the 2014 Scottish Referendum, Northern Irish politics, and possible political futures for these islands.

- How have decision-makers in Westminster and beyond fanned the flames of national division?
- Can this disunited kingdom come together once again?

The question of the United Kingdom's survival, once taken for granted, looms large in British politics. This book uncovers the roots of today's crisis, revealing MPs' and civil servants' assumptions in their understanding of the Union, and profound pessimism within politics about its long-term viability.

Why has the political class struggled to engage productively with devolution? Has English voters'

disenchantment with a detached central government influenced how politicians and bureaucrats regard the UK's future? How have seismic events fuelled tensions between Westminster and devolved administrations, from the SNP's election and independence referendum to Brexit and Covid? And what now?

Fractured Union offers a vivid account of the gradual loss of British unity, illuminating the forces and pressures now shaping the future of both nations and peoples. As nationalism rises across Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England, this book issues a sharp challenge to those who believe in a united kingdom: deliver better, more responsive government—or risk the UK falling apart.



Professor Michael Kenny

Michael Kenny is Professor of Public Policy, and inaugural Director of the Bennett Institute for Public Policy, at the University of Cambridge. He has written extensively on national identity, territorial politics and governance, and is the author of a prizewinning study of the impact of English nationalism on British politics.



Michael Kenny
Fractured Union: Politics, Sovereignty and the Fight to Save the UK (Hurst, 2024)

SEMINAR

Meeting Violence with Non-Violence: Responding to Injustice Through Peaceful Interventions in Palestine

7 March 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Speakers: Professor Mohammed Abu-Nimer
American University, Washington, USA
Dr Marwan Darweish
Coventry University

Organisers: Dr Erika Jiménez
Leverhulme Early Career Fellow, School of Law and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Rights and Social Justice
Professor Kieran McEvoy
Senator George J. Mitchell Chair in Peace, Security and Justice

At this Seminar, Palestinian scholars Professor Mohammed Abu-Nimer and Dr Marwan Darweish delivered presentations drawing on their extensive non-violence research and activism in the region.

Professor Abu-Nimer focused on how Palestine-Israel relations have changed since 7 October 2023.

He discussed how religious identity and symbols have been heavily deployed since 7 October as part of politics of fear to justify the scale of destruction in this war by Hamas and the Israeli right and how Israeli politicians and media outlets (including secular ones) are instrumentalising religious ideology symbols and identity into the war. He also analysed the ways that the 1.7 million 48-Palestinians (Palestinian citizens of Israel) have been silenced via various means including bans on protests against the war and the increased use of surveillance. Professor Abu-Nimer argued that while there was generally a lack of recognition

concerning the pain and trauma experienced because of the war and this trauma represented a real challenge to the very idea that Jews and Arabs could live together. More positively he argued, the global solidarity movement in support of Palestinians has gained momentum unlike at any stage since 1945.

Drawing on his ongoing research and activism in the occupied West Bank, Dr Marwan Darweish spoke about enhancing unarmed civilian protection amongst Palestinian communities in the South Hebron Hills-Masafer Yatta. He discussed the increase in settler violence following the November 2022 Israeli general election, emboldened and encouraged by the most right-wing government in Israel's history using the cover of the war. He pointed out that the war and restrictions on movement and travel have led to a drastic reduction in space for unarmed civilian protection. He examined the significance and challenges of 'accompaniment' and 'accompaniers' (Palestinian human rights activists, Israeli solidarity groups and internationals) and reported that the Palestinian response to challenges has been Sumud (steadfastness).

A range of topics were explored during the lively Q and A discussion. These included:

- The challenges for those arguing within the Palestinian community for non-violent resistance in the midst of such a brutal conflict; and
- The merits and challenges of the BDS Movement (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) and some of the practicalities around this when it comes to academic boycott particularly. The speakers stressed that the academic boycott meant a boycott of institutional links with Israeli academic organisations not individuals but that it is important to recognise that when academics within these institutions have challenged Israel's discrimination against Palestinians they too can be ostracised or even suspended in their organisations. The speakers also stressed the importance of working with progressive civil society groups and how such a 'pragmatic' approach allowed for the involvement of Israeli actors within the struggle for Palestinian rights.

This event was hosted in partnership with the School of Law, Queen's University Belfast.



Left to right: Dr Erika Jiménez, Professor Mohammed Abu-Nimer; Professor Kieran McEvoy and Dr Marwan Darweish

WEBINAR

The Importance of BDS for Decolonial Feminist Peace in Palestine

A conversation between Shaimaa Abdelkarim (University of Birmingham) and Nicola Pratt (University of Warwick)

8 March 2024
Online

Chair: Professor Marsha Henry
Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair in Women, Peace, Security and Justice

This online event focussed around activism and practice towards decolonial feminist peace in Palestine. The Webinar was structured around a series of questions posed to better understand why feminist scholars and activists advocate for, and support, certain boycott, divestment, and sanction strategies in order to promote feminist peace in regions under militarised occupation.

Professor Pratt and Dr Abdelkarim discussed campaigns, and their research and expertise on Palestine and shared examples of recent work.



Dr Shaimaa Abdelkarim

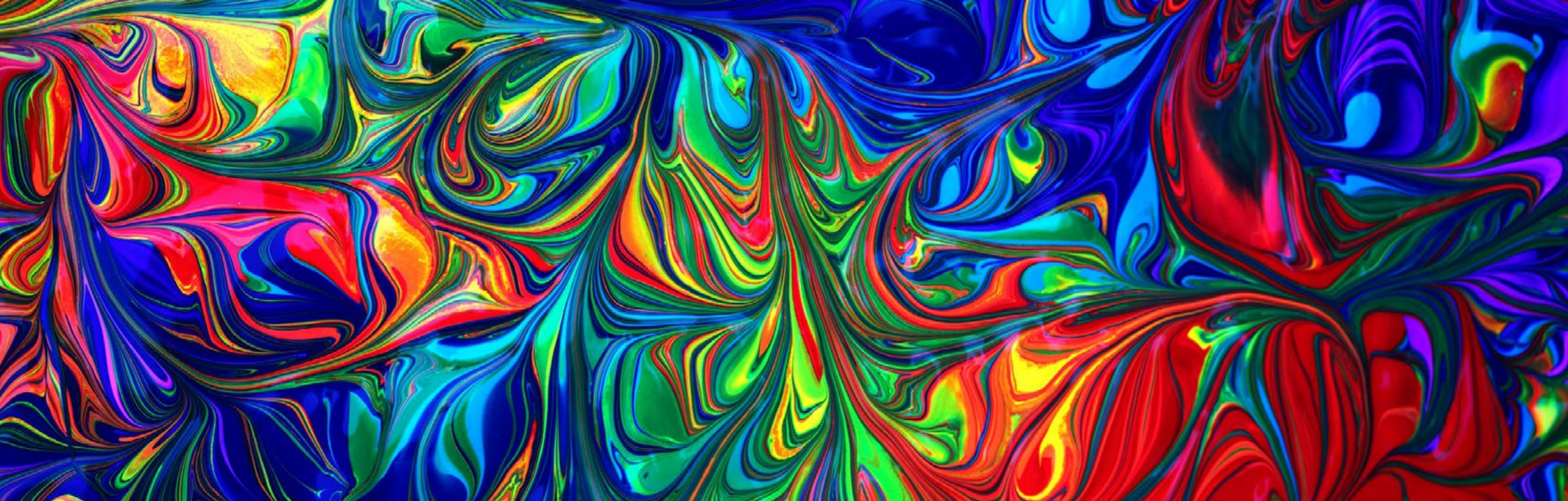
Dr Shaimaa Abdelkarim is an Assistant Professor in Postcolonial Legal Theory and Critical Race Studies, at the School of Law, University of Birmingham.

Her research is informed by a psycho-social approach to human rights discourse. She works on questions of colonialism, resistance, and human rights.



Professor Nicola Pratt

Nicola Pratt is a professor in the Politics and International Studies Department at the University of Warwick, with a particular interest in feminist and decolonial approaches and a focus on 'politics from below.' She teaches and researches on the history of Israel-Palestine, informed by her involvement in the Palestine solidarity movement. Between 2010 and 2013, she was the Co-Director of an international research partnership between Warwick and Birzeit University, in the occupied West Bank, entitled, *Reconceptualising Gender: Transnational Perspectives*, during which time, she visited Palestine.



WORKSHOP

Peacebuilding, the Arts and the Participation of Children and Young People

12 March 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Organisers: Professor Fiona Magowan
Theme Lead: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding
Dr Edel Lamb
Senior Lecturer, School of English, Arts and Languages and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding

This event brought together practitioners and researchers working with and on children and young people to explore the contribution of children and young people's participation in the creative arts to peacebuilding to explore questions such as:

- How the creative arts can facilitate the expression of children's and young people's experiences of conflict and post-conflict societies;
- Does it empower them to participate in processes of social justice, transformation and commemoration; and
- How can listening to children's creative productions across diverse cultural contexts help us better understand the contribution they have made and can make to peacebuilding, historically, now and in the future.

The first session on **Programmes involving Children and Young People in the Arts and/or Peacebuilding** included brief presentations by Dr Kirsty McCarrison (English Heritage) and Young Producers from the Shout Out Loud Programme; Dr Martin McMullan, Mark Clegg, Shelia Morris, Chloe Moreland and Rachel Hasson (YouthAction NI); Dr Eliz McArdle (Ulster University); and Aideen Howard (The Ark, QUB).

This was followed by a Roundtable discussion on **The Impact of Children's and Young People's Participation in Creative Arts on Peacebuilding** with panellists including Dr Laura Dunne (QUB), Darren Ferguson (Beyond Skin), Professor Tom Maguire (Ulster University), Juanita Rea (eduSoil, Design for Change, QUB).

This event was hosted in partnership with the School of Arts, English and Languages and the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, Queen's University Belfast.

IN-CONVERSATION



Lonnie G. Bunch III In-Conversation with Professor Olwen Purdue

23 April 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Lonnie G. Bunch III
Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution

Chair: Professor Olwen Purdue
Director of the Centre for Public History, QUB

Professor Olwen Purdue hosted Lonnie G. Bunch III for a conversation on the role of museums in dealing with difficult pasts and divided presents.

Lonnie G. Bunch III is the 14th Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. He assumed his position on 16 June 2019. As Secretary, he oversees 21 museums, 21 libraries, the National Zoo, numerous research centres, and several education units and centres. Two new museums—the National Museum of the American Latino and the

Smithsonian American Women's History Museum—are in development.

Bunch was the Founding Director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture. Bunch chronicled the creation of the museum in his book, *A Fool's Errand: Building the National Museum of African American History and Culture in the Age of Bush, Obama and Trump* (Smithsonian Books, 2019), and is the first historian to be Secretary of the Institution. In 2021, he received France's highest award, The Legion of Honor.

This event was hosted in partnership with the Centre for Public History, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, Queen's University Belfast.



Left to right:
Gordon Lyons, Minister for Communities;
Professor Olwen Purdue, Director of the Centre for Public History, QUB;
Professor Sir Ian Greer, President and Vice-Chancellor, QUB;
Lonnie G. Bunch III, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution;
Professor Margaret Topping, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Internationalisation, QUB;
Dr Ryan Feeney, Vice-President of Strategic Engagement and External Affairs, QUB;
William Blair, Director of Collections at National Museums NI.

IN-CONVERSATION



Policing & Politics in Divided Societies

15 April 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Speakers: Dr Barbara J. Stephenson
Vice Provost for Global Affairs, UNC-Chapel Hill
Sir Hugh Orde
Former Chief Constable of the PSNI

Chair: Dr Peter McLoughlin
Reader, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy

Held on 15 April 2024, this In-Conversation event featured Dr Barbara J. Stephenson, Vice Provost for Global Affairs, UNC-Chapel Hill, and former U.S. Consul in Belfast (2001-2004) and Sir Hugh Orde, former Chief Constable of the PSNI (2002-2009).

Chaired by Dr Peter McLoughlin, Dr Stephenson and Sir Hugh Orde discussed the challenging early years of the Good Friday Agreement's implementation after 1998, and the complex politics around policing reform following the Patten Report in 1999.

They also shared their insights from their work and engagement with other societies, such as El Salvador, Colombia and the Philippines, where there are similar ethnic conflict or security issues to Northern Ireland, and explored whether the peace process provided any valuable lessons for these regions.

This event was co-hosted by the Mitchell Institute in partnership with QUB Civic Engagement and the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) GC Foundation.



Left to right:
Dr Peter McLoughlin, Reader, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy;
Michael Davidson, Royal Ulster Constabulary GC Foundation;
Professor Stuart Elborn, Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Centre for Experimental Medicine, Institute for Health Sciences, School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences;
Sir Hugh Orde, Former Chief Constable of the PSNI;
Dr Barbara Stephenson, Vice Provost for Global Affairs, UNC-Chapel Hill;
Professor Richard English, Mitchell Institute Director;
Dr Kurt Taroff, Head of School, School of Arts, English and Languages.

SEMINAR



Talk4Peace: Innovative Strategies in Transformative Mediation and Inclusive Dialogue

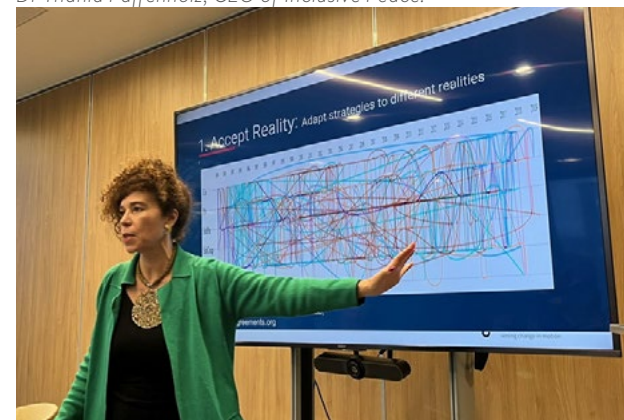
29 April 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Organiser: Dr Maria-Adriana Deiana
Senior Lecturer, School of History, Anthropology,
Philosophy and Politics and Mitchell Institute Fellow:
Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding

To mark the conclusion of the Talk4Peace Project, a public Seminar was held at Queen's University Belfast on 29 April 2024, bringing together researchers and practitioners to explore transformative approaches to peace mediation with a focus on innovative strategies and creative approaches.

Launched in 2022 and funded by HEA North-South Research programme, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, and the Shared Island Fund, the Talk4Peace project explores the role of transformative mediation as a mechanism for peacebuilding internationally and

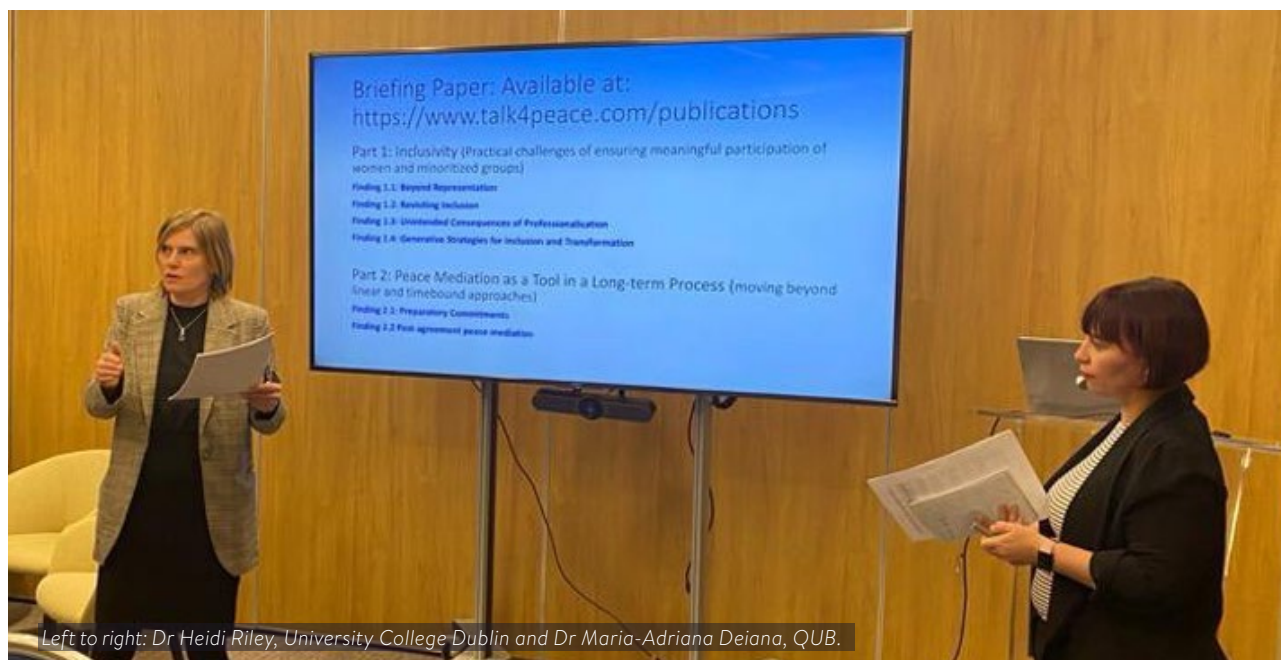
Dr Thania Paffenholz, CEO of Inclusive Peace.



on the island of Ireland. Drawing on engagement with mediation practitioners, the project seeks to assess transformative mediation's potential to promote an inclusive peace through the engagement of women and other minoritised groups as key actors, and to support dialogue and cultural understanding through a wide array of mediation techniques. The project also explores the role of innovative tools used to maximise inclusion and outreach in mediation practices, including arts and cultural practices.

The project was led by Dr Maria-Adriana Deiana, QUB, and Dr Heidi Riley, University College Dublin and they opened the Seminar with a presentation of the latest project output **The Toolkit for Transformative Mediation in Peacebuilding**.

The Seminar included two panel discussions—**Promoting Inclusion: Innovations in Research and Practice** and **The Transformative Potential of the Arts & Creative Methods**.



Left to right: Dr Heidi Riley, University College Dublin and Dr Maria-Adriana Deiana, QUB.

ROUNDTABLE

The End of Peacekeeping: Gender, Race and the Martial Politics of Intervention

7 May 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Panellists: Professor Marsha Henry

Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair in Women, Peace, Security and Justice

Dr Maria-Adriana Deiana

Senior Lecturer, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding

Dr Hannah Partis-Jennings

Lecturer, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics

Chair: Professor Debbie Lisle

School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics and Mitchell Institute Fellow: The Politics and Security of Institutional Peacebuilding

In this Roundtable, Professor Marsha Henry presented the key themes of her book *The End of Peacekeeping: Gender, Race and the Martial Politics of Intervention* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2024), based on over 2 decades of her research on gender, peace and security; gender and militarisation; gender and development; and intersectional feminist methodologies.

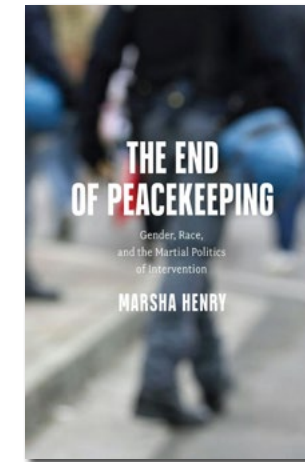
The End of Peacekeeping makes use of feminist, postcolonial, and anti-militarist frameworks to expose peacekeeping as an epistemic power project in need of abolition. Drawing on critical concepts from Black feminist thought, and from postcolonial and critical race theories, Marsha shows how contemporary peacekeeping produces gender and racial inequalities through increasingly militarized strategies. She uses an intersectional analysis of peacekeeping based on more than fifteen years of ethnographic fieldwork in peacekeeping missions and training centres around the world, including interviews with UN peacekeepers, humanitarian aid personnel, and local populations.

Marsha demonstrates how focus on the policy and practice of peacekeeping has obscured the geopolitical knowledge project at peacekeeping's root, allowing its harms to persist unquestioned by mainstream scholarship. Arguing that we must recover critical theoretical contributions that have been side-lined within the field, she brings the insights of feminist and postcolonial scholarship to bear on peacekeeping studies, whose production of empirical data and evidence continues to provide

the justification and foundation for policy and global governance actions. Revealing that peacekeeping is not the benign, apolitical project it is often purported to be, the book encourages readers to imagine and enact alternative futures to peacekeeping.

Panellists discussed these themes from the context of their own research and areas of expertise.

This event was hosted in partnership with the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, Queen's University Belfast.



*Marsha Henry
The End of Peacekeeping:
Gender, Race and the Martial
Politics of Intervention
(University of Pennsylvania
Press, 2024)*

SEMINAR

Uncivil War: The British Army and The Troubles, 1966–1975

13 May 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Dr Huw Bennett
Cardiff University
Chair: Professor Peter Gray
Director of the Institute of Irish Studies, QUB

When Operation Banner was launched in 1969, civil war threatened to break out in Northern Ireland and spread over the Irish Sea. Dr Huw Bennett's latest book *Uncivil War: The British Army and The Troubles, 1966–1975* (Cambridge University Press, 2023) reveals the full story of how the British army acted to save Great Britain from disaster during the most violent phase of the Troubles but, in so doing, condemned the people of Northern Ireland to protracted, grinding conflict. It shows how the army's ambivalent response to loyalist violence undermined the prospects for peace and heightened Catholic distrust in the state.

British strategy consistently underestimated community defence as a reason for people joining or supporting the IRA whilst senior commanders allowed the army to turn in on itself, hardening soldiers to the suffering of ordinary people. By 1975 military strategists considered the conflict unresolvable: the army could not convince Catholics or Protestants that it was there to protect them and settled instead for an unending war.

This event was hosted in partnership with the Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University Belfast.

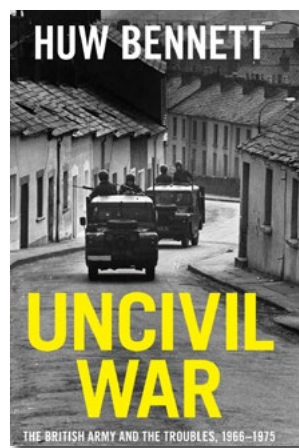
SYMPOSIUM

Love & War: 1914-2024

15–17 May 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Organisers: Dr Alison Garden
UKRI Future Leaders Fellow, School of Arts, English and Languages and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy
Dr Ruth Duffy
Research Fellow, School of Arts, English and Languages and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy

The Mitchell Institute co-hosted the Love & War Symposium, held on 15–17 May 2024: a thought-provoking exploration of love in various ways—romantic, familial, devotional, duty, care—and in relation to a number of conflicts from 1914 until our present day.



Huw Bennett
Uncivil War: The British Army and The Troubles, 1966–1975,
(Cambridge University Press, 2023)



The event was opened on 15 May 2024 by a Plenary Lecture on “*Noli timere, frater*”: *Love, Letters and War*’ by Professor Fran Brearton, School of Arts, English and Languages and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy, followed by a reception.

On 16 May 2024, there were a number panel discussions followed by a Curator’s Tour of the *Troubles and Beyond* exhibition at the Ulster Museum and academic presentations in the afternoon. Poet Michael Longley gave a reading in the Irish Art Galleries to conclude the day.

On 17 May 2024 there were panels throughout the day, with a roundtable discussion to close the event.

The Symposium forms part of the interdisciplinary project **Acts of Union: Mixed Marriage in Modern Ireland** investigating the phenomenon of ‘mixed marriage’ or ‘love across the divide’ across the island of Ireland in the twentieth century. The project is funded by UK Research and Innovation.

This event was hosted in partnership with the School of Arts, English and Languages, Queen's University Belfast.



LECTURE



Harri Holkeri Lecture 2024

The New European Security: Lessons Learned from Finland's Road to NATO

6 June 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Pekka Haavisto MP
Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Finland
Chair: Professor Richard English
Mitchell Institute Director

The Harri Holkeri Lecture Series celebrates the contribution of the late Finnish Prime Minister Harri Holkeri to the Northern Ireland peace process. His aim of transforming conflict and promoting social justice in Northern Ireland and across the world is shared by the Mitchell Institute. We are honoured to partner with the Embassy of Finland, London, to host the Harri Holkeri Lecture Series.

Finland has been a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization since the 4 July 2023. But how to be a member of NATO without narrowing the possibilities for Finnish trademark foreign policy: non-violent mediation and peace building?

The ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza have a negative effect on the security of the whole of Europe. What possibilities do small countries, such as Finland and Ireland, have in mediating sustainable peace?

Pekka Haavisto

Pekka Haavisto is a Member of Parliament and the former Foreign Minister of Finland. He is a peace negotiator and a defender of both democracy and human rights. Haavisto is especially experienced in foreign policy and international operations. He has led research into the environmental impact of wars and represented the EU and the UN in various crises all over the world. Haavisto has also authored numerous books. His beloved hobbies are literature, Beetle cars, and wooden boats.

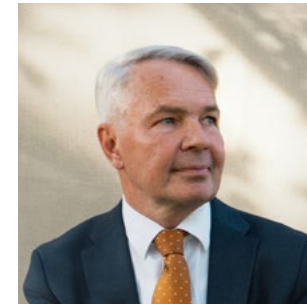
This year's Lecture—the 9th in the Series—was hosted in partnership with the Embassy of Finland, London and Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility, Queen's University Belfast.

Previous Harri Holkeri Lectures

8th Harri Holkeri Lecture
Perspective; Conscience; Integrity: Reflections From a Career in Diplomacy
Dr Anne Anderson
Former Irish Ambassador
24 April 2023

7th Harri Holkeri Lecture
Peace Process – In Light of Brexit Issues
Bertie Ahern
Former Taoiseach of Ireland and Mitchell Institute Honorary Professor of Practice
21 April 2019

6th Harri Holkeri Lecture
Remembering, Forgiving, Forgetting and Imagining
President Michael D. Higgins
President of Ireland
29 May 2018



5th Harri Holkeri Lecture
Reflections on Women and Peace-building
Tarja Halonen
Former President of Finland
9 May 2017

4th Harri Holkeri Lecture
Women, Leadership and Peace-building
Dame Arlene Foster
Former First Minister of Northern Ireland
23 May 2016

3rd Harri Holkeri Lecture
Reflections on Brokering Peace in Divided Societies
Senator George J. Mitchell
22 April 2015

2nd Harri Holkeri Lecture
Islam, Peace-building and Conflict Transformation
Ambassador Akbar S. Ahmed
Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies, American University, Washington DC
29 May 2014

1st Harri Holkeri Lecture
Egalitarianism in Conflict Resolution
Martti Ahtisaari
Former President of Finland
21 May 2013



Unsettled Shakespeares Conference. Image credit: Noriko Eguchi as Miranda in Sado Tempest (dir. John Williams, 2012). Copyright: 100 Meter Films.

SYMPOSIUM

Unsettled Shakespeares: Adaptation, Mobility and Justice

10-11 June 2024
Queen's University Belfast

Organisers: Professor Mark Burnett

School of Arts, English and Languages and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding

Dr Emer McHugh

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellow, School of Arts, English and Languages

Dr Taarini Mookherjee

Visiting Scholar, School of Arts, English and Languages

This 2 day Symposium explored the limits and possibilities of worldwide adaptations of Shakespeare in our contemporary 'age of unsettlement' through a series of panel discussions. It contends that such adaptations execute a vital role—and have a unique utility—in canvassing possibilities for global justice.

Across the Shakespeare canon, ideas of unsettledness and unsettlement recur. For example, Leontes, jealous husband in the late romance, *The Winter's Tale*, is described as seeming 'something ...unsettled', while Prospero, bidding farewell to his island kingdom in *The Tempest*, refers to his 'unsettled fancy' as he turns his back on his magus 'settler' role. The condition is given its most succinct statement in Hamlet's complaint, fired by a carpentry metaphor, that the time 'is out of joint' and he must 'set it to right'. Both in the sense of psychological displacement and in the sense of colonial dispossession/departure, these

registrations of being 'unsettled' make for powerful drama. But, as developments in political and sociological theory demonstrate, to be 'unsettled' is also a signature feature of the contemporary. In her study, *Narratives of Unsettlement: Being Out-of-Joint as a Generative Human Condition* (Routledge, 2023), Madina Tlostanova writes that the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries represent the 'age of unsettlement', a phenomenon marked by 'constant negotiation between belonging and non-belonging, rootedness and displacement, by a chronophobic fear of changes [and] ... an inability to imagine a different world and start working for its implementation'.

This Symposium argued that adaptations of Shakespeare's plays world-wide engage actively with this 'age of unsettlement'. It contends that such adaptations execute a vital role—and have a unique utility—in canvassing possibilities for global justice. Drawing on the combined interests of the organisers—Burnett (Shakespeare and World Cinema), McHugh (Marie Curie project, 'Shakespeare and the Irish Actor') and Mookherjee (British Academy/Newton International project, 'Shakespeare, India, Diaspora')—the Symposium takes ideas of unsettledness and unsettlement as a point of departure. Papers explored the ways in which recent adaptations converse with the plays to debate the 'unsettled' condition, whether this expresses itself in the recuperative potentialities of theatre in conflict and post-conflict situations, the place of indigenous studies and the role of translation or in the effects of diaspora in Asia, India, Ireland, Europe and the US, the workings of gender, sexuality and race inside 'unsettled' ideologies, the movement of actors and, crucially, the transmission of the Shakespearean text. Throughout, and in keeping with recent discussion in

adaptation studies, it is suggested that adaptations open spaces for the operation of healing work. As Tlostanova explains, 'to regard unsettlement ... as potentially ... creatively rich ... widening horizons ... is an important task'. Marked, as they are, by the discontinuities and inconsistencies that characterise their contexts of production, 'Unsettled Shakespeares' might be read as aspiring to restorative visions and better dispensations today.

The Plenary Address on **Unsettling Shakespeare's 'Antony and Cleopatra'** was delivered by Professor Joyce Green MacDonald, University of Kentucky. A play about empire, desire, and race, Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* has long unsettled critical and theatrical responses. Its vexed reception may well mirror the unsettled state of the play itself, where men are mistaken for women, the erotic blurs into the maternal, and Octavius—the final victor—remembers Antony, his greatest rival, as the engine that animated his own heartbeat.

This event was hosted in partnership with the School of Arts, English and Languages.

CONFERENCE

The Disappeared: Addressing the Legacies and Challenges of Confronting Human Disappearance

10-11 June 2024
Queen's University Belfast

In this two-day Conference on 10-11 June, some of the world's leading experts and practitioners gathered in Belfast to discuss the global legacies and implications of enforced disappearance.

At this first international Conference of its kind, leading voices from the policy sector, academia and world of arts were brought together to centre 'disappearance studies' as a new core research field in politics, international relations and legal studies and in conflict, violence and peace related programmes.

The theme for Day 1 was **Disappearance: Testimony and Research**, with panel discussions including:

- Testimony
- Seeking Redress for Enforced Disappearance: Lessons from Colombia
- National and International Responses to Enforced disappearance

The theme for Day 2 was **Reappearance: Excavating the Human**, with panel discussions including:

- Enforced Disappearance and the Forensic and Archival Response
- Emerging Perspectives in the Study of Disappearance
- Artistic Responses to Disappearance

The Guest Speaker for the Plenary Lecture on Tuesday 11 June was Carlos Beristain, Former Truth Commissioner and member of the group of experts on Disappearance in Mexico.

This Conference was co-hosted with:

- The Clingen Family Center for the Study of Modern Ireland, University of Notre Dame
- The Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame
- The Global Insecurities Centre, The University of Bristol
- The Centre for the Study of Violence, The University of Bath



CONFERENCE

The Future of Irish Studies

12 June 2024
Queen's University Belfast

On 12 June, 'The Future of Irish Studies' brought together scholars from around the world including Ireland, the UK and numerous other countries, to discuss aspects of the study of Ireland, and future possibilities for global collaboration.

Through a series of panel discussions, academics explored a range of themes including:

- Global Irish Studies
- Disciplinary Irish Studies
- Organising Irish Studies
- The Future of Irish Studies

This event was co-hosted at Queen's with the Institute of Irish Studies, QUB, in partnership with the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies at the University of Notre Dame.





The Disappeared Conference. Image credit: Chantal Meza, Obscure Beasts V, 2018. Coal, ink, pastels, watercolour, pigments and glue. 115cm x 86cm.

RESEARCH WORKSHOPS

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The Mitchell Institute Research Workshop Series offers an interdisciplinary platform to showcase research and stimulate debate and discussion. The Workshops provide a forum for authors at various stages in the writing process—from early drafts to published works—to explore their ideas, hypothesis and findings with academics and practitioners from a range of disciplines and at various career stages. Attendees read the articles, publications or drafts in advance of the Workshop, using the full duration of the Workshop for discussion and debate. The Workshops enable the sharing of practical experience and expertise in the publishing landscape as well as research development for the authors.

Achieving a New Ireland

6 December 2023
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Professor Colin Harvey
Sabbatical Fellow

The first Research Workshop of the new academic year was hosted by Mitchell Institute Sabbatical Fellow Professor Colin Harvey.

The post-Brexit wave of reflection on a united Ireland should not be a surprise. The Good Friday Agreement guarantees a choice about the constitutional future (principle of consent/right of self-determination).

It is not difficult to imagine why the option is attracting attention. The prospect of referendums is being taken seriously and the dominant narrative remains one of planning and preparing well.

An attempt to ease tensions by wrapping deliberations in the dull language of bureaucratic management is evident. This makes good sense for those who simply wish to see necessary work completed well in advance.

While there is an opposing tendency to fill heads with bleak visions of dangerous and violent consequences, there is a real risk that the opportunities for new conversations are too easily neglected.

The aim of this Research Workshop was to explore constitutional pathways to a New Ireland, particularly for those who hope for transformative possibilities.



Professor Colin Harvey

Roman Civil Wars in the Empire: Provincial Experiences of Conflict and State Formation in the First Century BC

13 December 2023
Queen's University Belfast

Speaker: Dr Laura Pfuntner
Sabbatical Fellow
Chair: Professor Richard English
Mitchell Institute Director

In this Research Workshop with Mitchell Institute Sabbatical Fellow, Dr Laura Pfuntner, participants explored the main themes emerging from her research for the book *Roman Civil Wars in the Empire: Provincial Experiences of Conflict and State Formation in the First Century BC*.

This book examines the Roman civil wars of the first century BC from a 'centrifugal', provincial perspective. The scope of these wars extended from Syria westwards to Spain, and from the Maghreb as far north as the Rhine and Danube. Most of their great battles took place in provinces that were under some degree of Roman control, but not fully incorporated into the Roman state. Significantly, most of the inhabitants were not Roman citizens, and so did not possess the same political rights, privileges, and obligations—in other words, the same



Dr Laura Pfuntner

claim to membership of the Roman state—as the Roman armies that fought over their territory. The book takes these inhabitants of Rome’s provinces as its focus and examines the impact of civil warfare on their communities.

Laura presented a selection of case studies of individual and collective experiences of civil warfare in the central and western provinces of the Roman Empire (Sicily, the Iberian peninsula, Africa, southern Gaul, and the northern and western Balkans).

These cases demonstrate vividly how civil warfare intersected with more localized conflicts within and between provincial communities, and how these intersections affected the choices made by communities (or factions within them) about which Roman side to support.

They also show how Roman military campaigns in the provinces required continued collaboration with local powerbrokers. This collaboration came with obvious risks, but if navigated successfully, could also provide a path to social advancement for provincial individuals and families in the aftermath of conflict. In many parts of the empire, moreover, conflict resolution was a decades-long process that met with as much failure as success. It involved negotiations between Roman authorities and a range of provincial stakeholders, including new Roman colonists, descendants of earlier Roman and Italian diasporas, and indigenous elites. Consequently, the individual and group identities that emerged out of the civil war period and into the Principate of Augustus were far more complex than the traditional concept of ‘Romanization’ (i.e., the political and cultural process of ‘becoming Roman’) can accommodate.

Documentary Film and the Politics of Radical Psychiatry

24 January 2024
Queen’s University Belfast

Speaker: Dr Des O’Rawe
Sabbatical Fellow
Chair: Professor Fiona Magowan
Theme Lead: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding

Taking its cue from Susan Sontag’s memorable remark that ‘in every society, the definitions of sanity and madness are arbitrary—are, in the largest sense, political’, this Research Workshop explored the relationship between documentary filmmaking and various ‘anti-psychiatry’ movements and the counter-cultural critique of scientific discourse on mental illness.

Participants discussed not only how documentary filmmaking challenged perceptions of mental illness and attitudes towards neurodiversity but also how contemporary documentary forms and observational techniques inadvertently reinforce these attitudes and misperceptions.



Dr Des O’Rawe

How to Deal with Difficult Regimes – Calibrated Aid, Sanctions and Limited Engagement in the Global Response to Taliban-led Afghanistan

21 February 2024
Queen’s University Belfast

Speaker: Professor Michael Semple
Professorial Research Fellow, QUB
Chair: Professor Richard English
Mitchell Institute Director

This Research Workshop discussed post-2021 Afghanistan as a case study in international actors’ response to regimes which defy global norms. Based on ongoing research into the Afghan Taliban Movement and conflict transformation efforts, Professor Semple reviewed the range of policy options considered and pursued by Afghanistan’s neighbours and global powers and assessed the extent to which this has any impact on Taliban governance.

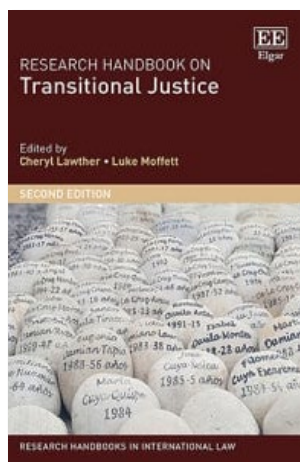
The talk was structured around the legacy of the 2020 Doha Accord and the evolution of the UN Security Council response to the Taliban takeover, which has included maintaining a sanctions regime and deploying a Special Coordinator to try to restart political dialogue.

Professor Semple explained how the Taliban have been able to pursue their project of constructing an authoritarian state and disregarding norms, despite the efforts at use of aid, sanctions and engagement to promote a more inclusive Afghanistan.

PUBLICATIONS

[Return to contents page](#)

Institute Fellows and colleagues have published a number of books this year which aim to enhance understanding of a range of themes, responding through analysis of current research, examination of policy and practice, and case studies.



Cheryl Lawther and Luke Moffett
Research Handbook on Transitional Justice
(Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2023)

BOOK

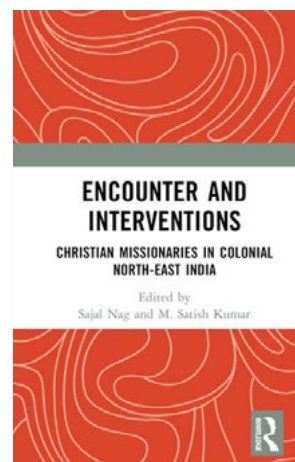
Research Handbook on Transitional Justice

Edited by Professor Cheryl Lawther and Professor Luke Moffett

Providing a refreshing take on transitional justice, this thoroughly revised second edition brings together an expanse of scholarly expertise to reconsider how societies deal with gross human rights violations, structural injustices and mass violence. Contextualised by historical developments, it covers a diverse range of concepts, actors and mechanisms of transitional justice, while shedding light on the new and emerging areas in the field.

Wholly engaging with the field's upward trajectory, this Handbook explores important new ground on existing issues of transitional justice, including masculinities, witnesses and the role of archives. This updated edition also engages with newly evolving areas of study, such as counter-terrorism, climate change, colonialism and non-paradigmatic transitions.

With theoretical and empirical contributions from a rich array of world leading practitioners and scholars, this cutting-edge second edition *Research Handbook* is an invaluable academic resource for students and researchers of sociology, transitional justice, criminal law and human rights law. With expertly written chapters it also provides practitioners with a consolidated overview of the latest scholarship and analysis of legal and policy developments.



M. Satish Kumar and Sajal Nag
Encounter and Interventions: Christian Missionaries in Colonial North-East India
(Oxon: Routledge, 2023)

BOOK

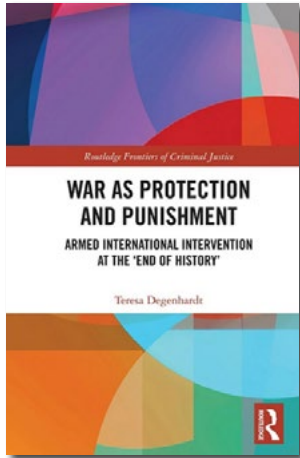
Encounter and Interventions: Christian Missionaries in Colonial North-East India

Edited by Dr M. Satish Kumar and Professor Sajal Nag

The advent of colonialism and its associated developments has been characterized as one of the most defining moments in the history of South Asia. The arrival of Christian missionaries has not only been coeval to colonial rule but also associated with development in the region. Their encounter, critique, endeavour, and intervention have been very critical in shaping South Asian society and culture, even where they did not succeed in converting people. Yet, there is precious little space spared for studying the role and impact of missionary enterprises than the space allotted to colonialism.

Isolated individual efforts have focused on Bengal, Madras, and Punjab and much remains to be addressed in the context of the unique region of North East India. In North East India, for example, by the time the British left, a majority of the tribals had abandoned their own faith and adopted Christianity.

This book, edited by Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding Dr Satish Kumar, and co-author Prof Sajal Nag (Assam University), aims to provide an informed historical and cultural appreciation of the role of contribution of missionary endeavours in British India.



Teresa Degenhardt
War as Protection and Punishment: Armed International Intervention at the 'End of History'
(Oxford: Routledge, 2023)

BOOK

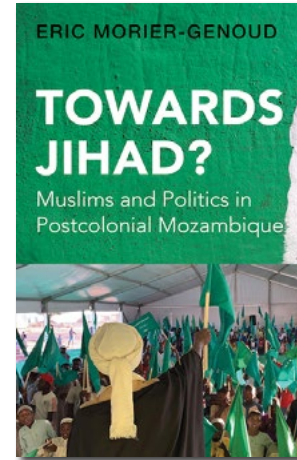
War as Protection and Punishment: Armed International Intervention at the 'End of History'

Dr Teresa Degenhardt

This book provides an analysis of how penal discourses are used to legitimise post-Cold War military interventions through three main case studies: Kosovo, Iraq and Libya. These cases reveal the operation of diverse modalities of punishment in extending the ambit of international liberal governance. The argument starts from an analysis of these discourses to trace the historical arc in which military interventions have increasingly been launched through reference to both the human rights discourse and humanitarian sentiments, and a desire to punish the perpetrators.

The book continues with the analysis of practices involved in the post-intervention phase, looking at the ways in which states have been established as modes of governance (Kosovo), how punitive atmospheres have animated soldiers' violence in the conduct of war (Iraq), and finally how interventions can expand moral control and a system of devolved surveillance in conjunction with both border control and the engagement of the International Criminal Court (Libya).

In all these case, tensions and ambiguities emerge. These practices underscore how punitive intents were present in the expansion of liberal governance, demonstrating how the rhetoric of punishment was useful in legitimating the expansion of the liberal world.



Eric Morier-Genoud
Towards Jihad? Muslims and Politics in Postcolonial Mozambique
(London: Hurst, 2023)

BOOK

Towards Jihad? Muslims and Politics in Postcolonial Mozambique

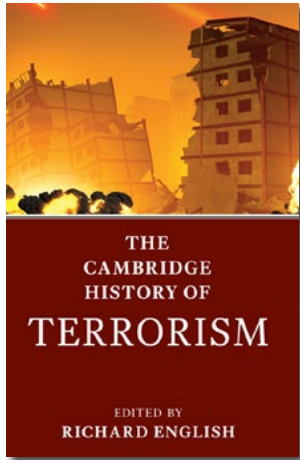
Professor Eric Morier-Genoud

Since 2017, Mozambique has been confronted with a jihadi insurgency. In his latest book, Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding, Professor Eric Morier-Genoud looks at the origins of that insurgency, and the broader and longer history of the relationship between Islam and politics in the country. Did Mozambique's Muslim politics always point towards jihad?

Eric examines the period immediately after independence, when the state engaged in anticlericalism; he then moves across the decades to the 2000s, when the ruling party and the opposition alike courted Muslims for electoral purposes, before reaching the 2010s, when tensions between 'mosque and state' returned. Along the way, he explores a wide variety of phenomena, including the rise of Wahhabism, religious competition, state mediation, secularism, the alleged growth and radicalisation of Islam, and the origins of the ongoing insurgency.

What emerges is a rich history, attentive to different branches and elements of the Muslim community, looking far beyond the narrow perspective of jihad.

Taking a socio-historical perspective, *Towards Jihad?* unpacks a complex dynamic, which the jihadi insurgency is in fact now disrupting. Understanding the long history of Muslims' engagement with politics in Mozambique sheds light on where the country has come from, where it stands now amidst violent unrest, and where it might go next.



Richard English
The Cambridge History of Terrorism, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023)

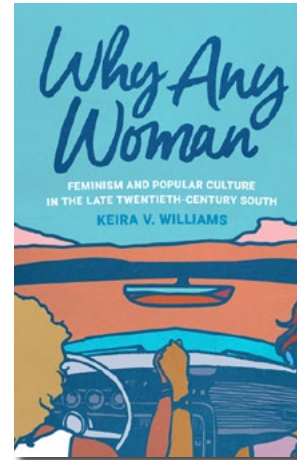
BOOK

The Cambridge History of Terrorism

Edited by Professor Richard English

The Cambridge History of Terrorism provides a comprehensive reference work on terrorism from a distinctly historical perspective, offering systematic analyses of key themes, problems and case studies from terrorism's long past.

Featuring expert scholars from across the globe, this volume examines the phenomenon of terrorism through regional case studies, largely written by local scholars, as well as through thematic essays exploring the relationship between terrorism and other historical forces. Each of the chapters—whether thematic or case-study focused—embodies new, research-based analysis which will help to inform and reshape our understanding of one of the world's most challenging problems.



Keira V. Williams
Why Any Woman: Feminism and Popular Culture in the Late Twentieth Century South (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2023)

BOOK

Why Any Woman: Feminism and Popular Culture in the Late Twentieth Century South

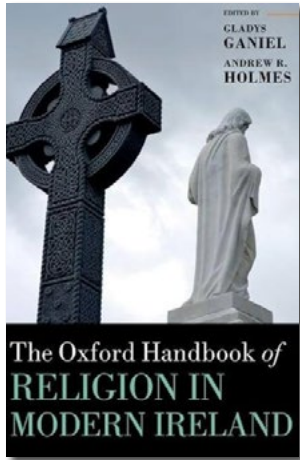
Dr Keira V. Williams

Scholars are revisiting the history of feminist activism and organizations, mining it for a revisionist, grassroots gender politics in the South. In this book, Dr Keira Williams advances this line of historical inquiry by focusing on one of the most productive sites of late twentieth-century southern feminisms: popular culture by and about southern women.

Why Any Woman examines key texts by and about southern women—the play *Crimes of the Heart*, the novels *The Color Purple* and *Ugly Ways*, the films *Thelma and Louise* and *Beloved*, the television shows *Designing Women* and *The Oprah Winfrey Show*—as a means of understanding the role of regional popular culture in defining and redefining American feminisms as we approached the twenty-first century.

Taken as a collective, these texts expand how we think about the whats, wheres, whens, and hows of feminisms in recent U.S. history. “Why any woman give a shit what people think is a mystery to me,” muses the blueswoman Shug Avery in Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple*.

Why Any Woman features southerners who, like Shug, rejected and reshaped gender norms, and their stories illustrate some of the ways regional pop culture has been and still is a crucial site of American feminisms.



Gladys Ganiel
and Andrew R. Holmes
*The Oxford Handbook of
Religion in Modern Ireland*
(Oxford: Oxford University
Press, 2024)

BOOK

The Oxford Handbook of Religion in Modern Ireland

Edited by Professor Gladys Ganiel
and Dr Andrew R. Holmes

The Oxford Handbook of Religion in Modern Ireland, is a landmark publication. It is the first volume to offer such a comprehensive and wide-ranging treatment of the role of religion on the island of Ireland between 1800 and the present day. It features 32 chapters exploring the relationships between religion, society, politics, and everyday life.

Taking a chronological and all-island approach, the Handbook explores the complex and changing roles of religion both before and after partition. It includes fresh perspectives on long-standing historical and political debates about religion, identity, and politics, including religion's contributions to division and violence. It also features contributions on how religion interacts with education, the media, law, gender and sexuality, science, literature, minority religions, and memory.

Thirty-six leading scholars contributed to the volume, with those from Queen's University including: S.J. Connolly, Gladys Ganiel, Myrtle Hill, Andrew R. Holmes, Christopher McCrudden, and Graham Walker.



Johnathan Carroll,
Matthew O'Neill,
and Mark Williams
*The EU, Irish Defence Forces
and Contemporary Security*
(London: Palgrave Macmillan,
2024)

BOOK

The EU, Irish Defence Forces and Contemporary Security

Edited by Johnathan Carroll, Dr Matthew O'Neill
and Mark Williams

Mitchell Institute Alumnus Dr Matthew O'Neill, LINAS Doctoral Scholar Mark Williams and Johnathan Carroll, a PhD candidate at Texas A&M University, launched their latest book on 27 July at the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin. The event included an introduction from Tánaiste Micheál Martin TD and contributions from Noelle O'Connell, CEO of European Movement Ireland and co-editor of the book Dr Matthew O'Neill.

The book explores small states and militaries, European defence and security policy, as well as contemporary and emerging threats. This edited collection gathers academic commentators on Irish defence policy, military leaders from across the service components of the Irish Defence Forces and European defence experts to contribute to the first in-depth conversation and analysis on modern Irish defence and its application within the European Union. The book aims to ascertain what capabilities are robust, which are lacking, what future threats need to be catered for, and what action is needed to ensure those threats will be addressed going forward. It also explores emerging issues and applications of modern and contemporary threats within the context of Ireland, Europe and Western institutions.

The book includes invited submissions from scholars, commentators, policymakers and military practitioners to evaluate the Irish Defence Forces and to illustrate the complexities facing small nations in formulating and resourcing defence and national security policy.



Jamie J. Hagen, Samuel Ritholtz and Dr Andrew Delatolla
Queer Conflict Research: New Approaches to the Study of Political Violence
(Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2024)

BOOK

Queer Conflict Research: New Approaches to the Study of Political Violence

Edited by Dr Jamie J. Hagen, Dr Samuel Ritholtz and Dr Andrew Delatolla

Bringing together a team of international scholars, this volume provides a foundational guide to queer methodologies in the study of political violence and conflict. Contributors provide illuminating discussions on why queer approaches are important, what they entail and how to utilise a queer approach to political violence and conflict.

The chapters explore a variety of methodological approaches, including fieldwork, interviews, cultural analysis and archival research. They also engage with broader academic debates, such as how to work with research partners in an ethical manner. Including valuable case studies from around the world, the book demonstrates how these methods can be used in practice. It is the first critical, in-depth discussion on queer methods and methodologies for research on political violence and conflict.



Professor Richard English
Does Counter-Terrorism Work?
(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024)

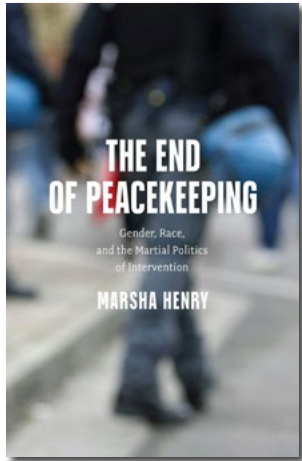
BOOK

Does Counter-Terrorism Work?

Professor Richard English

Responses to non-state terrorism have changed politics and history more than terrorist violence itself. Yet the public and academic debate to date on the efficacy or inefficacy of counter-terrorism has been less systematic, sustained and persuasive than necessary.

Does Counter-Terrorism Work? sets out a layered framework for understanding the various ways in which 'working' might be interpreted, and offers historically-grounded case studies of the post-9/11 War on Terror, the Northern Ireland Troubles, and Israel-Palestine as a way of analysing the complexities of counter-terrorist achievements and failings.



Professor Marsha Henry
The End of Peacekeeping: Gender, Race, and the Martial Politics of Intervention
(Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2024)

BOOK

The End of Peacekeeping: Gender, Race, and the Martial Politics of Intervention

Professor Marsha Henry

This book makes use of feminist, postcolonial and anti-militarist theorising in order to frame peacekeeping as a epistemic power project. After deftly navigating through the extensive body of peacekeeping scholarship, Henry argues that returning to critical theories enables scholars to come to see the patriarchal, colonial/racial, and martial foundations in peacekeeping politics, practice and scholarship.

The subsequent conclusion is that peacekeeping is not the benign, apolitical project it is often purported to be, this book encourages readers to imagine and enact alternative futures to peacekeeping.



PODCASTS

Listen to the episodes on iTunes and Spotify



tinyurl.com/Mitchell-iTunes



tinyurl.com/Mitchell-Spotify

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Taliban, Turbans and the Smartphone

Established in 2022 by Professor Michael Semple, and produced by Colm Heatley, the **Taliban Turbans and the Smartphone** podcast series explores developments in Afghanistan since the Taliban take over in August 2021.

Series 1 explains how the Taliban managed to take power in Kabul in August 2021 and what they did in their first year. This series includes important background to what is happening in Afghanistan

SERIES 1



today. Each episode features a guest interview, offering perspectives from analysts, activists, veterans and humanitarians.

In **Series 2**, Michael and Tamim Asey, Afghan Analyst and technocrat, follow developments in Afghanistan, exploring policy, politics, security and economics under Taliban rule. They discuss the people and events which they find significant in the unfolding saga of Afghanistan under the Taliban.

Series 3 follows the latest developments in Afghanistan and applies key ideas to interpret the new Afghan reality. Michael and Tamim investigate the characteristics of the Taliban's political culture and explore their model of Islamist authoritarianism. They take a deeper look at particular aspects of the Taliban's state-building project and Afghan and international responses to it.

EPISODE 1

Victory and Collapse a Year On

Over a year has now passed since the Taliban recaptured Kabul and went on to re-establish their Islamic Emirate. At the time of their entry into the capital, Taliban supporters relished a sweet, almost miraculous, victory. But for Afghans opposed to the Taliban, 15 August 2021 marked the collapse of their Republic, and with it a loss of freedoms and hopes. In victory and collapse, this podcast considers how Afghan perspectives on the Taliban takeover have been shaped by the first year of the Taliban in power.

This episode features a guest interview with new generation Afghan analyst Tamim Asey.

EPISODE 2

The State and the Economy Under Taliban Rule

In forcing their way into Kabul on the 15 August 2021, the Taliban took control of the Afghan state. This episode considers what the Taliban have done with the state; the extent to which they have pursued radical transformation or continuity; and what Taliban statecraft has meant for Afghans living under Taliban rule and for the Afghan economy.

This episode features a guest interview with a veteran Taliban commander.



EPISODE 3
Human Rights and Exile

This episode explores the state of human rights under the Taliban and secondly the exodus of Afghans from their country triggered by the Taliban takeover. The human rights crisis and the mass exodus from the country are each significant aspects of Afghan experience. They are also intricately related. Egregious human rights abuses conducted by Taliban forces with impunity have helped to drive Afghans across the borders.

This episode features a guest interview with Shaharзад Akbar, Chairperson of the Republic’s Independent Human Rights Commission.



EPISODE 4
Humanitarian Assistance, the State of the Media and the Taliban’s Quest for Recognition

The Taliban leaders expected that the international community would soon accept the reality of the change of rulers in Kabul. They counted on prompt diplomatic recognition to open up access to the international finance needed to run Afghanistan. Instead, no country has recognised the Islamic Emirate and official development assistance remains cut off.

In this episode Michael asks what Afghanistan’s new isolation has meant for all those struggling with the country’s humanitarian crisis.

This episode features a guest interview with an Afghan journalist and civil rights activist.



EPISODE 5
The Armed Conflict

The Taliban’s uncontested capture of Kabul did not end armed conflict in Afghanistan. A year on, the Taliban find themselves fighting two insurgencies. In the mountains of the north a ‘National Resistance Front’ is fighting against the Taliban’s Islamic authoritarianism. In Kabul and the cities, Daesh is waging a bloody campaign, accusing the Taliban of being worldly western stooges. This episode looks at why violence continues despite the decision by the US and others to sit out this round of the Afghan war.

This episode features a guest interview with the Republic’s Minister for Refugees, Nur Rahman Akhlaqi.



EPISODE 6
The Peace Process

In seizing Kabul, the Taliban collapsed the Islamic republic under which Afghanistan has been governed for twenty years. They also collapsed the peace process, abruptly ending three years of intense efforts by the US to broker a settlement between the Afghan conflicting parties. But the conflict in Afghanistan is not over and all the key questions around the country's future remain unresolved. This episode asks what is happening on peace-making, over a year after the last formal process was aborted.

This episode features a guest interview with Mawlvi Atta ur Rahman Saleem, Deputy Chairman of the Republic's High Commission for National Reconciliation.

SERIES 2



EPISODE 1
Revolutionary Decrees and the Taliban's Assault on Afghan Women

The Taliban are now well into a second year of imposing their revived Islamic Emirate on Afghanistan. The Taliban's Amir, Haibatollah Akhundzada, has published a series of radical decrees which he claims are, step by step, imposing an Islamic system of government and law. In the latest move, the Taliban have banned girls from university and stopped Afghan women from working in aid agencies, except in the health sector.

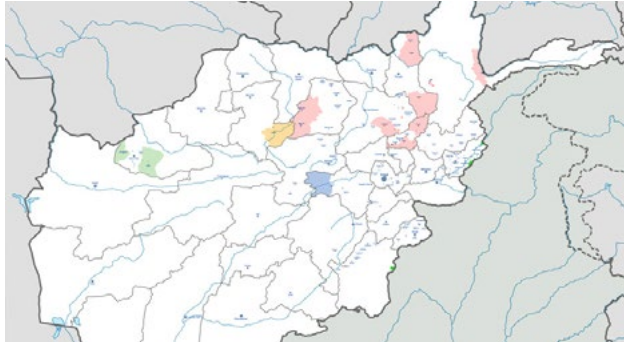
In this episode, Tamim and Michael assess the outcome of a mission to Afghanistan by UN Deputy Secretary General, Amina Mohammad. They locate this exchange in the context of the latest stage of the Taliban's roll-out of their Islamic Emirate.



EPISODE 2
The Qosh Tippa Canal Project—Threat to Ethnic Harmony or Doomed Vanity Project?

The Taliban Movement is basically famous for two things—for waging armed jihad and for imposing an austere moral code. In this episode Michael and Tamim explore why this Islamist Movement has involved itself in digging a canal across the plains of northern Afghanistan. The Qosh Tippa Canal is a mega project—it is like digging a ditch wider than a football field, stretching from London to Liverpool. It has been championed by Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the Emirate's Deputy Prime Minister who heads the National Economic Council.

Tamim and Michael try to work out why the Taliban are throwing so many resources at digging a ditch in the desert.



EPISODE 3

Emirate Versus Khilafat—The ISKP Critique of the Taliban

For researchers of the Taliban, the ISKP campaign is significant not just because of the horrendous violence, but because it deploys Islamist rhetoric and reasoning against the Taliban. Perhaps much of the Taliban leadership worries more about what ISKP says about them than they would worry about any number of Security Council resolutions. Taliban have always invested heavily in maintaining the unity of the movement and the authority of their Amir. So, in ideological rather than military terms, the most obvious threat to the Taliban and their unity is if ISKP jihadist rhetoric finds resonance with disillusioned Taliban fighters.

In this episode Michael and Tamim explore what ISKP is saying about the Taliban.



EPISODE 4

The Hazaras and the Taliban—A Reality Check on Minority Rights Under the Second Emirate

The Hazara ethnic group suffered under the Taliban's first Islamic Emirate. The Hazarajat region was the first to rebel against that Emirate and the Taliban army burnt down the regional centre Bamiyan in revenge. Massacres of Hazara civilians followed. Many feared that there would be a repetition of these events once the Taliban returned to power in 2021.

In this episode Michael and Tamim do a reality check on minority rights under the second Islamic Emirate, asking how Hazaras have been treated by the Taliban this time round. They start with impressions from this year's commemoration of the 28th anniversary of the killing by Taliban of the main Hazara jihadi leader, Abdul Ali Mazari and then reflect on Hazara political participation and the state of human rights.



EPISODE 5

The Women's Ban Extended to the UN—Are the Taliban Pursuing Contradictory Objectives?

On Tuesday 4 April 2023 the UN mission in Afghanistan went into crisis mode: Taliban officials in Nangarhar prevented UN Afghan women staff from going to work. The UN responded by telling all staff to stay home while the mission leadership sought explanations from the Emirate on what was behind the new restrictions.

The Islamic Emirate is indeed now applying the ban on Afghan women working in aid agencies to the UN, in line with the way it has enforced that ban in NGOs. This is a critical time for the internationally supported assistance mission in Afghanistan—agencies cannot continue 'business as usual' and are forced to consider reducing staff and cutting programmes. The ban has impacted donors funding of Afghan assistance.

In this episode, Michael and Tamim explore the Taliban objectives underpinning their latest women's ban.



EPISODE 6

The Taliban's Amir—Is He Transforming the Afghan State?

Media reports sometimes refer to Haibatollah as 'the Taliban's reclusive Amir'. The label is out of date. Haibatollah is still careful but not at all reclusive. He invites a steady stream of Taliban officials, commanders, religious scholars and even businessmen to his office in central Kandahar to receive instructions from him and listen to his vision for a truly Islamic Afghan society. In the last week of the fasting month of Ramadan, Zabiullah Mujahid released the Taliban Amir's Eid message, projecting an idealised picture of the Islamic state. The picture of justice, piety, security and prosperity is more grounded in aspirations than reality. But in recent months we have witnessed real changes in the way Afghans are governed.

In this episode, Michael and Tamim ask: is Haibatollah transforming the Afghan state?



EPISODE 7

Is There Internal Dissent in the Taliban Movement and Does it Matter?

This episode addresses the Islamic Emirate's internal politics and considers the factional tussles and differences over ideology and tactics within the movement. What do these differences in perspective between the Taliban factions tell us about the prospects for a change in the Emirate's hard-line policies?

Michael and Tamim explore the question of whether the Emirate should be prepared to compromise on its hard-line policies, in particular the restrictions on women, in response to Afghan popular sentiment and to mend fences with the international community. But does the movement's doctrine of obedience to the Amir just make internal politics irrelevant?



EPISODE 8

Do the Taliban Have an Economic Policy and if so What is it?

This episode focuses on what the Taliban have been doing to the Afghan economy, piecing together their economic policy. The Taliban aspire to a form of self-reliance, which they have pursued through revenue collection. But they are more focused on rewarding members for their jihad than growing the economy.

In this episode, Michael and Tamim discuss: What the Taliban understand by self-reliance; Taliban fiscal policy and how they have managed the transition to high dependence on budget support to funding the budget from domestic revenue; monetary policy and how Afghanistan has avoided the devaluation and inflations which accompanied previous political crises; the limitations of the Taliban's business-friendly approach; and economic outcomes and what this means for the Afghan population and resource distribution.



EPISODE 9

Emirate Land—What Have the Taliban Achieved Through all Their Decrees about Land and Property Rights?

Taliban Amir Haibatollah has issued multiple decrees dealing with land ownership issues. He follows in an historic tradition. One of the key themes in the development of the modern state has been how Afghan Amirs, from Ahmad Shah Durrani onwards, conducted military campaigns to stamp their authority onto outlying provinces and then followed up by settling their followers and loyal populations on land in the conquered territories.

In the modern conflict, the early PDPA regime announced land reforms, which were supposed to break up the holdings of ‘feudal landlords’ and distribute forfeited land to peasants. In the Republic many of the powerful figures of the Republic used their influence to lead and profit from a property boom as millions of Afghans shifted to the cities.

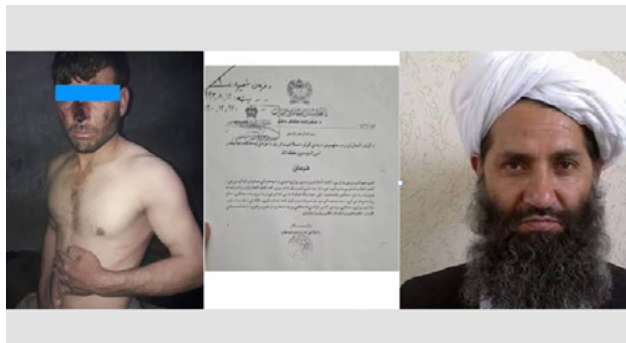


EPISODE 10

The Pre-history of Engagement with the Taliban—What UN Special Coordinator Sinirlioğlu Should Know

This episode addresses one of the topics that has been around as long as the Taliban have existed—how best to engage with the movement. In April 2023 the UN Security Council appointed Turkish diplomat Feridun Sinirlioğlu to the role of Special Coordinator. Central to his mission is this old question of how the United Nations and other international actors should engage with the Taliban.

Michael and Tamim discuss the challenges confronting the Special Coordinator and then dip into what feels almost like ancient history. They look at the lessons learned in Afghan and UN engagement with the Taliban and their first Emirate, between 1994 and 2001.

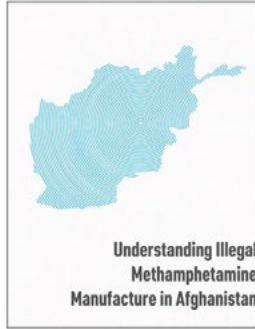


EPISODE 11

Rule of Law in the Emirate Security Sector—Will the Amir’s Latest Decree end Decades of Torture in Afghanistan’s Intelligence Agency?

The Taliban’s Amir published a succinct decree laying down basic rule of law guidelines for detention operations by the Emirate’s premier intelligence agency, the GDI. The decree states that torture is not permitted in any circumstances and sets a limit on how long the GDI can hold prisoners without charge. Torture has been a recurrent theme in the national intelligence agencies which have operated in Afghanistan since the outbreak of war in 1978.

In this episode Michael and Tamim discuss the decree and explore the Emirate’s approach to operating Afghanistan’s intelligence agency: What are their agency’s mission and approach? How central is the intelligence agency in the Taliban’s state building project? Can the Amir’s decree really bring the rule of law to those long-feared torture chambers?



EPISODE 12

Truly Unprecedented or Business as Usual—Fact-Checking the Taliban Narcotics Bans

In April 2022 Amir Haibatollah decreed a total ban on the cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotics which was complemented by orders banning specific aspects of Afghanistan’s narcotic trade, such as the trade in the ephedra plant, a natural source of ephedrine. The Amir’s decree was consequential as it was followed by a dramatic reduction in planting of opium in the main production areas in 2022. Afghanistan continues to produce and export opium, heroin, crystal meth and cannabis, despite the ban. Narcotics trafficking continued during the Republic, despite international counter-narcotics assistance. But the political and security context of the Emirate fundamentally differs from that of the Republic.

In this episode Michael and Tamim do a reality-check on the bans.



EPISODE 13

What the Middle East Conflict Reveals about the Taliban

One of the longest running debates around the Taliban is whether the movement really pursues a vision of ‘Islam in one country’, with its ambitions confined to establishing an Islamic system within the borders of Afghanistan. ISKP critics of the Taliban lambast them for confining the jihad within artificial boundaries. But the Taliban’s political opponents have long warned that the Taliban harbour extra-territorial ambitions and ultimately wish to drag Afghanistan into a global jihad. The repercussions of the unprecedented 7 October attack by Hamas on Israel have played out in Afghanistan, shining more light on the isolationist versus expansionist impulses within the Taliban.

This episode considers how Taliban leaders and ranks have responded to the latest round of conflict in the Middle East.



EPISODE 14

A Cultural Counter-revolution?—Haibatollah’s Flagship Jihadi Madrassahs

The Taliban Amir has established ‘jihadi madrassahs’, with new madrassahs now in many of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces. The Taliban recruited students from Afghanistan and Pakistan’s madrassahs as fighters during its initial campaign from 1994 and during the insurgency against the Republic. The madrassah of jihad in Kandahar was one of the important Emirate institutions during Mullah Omar’s rule. Tens of thousands of boys and young men are being drafted into the madrassahs and the Amir is using his direct control over Emirate finances to resource them.

The jihadi madrassah initiative is a conscious effort to eradicate two decades of western cultural influence and to prepare a new generation of young men ready to join the Taliban jihad and embrace martyrdom in the service of the Emirate.



EPISODE 15

Afghanistan after the Americans, An Overview of the Emirate and Afghan Responses to it

This final episode of Series 2 offers a stock-take on the Taliban's progress in building their Islamic Emirate and Afghan responses to it.

One of the most remarkable developments since the Taliban returned to power in 2021 has been the development of Haibatollah's role as Amir, consolidating his hold over the Taliban administration and transforming a theory of absolute authority into a political reality. With consequences for Afghans and the wider world, the Taliban have progressed beyond their initial phase of state capture into state transformation. They are re-imagining culture and power within their own movement, within broader Afghan society and, perhaps at the level of South and Central Asia. The profound nature of the changes underway in Afghanistan justifies continued study of the Taliban.

SERIES 3



EPISODE 1

Is Afghanistan Under the Taliban an Authoritarian State? And What Difference Does That Determination Make?

On 2 February 2024 a speech by leading Shia cleric Ayatollah Waizzada caught the attention of people across Afghanistan. The Taliban authorities had given their blessing to a meeting which they hoped would calm the Hazara community which was agitated over reports of young women being detained for hijab infringements. The cleric's speech is an example of the use of coded language by people living under an authoritarian regime. The literal meaning of what he said was placatory, but it contained an implicit warning to the authorities that they would face an uprising if they did not curb their abuses.

This episode considers the ways in which Taliban rule is authoritarian in nature and sets out the implications for international engagement with the Taliban, and for Afghans living under or hoping to resist Taliban rule.



EPISODE 2

How Inclusive is the Islamic Emirate? – Who Are the Men Running the Taliban's Administration?

In his report submitted to the UN Security Council in April 2024, Special Coordinator Feridun Sinirlioğlu laid out a plan for national dialogue to achieve an inclusive national administration, as well as restoring women's rights, doubling down on inclusivity as one of the prerequisites for normalising Afghanistan's relations with the international community. However, the Taliban have denied the need for any such political process, asserting that their administration is inclusive, because, they say, they have appointed officials from all ethnic groups.

Through analysis of the top rank office holders in the Islamic Emirate, Michael and Tamim consider the extent to which the Taliban's administration is not representative of Afghanistan's diverse society.

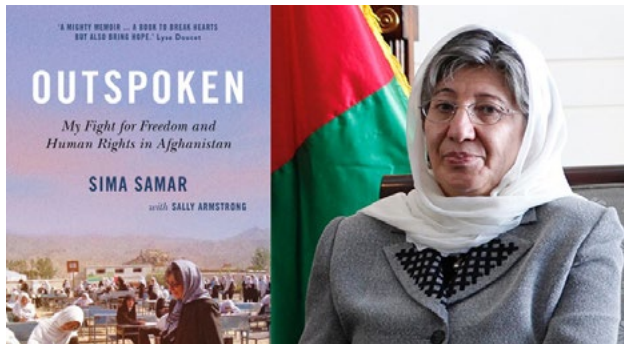


EPISODE 3

Exploring Taliban Political Culture—The *Andiwal* System or Taliban Comrade Networks

Much of what the Taliban do and how the movement operates can be explained by looking at the Taliban's distinctive and complex political culture. The Taliban has immunised itself against splits, it guards its secrets well, it has persuaded thousands of its members to make incredible sacrifices for the cause and for decades now the movement has sustained its central myth about an ameer directly inspired by God. These capabilities are all aspects of the political culture which underpins the movement's power.

This episode explores the *andiwal* system—the informal comrade networks Taliban commanders used to mobilise fighters during successive stages of their armed struggle. These networks now constitute an informal power structure operating inside the hierarchy of the Taliban-controlled state.



EPISODE 4

Life in Struggle, a Conversation with Dr Sima Samar

Dr Sima Samar is an internationally acclaimed human rights defender and political figure. She joined the struggle as a political activist in Afghanistan at the time of the 1978 Communist coup. She faced immense personal loss in her defence of freedom in the face of the ruling party's authoritarianism and egregious human rights abuses.

In this episode Dr Sima discusses the themes of her memoir *Outspoken: My Fight for Freedom and Human Rights in Afghanistan* (Saqi Books, 2024), including the struggle and popular mobilisation as Afghans started to resist the Communist government in 1978 and reflects on the consolidation of patriarchy during the conflict. She reflects on the threats and opportunities facing a new generation of Afghans mobilising to regain their freedom.



EPISODE 5

Have the Taliban Really Succeeded in Developing Sustainable Armed Forces for Afghanistan?

This episode considers the Taliban's claim to have achieved in three years what the US, NATO and the Republic failed to achieve in 20 years.

One explanation of the strategic failure of international intervention in Afghanistan in the period 2001–2021 was that together, the national authorities and their international partners failed to develop security forces which could be sustained from Afghanistan's own resources. Despite financial assistance from the US, EU and others, security spending was way beyond the government's financial capabilities.

The NATO plan to train and equip the security forces was still incomplete when the US signalled the withdrawal. Then the world witnessed how, after the intense fighting of the insurgency, those expensive security forces melted away in the final stages of the Republic.



EPISODE 6

Doha 3 Conference—Opportunity or Distraction

Ahead of the meeting in Doha that took place on 30 June and 1 July 2024, Michael and Tamim discuss the UN's efforts to balance competing interests and get the Taliban to the table. The Taliban want to pose as the sole representatives of Afghanistan and to block any move to appoint a UN Special Envoy. They have made it clear that they intend to retain their monopoly of power running as a one-party clerical state and have signalled they have no intention of compromising on rights issues.

Special Representatives for the G7 countries want to see girls back in school, women's rights restored and progress towards a genuinely broad-based administration, before any normalisation of Afghanistan's relationship with the international community.



EPISODE 7

Speaking Up and Pushing Back—Is There Space for Civic Resistance in Afghanistan?

The Taliban have frequently declared that they will not tolerate even peaceful criticism of the Emirate. Many Afghan-watchers have assumed that successful civic action in Taliban run Afghanistan is impossible and all resistance to authoritarianism must be armed.

Building on their analysis of Taliban authoritarianism, Michael and Tamim look at examples of Afghans standing up for their rights and the strategies that have been developed to criticise or push for change, to allow them to exert agency and determine their fate. The longest running civic actions are the numerous ways Afghan women are demonstrating for the right to education, work and freedom.

Polish Authorities Continue to Attack Human Rights Defenders Near the Belarus Border

Professor Brian Dooley
Honorary Professor of Practice
August 2023



Deep in the dense Bialowieza Forest, the Polish authorities have built a huge fence to prevent people crossing from Belarus.

Tens of thousands of people have attempted to cross from Belarus into Poland over the last two years. Most come from the Middle East or Africa, and are often fleeing conflict. Many are women and small children.

The Belarussian government, a close ally of Russia's Vladimir Putin, has lured many of them with promises of taking them to the border of the European Union. Belarus aims to cause problems for the European Union by pushing people across its borders with Poland (and, less frequently, into Latvia and Lithuania).

People attempting to come into Poland from Belarus – unlike those fleeing the war in Ukraine – have often been met with hostility and violence by Polish border guards and other security forces. As elsewhere in Europe, Polish authorities also continue to target local human rights defenders who give humanitarian aid to those trying to help refugees.

A few weeks ago I was in the forest with local activists to research a report for Human Rights First that I co-authored with Maya Fernandez-Powell.

On one side of the fence were the activists, who are not allowed within 15 metres of the barrier. On the other a group of about 30 people from Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and elsewhere. Those pressed up against the fence on the other side and said clearly and repeatedly that they wanted to claim asylum in Poland.

Kids pushed their hands through the bars hoping for food or water, and the adults pleaded in broken English for legal and medical help. “We’ve clearly heard them through the fence, dozens of times, ask for asylum in Poland,” said activist Aleksandra Chrzanowska, who was at the scene. “They’re desperate and exhausted. And they’re already on Polish soil if they’re up against the fence. According to the law if they are applying for asylum they should be allowed to make a claim and have their case heard.”

As the fence is built just inside Polish territory, their claims were being made from inside Poland, but were rejected.

After several days the group dispersed back into the forest on the Belarus side without securing the asylum hearing in Poland to which they are entitled.

Local human rights defenders in Poland who try to provide legal and humanitarian aid to those who

want to claim asylum report being judicially harassed, criminalized, threatened and physically attacked by Polish authorities.

Many of the activists are from the network Grupa Granica, set up to provide aid to those trapped in the forest.

Aleksandra Chrzanowska is from Grupa Granica and the Association for Legal Intervention, and is currently facing legal cases for her humanitarian work at the border. She says “the security presence along the border is everywhere. This constant stopping and questioning of people—Where are you going? What are you doing? It’s not normal in a European democracy. We’re stopped virtually every day. The goal is to scare us or annoy us. The questioning can be aggressive—the implication is that we’re helping people stay illegally in the country.”

Activist Ola Ziemińska of the Szpila Collective said “The authorities are targeting the activists helping those at the border in three main ways: first by constantly fining people, hoping to exhaust them with repeated court procedures; second by bringing very serious fake charges against some of the activists which could end up in long jail sentences; and third by targeting the activist leaders with judicial harassment, including being summoned for interrogation.” Local activists say such experiences are far from uncommon.

The courts have sometimes proved to be allies of the activists. In a January 2023 report Grupa Granica noted that “court decisions in the past year have shown that the main purpose of repression by uniformed services against humanitarian activists in the Polish-Belarusian border area is to create a so-called ‘chilling effect’ aimed at intimidation or discouragement of activists.” The report highlights that in the vast majority of cases, the courts dismiss charges against activists and emphasize that providing help is not illegal.

For example, on 31 May 2023, the District Court in Hajnówka ruled that an Iraqi man living in Germany who had come to help his family in the forest in October 2021 was not acting unlawfully. The court recognized that he had helped several family members, including children, who were freezing, tired, hungry, on the verge of physical exhaustion, and in a situation threatening their health and perhaps life. The court ruled that what he did in helping them “was not socially harmful and therefore did not constitute a crime,” and that his action “deserves neither condemnation nor criminal penalization.” The prosecutor is appealing the verdict. “The courts have again sensibly ruled that helping people in need is a good thing, not something to be prosecuted,” said Marta Górczyńska, a lawyer with Warsaw-based NGO the Helsinki Foundation. “The police and prosecutors should stop bringing these cases, wasting court time and harassing people who are showing compassion.”

But the attacks on the activists continue. Some are charged with people smuggling-related offences that carry jail sentences of up to eight years in prison.

The forest is a dangerous place for the activists and for those they are trying to help.

“Drones and guards constantly patrol the fence, and activists are often fined 500 zloty (£96) for getting too near the fence and another 500 zloty for passing food or medicine to people on the other side,” said Ola Ziemianska. “Since the fence went up we’re seeing more cases of broken bones and cuts to people’s bodies when they’ve tried to climb over. Some pregnant women have also lost their pregnancies trying to get across the fence.”

Many of those attempting to cross through the forest don’t make it, and dozens have died trying. Piotr Czaban is one of those trying to help survivors in the forests, and he reports of constant harassment by border guards. He also searches for those who have gone missing in the forest, where dead bodies are regularly discovered.

“In February 2023 we were looking for a boy from Yemen who was missing,” he said. “But instead we found another body, of an Ethiopian boy. We’re trying to identify him through DNA testing.”

Local activists predict that Poland’s general election campaign in the autumn will likely see a rise in far-right rhetoric from government officials and others, aimed at refugees and those who assist them. It looks like more tough months ahead for those in the forest.

Brian Dooley

Dr Brian Dooley is an Honorary Professor of Practice at the Mitchell Institute and a Senior Advisor at Human Rights First, a U.S.-based NGO. He specialises in working with Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in conflict and post-conflict contexts, and was Senior Advisor to the UN Special Rapporteur on HRDs Mary Lawlor 2020–2023. His most recent work has been in the Hong Kong revolution and on Russia’s war on Ukraine. He has also written two books related to the conflict in Northern Ireland, including a comparative study of the civil rights movements in the U.S. and Northern Ireland.



Talking to Americans about Northern Ireland: A Historical View

Dr Shane Brighton

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September 2023



Concern at the impact of Brexit on Northern Ireland has escalated American criticism and political pressure on the UK Government in Washington and beyond. The stakes are potentially significant.

Amid the more positive post-Windsor Framework atmosphere, the Biden Administration has linked improved UK-EU trade arrangements with increased American investment, a prospect hopefully bolstered by the recent Northern Ireland Investment Summit.

Importantly, the Northern Ireland Protocol and the controversial Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill have been a focus for a bipartisan lobby group, the Ad Hoc Committee to Protect the Good Friday Agreement. The Committee, whose membership includes President Biden's Special Envoy to Northern Ireland, Joseph Kennedy III, has engaged in consistent dialogue with British diplomats and expressed their views to successive Prime Ministers since its creation in 2019.

Funded by the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics and the QUB ESRC Impact Acceleration Scheme, I visited Washington DC in early September 2023 to undertake archival research and meet with officials at the British Embassy.

I gave a presentation at the Embassy, entitled *Talking to Americans about Northern Ireland: A Historical View*, based on my current book project

on British public diplomacy during the Northern Irish conflict and a forthcoming article-length piece on the US impact of the 1980-1981 hunger strikes.

I surveyed the development of the Irish-American lobby and the history of British government efforts to manage and shape American perceptions of the Troubles. Against interpretations of the conflict as a mainly 'local' affair, I emphasised its international dimensions, the centrality of American experience for the Northern Irish Civil Rights movement and the often-pervasive analogy between Northern Ireland and Vietnam.

Drawing on my archival work, I used the words of British officials in US posts to trace the emergence of an increasingly sophisticated Irish Republican publicity effort in America during the 1970s, British efforts to counter it and the unprecedented impact upon both following intense US media coverage of the 1981 Hunger Strike. The latter saw the arrival of a large, predominantly American, international press corps in Northern Ireland and a growing perception that British officials had lost control of the narrative in America, with the UK press criticising the Foreign Office and aggressively 'fact checking' US coverage by turn.

I situated later developments within the Thatcher-Reagan relationship and the emergence of a bipartisan Congressional lobby ('the Congressional

Friends of Ireland') with a focus on employment issues in Northern Ireland as well as the wider politics of the conflict.

This more diverse, politically effective Irish-American interest group successfully pressed the Clinton Administration to grant a visa to Gerry Adams and helped lay the ground for the US contribution to the Peace Process.

To understand the current concern in the US, I suggested, it is necessary to be familiar with the American narrative of the Peace Process and the profound sense of investment in its outcome—at once emotional and well-informed—that exists within the Irish-American lobby.

After the presentation, I was joined by members of the audience in a wide-ranging discussion (most of it under the Chatham House Rule) in which we explored the historical resonances of the present situation and evaluated the strategy and policy behind British engagement with the Irish lobby in the US. I also had the opportunity to informally engage with officials from the Embassy, the Northern Ireland Office and the Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington.

The success of the visit was confirmed by a request that I develop the presentation into a briefing paper on the history of the FC(D)O's effort to address American interest in Northern Ireland. I presented

aspects of the research it draws upon at the Political Studies Association of Ireland (PSAI) Annual Conference, hosted by Queen's University Belfast 20-22 October 2023.

Dr Shane Brighton

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The ESRC Impact Acceleration Account at Queen's helps to maximise the societal and economic impact of social science research by facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing with external partners. The scheme supports the translation of research findings into practical applications, policy recommendations and commercial opportunities.



G' Day in Australia: Research Visit to the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation



Dr Ulrike M. Vieten

Senior Lecturer, School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding
September 2023

The Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation (ADI), Deakin University, Melbourne is one of the big global players in the field of citizenship studies and social inclusion. Its research responds to the complex challenges posed by the rise of extremism, continued patterns of intersectional exclusion, and rapid transformation of societies, internationally. As part of my sabbatical, starting end of January 2023, I had planned to go to Australia for a few months. I was fortunate that the ADI accepted me as *Visiting Research Fellow* for nearly three months at their Burwood Campus, Melbourne, between mid of April and beginning of July 2023. Apart from exploring possibilities to deepen international research links between Queen's and the ADI there were different scopes to my visit:

First, I was interested to share and discuss some insights of my latest monograph on *Normalization of the Global Far Right: Pandemic Disruption?* published in autumn 2022, and co-authored with my Sydney based colleague, Professor Scott Poynting.

Second, I was on track to write some chapters for my new monograph *Loss and Liquid Citizenship in Europe: The Post migration Condition in a Populist Age* (Routledge, forthcoming in 2024). I anticipated that conversations with my Australian colleagues, based in

an Institute focusing on citizenship and globalisation, would be very fruitful to the intellectual endeavour of the book.

On arrival in Melbourne, I was warmly welcomed by the Institute's director, Professor Fethi Mansouri, who is an internationally renowned and leading expert on interculturalism, migration studies and global Islamic politics, and Dr Vince Marotta. The latter was my initial contact for the stay in Melbourne. I do know Vince through our international sociological activities (ISA/ RC05), for years. Vince—among others—is Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, with whom Scott and I published a very successful—widely read and cited—special issue on *Contemporary Far Right Racism in Europe*, in 2016.

All fell into place with my visit, and I was excited to learn that the ADI is home to quite a lot of colleagues researching far right populism with respect to racisms (including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia), the three C's (class, capitalism, and crisis) and the role of gender regimes impacting these discourses. The ADI colleagues were enthusiastic, too, about me joining them as a visiting researcher and attended, for example, the lunch time Seminar in greater numbers when I presented arguments based on the second chapter of my book *Global Far Right*, 2022.

Dr Ulrike M. Vieten and Dr Valerie Ingham, Charles Sturt University



Seminar at Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation





Seminar at Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation

It was fantastic to get this high level of attention and positive feedback on my longstanding work on far-right normalization, gender, and racism. The Seminar was recorded and is available on YouTube.

The research environment is very welcoming to newcomers: weekly tea morning gatherings, allowed me to feel at home, very soon, and getting to know staff of the ADI, quickly. Further, other Seminars I attended, for example those organised by Professor Greg Barton, allowed a deepening of interdisciplinary thinking.

This year is particularly important to more inclusive political agendas and anti-racist developments in

Australia. In October there will be a referendum on a proposed law to alter the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice*. The referendum will put the question to all citizens to recognise *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice* while granting them a central role, constitutionally.

It was fascinating for me to learn about the different fractions and what their arguments are, reaching out across the race divide, and following closely media debates during my stay. Further, the discussion with Australian based colleagues provided valuable knowledge advancing my understanding of indigenous epistemologies, countering

Eurocentric approaches in mainstream sociology. Another formally important event was the ISA World Congress of Sociology, which took place in Melbourne, this year. As a long standing and active member (since 2003) of the *Research Committee on Racism, Nationalism, Indigeneity and Ethnicity* (RC05), I co-convened a session on the *Normalization of the Global Far Right* with Professor Scott Poynting—and gave a paper related to my current book project, on *Liquid Citizenship and the post-migration condition*, in another RC05 session.

Both sessions were very well attended with stimulating discussions. Following up on this, Scott and I are in communication with the chief editors of the *Journal of Intercultural Studies* and preparing a special section on the *global far right* panel contributions, which will be likely published next year, or early 2025. After the congress, and in the beginning of July, my time in Melbourne and at the ADI, ended.

Looking back, it was an exceptionally exciting and intellectually inspiring stay, and I hope to be back, in a couple of years. My first, and very successful research stay at the ADI promises, too, future international research cooperations, deepening a shared research agenda on global trends in gendered far-right extremism.

Dr Ulrike Vieten

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Cults, Violence, and the Politics of Victimhood in Japan

Dr Rin Ushiyama

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September 2023



On 8 July 2022, Abe Shinzo, the former Prime Minister of Japan, was gunned down outside a train station whilst giving an election campaign speech. The assailant, Yamagami Tetsuya, a man in his forties, confessed that he had held a grudge against The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU, formerly the Unification Church and colloquially known as the ‘Moonies’), a new religion originally founded in South Korea with a large membership in Japan.

According to Yamagami, his mother had joined the Unification Church when he was in high school, donating all of her assets and abandoning her children. Yamagami sought revenge, but, unable to approach the FFWPU leadership, he targeted Abe instead, whom he believed had close links to the political wing of the FFWPU.

Following these dramatic revelations, Japanese politics shifted in a direction that few could have imagined. As it became apparent that leading figures from the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) had for decades enjoyed political support from the FFWPU, public criticism quickly turned towards a perceived collusion between politicians and a controversial ‘cult’ which had amassed its wealth by allegedly ‘brainwashing’ and ‘mind controlling’ its members into donating large sums of cash. While FFWPU representatives have denied any wrongdoing, at the time of writing, the government

is preparing to revoke the group’s ‘religious corporation’ status which provides religious organisations with preferential tax rates and a mark of respectability.

By contrast, the assassin has attracted sympathy as the media framed his as a ‘victim’ of a nefarious cult rather than as a ‘perpetrator’ of the murder of one of the most important figures in Japanese politics. Since the controversy came to light, his supporters have sent cash and gifts worth tens of thousands of pounds to the detention centre.

To understand the particular trajectory of the public discourses after Abe’s assassination, we need to look at a longer history of ‘cult controversies’ and the politics of victimhood going back to a pivotal moment in modern Japanese history: the gassing of the Tokyo subway using sarin on 20 March 1995 by the religious group Aum Shinrikyō.

My new book *Aum Shinrikyō and Religious Terrorism in Japanese Collective Memory* (British Academy Monographs, Oxford University Press, 2022) reconstructs the social aftermaths of the sarin gassing, which killed thirteen and injured more than 6,000 commuters.

Aum Shinrikyō was a millenarian group which drew eclectically from Tibetan Buddhism, Christianity, and New Age spirituality. Its charismatic leader,

Asahara Shōkō, claimed that he had achieved enlightenment in the Himalayan mountains, and called himself a messenger of Shiva and the second coming of Christ. In the early-1990s, Aum began developing chemical weapons in preparation for World War Three, which Asahara predicted to occur before 1999.

Asahara ordered a coordinated attack on Tokyo as the group came under police investigation. The assault on Tokyo, together with a plethora of violent crimes including an earlier terrorist attack in 1994, kidnapping, multiple murders, and attempted murders, came to be known together as the Aum Affair.

The Aum Affair changed many aspects of social life overnight. Security on public transport tightened, as transparent bins were installed and surveillance cameras introduced. New religious movements—already viewed by many with suspicion—found themselves tarred with the same brush as Aum, as universities began issuing warnings to students about joining so-called ‘cults’. Through extensive public debates, the Aum Affair became a ‘cultural trauma’, an indelible moment in Japan’s national identity and collective memory.

The two most significant social changes that occurred as a result of the Aum Affair were arguably debates surrounding ‘mind control’ and victims’ rights.

Mind control is a concept originally invented by American anti-cult activists in the 1970s and '80s, which alleged that controversial religious groups employed manipulative methods such as controlling members' access to the media and cutting ties with family members to create obedient robot-like followers.

Although many controversial groups including Aum did indeed seek to train adherents to be unquestioningly loyal to their leaders, the efficacy of such techniques has been seriously questioned by religious scholars and sociologists of religion, and disproved in many court cases.

Even though the scientific legitimacy of mind control was already in question by the time it entered Japanese discourse, it quickly became a household term as anti-cult activists and commentators dominated the mass media. Religious scholars, many of whom were critical of the idea that Aum members were simply manipulated by Asahara, were sidelined in these debates when some were discovered to have made positive comments about Aum in the past. As a result, the orthodox narrative that formed shortly after the Tokyo attack was that Asahara had mind controlled his followers into committing violent crimes and terrorist attacks: an interpretation that some ex-members embraced upon renouncing their faith.

The reality, however, is much more complex. Whilst some former rank-and-file adherents subscribed to the mind control thesis, others—including some of the most senior members—have disagreed, describing their experiences as the result of misguided faith in the charismatic but deluded leader.

For instance, Hayashi Ikuo, one of the culprits in the Tokyo attack, recalled in his memoir the inner moral conflict between following the order and not wanting to kill innocent civilians:

“If I don't do it, Aum will be crushed ... If I don't defend Aum, Truth will die out. I must do it. Even then, I don't want to kill women and children”.

As these confessions suggest, far from acting as mindless robots, the culprits unleashed terror on Tokyo through a lucid decision-making process based on the belief that Asahara was an omniscient guru. Despite ample evidence that Aum's senior figures were not simply manipulated by Asahara, but actively aided him as co-conspirators to plan and execute increasingly violent schemes, many commentators have chosen to single out Asahara as a singular source of evil.

The Aum Affair also brought changes to the concept of victimhood in relation to 'cult' controversies. Before the Affair, people who stepped forward as 'victims' of cults were primarily family members of adherents who had suffered strained family relations and financial difficulties. The Aum Shinrikyō Victims' Society was founded by parents of worshippers who alleged that their children had been 'brainwashed' and 'mind controlled' by Asahara. The group was led by Nagaoka Hiroyuki, a parent who survived an assassination attempt by Aum using the deadly nerve agent VX. Following the Tokyo attack, the group renamed itself the Aum Shinrikyō Families' Society to reflect the fact that the parents were now seen to be linked to the 'perpetrators'.

In turn, a new victims' rights movement emerged under the leadership of Takahashi Shizue, who

founded the Subway Sarin Incident Victims' Society. Takahashi, whose husband was a subway employee killed in the attack, launched a thirteen year long campaign for a state-funded compensation scheme for victims and survivors of Aum's murders and terrorist attacks. After tireless lobbying and testimony work, Takahashi's group secured the enactment of the Victims Relief Act of 2008, which provided survivors and bereaved families of victims with state compensation.

Nagaoka and Takahashi's personal experiences are very different, but their respective models of victimhood share an important characteristic: they are primarily oriented towards retributive justice. In such models, there is a fundamental gulf between 'perpetrators' and 'victims' that cannot be bridged: there is no possibility for reconciliation or forgiveness.

As my book discusses, there have been some limited attempts towards reconciliation through dialogue, such as by Mori Tatsuya, a documentary filmmaker, and Kōno Yoshiyuki, a survivor and widower of Aum's earlier sarin attack on Matsumoto in 1994. However, these attempts have remained isolated and underdeveloped in a culture where there is continued support for retribution, especially through the death penalty.

In 2018, Japan hanged thirteen convicts including Asahara for Aum's crimes and terror attacks, despite strong opposition by human rights organisations. Although the mass executions sparked a brief public debate on the morality of the death penalty as a form of retributive justice, there are currently no proposed changes to abolish the death penalty.

Fast forward to the present day, and we can see how the national trauma of the Aum Affair has shaped social responses to the new national trauma of Abe's assassination. The upsurge of anti-cult sentiment against the FFPWU did not appear out of nowhere: rather, it is a reiteration of earlier discourses which took shape after the Tokyo sarin attack. Much of the recent civic debate has centred around an evil 'cult' putting civil society under threat through nefarious means—this time, through alleged ethically dubious forms of fundraising attributed to 'mind control' and buying political influence through conservative politicians. To be sure, the social and psychological factors behind Abe's assassination are likely more complex than many media reports suggest.

Although political assassinations are virtually unheard of in Japan, the country has experienced numerous spree killings, and targeted attacks on public institutions and vulnerable people in recent years.

Almost without exception, the perpetrators have had similar and comparable backgrounds to Yamagami: men from low or precarious socio-economic backgrounds who have become socially isolated. They have come to be known colloquially as 'invincible people' (*muteki no hito*) because they have nothing to lose and do not fear the consequences of their actions.

These wider patterns of violent crimes can hardly be reduced to discussions about second and third generations of cult members who are struggling economically, as Yamagami was. Yet, the discourse around Abe's assassination has been primarily about the rebirth of a cultural trope in Japan which sees 'cults', if not 'religions' in general, as existing outside civil society as potential threats to (secular) liberal and democratic norms.

For various cultural and political reasons as discussed above, the Abe assassination does not seem to have influenced wider debates about attacks on democratic institutions and their representatives, as seen in other political assassinations such as the murders of Jo Cox and David Amess in the UK, nor about socially isolated men who are radicalised online and go on to commit violent crimes.

As scholars in peace and conflict studies know all too well, narratives of 'victims' and 'perpetrators' are useful, if not indispensable, for understanding the causes and consequences of violence.

At the same time, the ossification of these categories can obscure rather than clarify the complex realities of social life. Yamagami was certainly a 'victim' of parental neglect and economic hardship caused by the FFPWU, but this does not explain let alone justify his horrific assault on the democratic process.

The categorical opposition of victim and perpetrator, in both the Aum Affair and the Abe assassination, has prevented more nuanced analyses from emerging and has precluded opportunities for apology, redress, and reconciliation.

Part of the blame surely falls on the offending parties including Aum and the FFPWU, which have both been reluctant to admit fault or to offer redress to aggrieved parties; at the same time, perhaps as a result of deep-seated cultural norms, a willingness to forgive and reconcile seems to be in short supply in contemporary Japan.

Dr Rin Ushiyama

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Image Credit: Tokumeigakarinoashima, wikimedia Commons. Kintetsu Yamato-Saidaiji station northern entrance on 8 July 2022.

Art of Identity: Generation Peace

Dr Joceyln Dautel

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September 2023



I am one of a group of global researchers working in collaboration to explore and understand children's empathy and prosocial behaviours within a development intergroup framework.

We hosted **The Art of Identity: Generation Peace and European Identities** event in November 2022 at the Ulster Museum. Part of the ESRC Festival of Social Sciences in NI, the event included an exhibition of the artwork produced by the children taking part in the research showcasing their perspectives of, and attachment to, different national and ethnic identities across four conflict-affected societies that have different relations with the European Union (Northern Ireland, Croatia, Kosovo and the Republic of North Macedonia). Children's drawings of where they live, Europe, and peace were displayed along with key quotes from children in each site. The event also included interactive art activities for children visiting the exhibition.

An interactive art exhibit event, co-hosted with child development researchers across Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University, took place on 4 November at the Ulster Museum as part of the ESRC Festival of Social Science 2023 **Appy Families: How Do We Learn About Learning?**

Fun for all the family, this interactive workshop featured hands-on activities for parents and children. Each activity demonstrated the interactive games that researchers use to study child development.

Activity stations were set up in the Ulster Museum Grainger Room, including: a colouring book game and a word learning game for exploring language development, an Art of Identity display and drawing 'peace' station, a self-regulation app to promote child wellbeing and an app to support the development of the Fundamentals of movement skills.

Context for the research behind Art of Identity: Generation Peace

The Kids in Context Lab at Queen's University Belfast and Helping Kids! Lab at University College Dublin collaboratively conduct research with children across the globe.

We worked with children in four European societies: Croatia, Kosovo, Northern Ireland, and the Republic of North Macedonia. Each society has in common a history of conflict and enduring division. For example, children in each of these societies attend different schools, or sessions of the same school, by ethno-religious background. Yet, each society has a unique history marked by a peace agreement, and different relationships with the European Union.

Using the Draw-and-Tell method (Driessnack, 2006), children drew pictures exploring the topics 'peace' and 'Europe,' and responded to open-ended questions about their understanding of a local or ethnic identity and their European identity.

Croatia

- The Croatian War of Independence (1991–1995)
- Primarily between Croatians and Serbians-Peace Agreement: Dayton Agreement, 1995
- Croatia has been a full member of the European Union since 2013.

Kosovo

- The Kosovo War (1998-1999)
- Primarily between Albanians and Serbians
- Peace Agreement: Rambouillet Agreement (1999)
- The Accession of Kosovo to the European Union (EU) is on the current agenda for future enlargement of the EU.

Northern Ireland

- Northern Ireland, "The Troubles" (1968-1998)
- Primarily between Catholics and Protestants
- Peace Agreement: Good Friday Agreement (1998)
- Northern Ireland, with the United Kingdom, recently left the European Union during 'Brexit' in 2020.

Republic of North Macedonia

- North Macedonia, "The 2001 Insurgency"
- Primarily between Albanians and Macedonians
- Peace Agreement: Ohrid Agreement (2001)
- Macedonia submitted its membership application to European Union in 2004, thirteen years after its independence from Yugoslavia and is currently a candidate country.

For example, they were asked “Whenever you think of peace or groups of people getting along, what do you think of?” In response to this question, an 8-year-old from Northern Ireland drew a picture and described it as “group of friends holding hands.” Another answer from an 8-year-old from Kosovo said, “It is nice to me because there are no more wars and there are no bomb holes everywhere, everything is peaceful now.” This study allowed an exploration of children’s perceptions of peace and European identity growing up in conflict-affected areas.

Using interview and survey measures, we also worked with another 442 children aged 7–11 who participated from across the four conflict-affected sites (Taylor, Corbett, Maloku, Humer, Tomovska Misoska & Dautel, 2023). We found that children’s social identification with Europe differed depending on the context and their group membership. For example, in Northern Ireland, children from Catholic backgrounds identified more strongly as European than children from Protestant backgrounds, while in Kosovo, group membership did not seem to affect the strength of identification with Europe. These patterns vary with each country’s socio-historical context, demonstrating the importance of studying Kids In Context.

The study’s findings suggest that stronger identification with Europe, as a subordinate group membership, promotes more positive attitudes and prosocial behaviour to those in other groups. You can read more about the findings in the article *Strength of Children’s European Identity: Findings from Majority and Minority Groups in Four Conflict-affected Sites* (European Journal of Developmental Psychology, Volume 20, 2023, Issue 5).

Outcomes of Art of Identity Event 2022

In order to make this exhibition as interactive and as fun as possible, we had several different activities ongoing on the day. A drawing station was set up for children to make their own drawings around ‘peace’ and ‘where I live.’ They then hung up these on a wall, creating a lovely display.

We were so pleased that so many families came along, and all of the children seemed to enjoy the activities! Altogether, we had 33 drawings of ‘Peace’, 10 of ‘Europe’, and 34 of ‘Where I Live.’ Some of the beautiful displays and the art by the talented children are in the images below.

A museum scavenger hunt was also organised for the children. This allowed children not only to explore our own exhibit, but also seek out different artefacts of the museum focused on the topic of peace and where they live. This could’ve helped to aid cultivate understanding, as well as potentially educate around past conflict and the attempts for peace that have come as a result.

We also used this opportunity to recruit for future studies. This included an opportunity for families to sign up to be contacted in the future, as well as pilot studies happening on the day in a separate room for families that wished to take part there and then.

Reflecting on their experience, a visitor of the exhibit said: “An enjoyable, and extremely thought-provoking experience. My son loved the workshop –the crayons, pencils, drawing his idea of peace, and interacting with other children and families doing the same. Within this, we all had an opportunity to reflect on how children make sense of conflict, and peace and national identity. It was interesting to see similarities and differences between post-

conflict societies across Europe. I feel I got a better understanding of a child’s perspective of living in our post-conflict society. If he were a bit older, I imagine it would give us a conversation starter to see how he makes sense of himself, the city and our communities. I also took a moment to reflect on my own perspective. When I was my son’s age, it was the middle of The Troubles and wondered what I might have drawn if presented with the same task.” In order to evaluate the success of our event, we surveyed parents and children upon entry and exit, as well as monitoring social media likes, shares, and replies.

The children’s survey had only two questions:

- Did you like learning about kids in other places?
- Did you like learning about peace?

The kids had the opportunity to answer these questions by pressing a button on a tablet.

On the day, we had 25 children take our survey to get their feedback on the event. We found that 100% of them liked learning about kids in other places, and 96% liked learning about peace!

For adults, 31 responded to our pre- and post-event survey. Adults were more likely to agree with the statement ‘I think the next generation can build peace’ after they had viewed the exhibit and participated in the event, compared to when they entered.

Dr Jocelyn Dautel

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Researching Human Rights in Ukraine

Professor Brian Dooley
Honorary Professor of Practice
January 2024



I just got back from another research visit to Ukraine, my tenth since Russia's full-scale invasion of February 2022. I've been visiting Ukraine for ten years for Human Rights First, working with and writing about local Human Rights Defenders (HRDs). I focus mostly on the north-eastern region of Kharkiv, close to the front line and home to Ukraine's second-biggest city, and I write reports about HRDs working on a range of issues including war crimes, LGBTQ rights, medical aid, and government corruption.

After these visits I often get asked the same sorts of questions about the practicalities of researching in a war zone, especially in extremely cold temperatures. Here are answers covering some of the most common things I get asked.

Getting There, Getting Around

You can't fly into Ukraine now, so the best bet is to fly to Warsaw or Krakow and get the train. In early 2022 it was more chaotic and trains were full, so I had to go in and out on long bus journeys, sometimes sleeping on the bus overnight at the border. Now the train from Warsaw is the best option—17 hours on the same train (in a bunk if you're lucky enough to get one) direct to Kyiv without having to get out at the border. Via Krakow you have to change trains at the border town of Przemysl and stand around in the cold for a few hours to get through passport control and security, before getting another train to Kyiv.

In Ukraine transport is generally comfortable and efficient. You book tickets on an app, they don't sell more seats than they have bums to fill, so you're guaranteed a seat. Trains from Kyiv east to Kharkiv take about five hours. There's a café car, and they're warm and modern. In the big cities the underground metro systems work well, though the platforms get full when there's an air raid alarm and people rush down from the street for cover. In Kharkiv the metro is still free, in Kyiv you just tap your credit card. For car journeys a local version of Uber, BOLT, is very efficient.

What to Wear

This depends on the season—this month I was in temperatures as low as minus 18 Celsius, while the summer gets really hot. Generally the more pockets the better—jackets and cargo trousers with zipped pockets for phones, cameras, notebooks, pens, ID, etc. It's best to avoid green or anything that makes you look in any way military. Near the front line, you don't want to look like a soldier to another soldier looking at you through binoculars.

Close to the fighting I wear a flak jacket and helmet. They're very heavy and hard to run in. I also always have a white flag in case I need to wave it at someone with a gun. I use a pillowcase for this—it doubles as an emergency bag, and on long train or bus rides I stuff it with clothes to sleep on.

Bomb Shelters

Kyiv is very different from Kharkiv. In Kyiv you usually get 10–15 minutes from missiles being fired at the city until they arrive, enough time to hear the air raid alarms and find shelter. Kharkiv is only about 25 miles from the Russian border, and warnings can be a matter of seconds, or can even be announced after the missiles hit. If you're outside the best thing is to find a shelter in the underground metro, or under shops or car parks with basements. There's an overnight curfew in both cities, and things are quiet from about 10pm.

I stay mostly in hotels, occasionally in an empty house if near the front line. Hotels have decent bomb shelters, with kettles and tea, chairs, and even bunks. The air raid alarms are announced on phone apps which tell you which regions are being targeted. Then when the air raid alert is over, *Star Wars*' Mark Hamill's voice comes over the app announcing it's clear and says "May The Force be with you." The apps are essential—a friend of mine in Kyiv was without a phone for a few days this week and realised how much she depended on the alerts for safety.

The air raid alerts can happen a few times the same night, and last between 15 minutes and several hours. Several times in Kharkiv this month I heard the loud, huge S300 missiles explode fairly close to me, both during the daytime when I was out on the street and when I was in bed.

Working near the front line

Some of the most important—and unreported—work being done by HRDs is at the front line of fighting. They are bringing food and medicine to civilians left stranded in the combat zone, and document missile attacks on civilians and other war crimes. I never go alone to the front line villages, or to cities like Kupiansk—I always go with a small team of journalists or medics from Kharkiv.

The streets in the towns and villages are largely deserted, with most houses damaged or destroyed by missiles. In most places there is the near-constant sound of shelling, with white plumes of smoke when the shells hit.

It's best to drive fast through these places, and not hang about outside when you get out of the car. But this month the weather meant I had to drive very slowly for hours on icy roads, which was an added complication.

Reporting

I produce a report soon after I return, with recommendations for governments and others on how to better support Ukraine's civil society. After this month's visit I wrote a report with my colleague Maya Fernandez-Powell focused on the need for more psychological support in Ukraine.

People are generally willing to talk to me, although I clear quotes with them before I make them public. Interpretation is an issue, but a combination of local English speakers and translation apps generally work well enough.

Day to Day Frustrations

It can be challenging to plan meetings or make firm arrangements—everyone is at the mercy of air raid alarms and everything depends on what happens that day. There are many hours waiting around in underground stations or basement car parks waiting for Mark Hamill to tell you it's okay to go outside.

For locals, it is obviously much harder than for someone who only visits every couple of months. Ukrainian men aged 18-60 aren't allowed to leave the country in case they are called into the army. Ukraine is running low on conscripts—I was stopped in the street several times this month by 'mobilisation units'—groups of police and soldiers asking for my ID and checking I wasn't hiding from joining the military. Most researchers and visiting foreign diplomats get as far as Kyiv, but not many venture to Kharkiv out of safety concerns. But it's important to see what local HRDs are doing up close, to highlight the risks they're taking and the work they're doing, and to report on what they're facing in difficult and dangerous places.

Brian Dooley

Dr Brian Dooley is an Honorary Professor of Practice at the Mitchell Institute and a Senior Advisor at Human Rights First, a U.S.-based NGO. He specialises in working with Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in conflict and post-conflict contexts, and was Senior Advisor to the UN Special Rapporteur on HRDs Mary Lawlor 2020-2023. His most recent work has been in the Hong Kong revolution and on Russia's war on Ukraine. He has also written two books related to the conflict in Northern Ireland, including a comparative study of the civil rights movements in the U.S. and Northern Ireland.



How Do You Structure a Peace Process Under Conditions of Authoritarianism?

Professor Michael Semple
Professorial Research Fellow
February 2024



To be credible, any revived Afghan peace process will have to be structured so that representatives of the majority who have remained in their country can participate. But to be ethical and, indeed successful, peace process architects must confront the authoritarian nature of the Taliban's Emirate and the threats facing Afghans living in the country. The challenge is how to organise dialogue and structure an inclusive process when Afghans are not free to speak their mind or may face consequences should they do so.

Authoritarianism is now a lived experience for millions of Afghans. The Taliban have explicitly renounced democracy and describe their regime as Islamic. But they govern with all four hallmarks of authoritarianism as it is classically defined by Linz and others. Firstly, pluralism has been eradicated by the Taliban asserting a monopoly of power for their movement. Secondly, the Taliban base their claim to political legitimacy not on popular consent but on the story that their Amir is guided by God with a mission to implement divine law. Thirdly, the Taliban suppress any criticism of their Emirate and deter any political mobilisation, even among their own members. And fourthly, the Amir and his subordinates exercise untrammelled executive authority, unconstrained by a constitution. In addition, the Taliban have developed a repressive apparatus to enforce compliance and suppress opposition. In practical terms, under the new authoritarianism, elected bodies have been dissolved and non-Taliban are

excluded from positions of responsibility in the state. The few Afghans who dare to speak their mind in a public space know that they may be arrested or disappeared for doing so. Journalists operating in the country know they must check with the Taliban before filing a report and can be punished for publishing material the Taliban disapprove of. You can also be picked up if a Taliban search reveals “objectionable” social media content on your phone. There is immense pressure on Afghans involved in civil society activity or running NGOs to reach an accommodation with the Emirate's intelligence, which may require personnel to report to them.

Alas, much of what Afghans now experience is common to people living in other unfree countries. Freedom House's **Freedom in the World Report** rates conditions in 195 countries and 15 territories against 25 indicators of political and civil rights, based on the UDHR. In the 2023 report, Afghanistan was one of 16 countries dubbed the ‘worst of the worst’, a subset of the 57 countries which are rated as ‘not free’. Countries with ranking similar to Afghanistan include Syria, North Korea, Eritrea, Tajikistan, Belarus, China and Myanmar. Intensified suppression of freedom of expression is a common feature of contemporary authoritarian regimes. For example, in Nicaragua critics of Daniel Ortega can be jailed for treason and “authorities in Belarus, the eastern Donbas and Eritrea have developed informant networks and check people's phones to suppress the sharing of dissenting opinion.” Afghans are grimly familiar

with such practices. But this means that many of the challenges facing peacemakers who plot a way forward are generic to authoritarian contexts rather than unique to Afghanistan.

The February 2024 UN-organised Afghanistan meeting in Doha planned to follow-up the report by Special Coordinator Sinirlioglu to the UN Security Council illustrates the potential pitfalls in trying to organise a process which is meaningful for people living in repressive conditions. Understandably the UN asked the Taliban to send a delegation to represent their Emirate in talks with international envoys. The UN did not want to invite members of the Afghan resistance groupings, such as the Tajikistan-based National Resistance Front or the Turkey-based Supreme Council for National Resistance at this stage. This stance was the safest approach for a meeting at the start of a process. Therefore, the UN decided to put together a panel of members of civil society. The main idea was that credible but non-party-aligned Afghans should present their perspective on the state of play in Afghanistan to the assembled envoys. Potentially this could influence the roadmap adopted by a new UN ‘Special Envoy’. But expecting Afghans living under Taliban rule to participate freely in a high-profile and contested event is deeply problematic.

There is a long tradition of treating only Afghans resident and active in the country as authentic voices, better able to represent what is going on there

than members of the diaspora. But when an Afghan colleague was asked to suggest participants, his first question was what guarantee the UN can provide that participants would not face repercussions from the Taliban, for attending or taking positions which the Taliban do not like. The answer is of course that no one can credibly give such a guarantee. In academic research, ethical approval would rightly be withheld from any proposed exercise which exposed participants to unreasonable risks which could not be mitigated. This is the situation that peacemakers now find themselves in on Afghanistan. Encouraging non-Taliban to travel abroad to publicised events, encouraging them to speak openly and then expecting them to return home to face the music from GDI is ethically deeply problematic. The approach is even more problematic given that Taliban claim that they insisted that the UN share with them the identities of civil society figures considered for invitation.

In any case, the modern civil society that flourished in the Republic no longer exists. Even Afghan traditional civil society, comprising ulema and tribal elders, is closely watched by the Taliban. The pool of Afghans, able to maintain a public profile and a presence in Afghanistan, attend international events and speak critically is now very limited. Hezb Islami leader Amin Karim, women's activist Mahbouba Seraj and academic Faiz Zaland are notable examples, each of whom has had to develop a personal strategy to cope with life under the Taliban. While these are all highly respected and honourable figures, it would be naïve in the extreme to ignore the fact that ethnic minorities have found it most difficult to retain their independence while accommodating with the Taliban. Authoritarianism poses a challenge both for peacemakers considering who to invite to their meetings and for Afghans considering who they want to be represented by.

Some basic precautions would ensure that peace-making takes account of the difficult circumstances now experienced by Afghans. Firstly, we should stop expecting Afghans who live under Taliban rule to speak candidly in dialogue events or to represent any constituency other than their own individual experience. It is unethical to expect independent Afghans to express what is happening in the country and people's aspirations before having to return to Afghanistan and the Taliban's intelligence. Under the first Emirate, Political Affairs Officers of the UN mission were responsible for engaging securely with civil society in the country and feeding Afghan perspectives into the peace process. The UN should again do its job rather than rendering Afghans vulnerable.

Secondly, whoever leads a peace process should recognise the vital role to be played by Afghan political and civic organisations which are based outside Afghanistan, but which are able to communicate with and indeed mobilise Afghans resident in the country. Afghanistan under the second Emirate is far more open than the Afghanistan of the nineties, not least because of the penetration of telecommunications into the remotest parts of the country. This offers opportunities to circumvent authoritarianism inside Afghanistan. The February Doha meeting was only ever intended as the start of a process. The purpose of the new round of the engagement mandated by the Security Council is to help Afghans attain an inclusive political system which respects their rights. Therefore, when prioritising which non-Taliban parties and groupings to engage with, the peace process lead has an opportunity to favour those which can demonstrate they have a real base inside Afghanistan and are inclusive and have a national character. This of course highlights that the primary responsibility for ensuring that normal Afghans (there is a lack of

good adjectives to describe non-Taliban) have a say in determining their future lies with Afghan political and civic organisations. Afghan confidence in democratic politics was low by the end of the Republic and the onus is on the Afghan political class, which is now largely located in neighbouring countries and beyond, to win back that confidence and show leadership.

Thirdly, the peace process lead should recognise and address the considerable obstacles that Afghans now outside their country have faced in organising and building the new coalitions which are required to build pressure for an inclusive and right-respecting system. Local and national elected representatives, leaders and activists have been scattered between countries, some of which have imposed restrictions on open political activity. The peace process lead could work with host countries to win more space for Afghans to speak and organise. Ideally the peace process lead would also pursue what I have described as a "safe space to talk"—a country where Afghans engaged in the political process could convene. It is hard to over-estimate the decisive way in which access to Doha boosted the Taliban during the process led by Zalmay Khalilzad. The availability of an equivalent safe place could greatly facilitate the emergence of an effective and cohesive democratic opposition to the Taliban, which is a prerequisite for attaining durable stability. The conditions of authoritarianism prevailing in Afghanistan mean that such an opposition cannot develop in-country.

Challenging Hegemonic Conditions for Democratising Universities in India - Introducing Mitchell Institute Visiting Scholars Dr Nandita Banerjee Dhawan and Dr Asha Achuthan

Professor Dina Belluigi

Professor, School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy

Dr Ulrike M. Vieten

Senior Lecturer, School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding

February 2024

Mitchell Institute Fellows Professor Dina Belluigi (Legacy) and Dr Ulrike M. Vieten (Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding) are hosting Visiting Scholars Dr Nandita Banerjee Dhawan and Dr Asha Achuthan, on behalf of the Institute as they all just embarked on a new and exciting collaborative research project on *Counter-stories of Author-ity in Transition: Women in the Indian Academy*.

The project takes, as its departure point, the awareness of gendered intersectional inequalities, structural exclusion, and hegemony within higher education institutions in India, which are nonetheless tasked as key drivers of the Sustainable Development Goals. The multi-disciplinary, international team will apply innovative methods (including oral history, visual ethnography, soundscapes, digital stories, and art films) to create a counter-archive of the agency of first-generation academics within such conditions.

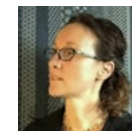
The project builds on the findings of a mixed method study which considered policy—and principle—implementation gaps to transforming higher education in Indian and South African universities.

Findings included, the costs of entering the 'New Middle Class' for those entrapped by gendered inequalities (see Dhawan, Belluigi, Idahosa, 2023); the politics of assigned and unassigned leadership for the sustainability of transformation (see Belluigi, Dhawan and Idahosa, 2022); the conditions of academics' formation as citizens within boundaries and borderlands of the academy (see Belluigi, Dhawan and Idahosa, 2021). A specific chapter with insights from within an historically Black university in South Africa is forthcoming (Idahosa, Belluigi and Dhawan, forthcoming). Dr Dhawan and Professor Belluigi have also offered a genealogical narration on the history of 'women's studies' in the Indian academy, as a contribution to the question of how critical university studies may be advanced, in a forthcoming edited volume.

Beyond the written and published material, glimpses of the innovative methodological development can be viewed in this visual paper (Belluigi and Meistre, 2021). It relates to a project (led by Professor Belluigi and artist Brent Meistre of Analogue Eye: Video Art Africa) about first generation academics with



Dr Ulrike M. Vieten



Professor Dina Belluigi

first generation-education artists. Included is the artwork *The Irreversible Other* by Mark Wilby, on the struggles against mis-recognition of Indian academics who are members of 'Scheduled Tribes'. Both artists are involved in this project, hoping to build on the learnings from Counter Narratives.

Dr Achuthan is an expert on histories of technology, including digital technologies, and on feminist queer politics. This all ties in very well to Dr Vieten's academic expertise in Gender, Ethnicity and Sexuality Studies (PhD, UEL, 2008).

Dr Banerjee Dhawan's and Dr Achuthan's affiliation with the Mitchell Institute began in January 2024 and will last until the end of 2026. Being Visiting Scholars will give space to develop further collaboration with various Institute's Fellows and Theme Leads, for instance, Professor Fiona Magowan and Professor Louise Mallinder.

Encompassing Dr Banerjee Dhawan and Dr Achuthan's research visits to Queen's University Belfast, in the near future, two RAs to the research

project, Ms Madhuparna Karmakar and Mr Johny Marjit, are going to join Queen's for one month, between March and April 2024. Both scholars, among others, will give talks and take part in activities within the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work, such as the Centre for Inclusion, Transformation and Equality (CITE), Away Days (14-15 March), and present insights of their work to students studying the university.

This international cooperation with Indian colleagues will deepen understanding of minority-majority world relations and complicate dominant narratives about authority and legitimacy in universities. Dr Vieten, who is a transnational *First Generation Academic*, feels inspired by the project in India, and plans to establish an international network (all-Ireland and UK, for now) to enhance understanding of structural inequalities for those first generations of female academics, who come and came to academia from working class backgrounds.

Dr Vieten has researched the notions of difference and otherness, particularly with respect to historical and contemporary cosmopolitanisms. More recently, she looked into the experiences of asylum seekers and refugees in Northern Ireland, and focused on the politics of loss, the language of dance and how to communicate experiences of displacement across different groups.

The study on refugees was the first study of this kind in NI, and commissioned by the OFMDFM/Stormont, in 2016. Following previous, also externally funded research, the most recent project with colleagues in Turkey is ground breaking as visual culture is used to stimulate processes of reconciliation across divided communities.



Belfast Event on ‘Academic Freedom Under Threat: Global and Local Perspectives’

Professor Dina Belluigi

Professor, School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy
February 2024



To discuss threats to academic freedom, over 50 people gathered in Belfast on 20 February 2024, for an event of the Scholars at Risk Ireland Committee. This is the first ever event held in Northern Ireland, and as such was a joint offering hosted by Queen’s University Belfast and Ulster University.

Following an opening by Janice Caruthers, as Dean of Research for the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at QUB, the SAR Annual Report was launched Denise Roche of SAR-Europe, based at Maynooth University. The reflections of the past SAR Ireland Committee Chair, Rowena Pecchenino (also Maynooth) were presented by the incoming Chair, Rory O’Connell.

Importantly, the day included contributions grounded in the personal-professional experiences of academics who had, or were, facing various threats and challenges to their academic freedoms. Some of these were linked to organisations—such as Scholars at Risk, the Council of At Risk Academics and Fobzu—which specifically sought to offer protections and support for academia and academics at risk. Most were within current institutional protections as staff members or fellows, though importantly one contributor provided insights into the challenges of continuing intellectual practice and support from a country in conflict, when without institutional protections.

These conversations commenced with a presentation by Helen Murray (King’s College London, Trustee of Funzo) titled *Between solidarity and silencing: A long view on building links between Palestinian and UK universities*. It was then followed by contributions of Abdul Aziz Mohibbi (Maynooth University), Dr Tetiana Kolisnyk (QUB), Dr Mohammed Hassan (University of Essex) and Dr Liudmyla Fihurska (QUB), who included reflections about their countries of Afghanistan, Sudan and Ukraine.

Academic Freedom in these islands was the second panel with contributions by Colin Harvey (QUB), Goretta Horgan (UU), Graham Ellison (QUB) & Roja Fazaeli (University of Galway).

In addition, Darren Ferguson (the director of Beyond Skin) discussed the Musicians at Risk Resettlement Scheme, through which many facing persecution or fleeing conflict have continued their practice, and thereby maintained their identities. This was followed by a performance by three musicians—Swar, Haroun and Conor—who had formed a trio in Northern Ireland, originally from Sudan and Ireland.

It is hoped that the event will catalyse more action, support and deliberation about how academic practice and academics can be better protected and enabled on these island, and by those on these islands.

Scholars at Risk has three organising frames: Protection, Advocacy and Learning. The current Chair of the Scholars at Risk Ireland Committee is Rory O’Connell (UU)—he organised the event with Dina Zoe Belluigi, who is the representative at QUB.

This event was supported by the Mitchell Institute, the Transitional Justice Institute (TJI) and INCORE at Ulster University (UU).

Professor Dina Belluigi

Professor Belluigi’s work relates to the agency and ethico-historical responsibility of those who re-present in contexts undergoing transitions in authority and in the shadow of oppression. She is concerned with the complexity of the conditions which (in)form artists’ and academics’ critical consciousness within institutions and countries. One of the current question is higher education institutions’ fit-for-purpose for driving substantive change, such as the SDGs which they have been mandated to do. She is committed to the growth of pan-African and international networks for advancing Critical University Studies, where committed scholars, practitioners and policy makers across the globe actively pursue an emancipatory imagination for the future university.



RESEARCH FUNDED POSTS

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Complex Conflict and Peace

Professor Michael Semple
Professorial Research Fellow

During 2024, Professor Semple continued a two-year project of research on the political culture of the Afghan Taliban Movement, tracking developments in the Afghanistan conflict through this lens.

The project aims to contribute to western policymaking on Afghanistan in the wake of the Taliban takeover and establishment of a second Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. In particular, the research endeavour is designed to offer insights on possible strategies to establish an inclusive political system, which is still widely considered a *sine qua non* for attainment of sustainable peace in Afghanistan's diverse Muslim society. Other post-2021 western concerns include the humanitarian crisis and human rights abuses in Afghanistan and the threats of terrorism, narcotics and mass migration emanating from the country.

The research project offers its insights into Taliban actions and perspectives as a contribution to the evidence-based policy response.

The Taliban capture of Kabul on 5 August 2021 was not a 'end of history' moment for Afghans and Afghanistan. Rather, it was the start of a new phase in the struggle to control and define the country.

The research team has a hand in chronicling and making sense of this struggle. The research findings inform the Taliban Turbans and the Smartphone Podcast Series, featuring analysis and discussion with Afghan

leaders and thinkers, including members of the former Afghan government, NGO's, and others involved in the country's politics as the country seeks to rebuild under a new Taliban government, 20 years after the former Taliban rulers were overthrown.

The third Series, broadcast in 2024, follows latest developments in Afghanistan and applies key ideas to interpret the new Afghan reality. Episodes investigate the characteristics of the Taliban's political culture and explore their model of Islamist authoritarianism. Under the self-explanatory episode title "Life in struggle", special guest and founder of the Afghan Human Rights Commission, Dr Sima Samar, talks about her memoir. Other episodes take a deeper look at particular aspects of the Taliban's state-building project and Afghan and international responses to it. For example we consider whether the Taliban have been more successful than their predecessors in setting up and funding sustainable security forces. And we ask how Afghans are speaking up and pushing back, through civic action.

The previous two Series explain how the Taliban managed to take power in Kabul in August 2021 and what they did in their first year (Series 1) and explore policy, politics, security and economics as the Taliban consolidated their rule (Series 2).

The Podcasts demonstrate just how profound and equally fascinating and troubling the story of Afghanistan has been since the Taliban takeover.



Professor Michael Semple

Professor Michael Semple is Professorial Research Fellow: Complex Conflict and Peace Research based at the Mitchell Institute. Michael was previously Practitioner Chair. He works on innovative approaches to peace-making and engagement with militant Islamic movements in Afghanistan and South Asia. His interests include the political culture of the Afghan Taliban and kindred militant Islamic movements, the role and potential of dialogue and social media in conflict transformation and the challenge of pluralism in the post 9/11 Muslim world.



SUCCESSSES

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We are delighted to share the success of Institute staff and Fellows whose standing and significant contribution to their various research fields has been recognised by Fellowship awards, election to prestigious academies and grant awards.

We celebrate the success of one of our Honorary Professors on becoming the 2024 Templeton Prize Laureate

Professor Louise Mallinder Elected to the Royal Irish Academy and Appointed as the 2024 Pozen Professor of Human Rights

In May 2024, at a ceremony in Dublin, Mitchell Institute Deputy Director Professor Louise Mallinder was officially admitted into the Royal Irish Academy as an elected member, in recognition of her exceptional contribution to humanities and social sciences.

One of only 28 elected members from across Ireland, Professor Mallinder has been recognised for her distinguished contributions to scholarship and research.

The Royal Irish Academy is an independent, all-island learned society which elects a small number of members each year for their distinguished contributions to scholarship and research. The Academy has been honouring Ireland's leading contributors to the world of learning since its establishment in 1785. Each member is formally admitted in a special ceremony, during which they subscribe to the Member's Declaration of Obligations and sign the Roll Book of Members. Past Members have included Nobel laureates: WB Yeats, Ernest Walton, Max Planck, Erwin Schrödinger and Seamus Heaney.

Commenting on her election, Professor Mallinder said: "I feel extremely honoured to have been elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy. I am looking forward to being part of its community of leading experts from the sciences and humanities and to supporting the Academy in its work to serve the public good through promoting academic research and knowledge."

Earlier in the year, Professor Mallinder was appointed the 2024 Pozen Professor of Human Rights at the University of Chicago.

Pozen Professorships are awarded annually to 'distinguished human rights scholars and practitioners'. These visiting positions enable the Pozen professors to spend one quarter of the academic year at the Pozen Family Center for Human Rights at the University of Chicago, during which time they will teach one Seminar and deliver a Public Lecture. The Pozen Center is an interdisciplinary centre for the study and advancement of human rights. The Pozen Professorship is made possible by a gift from Richard and Ann Pozen.

Professor Louise Mallinder, QUB with Professor Pat Guiry, President of the Royal Irish Academy





As part of her appointment, Professor Mallinder visited the University of Chicago from 11 March to 19 May 2024 where she taught a course on Transitional Justice during and after conflict. She also delivered a Public Lecture on 18 April 2024 on her in progress monograph on amnesties and international law—research which is funded by a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship.

In her talk, Professor Mallinder discussed her current book project that examines whether a norm has evolved in international law to prohibit the use of amnesties for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations. The salience of this topic is evident if we consider that in 2004, the Special Court of Sierra Leone proclaimed that there was a ‘crystallizing international norm’ to prohibit states from enacting amnesties for serious crimes, such as genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. However, in 2020, the Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Court argued that ‘international law is still in the developmental stage on the question of acceptability of amnesties,’ suggesting that the Special Court of Sierra Leone’s anticipated future for amnesties has not yet definitively come to pass.

In exploring this question, Professor Mallinder engaged with theories on how to identify and interpret international legal norms. She used this framework to contrast the interpretative strategies used by international courts with more positivist approaches that place greater emphasis on state practice. She further used original empirical data on state practice to identify areas of divergence between judicial decisions and state practice on amnesties. This data is drawn primarily from the Amnesties, Conflict, and Peace Agreement database.

Commenting on her appointment, Louise said: “I am greatly honoured to be appointed as this year’s Pozen Professor and I am very much looking forward to using this opportunity to advance my research and teaching on law and peace in a leading international human rights centre. I am also looking forward to working more closely with my colleagues in Chicago.”



Professor John D. Brewer Receives the 2023 Distinguished Service to British Sociology Award

Emeritus Professor John D. Brewer received the 2023 Distinguished Service to British Sociology Award from the British Sociological Association.

The award is judged on service to British sociology and awarded to the outstanding individual who has contributed most to the discipline by leading an extraordinary life as a sociologist.

On receiving the award, Professor Brewer commented: “I am thoroughly delighted to receive this award. I have enormous respect for the British Sociological Association and I consider my service to the Association as a highlight of my career.”

Commenting on the award, Professor Richard English, Mitchell Institute Director said: “It is excellent to see Professor John Brewer’s immense contribution to sociology being celebrated with this prestigious award. Many congratulations on this well-deserved recognition.”



Dr Lauren Dempster Awarded AHRC Research, Development and Engagement Fellowship

Dr Lauren Dempster, Institute Fellow: Rights and Social Justice, was awarded just over £290,000 from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Research, Development and Engagement Fellowship for her project **Forensic Scientists and Knowledge Production in Transitional Justice**.

This AHRC Fellowship Scheme allows researchers to carry out high-quality research in any area covered by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It also provides the opportunity to develop capabilities as research specialists and to undertake innovative and collaborative development activities.

Over an 18 month period, Lauren will explore the role of forensic scientists in transitional justice, specifically in the context of efforts to recover the disappeared. This will involve investigating what knowledge forensic scientists produce—and how, the factors that influence or impede on this knowledge production work, and the ways in which this knowledge can shape or influence transitional justice

mechanisms and outcomes. In addition, she will explore what we can learn from the work of forensic scientists about knowledge production in transitional justice as a field—this is an area that has come under increased scrutiny in light of critiques that the field has a neo-colonial tendency, with Global North scholarship and practice dominating the field.



Dr Teresa Degenhardt Receives the Emma Goldman Award from the FLAX Foundation

Dr Teresa Degenhardt, Mitchell Institute Fellow: The Politics and Security of Institutional Peacebuilding, on receiving an Emma Goldman Award from the FLAX Foundation.

The FLAX Foundation generates and supports innovative research and knowledge on feminist and inequality issues in Europe in order to contribute to a society with greater social justice, equality, and solidarity. Since 2020 they have been issuing awards to talented and engaged scholars on feminist and inequality issues in Europe, to support their research and development.

The Emma Goldman Awards are awarded to between 5 and 10 selected excellent candidates each year. Recipients can spend their 50,000 Euro awards according to their own research plans, provided they fall within the remit of the aims of the Foundation and they are agreed upon by the Board of the Foundation. They also receive individual and group coaching to ensure that they budget and plan expenditure of their award.



Professor Muiris MacCarthaigh Elected to Fellowship of the Academy of Social Sciences

Professor Muiris MacCarthaigh, Mitchell Institute Fellow: The Politics and Security of Institutional Peacebuilding, was elected as Fellow to the Academy of Social Sciences.

The Academy of Social Sciences promotes social sciences in the UK for public benefit. They showcase, champion and advocate for the social sciences, raising awareness of their immense value and helping to secure their flourishing future. It is the national academy of academics, practitioners and learned societies in social science. The sector's leading independent voice in the UK, we champion the vital role social sciences play in education, government and business.

Muiris, Head of Politics and International Relations and Professor of Politics and Public Administration in the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, was nominated by the Public Administration Committee (PAC) of the Joint University Council for his outstanding scholarship and leadership in public

administration and service to the learned society. Commenting on his appointment, Muiris said: "It's an honour to be recognised by the Academy for my research and engagement with public servants and public sector organisations over the last two decades.

I look forward to continuing this work with colleagues at Queen's and using the opportunities that membership of the Academy provides to collaborate with distinguished academics and practitioners, and in so doing to advance the frontiers of social science."



Dr Jocelyn Dautel Awarded the Templeton World Charity Foundation Research Funding

Dr Jocelyn Dautel, Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding, was awarded \$260,000 of funding from the Templeton World Charity Foundation to continue the collaborative project on **Communicating ‘Truth’: Consumption and Transmission of Polarized Information Amongst Young People in a Divided Society**, for another 2 years. The project forms part of the Grand Challenges in Human Flourishing initiative.

The project will be conducted by an international and multidisciplinary team of researchers including:

- **Mariah Kornbluh** (University of Oregon)
- **Jing Xu** (University of Seattle Washington)
- **Bethany Corbett** (Ulster University)
- **Lara Wood** (Abertay University)
- **Christin Schulz** (University of Amsterdam)
- **Jennifer Watling Neal** (Michigan State University)
- **Kathleen Corriveau** (Boston University)
- **Emma Flynn** (Warwick University)

The team’s expertise stretches across the disciplines of cognitive science, psychology, cultural evolution, anthropology, communications, neuroscience, and child and adolescent development.

Explaining the project, Jocelyn said: “In this programme of research, we integrate paradigms from cultural evolution and social learning to investigate how young people evaluate the credibility of information in divided societies, including how they seek and share information. We use mixed-methods to investigate dynamic influences within broader socio-ecological systems, exploring *interpersonal*, *structural* and *cultural* influences on information transmission and belief revision amongst young people in Northern Ireland.

With seed funding from the Templeton World Charity Foundation our team embarked on an ambitious project including three strands of mixed-method research to pursue this programme of research. The current funding will allow us to finalize data collection, synthesize our results across three strands of research, and disseminate findings through academic outputs and community research engagement.

In **Strand 1**, we employ computational text-mining to examine how narratives on identity and polarisation affect social learning. Novel text analysis methods and utilization of Large Language Models (LLMs) allow for exploration of actual differences in information via pedagogical texts and cross-generational narratives that young people are exposed to in Northern Ireland.

In **Strand 2**, we employ diffusion chains, similar to an experimental game of telephone, to test biases in the transmission and consumption of polarised information across young people. In this method we feed a polarized narrative to a first participant, who reads and recalls for the next participant. The second participant then reads and recalls the narrative of the first participant, and recalls for a third participant, and so on. Experimental paradigms will allow us to rigorously test how information is transmitted across young people within—and between—ethno-religious groups, and how aspects of transmission (e.g. content, source) impact fidelity of information across transmission and openness to belief revision.

Strand 3 uses qualitative interviews to elucidate the role of culture and social context, as well as thought processes around information consumption, transmission, and belief revision. Furthermore, qualitative interviews yield the opportunity to explore facilitators of belief revision across multiple ecological system levels: interpersonal (family, peers), structural (schools, neighbourhoods), and cultural (social media, politics).

Now in the final stages of data collection, we shift our focus with the current funding to analysis and dissemination of our research findings. We will also synthesize findings across strands in order to illuminate biases in the consumption and transmission of information. The findings will inform future interventions focussed on increasing epistemic vigilance and critical consciousness of young people in polarized societies.”



Professor Colin Harvey Appointed to the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the Scientific Committee of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission is Ireland's national human rights and equality institution.

They are an independent public body that accounts to the Oireachtas, with a mandate established under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 (IHREC Act 2014). The IHREC Act includes and further enhances the functions of the former Irish Human Rights Commission and the former Equality Authority. Their purpose is to promote and protect human rights and equality in Ireland and build a culture of respect for human rights, equality and intercultural understanding in the State.

The Commission's founding legislation provides a range of ways to address human rights and equality issues from engagement to enforcement. The Commission aims to bring about change through legal means, policy and legislative advice, awareness

and education and partnerships across civil society. This appointment is a distinguished honour, reflecting not only Professor Harvey's expertise and lifelong commitment to human rights and equality but also his exceptional contributions to the academic community at Queen's University Belfast.

Commenting on his appointment, Professor Harvey said: "On a personal note, this is particularly meaningful recognition of my lifelong work for human rights and equality on this island. I want to take the opportunity to thank publicly all those who expressed solidarity and support during difficult recent times. It made a genuine difference and was a welcome reminder of the collective values that underpin this vital work. I hope to be of assistance to the Commission during what is a significant moment for human rights and equality on the island of Ireland. I regard this appointment as further acknowledgement of the outstanding human rights and equality work ongoing at Queen's."

Colin was also appointed to the Scientific Committee of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), in December 2023. Established in 2007, the FRA are the independent centre of reference and excellence for promoting and protecting human rights in the EU. They help make Europe a better place to live and work and help defend the fundamental rights of all people living in the EU.

The Scientific Committee is the guarantor of the scientific quality of the FRA's work and is involved by the Director in the early stages of the preparation of the majority of FRA's documents drawn up to meet its tasks. The Scientific Committee is composed of eleven independent persons, highly qualified in the field of fundamental rights.

The members bring together specialist expertise in key thematic areas such as EU migration law; European and comparative disability law; comparative constitutional law; engagement of domestic courts with international law; interaction between EU and Council of Europe law; equality law; artificial intelligence and automated computing; fundamental rights structures; the rule of law; populism; political participation and civil society engagement; international and European criminal law; international human rights law.

Commenting on his appointment, Professor Harvey said: "It is a genuine honour and privilege to be appointed to this EU expert advisory role. This is a significant and challenging moment for human rights across Europe and I hope to be of assistance in supporting the vital work of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights."



Honorary Professor Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela Wins the 2024 Templeton Prize

The recipient of the 2024 Templeton Prize is Mitchell Institute Honorary Professor Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela.

The Templeton Prize honours individuals whose exemplary achievements advance Sir John Templeton’s philanthropic vision: harnessing the power of the sciences to explore the deepest questions of the universe and humankind’s place and purpose within it.

Pumla’s insights into the mechanisms of trauma and forgiveness in post-apartheid South Africa have created a globally-recognized model for social healing in the aftermath of conflict, a model she calls “the reparative quest.”

Pumla is Professor and South African National Research Foundation’s Chair in Violent Histories and Transgenerational Trauma and the Director of the Centre for the Study of the Afterlife of Violence and

the Reparative Quest at Stellenbosch University. She was also an influential member of the Human Rights Violations Committee of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Her career as a researcher and a public figure is distinguished by her effort to repair ruptures created by past violence and to build a path toward healing and restoration in an ongoing process she calls ‘the reparative quest.’ In international lectures and books, she displays keen powers of sympathy and a deep feeling of humanity toward victims as well perpetrators of traumatic experiences.

“Through the many encounters I had in my work when I served on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, I learned that ordinary people, under certain circumstances, are capable of far greater evil than we could have imagined. But so are we capable of far greater virtue than we might have thought,” said Gobodo-Madikizela. “My research is based on

this possibility of human transformation, on probing deeper to understand the conditions necessary to restore the values of what it means to be human—to want to preserve the dignity and life of the other.”



Society of Legal Scholars Best Paper Prize 2023 Awarded to Dr Conall Mallory

The Society of Legal Scholars Best Paper Prize was awarded to Mitchell Institute Fellow: Rights and Social Justice, Dr Conall Mallory and co-author Dr H el ene Tyrrell (Newcastle University) for their paper entitled *The Extra-Judicial Voice*. The selection was made at the Society of Legal Scholars 2023 Annual Conference that took place at Oxford Brookes, and the prize includes  300 monetary award and publication of the paper in the Legal Studies journal, Volume 44, Issue 1 in April 2024.

Judges communicate outside of the courtroom on a regular basis. They give speeches at universities and to societies; appear before select committees; write for a range of publications; and engage in both media and outreach activities. Existing literature has charted the value and perils of such extrajudicial communication. This paper contributes an explanation of what motivates judges towards such communication, and what shapes their discourse. The paper is based on a series of 13 interviews with serving and retired senior judges from England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Commenting on winning the award, Conall said: “We are delighted to win the award for best paper at the SLS annual conference. The paper is the first output from an extended project we have been working on concerning extra-judicial communication, i.e. when judges communicate outside of legal judgments. We are in the process of editing a wider collection on extra-judicial outputs and have plans to continue our engagement with both domestic and international judges on their discourse beyond the bench.”



Dr Tristan Sturm takes up Fellowship at the Centre for Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Studies

Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding, Dr Tristan Sturm obtained a Fellowship at the Centre for Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Studies at the University of Heidelberg. He commenced his 4 month tenure on 1 April 2024 to finish his book, *The Future Is a Foreign Country: The Apocalyptic Landscapes of American Christian Zionist Pilgrims In Israel-Palestine*.

This book project, is a decade-long ethnographic study of American Christian Zionist pilgrims whose religious (Jewish-Christian) and national (American-Israeli) identities are imagined through an expectation of an apocalyptic future. This is a future that finds expression in landscape pilgrimage sites in Israel and Palestine.

INSTITUTE METRICS

OCTOBER 2023 - SEPTEMBER 2024

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48,413
WEBSITE
VIEWS

Visitors from 146 countries such as Ireland, USA, Spain, Italy, China, South Africa and Australia visited the Mitchell Institute website, with over 100 views from 23 countries.



98,619
IMPRESSIONS
ON X

Our followers include academics, researchers and practitioners from a range of universities and institutes across the world, as well as members of the public with an interest in the activity of the Institute.



4,682
YOUTUBE
VIEWS

Recordings of Institute talks and lectures from leading academics, practitioners enable people from across the world to engage with Institute activity.



817 PODCAST LISTENERS

Podcast Listeners on iTunes and Spotify for the Taliban, Turbans and Smartphones Podcast series.



RESEARCH INCOME

During the academic year 2023-2024, Mitchell Institute colleagues secured:

Research Awards
£1,686,039

Budget Contribution
£479,455

Total Research Income Assigned
£3,681,719



176 POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

68 Mitchell Institute academics are the 1st Supervisor for 176 Postgraduate Research students.

60 Mitchell Institute academics are the 2nd Supervisor to 122 Postgraduate Research students.

02

POSTGRADUATE
ACTIVITIES



POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH

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There are currently 176 Postgraduate Research Students whose first supervisors are Mitchell Institute academics. The Institute is also home to two Doctoral Training Programmes:

- The Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Cybersecurity and Society (LINCS)
- The Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Algorithmic Solutions (LINAS)

These Programmes have total funding of £2.4million, from the Leverhulme Trust and from the NI Assembly Department for the Economy for a total of 30 postgraduate research students per programme, from 2015 to 2026. There are currently 19 students enrolled on these two programmes—a significant proportion of our student cohort.

The postgraduate students contribute significantly to the strong interdisciplinary community of the Institute. They have opportunities to get involved in the development and delivery of dedicated postgraduate activity, through formal and informal events, such as the Annual Postgraduate Research Conference and Fireside Chat Series. By doing so, they build on their transferable skills and expertise, enabling significant personal development. Our students have access to the extensive expertise within the Institute and across Queen's University Belfast as well as through the Institute's network of national and international researchers, professionals, practitioners and communities from a diverse range of disciplines.





DOCTORAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES

LINAS

The Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Algorithmic Solutions

The Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Algorithmic Solutions (LINAS) Doctoral Training Programme was established in 2021 to develop a cohort of Doctoral Scholars who can address the implications of massive scale data processing, artificial intelligence and machine learning for both the actual operation of algorithmically driven public decision-making in wider society, and within science and engineering. The development of Large Language Models of generative AI such as Chat GPT which have caught attention recently have given new impetus to this research area.

LINAS brings together legal scholars, social scientists, physical scientists, mathematicians, computer scientists and engineers to develop a distinctive cohort of doctoral students working across the boundaries of their own disciplines to explore the wider themes here.

This Doctoral Training Programme will receive a total of £1.35million from the Leverhulme Trust with match funding from the Department for the Economy for 30 scholarships over 72 months, from 2021 to 2027. This funding covers the tuition fees and maintenance grants (at standard UKRI rates) in addition to supporting training and development needs.

The first cohort of 6 LINAS students commenced their studies in autumn 2021, with a total of 19 Scholars on the programme in 2023-24. The Scholars are working on a variety of interdisciplinary projects ranging from legal technology and the ontology of law, algorithms and market abuse, and the challenges of unmanned ariel devices.

Professor John Morison, Programme Coordinator said: “LINAS brings together a wide range of PhD scholars and an extended supervisory team to explore the implications of massive-scale data processing, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML). Our focus is on exploring the actual operation of algorithmically driven public decision-making in wider society, and within science and engineering.

At this midway point in the programme the number and range of both PhD scholars and supervisors has increased, and projects now cover an even wider spectrum of interdisciplinary interests.

There are now 19 Doctoral Scholars currently enrolled and all are fully engaged with the training aspects of the programme and take full part in the extensive programme of LINAS activities that bring

the various postgraduate students and staff members together from across a range of disciplines within the University. This includes a Seminar Series, book club, a very vibrant ethics discussion group, and a film event alongside a number of training sessions.

Notable among the activities was the Student-led Postgraduate Conference in April on ‘*The Automation Generation: The Societal Implications of AI, ML and Big Data*’ which attracted a large audience from both within QUB and beyond.”

LINCS

The Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Cybersecurity and Society

The Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Cybersecurity and Society (LINCS) Doctoral Training Programme was established in 2015 to support Doctoral Scholars undertaking pioneering research at the interface between the social sciences and electronic engineering & computer science. LINCS brings together The Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice and the Centre for Secure Information Technologies (CSIT) to develop a distinctive cohort of 15 doctoral students working across the boundaries of their disciplines, opening up new avenues of enquiry centred initially on the priority themes and specific PhD projects.

This Doctoral Training Programme was awarded £1.05million from the Leverhulme Trust with match funding from the Department for the Economy for 30 scholarships over 60 months, from 2015 to 2023. This funding covered the tuition fees and maintenance grants (at standard UKRI rates) in addition to supporting training and development needs.

The first cohort of LINCS students commenced their studies in Autumn 2015.

Professor Cathal McCall, Programme Coordinator said: “As one of the original Leverhulme Doctoral Training Scheme programmes LINCS was a pathfinder for interdisciplinary research on cybersecurity and society at Queen’s. LINCS opened exciting, innovative and rewarding avenues of enquiry enabling researchers to develop futures-oriented collaborations and offer interdisciplinary support to its Leverhulme Doctoral Scholars. The programme ended in 2023. However, it has been succeeded by the Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Algorithmic Solutions (LINAS) ensuring continuity of futures-oriented postgraduate research in this rapidly developing field of study.”

LINAS CONFERENCE 2024

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LEVERHULME
TRUST

‘The Automation Generation’: The Implications of AI, ML and Big Data

The Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Algorithmic Solutions (LINAS) Doctoral Training Programme hosted an annual Postgraduate Research Conference at Queen’s University Belfast on 22 April 2024. It was organised by a small committee of students from the LINAS cohort and focused on a broad theme related to *The Automation Generation*, that considered the wide implications of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML) and Big Data. The conference is entirely student-led.

The Annual Postgraduate Research Conference provides a platform for postgraduate students and researchers, from Queen’s University Belfast and beyond, to showcase their research to a wide audience and to build networks with other interdisciplinary researchers from across the world.

Through presentations and discussions, major questions pertaining to the implications of massive-scale data processing, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) were addressed.

Organising Committee Chairs

- Anna Montgomery
- Joshua Weston

Opening Remarks

Professor Kieran McEvoy
Senator George J. Mitchell Chair in Peace, Security and Justice, and Theme Lead: Rights and Social Justice

Keynote Address

Digital Constitutionalism Theories: Methodology and Research Agenda

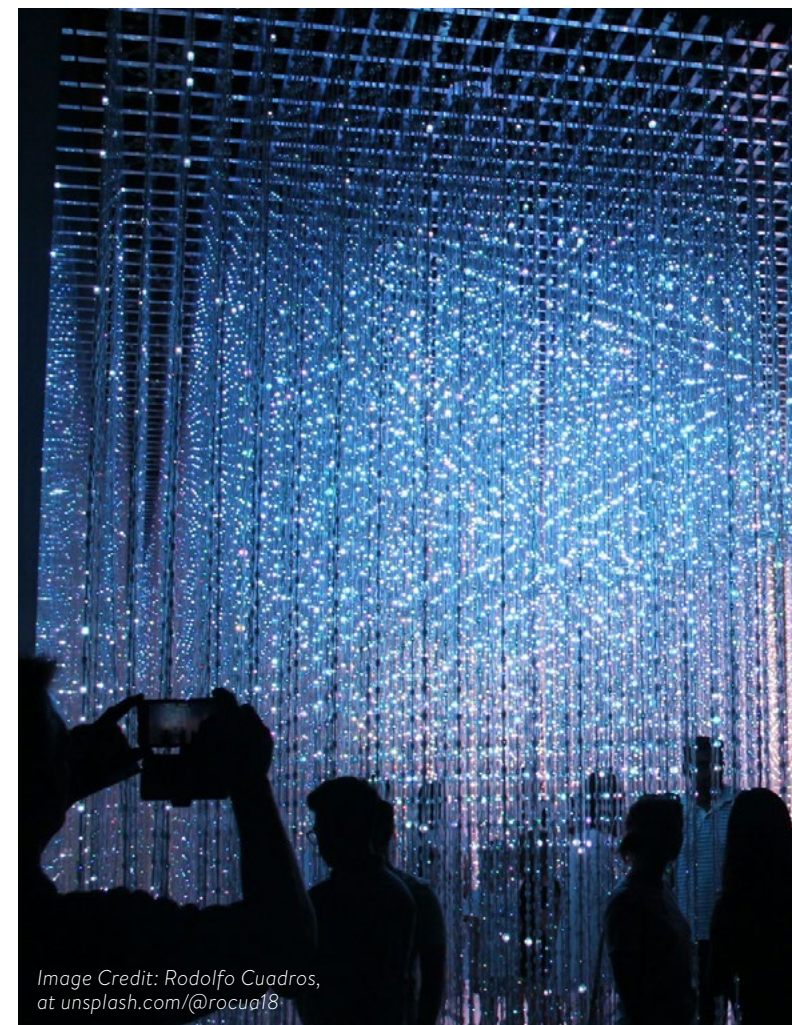
Associate Professor Edoardo Celeste
Associate Professor of Law, Technology and Innovation at the School of Law and Government, Dublin City University (DCU)

Concluding Remarks

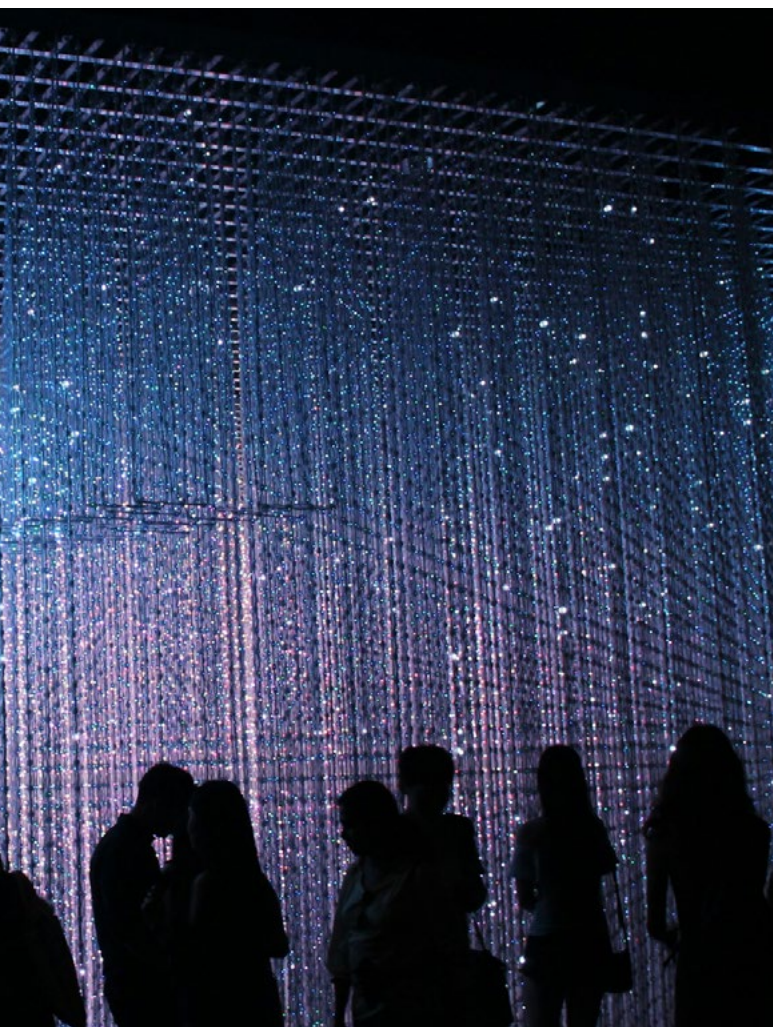
Professor John Morison
School of Law and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy

LINAS Forum

Chair: Dr Deepak Padmanabhan
Senior Lecturer, School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences



*Image Credit: Rodolfo Cuadros,
at unsplash.com/@rocua18*



Panel 1
Public Sector, Accountability, and Society

Chair

Professor Muiris MacCarthaigh
School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics and Mitchell Institute Fellow: The Politics and Security of Institutional Peacebuilding

Panellists

Fatima Ozcan
University of Southampton
Navigating Regulatory Waters: Cyber Security Governance for Autonomous Vessels

Helena Anacka
Gdańsk University of Technology
Enhancing Climate Awareness through Digital Technologies. The PULA Application Case

David Mark
Queen's University Belfast
We Regulate What We See

Marc Elliott
Queen's University Belfast
Mapping Dominant AI Schools to Accountability Types

Panel 2
Surveillance, Threat, and Victimization

Chair

Dr Teresa Degenhardt
Senior Lecturer, School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work and Mitchell Institute Fellow: The Politics and Security of Institutional Peacebuilding

Panellists

Kelly Huie
Queen's University Belfast
Self Disclosures on Snapchat and the Potentiality for Cybercrime Victimization

Jean-Pierre Roux
University of Glasgow/Edinburgh
Body-Worn Video Technology: More than a Recording Device

Anna Montgomery
Queen's University Belfast
Casting the Spotlight on Surveillance Exercised by Domestic Abusers within Intra-Private Spaces

Shuxin Zhang and Zhuoyi Shen
Durham University
How to Protect Female Privacy Rights Online—What should we do if the Nth Room case happens in China?



This image was created
using Generative AI

Panel 3 **AI and the Changing Legal Order**

Chair

Professor John Morison
School of Law and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy

Panellists

Martina Černá
University of Edinburgh
*Distributed Autonomous Organizations:
Mismanagement and Inefficiency Reduced by a Code
or Translated into the Code?*

Victoria Hendrickx
KU Leuven Centre for IT and IP Law
*In Defence of Fair Trials: The Implications of AI on
The Judicial Duty to State Reasons*

Arjun Banerjee
Vrije Univesiteit Brussel
*Judicial Analytics: Addressing Bias or Creating New
Challenges?*

RaisuL Islam Sourav
University of Galway
*Decoding Legal Analytics: Navigating the Prospects
in the Digital Jurisprudence Era*

Panel 4 **Implications of AI on the Creative Industry**

Chair

Professor Giancarlo Frosio
*Professor of Intellectual Property and Technology Law,
School of Law*

Panellists

Anil Sena Bayindir
University of Galway
Patent Law Implications of Automation in Innovation

Weiwei Yi
University of Glasgow
*How “Free” is Free-to-Play: Reining Dark Design
Patterns in the Video Game Industry Through the
EU Data Regulation Paradigm*

Katherine Pittalis
Queen’s University Belfast
*The Weaponisation of Bots—A Private or Public Problem
for the Music Industry*

Laura Filliung
University of London (City)
*Algorithmic Challenges in Online Content Moderation:
Exploring Human Rights and Copyright Issues and
Proposing Data Trusts as a Policy Solution*

Panel 5
AI Through Scientific Discovery

Chair

Dr Sandra Scott-Hayward
Associate Professor, School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

Panellists

Joshua Weston
Queen's University Belfast
Objects in Space: Real or Bogus?

Jarlath Warner
Queen's University Belfast
Reduced Precision Tangled Program Graphs for Arrhythmia and Abnormality Detection Through ECG Classification

Jessica Barr
Queen's University Belfast
Machine Learning-Enhanced Diagnostics of Open Quantum Networks

Petia Guintchev Toneva
University of Barcelona
Introducing the Notion of Preventability of Errors in AI Regulatory Debates

Panel 6
Regulation and Application of Data in Society

Chair

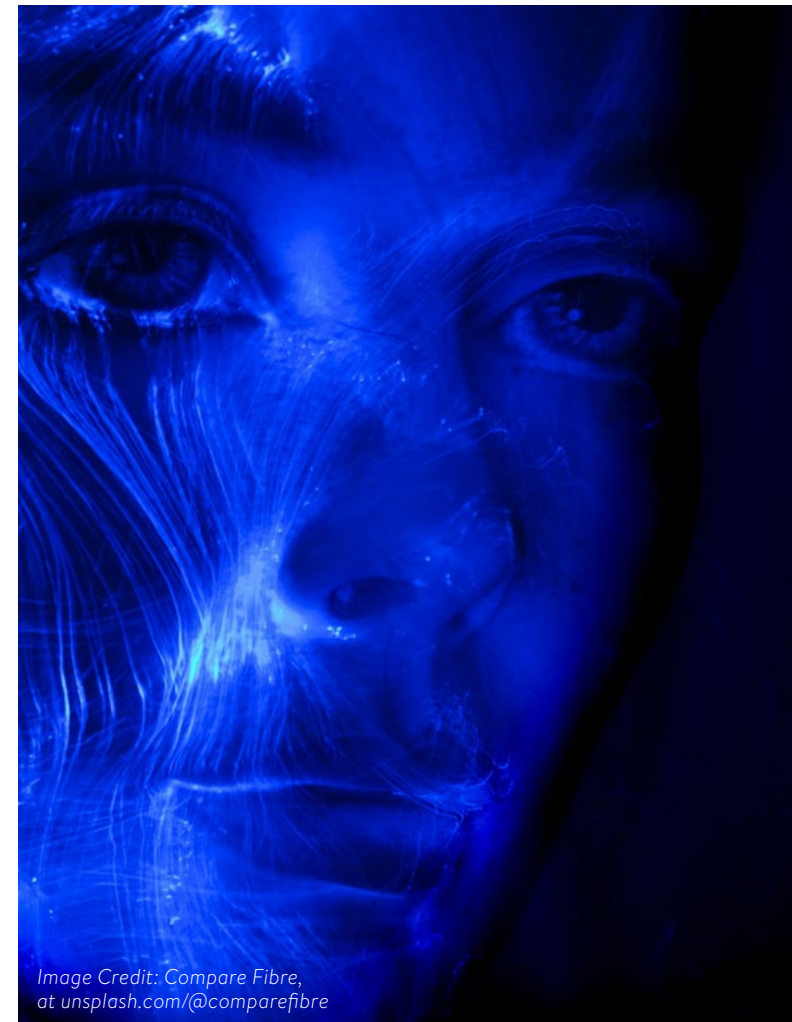
Dr Mike Bourne
Reader, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics and Mitchell Institute Fellow: The Politics and Security of Institutional Peacebuilding

Panellists

Lonnie Petersen
University of Southern Denmark
Artificial Intelligence Within the Public Sector—An Analysis of Legal Challenges

Spyros Syrrakos
London School of Economics and Political Sciences
Mapping the Proportionality Debate in the Digital Age within the EU Legal Order

Dr Katie Nolan
University of Ulster
The Function of Data Protection in Society



*Image Credit: Compare Fibre,
at unsplash.com/@comparefibre*

LINCS / LINAS SEMINAR SERIES

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The LINAS Seminar Series is student-led and organised by Dr Meg Schwamb and the doctoral scholars on the programme.

The Seminars explore the implications of massive-scale data processing, artificial intelligence, and machine learning for both the actual operation of algorithmically driven public decision-making in wider society, and within science and engineering.

15 November 2023

Anna Montgomery
Second year LINAS Doctoral Scholar
*The Smart Home as a Site of Control for
Victim-Survivors of Domestic Abuse*

Jason McKillen
Third year LINAS Doctoral Scholar
*Who Designs AI Security Systems? Locating Actors and
Identifying Structures in the Development of AI-enabled
Security Tools*

Dr Anastasia Ershova
Lecturer, School of History, Anthropology,
Philosophy and Politics
*Negotiating European Integration Council
Responsiveness to Public Opinion*

14 February 2024

Katherine Pittalis
Second year LINAS Doctoral Dcholar
*Weaponisation of Algorithmic Bots—a Private or Public
Problem for the Music Industry?*

Joshua Weston
Second year LINAS Doctoral Scholar
Objects in Space: Real or Bogus?

Dr Deepak Padmanabhan
Senior Lecturer, School of Electronics, Electrical
Engineering and Computer Science
The Intents and Consequences of AI

13 March 2024

Professor Austen Rainer
School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and
Computer Science
Human, AI and the Creative Leap

Jarlath Warner
Second year LINAS Doctoral Scholar
Optimised Tangled Program Graphs for FPGA Synthesis

Samantha Darrah
First year LINAS Doctoral Scholar
*Algorithm Aversion and Decision Making: An Overview
of Existing Research and Why Hybrid Intelligence May
be a Useful Tool*

FIRESIDE CHAT

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Established in 2019, the Fireside Chat Series is a student-led initiative, developed and delivered by a Fireside Chat Coordinating Committee of Mitchell Institute PGR students. PGR students Darren Colbourne and Brendan McKee coordinated the series for 2022-23.

The 'Fireside Chat' is a reference to American history and politics and also acts as a tribute to Senator George J. Mitchell. The key aims of the Fireside Chats are to provide a platform to showcase the interdisciplinary research going on across the Institute and beyond, and to enable networking for postgraduate students, researchers and practitioners at a range of career stages.

Irish Nationalist Identity in Transition: The GAA and Rule 21

Speaker: Jennifer Arthur

PhD Candidate

Chair: Damien Rea

PhD Candidate

25 October 2023

Queen's University Belfast

In this Fireside Chat, PhD candidate Jennifer Arthur discussed Rule 21 of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) which banned members of the British security forces from playing or being members of the GAA from 1885 to 2001. This rule created an added dimension to the divisions in Northern Ireland during the Troubles from 1969 to 1998 and for three years after the Good Friday Agreement in 2001 when the Rule was finally deleted.

Jennifer explored the political connections and impacts surrounding the deletion of Rule 21 from the GAA rulebook, to give an important insight into the complexity and indeed diversity of Irish nationalist politics north and south of the border.

By predominantly using qualitative interviews and media coverage, Jennifer discussed the debates and impacts around rescinding of Rule 21 and the impact on Crossmaglen Rangers and the British Army occupation of Crossmaglen GAA grounds in South Armagh.

Debate in national GAA Congress in the years leading up to the rule change achieved a national solidarity and an understanding of the difficulties faced by Irish nationalists in the North by their southern counterparts.

The examination of the deletion of this rule allows an important perspective of the evolution and meaning of Irish nationalist identity.

Jennifer Arthur is a PhD student at Queen's University Belfast. Her research is focused on Irish nationalism and identifying diversity in contemporary Irish Nationalism and Irish National Identity, using the framework of sport, and nationalism in sport, in particular the Gaelic Athletic Association.



POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2024

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Movements and their Discontents: Approaches to Contentious Politics and Challenges to the Status Quo

On 19 June 2024, the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security, and Justice welcomed guests to Queen's University Belfast for its Postgraduate Research Conference. Titled *Movements and their Discontents: Approaches to Contentious Politics and Challenges to the Status Quo*, the Conference featured fifteen speakers from across the humanities and social sciences. Attendees were treated to talks whose focuses spanned time and space, as panellists discussed their novel analyses of social movements, protest, and institutional responses.

The University of Warwick's Professor of Philosophy Quassim Cassam offered a keynote address on 'Liberation Philosophy', setting the tone for a day of respectful and serious-minded discussion around cases as diverse as contemporary youth mobilisations in Zimbabwe, the nuances of cross-border policing in Northern Ireland, and global student movements both old and new.



As noted by Institute Director Professor Richard English, the event reflected the ability of young scholars to constructively discuss and debate the most challenging and pressing questions posed by their research.

This year's Conference was organised by Postgraduate Research Students:

- Darren Colbourne
- Kathryn Cribben
- Brendan McKee
- Patrick Thompson

Keynote Address

Liberation Philosophy

Professor Quassim Cassam
Professor of Philosophy, University of Warwick

Closing Remarks

Professor Richard English
Mitchell Institute Director

Panel 1 Approaches to Race, Ethnicity, and Intersectional Mobilisation

Panellists

Brianna Griesinger
Queen's University Belfast
From the Wiphala to the Pañuelo Verde: Indigenous and Feminist Mutual Support in a Time of Contentious Peruvian Social Movements

Sydney Holt
Queen's University Belfast
Ignoring Race to Reach Equality? The Question of Ethnically Disaggregated Data Collection and the Contemporary Census

Pearce Magee
Queen's University Belfast
'Anti-Lynch Bill Lynched!': Congressional Apathy, Opposition, and the Defeat of Anti-Lynching Legislation in the Interwar Period

Motez Bishara
University of Leicester
Black Lives Matter in England Too: Analysing the Progressive Stages of Anti-Racism in English Football

Panel 2
Tactics, Strategies, and Building Resistance

Panellists

Calum McGeown
Queen's University Belfast
(Non)violence and the Struggle for a Liveable Planet – Where Next for the Radical Climate Movement?

Innocent Kasiyano
SOAS, University of London
The Battle of and for the Youth: Activist Recruitment, Partisanship And Movement Building In Urban Zimbabwe

Patrick Thompson
Queen's University Belfast
Parliamentary Activism: Civil Rights, the CDU and the weight of Parliamentary Convention

Abhishek Vyas
Brunel, University of London
Educators as Nonviolent Activists: Articulating a Pedagogy of Nonviolent Action

Panel 3
Ties that Bind: Contentious Identities

Panellists

Darren Colbourne
Queen's University Belfast
When the Whole World's Watching: Relational Mechanisms, New Left Publics, and Comparative Mobilisations in the People's Democracy and Students for a Democratic Society

Eimhin O'Reilly
Maynooth University
Thinking Global, Acting Local: Extractivism, Hybrid Citizenship and Community Governance in Rural Honduras

Brendan McKee
Queen's University Belfast
Nationalist Movements in the UK: Towards a Theory on Secessionism

Sivahn Sapirstein
Queen's University Belfast
Reactionary vs. Reform: The Diverging Paths of Diasporic Influence in Northern Ireland and Israel-Palestine

Panel 4
Reaction? Restriction? Repression?: Responses to Contentious Events

Panellists

Meem Arafat Manab
Dublin City University
Analyzing University Reactions to Student Movements in the Palestinian Conflict: The Response-Counter-Response of Higher Education Institutions

Cara Pritchard
Queen's University Belfast
The Slippery Slope of Protest Restriction: Investigating Attitudes and Psychological Impacts in Democracies

Kathryn Cribben
Queen's University Belfast
Cross Border Policing on the Island of Ireland Against Paramilitaries

Research Exchange Visit in Belfast

Kyle Seasly

Visiting Student, Notre Dame University
September 2023



For four weeks this summer, I had the privilege of being part of a research exchange between Queen's University Belfast and Notre Dame, sponsored by the Keough Naughton Institute. I was hosted by the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice and supervised by Dr Peter McLoughlin, Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy and Senior Lecturer in the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics.

The focus of my research for my exchange visit was The Republican Movement in Ireland (specifically looking at Sinn Fein), and its relationship to other international movements. Indeed, down the street from where I stayed during my visit at Mount Charles student housing, there was a Cuban restaurant and Palestinian café, which seemed to echo Sinn Fein's solidarity with Cuba and Palestine.

I visited the Solidarity Wall on my second day in Belfast, with my supervisor and Queen's Exchange Coordinator, Dr Tristan Sturm, Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding and Senior Lecturer in the School of Natural and Built Environment. I saw images of Cuban freedom fighters, Nelson Mandela, Palestinian prisoners, and many others. These images, to the Republican movement, and the now very electorally successful Sinn Fein, represented the collective struggle that they participated in, and these were their allies.

Additionally, when I took a day trip to Derry, the People's Gallery also clearly put these international relationships on display.

My research focus began to sharpen after I met with Dr Peter McLoughlin who helped me narrow my scope, given my relatively short time in Belfast.

My research questions evolved to focus on Republican Movement's relationship with the United States after the Good Friday agreement—specifically looking at archive press materials during the Bush administration from both Irish and American newspapers.

During the Bush administration, Sinn Fein was allowed to fundraise (for the most part) in the United States and bring back large hauls for their political coffers. Yet, support of Sinn Fein in the United States was a contradiction—Sinn Fein advocated for peace and supported a United Ireland, yes—but it also showed solidarity with other decolonizing or anti-imperial movements that the American public often identified as “terrorists” (whether properly or improperly).

Indeed, when President Bush identified the ‘Axis of Evil’ in his State of the Union Speech, Gerry Adams, the leader of Sinn Fein, still managed to pull off a visit to Cuba and met with Fidel Castro. Sinn Fein leaders, in particular Adams, also spoke out against the

Iraq War, continued advocating for Palestine, and opposed the use of the Shannon Airport for US military use.

Although there was some grumbling in the press about how Sinn Fein had fallen out of favor ‘this time’, the moment of reckoning never came despite scandals in Ireland and contradicting US foreign policy goals.

New questions emerged for my research:

- What gave Sinn Fein the ‘Teflon’ characteristic in the United States?
- Why could Americans accept Sinn Fein in the ‘You're either with us, or you're against us’ environment that emerged after September 11th and were augmented by Bush's foreign policy?

Dr McLoughlin directed me to the Linen Hall Library, where I ended up doing most of my research. The Linen Hall Library has a wonderful café and very helpful staff who assisted me after I exhausted my online research, providing boxes of documents from the archives. I was going through a few boxes a day! There was so much material available. The Linen Hall Library is a very rich resource and a wonderful place to carry out research. I would recommend it to anyone doing historical (or any type of) research, really.

Another highlight of my time in Belfast was the Belfast Traditional Music Festival that took place. As a player in Notre Dame's Céilí band, I relished the experience of seeing top players in the "trad" scene play beautiful melodies *extremely* quickly and completely from memory.

Starting my final week, the Féile an Phobail—the West Belfast Festival—was on, with events about the history of Northern Ireland and Belfast through the ages. I went on a tour that highlighted James Connolly's time in Belfast, saw Gerry Adams speak, and went to the discussion and debate with Jeremy Corbyn on The Choices for Ireland. On the final night of my stay in Belfast I went to see a concert featuring the group Kneecap whose most famous song was "Get Ya Brits Out," where the performers were taunting the DUP member who had criticized them on Twitter. Overall, it was a fitting ending for an immersive four weeks—and the materials that I had obtained at the Linen Hall Library are waiting for me to analyze further after this semester is over.

Kyle Seasley

Kyle is a post-graduate student currently in his second year of the Master of Global Affairs programme at the Keogh School for Global Affairs, University of Notre Dame.

The Strategic Partnership with Notre Dame is a programme driven and funded by Queen's to create international research and education linkages and collaboration. Each year one PGT student from the University of Notre Dame is invited to work with an academic staff member at Queen's. This exchange has many benefits, including the study of Northern Ireland, increased visibility and cooperation, and exchange capacity of both institutions.

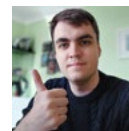


Student Focus: Joshua Weston

Joshua Weston

Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Algorithmic Solutions Doctoral Scholar

October 2023



Astroinformatics is something of a new concept. Humans have been pointing at the stars since they had fingers. Comparatively, the practice of getting computers to pool through the sky and make discoveries instead is not even half a century old. With the use of machine learning only becoming commonplace in the past decade or so it would be easy to assume that studying it would not feel too high pressure—every technique is new and exciting; every discovery easy to find. This was not to be the case when I began my PhD. Astronomers love coding. It's one of the big things that attracted me to my project!

When I arrived on the scene machine learning was established practice in astrophysical discovery—sky surveys used them to analyse data; to detect objects, classify them and find where to look next. My current work, which was to improve a model's ability to detect supernovae in images, seemed to pale in comparison to others. We knew of similar surveys with the same goals as ours, operated by brilliant academics, and it seemed unlikely that I—a man who regularly puts on jumpers the wrong way round—would be able to produce anything of note to the community. It was with this in mind that I tentatively submitted my abstract to the Astroinformatics 2023 conference in Naples for the first week of October.

The LINAS programme afforded me the opportunity to travel to Italy for this Conference; one of the first of its kind for the field. Being able to keep a finger on the pulse with regards to the research being done by others and network in person with leaders on the subject is a rare thing for PhD students, and is something that I think the programme encourages extremely well. I was due to present towards the back end of Monday afternoon, which came with its pros and cons. Pro: I had plenty of time to prepare on the day, and I would be able to enjoy the rest of my time in Naples after the fact without worrying about my presentation. Con: I would have to survive a day of listening to experts on Astroinformatics discuss their own work without feeling like I wouldn't measure up.

As I continued to fret about the upcoming presentation, which would (in my mind) certainly see the end of my career in academia if it went poorly, I tried to focus on reasons why it would go well. I had been given plenty of machine-learning training through LINAS to bring me up to scratch with all the skills required to carry out my work, so in that sense I did have some idea of what I was supposed to talk about. My supervisor and colleagues in the Astrophysics Research Centre had supported my project so far and had agreed that sending me to Italy was a good use of my funds; a promising sign.

On top of this, my friends and peers in the Mitchell Institute also seemed interested and engaged in my talk when I explained it to them (or at least were good at pretending to be!). Having such a supportive group of people to discuss your work with is an invaluable thing, and I'm extremely grateful to be part of the friendliest, most encouraging group on campus. It was with the support of all these people that I decided that rather than bolting back down the Capodimonte hill I should probably stick around and give my presentation.

I found that the more I talked about the project, the more I remembered, and the more I realised I actually knew what I was talking about. I stopped trying to memorise what was on my flashcards and started reminding myself of the work I'd done. And when you're forced to reduce a year of work to a fifteen-minute presentation, you realise how much you've done. With the support of an engaged audience it clicked that I didn't have any need to prove myself; my peers were here to listen to what I had to say because they were genuinely interested. Questions were asked and answered afterwards as easily as casual conversation.

With that, the pressure was off, and I could enjoy the rest of the conference without worrying that I'd be 'found out'. I had the amazing opportunity to listen to experts, compare notes with others, and tell my supervisor I was coming back to Belfast with new thoughts and ideas. I still had another four days in Italy though, and a few free afternoons to explore the Amalfi coast...until I'd done that, the next fight with imposter syndrome could wait!

Joshua Weston

Joshua Weston is in the second year of his LINAS Doctoral Scholarship. The LINAS Doctoral Training Programme seeks to develop a cohort of Doctoral Scholars who can address the implications of massive-scale data processing, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) for both the actual operation of algorithmically driven public decision-making in wider society, and within science and engineering.



The Belfast/Good Friday Agreement in Light of the Hamas-Israel Conflict

Martin Burns

MA Conflict Transformation and Social Justice Graduate
October 2023



Almost all the conferences, op-eds and speeches this past April that commemorated the twenty-fifth anniversary of Belfast/Good Friday Agreement (the Agreement) pointed out that the full promise of the Agreement has yet to be realized. There is much truth in this argument. The governmental institutions set up by the Agreement have been paralyzed by political instability for many years, paramilitary groups continue to operate, and Northern Ireland remains a divided society.

Despite all of this, the Agreement has kept the peace for twenty-five years. There was a time in the early 1990's after the signing of the 1993 Oslo Accords (which won the Nobel Peace Prize for Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, and Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat) when many observers predicted that there would be peace in the Middle East before there would be peace in Northern Ireland. For reasons that historians and political scientists will debate for years to come, leaders in Northern Ireland chose to go down one path while those in the Middle East decided to follow another course.

In light of the Hamas-Israel conflict, the Agreement seems an even more impressive accomplishment. The Hamas-Israel conflict is a stark reminder of the fate that Northern Ireland avoided. Despite all its imperfections and unrealized promises,

the Agreement has, to paraphrase Seamus Heaney, provided a space in which hope can grow.

It is only natural to wonder if there is some learning from the Northern Ireland peace process that we can apply to the Middle East. When asked this question at Queen's in April, Senator Mitchell was quick to point out that all conflicts are different and that you cannot take a strategy or tactic that worked in one place and apply it to another situation. In general, I agree completely with Senator Mitchell. However, there is one thing that I think we can say worked in Northern Ireland that would work in the Hamas-Israel conflict and that is the belief that peace is possible.

Throughout the multi-year negotiations that led to the Agreement, there were certainly many low points when the outlook was grim. Despite all of this, the parties believed that peace was possible. They fought hard against despair when giving up might have seemed to be the logical thing to do. As President Kennedy pointed out in June of 1963, this is a dangerous point of view because it leads to the conclusion that war is inevitable.

So, the one thing I think could be transferred to the Middle East from Northern Ireland is the idea that seemingly intractable conflicts can be solved. Implacable foes may not agree to go to have their children go to the same schools or generally

participate in an integrated society, but they can agree to stop killing each other. The Agreement is an example of successfully ending politically motivated violence. Despite all its flaws, the Agreement is a beacon of hope to a world that desperately needs it.

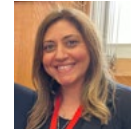
Martin Burns

Martin graduated from the Master's degree programme: Conflict Transformation and Social Justice in 2023. His dissertation was on *The Politics of Persuasion: How the Irish Republican Leadership Sold the 1998 Good Friday Agreement to their Constituency*.

‘We Stand Together’—National Hate Crime Awareness Week event, October 2023

Rombsala Said

Postgraduate Student, School of Law
November 2023



Northern Ireland is typically considered a friendly and welcoming place; however, this is not the case for those who experience hate-motivated incidents, which are often referred to as Hate Incidents and Crime. Hate crime in Northern Ireland has increasingly become an issue in need of serious address, especially over the last few years. While the numbers of reported incidents/crimes (per category) tend to fluctuate from year to year, a total of 3,118 hate-motivated incidents/crimes (across all categories) have taken place in the last year (July 2021–June 2023).

A hate crime incident is defined as ‘a crime against a person because of their race, religious belief, sexual orientation, political opinion, gender identity or disability;’ and manifests itself in many forms including bullying and name calling, ‘hate’ speech or expression, damage to property, attacks to people, and hate mail/email. [2] Any crime perpetrated on an individual simply because of their identity, religion, belief, background, race, or disability cannot be tolerated.

Recently there has been a surge in racially motivated hate crimes reported in the South Belfast area [3], with the growing appearance of hate expression in public spaces further exacerbating this issue.

There is much work being done in an attempt to address and combat this problem, for example the

creation of specific hate crime legislation. Currently hate crime legislation does not exist in Northern Ireland; therefore, crimes that are motivated by prejudice are not specifically defined by law. When a crime is committed and is taken to court, the crime itself is charged based on the criminal offense (such as property damage, personal assault, and harassment) and does not include specificity to the hate-motivation or hostility. However, when a perpetrator is tried for a hate crime, there is an option for it to be classified as ‘aggravated by hostility’.

According to the Public Prosecution Service, for this to take place, there must be “sufficient *direct* evidence that the offender was in fact motivated by hostility, rather than the victim simply *perceiving* that offence as being motivated by hostility”. [4] Where this direct evidence is available, then the prosecutor can ask the court to treat the offence as being aggravated by hostility, although the perpetrator isn’t charged with this. When this occurs, the judge will be asked to consider imposing an enhanced sentence upon conviction; therefore, it is only in the sentencing phase where the prejudiced or hostile motivation comes into account.

This is a particular point of concern, as it’s important to include these transgressions into the legal system in an effort to effectively discourage similar crimes and the harm they do to the overall community.

Currently, the Department of Justice (DoJ) and the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ), along with the PSNI and other community and civil service organizations are working toward creating sustainable and effective legislation to deal with criminal conduct motivated by prejudice and hostility.

While the new legislation will be incredibly vital to approaching this issue, creating legislation is not a quick and easy task, especially with the current situation surrounding the Stormont government. Therefore, it is vital to look at additional approaches and solutions, which was a point of discussion during many events which took place during National Hate Crime Awareness Week 2023.

National Hate Crime Awareness Week in the UK took place from 14–21 October 2023. In Northern Ireland, many events were planned across the province in an effort to increase awareness on the topic of hate crime and promote services available across different organizations to help those who are victims of a hate crime and inform all on how to recognize and report hate crime as well. This year’s theme **Put Yourself in Their Shoes**, a campaign designed by the PSNI and the Policing Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) to bring awareness to the issue of hate crime and how to report it, by encouraging people to think about how they would feel if they were a victim of a hate crime incident.

I attended a National Hate Crime Awareness Week event called ‘We Stand Together’, delivered by the Hate Crime Advocacy Service with Victim Support NI, which took place on 19 October 2023 at the MAC Theatre in Belfast.

This event was run in conjunction with the Belfast Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP), the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ), HSBC and Housing Rights as a part of national efforts to raise awareness of the support that is available to those who are victims of or witness a hate crime. It brought together members of the civil service, academics, charity organizations, government agencies and the PSNI to have an open conversation on the issue of hate crime in Northern Ireland, how to combat it, current and recent successes in helping victims and the steps to be taken to create sustainable change.

Over the course of the day, we heard from various speakers such as Barbara McAtamney, Head of the Department of Justice’s Hate Crime Branch, Superintendent Sue-Ann Steen, MBE, the PSNI’s Hate Crime Lead, and Professor Tim Chapman of Strathclyde University’s Centre for Law, Crime and Justice, along with two panel discussions, all covering very important topics including housing segregation and intimidation, transitional justice, developing hate crime legislation and options for a way forward.

The event began with a welcome from the CEO of Victims Support NI, Janet Bunting where she referred to hate crimes as “message crimes, because they send a message that anybody who shares

the victim’s characteristics is not welcome in the community.” [5] However, her hope is that events like ‘We Stand Together’, will bring people together to work to create a more inclusive future and send out a different message, stating that “hate crime is not welcome in our streets, our town, our country or our society”.

Host, Michael Avila (Manager, Hate Crime Advocacy Service) introduced the Hate Crime Advocacy Service (HCAS), which is a free service delivered in a consortium which includes, Victim Support NI, the Rainbow Project, Leonard Cheshire, and Migrant Center NI and is contracted by the PSNI and the Department of Justice. Avila pointed out that in recent years the service has supported between 900-1400 victims through the criminal justice process on a yearly basis. Superintendent Steen MBE later stated that having an advocate to help victims through the process is vital, as “advocates’ empathy and lived experiences are invaluable to helping victims who come to HCAS”. [6]

Housing segregation was discussed as one of the most significant on-going social issues in Northern Ireland, with coercive control and intimidation as the biggest influence.

Margaret Gilbride (NIHE) confirmed that housing issues are some of the most common factors in hate crime cases, with threats and attacks taking place mostly in areas still under paramilitary control and influence. This was something I also explored in my research for my MA dissertation on racism in Northern Ireland and links to paramilitary control.

Another key issue was the integration of refugees and asylum seekers and providing them with education on Northern Ireland, as most refugees/asylum seekers are not aware of the sectarian history here, which has led to many sectarian-motivated incidents for refugees and asylum seekers.

When it comes to tackling the issue of hate crime in Northern Ireland, the task is a rather large one. However, working together and collaborating across categories (i.e.: racism, sectarianism, people with disabilities and LGBTQ+), government sectors and various organisations, this issue can be addressed and confronted. It all begins with acknowledgement, understanding and empathy.

As Michael Avila stated, “Empathy is what brings people together—it’s what builds community”. Therefore, it is empathy which will lead the way to a future full of more inclusivity and acceptance.

[2] *NIDirect website, 2023, <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/hate-crime>*

[3] *PSNI Superintendent Stein (2023 We Stand Together Conference Speech)*

[4] *Public Prosecution Service NI (2023), Offences Aggravated by Hostility, <https://www.ppsni.gov.uk/hate-crime#toc-3>*

[5] *Janet Bunting, Welcome Speech, We Stand Together Conference, 2023*

[6] *Superintendent Sue-Ann Steen MBA, 2023.*

Following the event, I had the opportunity to meet with Michael Avila for a Q&A, discussing the event and outcomes:

What prompted you to create this event? Is this something you do every year?

HCAS (Hate Crime Advocacy Service) runs an annual event for NHCAW (National Hate Crime Awareness Week) to drum up awareness, generally, about hate crime and promote the service. Each year, we try to build on the previous year by facilitating a bigger and wider-reaching event to increase our exposure. It was important this year for us to:

1. highlight the impact the service has had since the implementation of its new (and more permanent) contract in 2022/23;
2. highlight the stories of victims and how they've been aided by the service; and
3. to get everyone working in hate crime across the public and community sectors in the same room to:
 - facilitate joint discussion and build stronger partnership/strategies; and
 - utilize our joint expertise to create a Hate Crime Manifesto that can be utilized and implemented into various institutions policies/strategies in addressing hate crime and discrimination.

How did the events go during Hate Crime Week? What were the biggest take-aways and next steps?

We're very happy with the engagement and feedback we've had. We had the right people in the right rooms hearing the right discussions and receiving the right feedback that will hopefully, eventually lead to change and better support for victims. Next steps are the manifesto and continuing to build on this momentum.

How will events like this help to address and work towards eradicating the issue of hate crime in NI?

Hate will never fully be eradicated, but building partnerships, working together, improving policy and strategy, and plugging service provision gaps are all possible through events and discussion such as this. Through this and the facilitating of more such events/engagements we believe will lead to a stronger and more resilient criminal justice system and institutions much more capable of addressing hate crime.

How will the current work-in-progress hate crime legislation help with this?

New legislation won't be a panacea, but it will likely improve outcomes in court, i.e., more hate crime convictions, as well as increase victim confidence in reporting and, probably most importantly, eventually work as a deterrent to would-be offenders with increased and harsher sentencing.

Generally, victims will be better supported through new legislation. Work then needs to be done on the support/advocacy/civil service side of things to ensure the system is properly and effectively resourced, trained and staffed.

How can we bring more attention to this issue and inform the people of NI of how important it is and how big of an issue it has become?

We are looking at the idea of a campaign alongside of/launched with the Manifesto. I think this will, again, raise more awareness generally about hate crime and how to report and seek support.

Rombsala Said

Rombsala Said is a postgraduate student currently studying Law at Queen's University Belfast, after recently completing an MA in Conflict Transformation and Social Justice, researching the issue of racism in the Northern Ireland context and the links to paramilitaries.

Rombsala is hoping to use the law degree to work in human and civil rights as a way of expanding on her previous MA course by focusing on the legal aspects of hate crime and racism, and how legislation can be developed and applied to the issue of addressing and combating hate crime of all kinds in Northern Ireland.

Student Focus: David Mark

Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Algorithmic Solutions Doctoral Scholar
November 2023



Striking a Balance

Embarking on a PhD journey requires navigating a complex array of academic challenges and personal commitments. As a scholar at the Mitchell Institute, I've learned that thriving in such a demanding environment is all about mastering the art of balance.

Consider the flexible yet unpredictable nature of a PhD schedule, the absence of fixed hours in the PhD world can be a double-edged sword—offering flexibility on one hand but often leading to long, irregular hours of deep study and research on the other, which can encroach upon personal time and well-being. Striking a balance between these extremes has been a critical, albeit challenging, part of my PhD experience. I do concede that my previous career may have helped in this regard, the transition from a practicing barrister, with its unpredictable hours and self-directed workload, laid a foundation that was beneficial to this new challenge. Reflecting on the opportunities and milestones of the past academic year, I recognise that finding balance has at times been a challenge but one I have greatly enjoyed. This new chapter has brought with it a wealth of opportunities to grow, learn, and adapt, and necessitated a requirement to find harmony in the midst of a, at times, chaotic schedule.

Wearing Multiple Hats

Earlier this year, the 2023 LINAS Conference presented an early opportunity to balance multiple roles—as a presenter, organizing committee member, and host. This was a perfect example of the balancing act a scholar is often required to undertake, having to focus on managing conference tasks efficiently whilst keeping a steady pace with their own research. Here, I learned that balancing doesn't always mean equal distribution of time and effort; sometimes, it's about giving your best in the moment, be it preparing a presentation or ensuring the smooth running of an event.

Later in the year I was able to expand upon my presentation at the LINAS Conference by presenting a paper at the Nottingham Trent University Workshop **Exploring the Intersections between Law and Artificial Intelligence**. My paper entitled *Sm-Art Attack* was a bridge between my past and present, exploring legal protections in the era of generative AI. This wasn't just an academic exercise but a reminder of my professional evolution from the courts into academia, balancing the rigors of research with the foundations of my legal background.

Beyond presenting at conferences, I had the privilege of collaborating with Professor John Morison, PI for

the LINAS Doctoral Training Programme and LINCS scholar Tomás McInerney on a chapter about AI in the *Judicial Decision Making for a Public Policy and AI Handbook*. In addition, I am also working towards an Associate Fellowship in Higher Educational Learning.

These endeavours are not just academic tasks but opportunities to delve deeper into topics that bridge my past with my present research interests and raise the challenge of balancing my own academic research with outside academic pieces and further professional development. At times it can be easy to get lost in some of this work and this may require you to step back from your work and reevaluate your priorities from a distance, which I've found to be a useful reflective exercise.

Other Scales of Balance

Outside of my work in academia, I've encountered some significant personal milestones this year such as buying a house, which was quite the balancing act! I believe finding the right balance of time spent on research and with family and friends is essential to success and happiness.

I am adamant that family will always come first in my life. Whilst unusual, I believe if there is ever a conflict between the worlds of work and family that those

closest to you should take priority. The importance of these relationships has repeatably become apparent as I make my way through my PhD, at times only surviving because of the support of my wife, family and friends!

However, this is not to say these two worlds are mutually exclusive, sometimes professional and personal worlds can merge seamlessly, as they did during my visit to Harvard's Berkmeier Klein Center. The trip doubled as an academic endeavour and a personal excursion with my wife around the Boston area, perhaps a practical example of work-life integration.

Additionally, outside of my studies, this year I've contributed to community work by sitting on the board of local poverty prevention charity Oasis Caring in Action, which keeps me connected to the world beyond academia. It's been a tangible way to balance my academic pursuits with community engagement and personal growth.

Final Thoughts

This year has taught me that seeking a perfect work-life balance is not the aim; instead, it's about finding a sense of harmony amid life's complex demands. It's about welcoming the unexpected, prioritizing wisely, and enjoying the opportunities that come along. As I move forward, I hope that sharing this will encourage others facing similar situations, underlining the importance of valuing and cultivating life outside the university walls.

David Mark

David Mark is in the third year of his LINAS Doctoral Training Scholarship. The LINAS Doctoral Training Programme seeks to develop a cohort of Doctoral Scholars who can address the implications of massive-scale data processing, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) for both the actual operation of algorithmically driven public decision-making in wider society, and within science and engineering.

Belfast: The Perfect Place to Study Conflict Resolution

Martin Burns

MA Conflict Transformation and Social Justice Graduate
January 2024



As I wanted to examine in my dissertation how Sinn Féin persuaded its members to support the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement (the Agreement), it was quite logical that I would do so at Queen's. In addition to be a world class university, Queen's had the huge advantage for me of being in Belfast. Studying here gave me extraordinary opportunities to talk with individuals who had participated in the negotiations that led to the Agreement as well as those who had lived through some very difficult years.

Even if one is studying a conflict that is happening or happened in a very different part of the world, Belfast is an outstanding place to study conflict transformation. The city and its people are a reminder that conflict transformation is not something that happens in an academic journal. Instead, it is something that impacts real people.

Given the small size of Northern Ireland and the number of casualties that occurred, it is fair to say that the roughly thirty years of violence that ended with the Agreement in 1998 touched everyone here. Furthermore, as one plaque commemorating the victims of one of the dark moments of the conflict puts it, bullets not only through space but through time. Individuals who were born years after the violence ended are still dealing with trauma of those years passed on to them.

The second reason why studying conflict transformation in Belfast is helpful is because living in the city is a constant reminder that conflict transformation is a process, not an event. The Agreement was approved by leaders of the several political parties and then approved by voters in both parts of Ireland in the spring of 1998. This was a single event. However, the process of transforming years of conflict into a more peaceful and just society is ongoing here in Northern Ireland. Through the years, there have been many moments of great hope and great despair about the course of the conflict transformation process.

Living in Belfast, one easily can notice the ups and downs of the conflict transformation process. As I write in mid-December, the British government is negotiating with political parties on ways to restore government in Northern Ireland. Political life in Northern Ireland, like elsewhere in the world is far from perfect. The assembly in Northern Ireland has been functioning probably for less than half the time it has been in existence. The outcome of the current round of talks is uncertain at best. There are many reasons to be sceptical. However, if you look at the course of events you realise that the conflict transformation process has overcome many obstacles in the past. There are reasons to believe that the current round of difficulties can be surmounted.

Studying conflict transformation in Belfast makes you realize that it is a difficult process requiring bold leaders and strong community involvement, not just a single agreement. It is an ongoing day by day process that can better the lives of individuals. However difficult it might be, conflict transformation is how we all move on to a better and more just society.

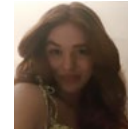
Martin Burns

Martin graduated from the Master's degree programme: Conflict Transformation and Social Justice in 2023. His dissertation was on *The Politics of Persuasion: How the Irish Republican Leadership Sold the 1998 Good Friday Agreement to their Constituency*.

Student Focus: Caragh Duffy

Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Algorithmic Solutions Doctoral Scholar

November 2023



I began my research journey into the legal sphere of artificial intelligence with a postgraduate Master's degree in law and technology at Queen's University Belfast. Coming from a traditional undergraduate degree in law, the world of regulating algorithms, machine learning, and artificial intelligence instilled a sense of excitement and trepidation upon entering an innovative field of study.

Debating and discussing topics including a separate jurisdiction for regulating and prosecuting the Internet of Things, to creating avatars in the Metaverse, was an overwhelming yet incredible experience. I encountered the Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network for Algorithmic Solutions (LINAS) in the first semester of my Master's degree when the Doctoral Scholars came to present their research to our class. I was fascinated by the diverse range of research fields and how each project was collectively entwined while possessing their unique characteristics.

During the first semester of my Master's, I was hesitant to apply to a doctorate programme due to imposter syndrome. However, upon witnessing the comradery of the LINAS programme and the opportunity to expand my knowledge beyond the judicial realm, solidified my decision to apply to the Doctoral Programme.

After submitting my Master's thesis, I began my research within the LINAS programme. Coming from

a structured class environment to having an office space and organising a diary for meetings for the first time was an adjustment but hopefully I have the hang of it now!

The endless opportunities provided by LINAS to meet and discuss with academics across various fields of research has been advantageous in further developing my communication and critical thinking skills.

I was informed that the transition from Master's to PhD would be daunting, and to become accustomed to isolated studying. Within the first week of beginning my doctorate, that fabrication was swiftly dispelled. I was welcomed into the LINAS cohort with open arms. The ability to sit around a table with your peers at lunch or weekly study groups has not only academically benefited me but also instilled a sense of community within the Institute. From a work-life balance perspective, the programme has been exceptional in being able to provide support for my medical condition. Additionally, allowing the flexibility to be able to train and participate in the sport of triathlon while studying is greatly appreciated.

Academically the interdisciplinary aspect of LINAS has been an enormous asset to my research project which concerns the relationship between humans and drones. With access to a wide range of subjects including physics, computer and social

sciences, politics, and history, I can gain a holistic understanding of connections between themes within my research.

As my research concerns the legal implications of the relationship between humans and drones, the ability to be able to attend LINAS seminars that discuss and debate the computer science behind algorithmic decision-making, and the social ramifications big data and artificial intelligence can have on society, is extremely valuable.

I am immensely grateful to be part of a doctorate programme that is surrounded by an enthusiastic team of Doctorate Scholars and academics that are committed to solving the contemporary dilemmas posed by artificial intelligence and big data.

Caragh Duffy

Caragh is in the first year of her LINAS Doctoral Training Scholarship. The LINAS Doctoral Training Programme seeks to develop a cohort of Doctoral Scholars who can address the implications of massive-scale data processing, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) for both the actual operation of algorithmically driven public decision-making in wider society, and within science and engineering.

Dispatches from Berkeley

Darren Colbourne
Postgraduate Student
February 2024



“Having a place in this society is far less important than creating a society in which one would want to have a place.” – Mario Savio

Early last year, I applied to spend a period of partially funded study at the University of California, Berkeley. Now, five weeks into the programme, I’ve been asked to ‘share my experiences.’ Try as I might to subsume ‘my experiences’ within a prosaic recounting of campus events and activities, drafting this blogpost with anything resembling professional detachment proved impossible. Several frustrating false-starts led me to reframe the assignment as one of personal reflection, as an attempt to express this opportunity’s deeper ramifications for my work and academic ambitions.

A Series of First Impressions

If this piece’s theme is Berkeley’s gentle coercion towards my re-evaluation of academic life, it’s fitting that my early forays into the Bay Area were themselves compelled by others. Matt, my Canadian cousin, accompanied me on the cross-country trek from North Carolina to Berkeley, his sole demand being a chaperoned visit to a National Park. Within twelve hours of arriving, we were treading across the raised boardwalks of Muir Monument, weaving between redwoods whose sprouting predates the Magna Carta. The next day we visited San Francisco’s Museum of Modern Art; Matt, a modern art sceptic,

was nevertheless genuinely excited to encounter a Rothko in the wild and determine for himself whether it lived up to the hype.

I further experienced the joys of second-hand novelty when Berkeley’s rival UCLA rolled into town. Though historically an intra-state matchup dominated by UCLA, I felt obliged to drag fellow Queen’s researcher Stephen Murray to his first college basketball game. To the surprise of many –the Golden Bears themselves likely included—a second-half-comeback brought the entire arena to their feet for the closing minutes. Eventual loss notwithstanding, I found myself caught up in the momentary rapture of collegiate sports’ *esprit de corps*... a feeling I’d purposefully eschewed during my own undergraduate tenure. And I suppose it was somewhere amidst this miasma of experience, between the nature sojourns and last minute three-pointers, that an inchoate uneasiness took root in the back of my mind.

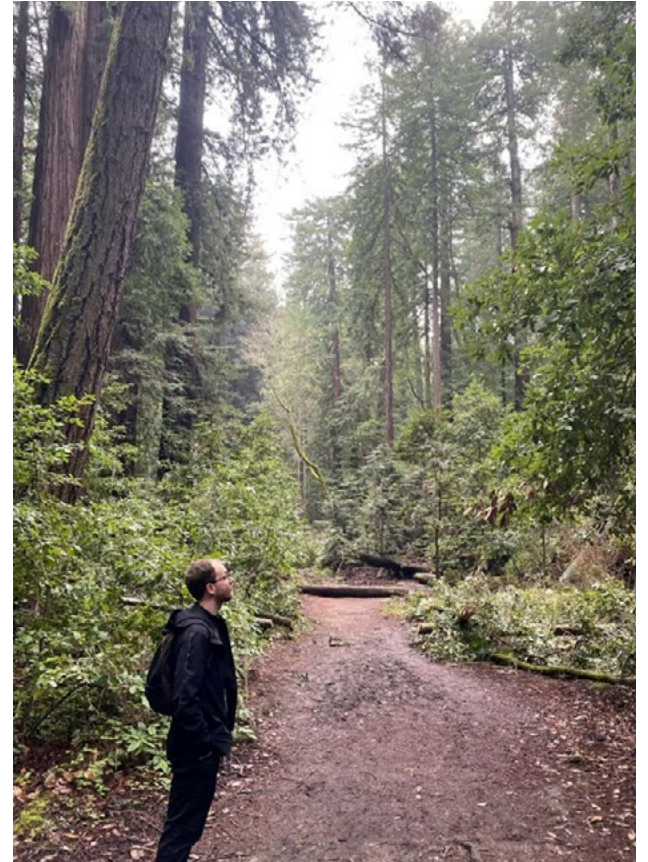
A Tourist on the Steps of the Great

It was a feeling I steadfastly avoided. Besides, I reckoned that if anything could shake that nagging feeling it would be my first solo pilgrimage to Berkeley’s Upper Sproul Plaza. I’ve dutifully included the requisite campus photos, the ones whose professional facsimile litter promotional materials: the clocktower where peregrine falcons roost; the

classical buildings of granite and brick silhouetted by lush hills; glimpses of the Golden Gate caught by peering down promenades at awkward angles.

Full disclosure: none of those landmarks interested me much. My destination was set. I beelined toward the area between Sather’s Gate and Sproul Hall, a social space clogged with tabling students, their political causes all lineages passed down from Berkeley’s storied history. It was here that Jack Weinberg set up a Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) stand against UC’s edicts in 1964, launching the Free Speech Movement. On the steps of Sproul Hall that December, Mario Savio addressed over 1,000 students and decried the dehumanising effects of universities’ bureaucratisation and administrators’ stifling of political speech.

Today, Savio’s presence is purposefully entrenched on campus, especially inside the FSM Café, a popular meeting spot plastered in Etsy-fied reproductions of his quotes. And sure, while FSM’s commodification strikes me as somewhat gauche, it’s exactly the type gauche that I can never get enough of. But try as I might to escape through five dollar Americanos and clinical musings over yesterday’s student newspaper, I could not outstrip that nagging feeling, that unease which was developing into an intolerable angst.



Archives and Activists

So I deployed the strongest weapon in my arsenal: a practiced retreat into a research mindset. For weeks I turned inward and focused on work, activating the defence mechanism which has served me throughout the dissertation process.

I certainly wasn't hurting for projects. Calling Berkeley's archival repositories 'vast' borders on criminal understatement. I've spent dozens of hours digging through boxes containing detritus and memories, decades of pamphlets and position papers from social movements long past. The diligent librarian faculty have, over the course of just a few weeks, helped me procure materials from as far afield as Wisconsin. I've networked with several professors specialising in comparative sociology, American studies, and modern European history, bouncing methodological ideas off them during office hours. I ate lunch on a rainy day in Sonoma, the vineyards concealed by heavy haze, and discussed my ambitions with Professor Doug McAdam, the person who quite literally wrote the book on contentious politics.

The Institute for European Studies (IES), my sponsoring department, established a weekly Colloquium where visiting fellows can share ideas and workshop our research. As a base of operations, IES provides an open forum which fosters an upstart research culture among its international cohort.

But this placement's most meaningful opportunities developed away from campus proper. After years of Zoom meetings haunted by the twin spectres of high latency and inconvenient time-zones, sitting across from activists in Berkeley Hills' foyers or Oakland kitchens was invigorating. Most interviewees represented an oft distorted and maligned caucus within an organisation I study, the Students for

a Democratic Society. They reminisced in tones running the gamut from regret to pride and back again. They spoke of opportunities seized and missed with shared atmospheres of hard-earned reflection. And for many, their presents are logical evolutions from their pasts: sixty years on, they continue to write, to organise, and to agitate for a better, more democratic society, a society within which the academy is an integral if problematic element.

Bringing it All Back Home

It was the process of transcribing those interviews which forced a confrontation with my lingering malaise. As the grainy recording repeated stories from a past life, I became unbearably cognisant of my growingly cynical detachment. I had, I realised, spent an untoward amount of time acting as something of a voyeur, alienating myself from the lifeblood of both my research and personal interests. Even among Muir's redwoods and the unselfconscious passion of basketball fans, I'd somehow defaulted to passive vicariousness. It felt as if, both on campus and off, I'd adopted the dispassion of an academic tourist.

Untangling my personal commitments to social activism and research objectivity has always been a tough circle to square. Berkeley, in its fundamental entwinement of those seemingly discrete ends, forced a reassessment of these 'duelling' identities and led me to construct, in the verbiage preferred by my interviewees, a dialectic.

For all this fellowship's opportunities, none are more appreciated than its provision of an environment within which to frame such a process. My time at Berkeley has allowed me to evaluate the long-term implications of how, as a hopeful academic and educator, I can support the twinned struggles for

social justice and knowledge creation. It's allowed me to discover the intersection of these goals and to locate ways of engaging simultaneously with them. I've since spent evenings participating in teach-in protests—those most American forms of collegiate dissent—in support of People's Park, a local greenspace whose history is inseparable from my work. I've attended both Shut Up and Write sessions and Food Not Bombs general meetings at Berkeley's anarcho-social space, The Long Haul. I've quietly audited the meetings of a veritable alphabet soup of campus political organisations, not only observing but participating in the types of movements that sparked my academic interests in the first place.

And it is that dialectical process, more than anything, which I hope to bring back to Belfast. To rediscover that first sense of awesome appreciation I felt when walking into Linen Hall Library. To feel not simply an academic satisfaction, but a personal one, when reflecting on Free Derry's emulative connection to Free Berkeley. To bring home not just reams of notes or garbled interview recordings, but a reinvigorated commitment and determination towards pursuing the type of professional life that betters more than just myself. Because, as Mario Savio so elegantly put it, having a place in our disciplines, our universities, or our wider societies isn't worth much, if we fail to create a society worth inhabiting.

Darren Colbourne

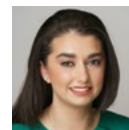
Darren is a doctoral candidate in history at Queen's University Belfast. His dissertation focuses on the political identificational development of Northern Ireland's People's Democracy, comparing their evolution to other mobilisations of the global New Left. His work uses cases not only from Northern Ireland's 'Long Sixties', but also similar movements in the Untied States.

LINAS Conference April 2024

Anna Montgomery

Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Algorithmic Solutions Doctoral Scholar

April 2024



On Monday the 22 April 2024, the LINAS Doctoral Training Programme (LINAS DTP) at Queen's hosted our second annual student-led Conference.

When we began our preparations for this year's Conference, we knew that we needed an excellent Keynote Speaker and corresponding theme which reflects the inter-disciplinary work that we do at LINAS.

Dr Edoardo Celeste, an expert in digital constitutional law from Dublin City University very kindly accepted our invitation to be our Keynote Speaker. Turning to our theme; after many scribbles and variations of phrasing we decided on *The Automation Generation*. This theme encompassed the inter-disciplinary nature of LINAS, with research spanning across law, computer science, maths, physics, history, anthropology, politics, psychology and sociology.

After advertising our call for abstracts, we accepted presentations from 16 high calibre speakers from an array of universities across the UK, Ireland, Poland, Belgium, Spain and Denmark. After many months of planning, Monday the 22nd came around very quickly. To top it off, we were delighted to welcome all our speakers in-person.

The day began promptly at 9.15am, with Professor Kieran McEvoy delivering opening remarks.

Professor McEvoy warmly welcomed everyone to our Conference and talked about our research, everyday life in the 'Mitchell Institute' (where the LINAS Scholars are based), and the collegiality that we have fostered on the programme.

Soon after, Dr Celeste delivered a fascinating keynote talk entitled *Digital Constitutionalism Theories: Methodology and Research Agenda*. The Canada Room was full! Everyone was engaged with this thought-provoking talk surrounding Digital Constitutional Law, which focused on the myriad ways in which constitutional law is impacted by digital technologies. In addition, how associated rights have collectively altered the digital ecosystem. Dr Celeste highlighted the importance of this 'constitutional moment', and research to stimulating the ongoing conversation about how constitutional principles should be formulated for the digital society.

Following a short tea-break, we began the LINAS Forum. Due to last year's success, we decided to repeat the forum style again. Our first year LINAS Doctoral Scholars had the opportunity to introduce themselves and their research, with Dr Deepak Padmanabhan taking on the role of chair. We heard presentations from: Caragh Duffy, Felix Elliott, Adam Kirk-Smith, Anna Hollis, Habeeb Ramos, Cecile Harrault, and last but certainly not least, Samantha Darrah! They each offered excellent summaries of their work to date.

Due to the high volume of excellent applications to our Conference, we decided that it would be a real shame to not make the most of our day, time and many helping hands. To facilitate this, we organised parallel panel sessions across the mid-morning and afternoon. To ensure the smooth running of the parallel panel's we needed two reliable MCs who know how to talk. I had no doubts that David Mark and James Sweeney would be the correct people to ask. They both did an excellent job, as everything ran extremely well and according to plan—of course assisted by our fantastic Josh Weston, Valerie Miller, Louise Milligan and all the LINAS Doctoral Scholars throughout the day. (Thank you all very much!)

Professor Muiris MacCarthaigh chaired Panel 1 in the Canada Room, with presentations surrounding the **Public Sector, Accountability and Society**. We heard a variety of interesting presentations covering regulation, accountability types in AI schools, climate awareness through digital technologies and understanding the cyber security governance for autonomous vessels. This was excellent and a series of thought-provoking questions and answers followed the final presentation.

This occurred at the same time as Panel 2 in the Moot Court Room. Presentations explored the **Implications of AI on the Creative Industry** and was chaired by Professor Giancarlo Frosio. Unfortunately, I missed the presentations in the Moot Court Room, for being



Dr Edoardo Celeste, Dublin City University



*Left to right:
 Professor Giancarlo Frosio, School of Law, QUB; Dr Edoardo Celeste, Dublin City University;
 Professor John Morison, School of Law, QUB; James Sweeney, LINAS Doctoral Scholar, QUB; Valerie Miller, QUB;
 Anna Montgomery, LINAS Doctoral Scholar, QUB; and Josh Weston, LINAS Doctoral Scholar, QUB.*

unable to be in two places at once. Nevertheless, I heard that all four presentations were fascinating and that lively discussions were had, regarding AI and its impacts more specifically on patent law, gaming, music and the online space.

It was great to see everything take shape and fall into place on the day without any hiccups—that I was made aware of any way! Over our lunch break we wanted to capture a group photo with as many of our speakers and attendees as possible, as well as a photo of the organising committee. I ran (literally) to ask if a friendly passer-by could take a few photos of our rather large group. I think most people have their eyes open in this one ...!

We returned after a lovely lunch for Panel 3 and 4.

Panel 3, **Surveillance, Threat and Victimisation** was chaired by Dr Teresa Degenhardt in the Canada Room. This was a super interesting panel (although I spoke on this panel and therefore may be slightly biased...) that discussed issues regarding cyber-crime and victimisation in online spaces/social media, the use of surveillance technologies in public and private spaces and female privacy rights. Similar themes and issues were raised throughout the four presentations; therefore, questions were facilitated across the four presenters after the final presentation, which became more of a panel discussion.

Panel 4, **AI Through Scientific Discovery** was chaired by Dr Sanda Scott-Hayward in the Moot Court Room. These four fantastic speakers discussed a variety of themes across their panel including: are objects in space real or bogus, machine learning and open quantum networks, preventing errors in AI regulatory debates and using tangled program graphs to detect abnormalities through ECG Classification.

Some re-charging was required with tea, coffee and light refreshments, before beginning our final panels of the conference.

Professor John Morison chaired Panel 5, **AI and the Changing Legal Order** in the Canada Room. Presentations discussed the impacts of AI on the judicial duty to state reasons, addressing bias and challenges in judicial analytics, navigating the digital jurisprudence era and distributed autonomous organisations. Once again, questions were facilitated across all four presenters after they had finished due to the similarities of themes and issues raised.

At the same time, Dr Mike Bourne chaired Panel 6, **Regulation and Application of Data in Society** in the Moot Court Room. With three excellent speakers on this panel, discussions surrounded the legal challenges of AI in the public sector, the proportionality debate in the digital age and finally the function of data protection in society.

Similarly to the start of the day, everyone returned to the Canada Room for closing remarks. This was facilitated by Professor John Morison, to reflect on the day and the interesting discussions had throughout. It was lovely to have so many people in one room, from so many different places, learning from each other and sharing networks!

Post-conference, all speakers and attendees were invited for some drinks to have the opportunity to chat and reflect on what we had learned from each other more informally. It was particularly great to get chatting to those who had travelled to Belfast for the first time. Everyone seemed to really enjoy visiting Queen's, attending the Conference and getting to meet each other. We hope that year on year the LINAS Conference will continue to be a success, and

bring together early career researchers working in similar areas, from near and far to share their latest findings!

Many thanks once again to all who were involved with the organisation, to our presenters, attendees, the LINAS Team, the Mitchell Institute and the Leverhulme Trust.

Anna Montgomery

Anna Montgomery is in the second year of her LINAS Doctoral Training Scholarship. The LINAS Doctoral Training Programme seeks to develop a cohort of Doctoral Scholars who can address the implications of massive-scale data processing, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) for both the actual operation of algorithmically driven public decision-making in wider society, and within science and engineering.

My Time at the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute: A Reflection

Tomas McInerney
Graduate

May 2024



My time in the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice as a Leverhulme Doctoral Scholar has come to an end. After an incredible three years, it is a bittersweet feeling. Having passed my viva in February, which focused on the use of Artificial Intelligence in the courts, I have spent the last few months reflecting on the great experience I had during my time at Queen's.

The PhD journey was immensely enjoyable. Being able to work with top academics over a sustained period of time, with people who genuinely care about the quality of my work, was incredibly fulfilling. The support network in the Mitchell Institute and the School of Law made an enormous difference, too. A group of friends on the LINCS/LINAS PhD programmes (along with 'Friends of LINAS'!) provided great support over the years, undoubtedly elevating the quality of my work. It made it much easier to make it into the office on Monday mornings!

I have many memorable experiences from my time in the Mitchell Institute. One of the most unforgettable was attending the Law and Society Annual Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in June 2023. This opportunity, generously supported by the Leverhulme LINCS Doctoral Training Programme (DTP), allowed me to present some of my PhD research on an international stage. Another highlight was the trip to the University of Cambridge,

where I presented a paper co-authored with Professor John Morison at a workshop on **Judging and the Judiciary**.

I was also able to attend a two-week-long Law and Technology Summer School at Fundação Getulio Vargas in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, generously funded by the School of Law and the Leverhulme LINCS DTP. These experiences not only enriched my research but also expanded my professional network. Perhaps most beneficial of all, however, were the countless coffee sessions with friends in the Mitchell Institute which kept me sane throughout. I'd also like to personally thank Sawers Deli for all of the support sandwiches—a real oasis during some tough days in the office!

Additionally, I had the privilege of co-authoring a publication with colleagues from the Mitchell Institute. The collaborative experience was fantastic, and I really enjoyed being able to brainstorm and bounce ideas off each other in such a comfortable environment.

Every PhD journey has its challenges. For me, balancing extensive research, teaching responsibilities, and conference presentations was a significant hurdle. But the past three years have been a period of growth. My research skills have developed significantly, and I have cultivated a much deeper understanding of the essential role law plays

in society—something which is particularly important given the rapid pace of technological development. My time in the Mitchell Institute has undoubtedly prepared me for my future endeavours, and I hope to take these skills with me to my new post as a Research Fellow at University College London.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the Mitchell Institute for their generous support and opportunities. Special thanks to the LINCS DTP for funding my research and to the School of Law for their support. I'd also like to say a particular thank you to Professor John Morison, Valerie Miller, and Jason McKillen whose guidance and friendship have been instrumental in my journey.

Dr Tomas McInerney

Tomás' research focuses on the legality of algorithmic decision-making in governments, with a specific focus on accountability. Adopting a socio-legal approach, Tomás is interested in eliciting some of the key concerns stemming from the hasty implementation of technology in the public sector, and how legal and computer science perspectives on algorithmic decision-making can coalesce in the future.

My Ten-Year Journey in Ireland 2014–2024

Yumi Omori
Graduate
May 2024



On the day I arrived in Belfast in June 2014 to join the Irish Studies Summer School, I never imagined I would be graduating with a PhD Sociology from Queen's ten years later. Along the way, I achieved significant milestones, such as completing my MA in Conflict Transformation and Social Justice at the Mitchell Institute and working at the Embassy of Japan in Dublin.

My journey in Ireland, North and South, proved much longer than I had initially planned. After ten years, however, I cannot imagine myself without a deep attachment to the country. The warmth of the people I met and the rich history, culture and nature surrounding me all contributed to my deepening love for this country. It is not just a place where I studied; it is a place that shaped me.

Along with the Irish Studies Summer School in 2014, the MA programme from 2015 to 2016 at the Mitchell Institute became a life-changing experience. For my MA dissertation, I conducted my first qualitative research in a Loyalist community in Belfast and interviewed women who had lived through 'the Troubles'. Although it was daunting for me as an international student at the beginning, I loved meeting new people and listening to their life stories. It was a transformative experience that shaped my academic and personal growth.

After the MA programme, I worked at the Embassy of Japan in Dublin for two years, from mid-2017 to 2019. Through the diplomatic lens at the embassy, I witnessed the seismic change in the political dynamics in the islands of Ireland and Great Britain in light of Brexit. My work experience in Dublin, where I was involved in policy research and analysis, has also expanded my horizons beyond academia.

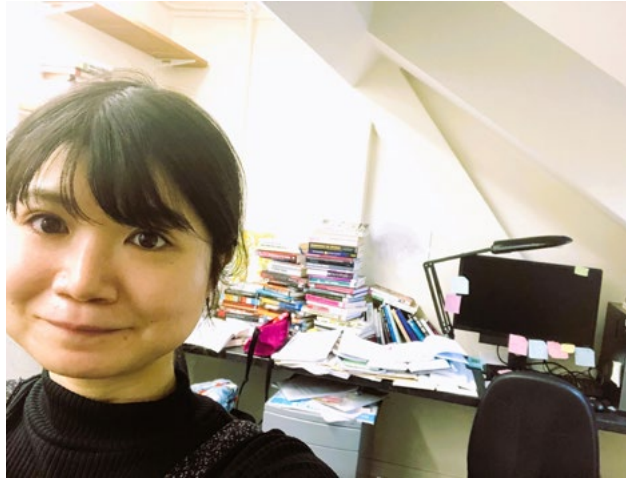
In September 2019, I re-started my academic journey as a PhD student at the Mitchell Institute, full of excitement, being blessed with a scholarship from a public body in Japan called JASSO to pursue a doctoral degree.

PhD Life

My PhD life faced many unexpected challenges, though. The Covid-19 pandemic changed the way we live and the way we do research. When the lockdown measure was installed in the UK, I was about to begin my fieldwork involving interviews with local mothers. It became impossible to do in-person meetings and fieldwork, which, at the time, I thought shattered my PhD. With assistance from my supervisors and the University, I amended my research design and used online platforms for the first few interviews.



Professor John D. Brewer, QUB and Dr Yumi Omori



In April 2020, my sister called me from Japan and notified me of the sudden passing of our dearest mum. I flew back to Japan amid the lockdown to attend her funeral and handle the family duties following her death. I ended up spending five months with my family in Japan, during which we lost our grandmother as well. It was an emotionally turbulent period that made me reflect on my personal life and family in Japan.

However, with heartfelt, caring support from my supervisors, Professor John Brewer and Professor Lisa Smyth, my friends and families, along with generous contributions from mothers who participated in my research, I managed to collect an important dataset and write a PhD thesis. Foregrounding the stories of motherhood in war-torn and ‘post-conflict’ Northern Ireland, my thesis highlighted the neglected yet significant contributions women played as mothers to social peace processes. I am deeply grateful to my respondents, who shared insightful stories about their lives in difficult times. Their voices will continue to be the foundation of my sociological imagination, which I endeavour to carry on as I pursue an academic career. In February 2024, my thesis *Motherhood During and After ‘the Troubles’* was officially submitted to the University.

Our cosy attic office at the Institute, hundreds of cups of tea and coffee that fuelled my writing, tons of our favourite McVitie’s Rich Tea Biscuits and Tayto crisps, hours of moans with my friends about the PhD life and the horrible weather, as well as the mountain of books notoriously piled up on my desk, will be dearly missed in the following chapters of my life. I am indebted to everyone who has enabled me to accomplish my goals on this beautiful, intriguing island.

What next?

Graduation this July is not the end of my overseas journey. I was recently awarded a postdoctoral fellowship from Stellenbosch University, South Africa, and opened a new chapter in my academic life at the Centre for the Study of the Afterlife of Violence and the Reparative Quest (AVReQ). In South Africa, I will be starting a new research project on mothering/motherhood in post-apartheid South Africa and working on publishing my PhD thesis written in Northern Ireland.

After ten years, the island of Ireland has become my second home, and I will surely keep coming back throughout my life.

Dr Yumi Omori

Supervised by Professor John D. Brewer, Yumi’s research explored motherhood experiences during and after ‘the Troubles’ in Northern Ireland. Her research interest is in how ordinary mothers’ mundane reasoning and practices in everyday family life interact with the transformations of the moral landscape in conflict-affected societies.



LINAS End of Year Event

Anna Hollis

Leverhulme Interdisciplinary Network on Algorithmic Solutions Doctoral Scholar
July 2024



On 21 June 2024, the LINAS doctoral scholars, alongside some of our esteemed academics, gathered to celebrate the end of the academic year with a lunch reception followed by a quiz. This event served as a fantastic way to wrap up the year, providing a perfect blend of challenge and fun that showcased the diverse range of knowledge within our doctoral community. The quiz was themed around our research—which meant that it spanned a range of topics and disciplines. The questions ranged from law ('List the 4 different levels of risk outlined in the EU AI Act'), to computer science ('What technique could you use to improve the robustness of your machine learning model?'), to general AI knowledge ('What is the name of the AI in the "Iron Man" films that assists Tony Stark, later becoming the superhero, Vision?').

The atmosphere was buzzing with excitement as teams brainstormed and debated the answers, each round sparking discussions and friendly competition. It was incredible to see how much everyone has learned and grown over the year. The highlight of the evening was undoubtedly the moment when the final scores were announced. With only a 4-point difference between the top and bottom teams, it was clear that everyone brought their A-game!

The quiz was a wonderful reminder of the collaborative spirit and shared passion that define the LINAS doctoral programme. Here's to a year of hard work, learning, and camaraderie – and to many more exciting events in the future!

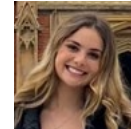


Visiting Student Summer Research Exchange

Peyton Marone

Visiting Student, University of Notre Dame

August 2024



This July, I was a visiting student at the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security, and Justice. This experience was made possible by the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies Visiting Summer Scholar Award to visit Queen's University Belfast, and is part of the Queen's University Belfast-Notre Dame Strategic Partnership. As a political science undergraduate student and international security fellow, I am required to complete a year-long senior thesis.

Having studied abroad in Jerusalem for the summer of 2023, I was always interested in writing a thesis about the Israel-Palestine conflict. It wasn't until the fall of 2023 that I began to engage with literature comparing the conflicts and peace processes in Israel-Palestine and Northern Ireland. Admittedly, I did not have a strong understanding of the Northern Ireland conflict, so I began to educate myself over the next several months, watching documentaries and reading books such as *Making Peace* by Senator George Mitchell.

In April, a professor of mine encouraged me to reach out to Keough-Naughton for guidance and potential contacts in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The faculty at the Keough-Naughton Institute went above and beyond, advocating for me and supporting me in my academic ambitions. Through the partnership between the universities, I was paired with

Dr Ronit Berger-Hobson who kindly agreed to oversee my research. Her expertise aligned perfectly with my interests; I couldn't have asked for a better match!

Upon arriving at Queen's, I was warmly welcomed by Dr Wendy-Louise Smith. She showed me around the campus and took me to the Botanic Gardens—I immediately felt embraced and supported. That same day, I met Dr Berger-Hobson and I left our meeting feeling inspired and eager to get started. She helped me focus my research question on one that was less broad and more appropriate for the required length of my thesis. My research will examine the role that security guarantees played in persuading paramilitary groups to support the peace agreements in Northern Ireland and Israel-Palestine.

During my 10-day visit, I found myself doing an equal amount of learning and unlearning. I arrived in Belfast with assumptions and perspectives about the conflicts, which were immediately challenged by my encounters with locals, interviews with scholars, and the sites I visited. I went on the classic Hop-On Hop-Off bus a couple of times and had the opportunity to go on a private political black cab tour of Belfast. I visited the International Peace Wall, Shankill Road, Falls Road, Garden of Remembrance, Crumlin Road Jail, Clonard Martyrs Memorial Garden, and Clonard Monastery (to name several).

I also visited a few exhibitions on the Troubles during my time abroad. The first was at the IMW North in Manchester, just a couple of days before I arrived in Belfast. The second was the Ulster Museum, and the third was the Museum of Free Derry. I had not originally planned to visit the museum in Derry, but I stumbled upon it during my day trip. All three were certainly unique and insightful in their own ways, it was interesting to compare my experiences in each one.

Toward the end of my time at Queen's, Professor Richard English, Professor Adrian Guelke, and Dr Ronit Berger-Hobson graciously agreed to formal interviews. Professor Richard English noted that security guarantees were more impactful in Northern Ireland compared to Israel-Palestine, where the continued militarized security in the West Bank led to a lack of trust among Palestinians, diminishing the effectiveness of the guarantees. However, Professor English also contextualized the conflicts and explained that while the security guarantees were important, they were not the main factor that drove the peace processes. Professor Adrian Guelke shared a similar perspective that security guarantees had a limited impact on the paramilitary group. Rather, he discussed the characteristics of the deeply divided societies and other factors that were perhaps more impactful. At the beginning of my interview with Dr Ronit Berger-Hobson, she discussed the subtle

signals that led paramilitaries to gain more trust in the British government. This particularly stood out to me. One example she gave was the transition from soldiers wearing helmets to berets, which were seen as less threatening. Dr Berger-Hobson made me realize that the seemingly ‘smaller’ details of conflicts add important context. She also filled many of my knowledge gaps that I didn’t realize I had.

When I was not at the Institute or reading in the McClay Library, I went on walks around the campus and the greater Belfast area (I averaged 8-12 miles a day). The contrast between the loyalist and republican communities was stark. Having never visited Northern Ireland, I did not realize just how many flags, symbols, and murals I would encounter. I went on a solo day trip to Derry and I was in awe of the political murals and symbols. I made my way to the Bogside murals and I noticed that a man was repainting the Free Derry Corner. I introduced myself, and he briefly told me his story. He was 12 years old during the Battle of the Bogside—I can’t begin to imagine what it was like. This unexpected encounter really humanized the conflict for me. Reading history is one thing, but putting a face to history is so much more powerful.

The connections I made at Queen’s and the insights I gained will undoubtedly shape my senior thesis and future endeavors as I discern my post-grad path. My time in Northern Ireland was transformative, and I’m eager to bring this renewed energy back to Notre Dame as I continue my research and learning.

The Strategic Partnership with Notre Dame is a programme driven and funded by Queen’s University Belfast to create international research and education linkages and collaboration.

Each year one PGT student from the University of Notre Dame is invited to work with an academic staff member at Queen’s.

This exchange has many benefits, including the study of Northern Ireland, increased visibility and cooperation, and exchange capacity of both institutions.



03

**PARTNERSHIPS
AND
SOCIETAL
ENGAGEMENT**

TURBULENT RELIGIONS, ALTERNATIVE FUTURES

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Workshop

The Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice hosted a collaborative Workshop with the University of Notre Dame on **Turbulent Religions, Alternative Futures**, bringing together scholars from Queen's University Belfast, Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and the Ansari Institute for Global Engagement with Religion, on 10 and 11 August 2023 at Queen's University Belfast.

The scholars' expertise in 'turbulent religions' includes the study of how religious actors, institutions, and discourses can disrupt societies and politics, whether that is by contributing to violence or peacefully challenging injustices and inequalities. They are also interested in how religious actors have conceived of the future across time and space, including apocalyptic and utopian thinking. These religiously-informed 'alternative futures' are rooted in complex histories, yet also impact on current debates. The scholars' research analyses the significance and impact of religions in polarizing contexts, including the roles of religion in violence, polarisation, peacebuilding, and imagining alternative futures on the island of Ireland, Israel-Palestine, and the United States.

To enable higher level engagement during the Workshop, delegates submitted papers, all of which were read in advance.

Panel discussions explored the themes of:

- Zionism, Pilgrimage and Tourism;
- Religions—Pasts and Futures;
- Religions, Violence, and Polarisation;
- Religion and Identity; and
- Religions, Environmentalism, and Sustainability.

Other lines of inquiry emerged from the discussion, including competing conceptions of apocalypse, differing approaches to time, the role of the past in imagining the future, and contested relationships between religion, ethnicity, and politics.

Blog Series

Following on from the Workshop, a series of articles on **Turbulent Religions, Alternative Futures** were published on the University of Notre Dame's **Contending Modernities** blog.

The posts explore 'turbulent religions', including the study of how religious actors, institutions, and discourses disrupt societal and political norms and practices, whether by contributing to violence or peacefully challenging injustices and inequalities. They analyse religion's role in historical and contemporary currents of violence—most notably around the themes of race and nationalism—and their relation to apocalyptic and conspiratorial thinking.



Left to right: Dr Jocelyn Dautel, QUB; Professor Gladys Ganiel, QUB; Dr Joshua Lupo, Notre Dame and Dr Darren Dochuk, Notre Dame.



Left to right: Professor Richard English, Mitchell Institute Director; Dr Tristan Sturm, QUB; Dr Veronique Altglas, QUB and Professor Atalia Omer, Notre Dame.



BLOG #1

Can “the Ghosts of Religion Past” Rest in Peace? The Churches and Alternative Futures on the Island of Ireland

Professor Gladys Ganiel

In this post, Professor Gladys Ganiel reflects on the historic role of Catholic and Protestant churches in perpetuating injustice—by promoting cultures of abuse and sectarianism—in both the north and south of Ireland. The island remains haunted by these past sins, on Ganiel’s account, and to move towards a more just future must come to terms with those sins. She suggests a focus on liberation theology and on the witnesses to abuse as a step towards creating a better future.



BLOG #2

The Political Theology of Traditionalism: Steve Bannon, the Far Right, and the End of Days

Dr Joshua S. Lupo

In this post, Joshua Lupo argues that the political theology of Traditionalism is a source for the political work of Steve Bannon and other right-wing thinkers. He argues that the cyclical notion of time that Bannon advocates, drawing on Rene Guénon, is one that drives Bannon’s ideological projects. For this reason, attention to Traditionalism among scholars remains as necessary as ever.

Joshua S. Lupo is the Assistant Director of the Contending Modernities research initiative and serves as the editor and writer for the **Contending Modernities Blog** and the classroom coordinator for the Madrasa Discourses program.



BLOG #3

Christian Zionism and the Apocalyptic Landscape of Gaza

Dr Tristan Sturm

In this post, Dr Tristan Sturm analyses how space and landscape form the political imaginations of Christian Zionists in the US with regard to Israel. Drawing on his ethnographic research among these peculiar religious nationalists, Sturm outlines the origins of an evangelical apocalyptic theology focused on Israel in US history and the ramifications it has today for Palestinians.

Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding Dr Tristan Sturm is Lecturer in the School of Natural and Built Environment at Queen’s University Belfast. His interests include critical geopolitics of religious movements, especially Christian Zionists, apocalyptic thought related to religious fundamentalism and climate change, nationalism and archaeology.



BLOG #4

Modern “Derry Girls”: How Teens Navigate Polarization in a Post-conflict Society

Dr Jocelyn Dautel and Dr Bethany Corbett

In this post, Jocelyn Dautel and Bethany Corbett explore the way narratives shape Northern Irish teens’ understanding of community in a rapidly modernizing world. Drawing on their own research findings with help from the show *Derry Girls*, the authors outline the ways that intergroup competition and segregation shape teens’ understandings of their communities. They point to Natural Language Processing, Social Network Analysis, and Diffusion paradigms as tools for better understanding and challenging narratives of polarization in Catholic and Protestant communities.

Dr Jocelyn Dautel is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Psychology and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding.

Dr Bethany Corbett is a Developmental Psychologist and Lecturer in the School of Psychology, Ulster University.



BLOG #5

Reframing the Past and Imagining the Future of Post-Brexit Northern Ireland

Professor Thomas A. Tweed

In this post, Professor Thomas Tweed returns to the guiding metaphors, narratives, and frameworks for interpreting sectarian conflict in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. He suggests that niche theory and sustainability studies offer novel ways of conceptualizing the challenges those on the island face. This leads him to train his analytical gaze on the contribution of colonialism and industrialisation to civil strife on the island of Ireland and away from familiar sectarian religious frameworks.

Professor Thomas A. Tweed is the Harold and Martha Welch Professor of American Studies and Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame. He is also a Faculty Fellow in the Institute of Latino Studies, the Ansari Institute for Global Engagement with Religion, and the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies.



BLOG #6

Religion, Politics, and the Orange Order in Northern Ireland: Defending Protestant Britain in the Age of Secularism

Dr Cathal McManus

In this post, Dr Cathal McManus explores how the Orange Order is grappling with the changing social and political landscape in the Northern Ireland. He contends that its continued reliance on a process of ‘othering’ Catholics to define its own identity as a Protestant pro-Unionist organization has left it in an increasingly difficult position. To overcome this difficulty will require narratives of what it means to be an Orangeman that defy this process of ‘othering’. To what degree this is possible, McManus argues, remains a contested matter.

Dr Cathal McManus is a Lecturer in the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work and Queen’s University Belfast and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy. He is interested in processes of ‘othering’ and how these contribute to the development and maintenance of social divisions and conflict. Related to this he is interested in identity formation and nationalism.

CONFERENCE

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Intergroup Relations After Violent Conflict: Insights from Research and Practice

Professor Peter Sheridan

Honorary Professor of Practice

October 2023

The inaugural Conference of the Weatherhead Research Cluster on Identity Politics took place at the Weatherhead Centre for International Affairs at Harvard University on 5 to 6 October 2023. It brought together researchers and practitioners engaged in designing, studying, and implementing interventions aimed at improving intergroup relations following violent conflict. Mitchell Institute Honorary Professor of Practice Peter Sheridan CBE was one of the speakers at the event.

Over the course of two days, the workshops and panels delved into interconnected themes at various levels of analysis: the micro, meso, and macro levels. Panellists were encouraged to focus on the theoretical underpinnings of contact-based interventions, as well as real-world experiences, and the ways in which features of local, national and international factors shape intergroup relations on the ground. Participants from diverse disciplines were prompted to engage in creative thinking and collaboration.

The Weatherhead Research Cluster on Identity Politics is chaired by Mitchell Institute Honorary Professor and Director of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Professor Melani Cammett.

The cluster explores ways to improve intergroup relations in post-conflict countries by bringing together a network of scholars at all career stages from Harvard and other US - and globally based institutions who work on conflict, conflict resolution, and identity politics, including the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice.



EVENTS TOUR

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USA Partners and Public Events Tour

Professor Dominic Bryan, Professor Cheryl Lawther and Dr Peter McLoughlin
October 2023

In October 2023, Mitchell Institute Fellows: Legacy, Professor Dominic Bryan, Professor Cheryl Lawther and Dr Peter McLoughlin were part of a delegation from Queen's University Belfast to visit the USA for a week of engagements and public events in Boston and Washington. A meeting with the Special Economic Envoy to Northern Ireland, Joe Kennedy III, also took place. These events built upon the Agreement25 Conference hosted by Queen's in April 2023.

A key event was a Roundtable Discussion hosted by the Irish Studies Programme at Boston College on 4 October to explore **Where Next for Northern Ireland?** with Dominic, Cheryl and Peter as panellists. They discussed the success of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement as well as the constitutional future of Northern Ireland post-Brexit and the impact of the current political impasse in Northern Ireland, as efforts are still being made to restore power-sharing.

The Roundtable was sponsored by the Mitchell Institute, Boston College, the Institute of Irish Studies at QUB, the NI Bureau, and the UK and Irish Consulates in Boston, all of whom were represented at the event.

Reflecting on the event, Peter said: "Hosting this debate in Boston is important given the vital role that the US played and indeed continues to play in our peace process—as is recognised in the naming of

the Mitchell Institute. The event also allowed us to strengthen our existing partnership with Boston College, and particularly its Irish Studies Programme. Guy and Rachael were wonderful hosts, and we are very much looking forward to working more with them to help better understand the continued challenges to peace in Northern Ireland, but also how international partners like the US can help progress here."



Left to right: Professor Dominic Bryan, QUB; Professor Cheryl Lawther, QUB; Professor Richard Collins, AHSS; Professor Olwen Purdue, QUB; Dr Peter McLoughlin, QUB; and Susan McCleary, North America Team, QUB.



LECTURE

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Ways Out of the Current Crisis

Dr Husam Zomlot

Head of the Palestinian Mission to the United Kingdom

November 2023

On 13 November 2023, the Mitchell Institute and The Human Rights Centre, Queen's School of Law, hosted a Lecture from Dr Husam Zomlot, the Head of the Palestinian Mission to the United Kingdom.

Dr Zomlot spoke of ways out of the current crisis. He addressed the causes of the violence, the role and responsibility of the international community in drawing it to a close, and the lessons which can be drawn from the Northern Irish peace process.

The event was chaired by Dr Conall Mallory, Mitchell Institute Fellow: Rights and Social Justice and Interim Director of the Human Rights Centre, Queen's School of Law.

The event was attended by a broad cross-section of Mitchell Institute Fellows, students and the Northern Irish human rights community.



WORKSHOPS

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Ukraine: Judicial Exchange Workshops

Professor Louise Mallinder, Professor Luke Moffett and Professor Cheryl Lawther
October 2023

On 26 October 2023, Professor Louise Mallinder, Deputy Director of the Mitchell Institute, and Mitchell Institute Fellows, Professor Luke Moffett and Professor Cheryl Lawther delivered Workshops to a visiting delegation of three senior Ukrainian judges, one from the Supreme Court of Ukraine and one each from the District Courts of Kharkiv and Dnipro.

The event was part of a study visit by the Ukrainian judges to Ireland and Northern Ireland.

It was held in collaboration with the Queen's School of Law, the European Union Assistance Mission to Ukraine, and Irish Rule of Law International (IRLI) and is part of a longer standing collaboration between Irish Rule of Law International and the Mitchell Institute relating to IRLI's transitional justice programmes.

The Workshops with the Ukrainian judges drew on the Institute Fellows' expertise to engage in a dialogue with the judges on themes of reparations, transitional justice, and victims and victimhood and focused in particular on experiences in Northern Ireland during and after The Troubles.

Commenting on the Workshop, Professor Mallinder said: "Between the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2021 and early November 2023, over 111,576 war crimes have been documented by Ukrainian authorities. This context raises enormous challenges

for pursuing widespread prosecutions during armed conflict while also meeting victims' needs for physical and psychological support and other forms of reparations.

These Workshops provided important opportunities to learn from Northern Ireland's experiences of pursuing truth and accountability during and after The Troubles and to reflect on the complex needs of victims of serious human rights violations.

We were delighted to be able to host these esteemed judges at Queen's University Belfast as part of our ongoing collaboration with Irish Rule of Law International and we look forward sustaining this relationship in the future."



EVENT

Amnesties and the Catalan Independence Referendum

Professor Kieran McEvoy
November 2023

Professor Kieran McEvoy, Senator George J. Mitchell Chair in Peace, Security and Justice and Theme Lead: Rights and Social Justice, spoke at an event on 2 November 2023 in Barcelona organised by the Catalan government on the topic of **The International Experiences of Amnesties in Conflict Resolution**.

The event was held in the infamous El Modelo, a former prison (now museum) where over 1000 executions of political prisoners took place during the Franco era 1939-1975. The event was also addressed by the current Catalan President Pere Aragonès and Meitxell Serret, the current Catalan Foreign and EU Minister, who was herself convicted of the crime of 'disobedience' following the 2017 Catalan independence referendum.

Professor McEvoy spoke on the legal limits of amnesties, particularly any attempt to use amnesties to interfere with right to an effective investigation of victims and survivors who had loved ones killed and injured during conflict. However, he also argued that providing such rights are not infringed, amnesties can play an important role in conflict resolution.

WORKING GROUP

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Religion and Peacebuilding Working Group

Professor Gladys Ganiel
and Professor Darren Kew
December 2023

Mitchell Institute Visiting Fulbright Scholar Professor Darren Kew (University of San Diego, USA) and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding Professor Gladys Ganiel established a **Religion and Peacebuilding Working Group** including Christian leaders from a variety of traditions. Members of the Working Group attended the monthly series of Workshops from December 2023 to June 2024, which aimed to contribute to the renewal of faith-based peacebuilding networks in Belfast and beyond. Participants identified priorities for faith-based peacebuilding in Northern Ireland, discussing issues including youth and community engagement, partnering with non-religious groups, peacebuilding and the Religious Education curriculum, and planning future initiatives in light of declining church capacities and resources.

Several students on the Master's in Conflict Transformation and Social Justice degree programme at Queen's University Belfast also attended the workshops, providing note-taking and other administrative support.

Participants plan to use the workshops as a springboard for further collaborations, including continuing with periodic networking meetings, providing mutual support for youth engagement, and engaging with the Religious Education curriculum review that is currently underway in Northern Ireland.

Kew and Ganiel will produce an academic journal article based on observations of the working group, contributing to knowledge about the role of faith leaders in post-violence peacebuilding.

This work was funded by The Queen's University Belfast North American Partnership Fund and Queen's University Belfast AHRC Impact Accelerator Fund. Professor Kew received funding from the US Friends of Queen's University Belfast Visiting Professorship, awarded by the US-UK Fulbright Commission.

CONVERSATIONS SERIES

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Conversations on Britishness and Irishness Series



The Conversations on Britishness and Irishness Series was initiated in early 2023 as a way of facilitating open and respectful discussion about cultural and political identities in and relating to Ireland. The Series forms part of the Analysing and Researching Ireland North and South (ARINS) initiative—a partnership between The Royal Irish Academy and the Keough Naughton Institute of Irish Studies at the University of Notre Dame, to generate authoritative, independent and non-partisan research and analysis on a range of important issues for contemporary Ireland.

The Conversations Series features politicians from across the UK and Ireland, with questions and discussions from an invited audience. The events are

co-hosted by the Mitchell Institute, The Royal Irish Academy and the Keough Naughton Institute of Irish Studies at the University of Notre Dame.

The Series was launched at Queen's University Belfast on 31 January 2023, with Dame Arlene Foster and former Taoiseach and Honorary Professor of Practice at the Mitchell Institute, Bertie Ahern in conversation. The event was chaired by William Crawley, Journalist and Broadcaster.

The second event took place on Monday 15 May 2023 at the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin.

Participants included: Doug Beattie MLA, Ulster Unionist Party; Joanna Cherry MP, Scottish National

Party; and Claire Hanna MP, Social Democratic and Labour Party. The event was Chaired by Professor Cathy Gormley-Heenan, University Provost at Ulster University.

The third event took place on Tuesday 13 June 2023 at the University of Notre Dame (USA) in London and featured a conversation between Lord Peter Weir of Ballyholme and Mr Declan Kearney MLA. The session was chaired by Dr Mary C. Murphy, Jean Monnet Professor in European Integration, University College Cork.

The fourth in the Series of Conversations on Britishness and Irishness events took place on Friday 8 December 2023 at the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin. Opened by Institute Director Professor Richard English, this event was a conversation between Sam McBride with DUP founder-member Wallace Thompson. Discussion included topics such as unionist politics, faith, identity, the state of the union, Brexit and the possibility of a border poll. Drawing on his lifetime experience, Wallace Thompson provided an insight into his adolescence in the 1960s and the civil unrest at that time, and the role and influence of Ian Paisley in shaping his future.

Mitchell Institute Director, Professor Richard English commented: "The Mitchell Institute is delighted to be partnering with Notre Dame and the RIA in hosting this important series of discussions about Irishness and Britishness. Constructive debate is vital for the present and future politics of these islands, and it is a positive development to see these conversations emerge and grow."



13 June 2023. Left to right: Professor Patrick Griffin, University of Notre Dame; Declan Kearney MLA; Professor Gerry McKenna, Member of the Royal Irish Academy; Dr Mary C. Murphy, University College cork; Lord Weir of Ballyholme; and Professor Richard English, QUB.

PANEL DISCUSSION

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Panel Discussion in US Congress, Washington DC

Honorary Professors of Practice Jonathan Powell and Avila Kilmurray
March 2024

The Mitchell Institute was delighted to host a Panel discussion on 12 March 2024 in the US Congress in Washington, DC.

The session on **Building Peace and Economic Opportunity in Conflict-Affected Societies: Lessons from the Northern Ireland Peace Process** was Chaired by Mitchell Institute Director Professor Richard English.

Institute Honorary Professors of Practice Jonathan Powell and Avila Kilmurray offered wide-ranging and insightful reflections, as did their fellow panellist David Donoghue, who was the Irish head of the joint Anglo-Irish Secretariat in Belfast during 1995-99. All three panellists were involved in the negotiations which led to the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, and the lively discussion allowed for important reflection on peace-building and the ending of conflict.



*Left to right:
Honorary Professor of Practice Jonathan Powell;
Mr David Donoghue; and
Honorary Professor of Practice Avila Kilmurray.*

Women and Peacebuilding: Reflections from Northern Ireland

Professor Marsha Henry
March 2024

Held on 19 March 2024, this special event reflected on the central role of women in the Northern Ireland Peace process in the negotiations leading to the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement—which brought 30 years of conflict in the region to an end—and in the 25 years since. It was co-hosted by Queen's University Belfast, the Institute of Global Politics (IGP) at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA).

The centrality of women to the Northern Ireland peace process, at all levels of society—politically, socially and culturally—is key to understanding how the Agreement was constructed and how its central principles of power sharing, equality, and mutual respect remain in place today. The internationalization of that role, powerfully expressed by leaders such as Secretary Clinton during the 1990s, and since consolidated by local political leaders, remind us that successful peace processes represent the diversity of the societies affected by conflict.

Hosted by Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton, Professor of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University and Chancellor of Queen's University Belfast, this event highlighted those involved in negotiating the Agreement, those tasked

with its implementation, and the new generation driving forward the dividends of peace and explored, through academic research, the global role of women in peacebuilding as we look to the future.

Professor Marsha Henry, Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair in Women, Peace, Security and Justice, participated on the panel **Women and the Peace Dividend: A Global Perspective** with: Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, Phoebe Donnelly, and Melanne Vermeer.

Professor Henry talked about her forthcoming book and used Enloe's concept of the 'persistence of patriarchy' as a way to expand on her ethnographic work on women peacekeepers from the global south and the complex challenges they face in the field.

A recording of the event is available.



Innovative Justice Responses for Non-Recent Institutional Abuses: Restorative, Transitional and Transformative Justice

April 2024

Non-recent institutional abuse refers to the harm, marginalisation, and shame organisations and states have inflicted on individuals, nations, and entire groups of peoples. It can include physical, emotional, sexual, or cultural abuse and neglect within state and non-state institutions.

Institutional responses to such harms have historically focused on ‘bad apples’ and the actions of individual perpetrators. However, structural factors are increasingly recognised as contributing to such issues, with aspects such as gender, age, race, disability, and power relations playing a role in oppression and inequality, demanding different approaches. Thus, although individuals within institutions can be responsible for specific acts of abuse, harm may also be more widespread or systemic.

Much of the literature indicates that current legal systems premised on retributive justice are not adequately responding to the needs of victim/survivors. In a search for other approaches, this paper explores three additional justice paradigms of relevance to historical (or non-recent) institutional abuses: restorative justice; transitional justice; and transformative justice.

This policy paper forms part of the collaborative project: **Transforming Justice Project: An All-Island Examination of Justice Responses to Historical Institutional Abuse.**

It was authored by Dr Sophie van der Valk (University College Dublin); Dr Allely Albert (Technological University Dublin, Lecturer, School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work and Institute Fellow: Legacy, Queen’s University Belfast); Professor Anne-Marie McAlinden (Professor, School of Law and Institute Fellow: Legacy, Queen’s University Belfast); Dr James Gallen (Dublin City University); and Dr Marie Keenan (University College Dublin).

The project explores the potential of a new transformative justice response to non-recent institutional abuses and what this might look like.

Peacebuilding Colloquium 2024: Building Peace Across Generations

April 2024

Hosted by the Yale Jackson School of Global Affairs on 22–23 April 2024, the Annual Peacebuilding Colloquium brings together scholars, practitioners, and policy-makers to highlight issues at the forefront of peacebuilding, human rights, and global health.

Participants included peace and conflict experts from the University for Peace, Queen's University Belfast, University of Bristol, Columbia University, and Yale; practitioners and policy-makers from the United Nations, Mercy Corps, the International

Association for Human Values, and the International Rescue Committee; and peacebuilding trainers and community organizers from Europe, Rwanda, and New Haven. They presented and discussed key innovations and insights on intergenerational peacebuilding. This Conference builds upon the November 2022 Strategies for Sustainable Peacebuilding led by the Kroc Institute of Notre Dame and Jackson School of Global Affairs.

Mitchell Institute Director Professor Richard English, Fellows (Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding)

Dr Liam O'Hare and Dr Laura Dunne, and Queen's colleague Professor Sarah Miller were invited speakers.

Richard spoke on **Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism and Peace**, presenting research based on his recent book *Does Counter-Terrorism Work?* (Oxford University Press, 2024).

Liam, Laura and Sarah presented their research findings on **Early Childhood Interventions and Social Cohesion** and on **Cognitive Mapping: Everyday Peace Knowledge Representation**.

Mitchell Institute Visiting Scholar Dr Bonnie Weir, Senior Lecturer, Jackson School of Global Affairs, Yale University, also contributed to the event.

*Left to right:
Professor Sarah Miller (QUB);
Professor Richard English (QUB);
Dr Laura Dunne (QUB); and
Dr Liam O'Hare (QUB).*



VISITING SCHOLAR

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Professor Kieran McEvoy Commences Visiting Scholar Position in New York

Professor Kieran McEvoy
April 2024

Professor Kieran McEvoy is currently a Leverhulme Major Research Fellow (September 2023 to September 2026) working on the role of apologies and acknowledgement in addressing past violence and human rights abuses. In April 2024 he took up a Visiting Scholar position in Fordham University School of Law New York as part of a commitment in the Leverhulme Fellowship to ‘road-test’ the ideas associated with the project.

Commenting on his upcoming visit to New York Professor McEvoy said: “I am delighted to have the opportunity to deliver a number of invited Guest Lectures and presentations as part of this Leverhulme Award. I will be giving papers drawn from the project at New York University and Fordham University. In addition, together with Justice Manuel José Cepeda Espinosa (former chief justice of Colombia’s Constitutional Court) I am delivering another talk on **Truth, Justice, and Acknowledgement in Northern Ireland & Colombia** at a special event hosted by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy and Fordham Law School. In addition, I am also engaging with diplomatic colleagues at the United Nations on the impact-facing dimensions of this research.

I have previously been a visiting professor at both Fordham and New York University, and I am really grateful to my colleagues at both institutions, as well as the National Committee on Foreign Policy and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs for their help in organising this component of the Leverhulme Fellowship.”

Annual Frank Wright Memorial Lecture 2024

Living Together After ‘Ethnic’ Conflict: Elites, Citizens, and Post-War Social Relation

Professor Melani Cammett
May 2024

Mitchell Institute Honorary Professor
Melani Cammett delivered the Annual Frank Wright Memorial Lecture 2024, hosted by the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics on 9 May 2024 at Queen’s University Belfast.

Melani Cammett is Clarence Dillon Professor of International Affairs in the Department of Government and Director of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University.

Melani’s work centres on identity politics, intergroup relations, and development, and many of her current research projects explore the nexus between politicized identity-based conflict and socioeconomic factors, with particular focus on Northern Ireland, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Lebanon and aims to compare the nature of relations across different subnational localities.

Professor Frank Wright lectured in Politics at Queen’s University Belfast from 1973 until his untimely death in February 1993, at which point he had just been seconded to the University of Limerick as their first Professor of Peace Studies. His work has been hugely influential. *Northern Ireland: A Comparative Analysis*, explored the Northern Ireland conflict through parallels with other societies divided along ethnic lines, while his important book *Two Lands on One Soil*, published posthumously in 1994, brought an important longer historical perspective to the Northern Ireland conflict. His work was marked by intellectual rigour and a deep empathy for the subjects of his research.

DATABASE

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Amnesties, Conflict and Peace Agreement Database

Professor Louise Mallinder
July 2024

Mitchell Institute Deputy Director, Professor Louise Mallinder has published version two of her ground-breaking amnesties database in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh's Peace and Conflict Resolution Platform (PeaceRep).

The **Amnesties, Conflict and Peace Agreement Database** is a ground-breaking database providing open-access, qualitative descriptions of key themes relating to the enactment process, scope, conditions, legal effects, and implementation processes of amnesty laws, which are enacted around the world for crimes committed in connection with armed conflicts.

Version 2 of the database updates the data to cover amnesties enacted from 2016 to 2023. The database now contains information on 320 amnesties introduced as a result of ongoing conflict, as part of peace negotiations, or in postconflict periods from January 1990 to December 2023 in all world regions. Professor Mallinder is grateful to Dr Daniel Odin Shaw for his work on this data update.

For conflict mediators and societies that are grappling with ending armed conflict, this data resource can provide models of how amnesty processes can be designed. This is particularly useful for showing that amnesties do not necessarily always entail impunity, but rather can have a range of conditions and legal effects that can help the

amnesty contribute to the delivery of the peace process, as well as support non-prosecutorial accountability efforts.

This database also enables researchers to identify and analyse broad patterns in amnesty design over time, across regions, or in specific political contexts. In the coming months, Professor Mallinder will publish two policy reports outlining the findings from this database.



THE UNIVERSITY
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BELFAST

04



NEW APPOINTMENTS

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ACADEMIC STAFF

Three Professors were appointed to newly established Chair posts in the Institute:

Professor Louise Mallinder

Deputy Director of the Mitchell Institute

Professor Marsha Henry

Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair in Women, Peace, Security and Justice

Professor Kieran McEvoy

Senator George J. Mitchell Chair in Peace, Security and Justice

Professor Louise Mallinder, is the Theme Lead for Legacy and her research centres on the intersections of law and peace at the international level and in post-conflict societies. She has an internationally recognised expertise on amnesties and transitional justice. Professor Mallinder is currently writing a monograph entitled *Amnesties, International Crimes and Armed Conflict* and is co-editing the *Elgar Encyclopedia of Law and Peace*. Her research has informed her public engagement work on legacy in Northern Ireland and she has also engaged in research and consultancies in other transitional societies.

Professor Marsha Henry's research is concerned with the gendered and racialised politics of violence; militarisation; global south development; international aid and intervention; and conflict, peace, and security. She is the author of

several books, the latest of which is: *The End of Peacekeeping: Gender, Race, and the Martial Politics of Intervention* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2024). Professor Henry has also advised a number of national governments on women's participation in the armed forces, combatting sexual exploitation and abuse in humanitarian settings, and developing anti-racist and diversity strategies in foreign policy ministries.

Professor Kieran McEvoy, Mitchell Institute Theme Lead for Rights and Social Justice, has conducted research in over a dozen conflicted or transitional countries on topics including truth recovery, amnesties, apologies, victims, ex-combatants, restorative justice, and lawyers. He has authored or co-authored four books, co-edited eight books or special issues and over seventy journal articles and book chapters. He has been Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator on 10 UKRI-funded projects and is currently a Leverhulme Major Research Fellow (2023–26). He is a Fellow of the British Academy, a Member of the Royal Irish Academy, and a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences.

HONORARY TITLES

Professor Brian Dooley

*Honorary Professor of Practice
Senior Advisor, Human Rights First*

Brian is currently Senior Advisor at Washington DC-based NGO, Human Rights First. He works primarily with Human Rights Defenders working in dangerous

environments, including war zones, revolutions, or in repressive countries.

His work focuses on the practicalities of enabling and protecting the work of Human Rights Defenders working in difficult and dangerous contexts. In 2022–23, much of Brian's work has been in Eastern Ukraine.

He has previously worked with Amnesty International in a number of roles.

Professor Siobhán Mullally

*Honorary Professor
Established Professor of Human Rights Law and
Director of the Irish Centre for Human Rights,
University of Galway*

Professor Siobhán Mullally is the Established Professor of Human Rights Law and Director of the Irish Centre for Human Rights at University of Galway. In 2020, she was appointed as the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children.

Professor Mullally has worked as an adviser and consultant on human rights, migration and asylum law, gender and justice sector reform for UN bodies (including UNIFEM, UNDP, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe) and international organisations in many parts of the world, including in Ethiopia, Timor-Leste, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Kosovo.

VISITING SCHOLARS

Dr Asha Achuthan

Assistant Professor

Advanced Centre for Women's Studies, School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India

Asha Achuthan initially trained, for her graduate and post-graduate studies, in medicine from Calcutta University.

She went on to work on an MPhil in Women's Studies from Jadavpur University, Kolkata, focussing on third world women and their lived experience of development. She then completed a PhD in cultural studies from the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore, looking at feminist standpoint theory and experience.

Asha's current work explores the contexts of gender and biomedicine, with a focus on feminist epistemological critiques of the same. Asha teaches courses in feminist science studies, sexualities and desire, and queering feminism, and has designed and teaches courses in feminist methodology in the PhD programme at the Centre.

Asha recently concluded a multi-sited study on the appearance and journey of gender-sexuality as a metaphor in medical text and practice, that also explored changing terms of legibility and entry of persons of gender-marginal lives and experiences into contemporary healthcare spaces in India.

Asha has published in the areas of gender diversity in science institutions, feminist standpoint methodologies, interdisciplinarity in higher education, sexuality and the nation, and the normative character of biomedical technologies. Her most recent work is on the dai figure in colonial India, with a book manuscript currently in press.

Asha is collaborating with Institute Fellows Professor Dina Zoe Belluigi and Dr Ulrike Vieten as well as Dr Nandita Banerjee Dhawan, Jadavpur University, India, on the project **Counter-stories of Authority in Transition: Women in the Indian Academy**. The research explores the agency and contributions of first-generation, gender-marginal academics in Indian higher education institutions.

Professor David Cunningham

Professor

Washington University, St Louis, USA

David Cunningham is Professor and outgoing Chair of Sociology at Washington University in St. Louis. His research has focused on drivers of political repression as well as organized racist campaigns by the Ku Klux Klan and other groups, and currently centers on how legacies of historical racialized violence shape ongoing inequalities and divisions. Interests around the latter have also bridged into the study of contested sites of public memory, including those involving Confederate monuments in the U.S. South. His work in Belfast will consider tourism and public murals in comparative relief with this ongoing work in the U.S.

He is the author of *There's Something Happening Here: The New Left, the Klan, and FBI Counterintelligence and the award-winning Klansville, USA: The Rise and Fall of the Civil Rights-Era KKK* (Oxford University Press, 2014), and more recently he has co-edited a special journal issue on **Legacies of Racial Violence**. Other present studies, on the role of 19th century newspapers in the spread of lynching and mass atrocity and on trajectories of contested historical spaces, are supported by the Mellon Foundation and the James S. McDonnell Foundation.

David is currently the Chair-Elect of the American Sociological Association's Section on Collective Behavior and Social Movements. Building on related prior public-facing work in the U.S. with the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Mississippi Truth Project, he also currently serves on the City of St. Louis Reparations Commission and as an instructor and board member for Washington University's Prison Education Project.

Dr Nandita Banerjee Dhawan

Assistant Professor

School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University, India

Nandita has previously held administrative positions of Director and Joint Director at the School of Women's Studies at Jadavpur University, India.

She has explored how patriarchal institutions deploy tropes of the (il)legitimate through the blending of economic liberalism and cultural illiberalism to reinforce the majoritarian privilege and hegemony

of the 'New Indian Middle Class'. She has studied gender and intersectional violence as well as the challenges faced by the Indian women's/feminist movement due to the category of 'difference'.

Dr Dhawan has extensive inter/national feminist research collaborations with academics and activists on issues of marriage, domestic violence, the transformation of higher education, and urban (re) structuring. She has published widely on these issues, including co-editing three volumes.

Dr Dhawan is collaborating with Institute Fellows Professor Dina Zoe Belluigi and Dr Ulrike Vieten Dr Asha Achuthan of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences on the project, **Counter-stories of Author-ity in Transition: Women in the Indian Academy**. Of particular interest to Dr Dhawan, is how their multi-generational insights will contribute to our understanding about the challenges of democratising social formation against main(male) stream authority at various points in time, including methodologies, knowledge systems and participation within the hegemonic cultures of the academy.

Professor Brad R. Roth

*Professor of Political Science and Law
Wayne State University, Detroit, USA*

Brad R. Roth is Professor of Political Science and Law at Wayne State University in Detroit. His scholarship applies political theory to problems in international and comparative public law, with a special focus on crises of political authority.

Brad is the author of *Governmental Illegitimacy in International Law* (Oxford University Press, 1999), *Sovereign Equality and Moral Disagreement* (Oxford University Press, 2011), and a wide range of book chapters, journal articles, and commentaries dealing with questions of sovereignty, constitutionalism, human rights and democracy.

His interest in Northern Ireland stems from his previous work on self-determination and statehood questions (e.g., Israel-Palestine, the former Yugoslavia, and Taiwan) and on retrospective and extraterritorial applications of criminal law to conflict participants.

Brad served from 2010 to 2018 as one of three American Branch representatives to the International Law Association's Committee on Recognition/ Non-Recognition of States and Governments, and currently serves on the ILA Committee on Military Intervention on Request.

FELLOWS

Following on from a Call in early 2023, 31 new Fellows were appointed to the Mitchell Institute, commencing their tenure in September 2023. From backgrounds as diverse as human and environmental rights, social justice, gender, race and class politics, literature, child development, international and cyber security, the new Fellows strengthen the interdisciplinary nature of the Institute through our priority Themes of Legacy; The Politics and Security of Institutional Peacebuilding; Rights and Social Justice; and Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding.

SABBATICAL FELLOWS

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The Mitchell Institute Sabbatical Fellowship Scheme 2023-24 was open to all QUB academic staff who had already been awarded Sabbatical Leave by their School during this academic year.

For the duration of their Fellowship—up to a maximum of 1 semester—recipients are provided with office space at the Institute; funding of £4,000 to support their research activities; and present their research in a Mitchell Institute Lecture or Research Workshop.

Professor Colin Harvey

Professor Colin Harvey, Institute Fellow: Rights and Social Justice and Director, Human Rights Centre, School of Law, is working on a research project examining the legal and policy implications of possible constitutional change on the island of Ireland. He presented a Research Workshop on Achieving a New Ireland on 6 December 2023 which explored constitutional pathways to a New Ireland, particularly for those who hope for transformative possibilities. The implications and possibilities posed by Brexit and the choices about the constitutional future provided The Good Friday Agreement will be discussed.

Colin visited New York in November and spoke at two events including the National Committee on American Foreign Policy (NCAFP) event at Fordham University School of Law on 2 November. He addressed an informal gathering of the Brehon Law Society of New York later that day. Both talks focused on human rights and constitutional change on the island of Ireland.

He was an invited speaker at the Seminar on European Responses to Territorial Conflicts in the EU, hosted by the Iratzar and Coppietiers Foundations on 7 November in Brussels, where he further explored these themes.

While in Brussels, Professor Harvey met with MEPs Barry Andrews and Seán Kelly at the European Parliament to discuss challenges and opportunities for the island of Ireland, including ongoing shared island conversations.

Colin hosted a Research Workshop on **Achieving a New Ireland** on 6 December 2023.

Professor Debbie Lisle

During her Sabbatical Fellowship, Professor Debbie Lisle, Mitchell Institute Fellow: The Politics of Security and Institutional Peacebuilding was working on her research project examining how productive failure is deployed to manage war, migration, pandemics and climate change. Her particular focus was the emergence of 'Lessons Learned Processes' in military institutions and the technoscientific framing of failure.

As well as attending various events, Debbie continued in her role on the Governing Board of the European International Studies Association (EISA) throughout her Fellowship.

Debbie attended the International Studies Association 2024 Annual Convention that took place in San Francisco from 3-6 April 2024, participating in several roundtables and panels.

On 9 April 2024 Debbie presented her ongoing research into the military origins of productive failure at the Centre for Global Peace and Conflict Studies, University of California, Irvine. During the visit to Irvine, Debbie co-taught a graduate Seminar on **The Politics of Humanitarianism** and held a mentoring event for PhD students and ECRs outlining research, funding and publishing opportunities in the UK and Europe. Debbie was also taken to a Dog Agility Tournament in West Hollywood by the PhD students.

Dr Des O'Rawe

Dr Des O'Rawe, Institute Fellow: Legacy and Senior Lecturer in Film Studies, School of Arts, English and Languages, worked on developing his research project **Framing Trauma: Documentary Film and the Politics of Psychiatry** during his Sabbatical Fellowship. He hosted a Colloquium, in partnership with the Belfast Film Festival on **Strangers to Peace: Documentary Film and the Politics of Transitional Justice** on 8 November 2023. This Colloquium included a screening of the critically acclaimed Columbian documentary, *Strangers to Peace* (Laura Àngel Rengifo and Noah Debonis, 2022), followed by a panel discussion responding to the film and exploring relations between documentary filmmaking and questions of post-conflict memory

and transitional justice—both more widely, and closer to home. The film’s producer, Colleen O’Brien, introduced the film.

Des also hosted an associated Research Workshop on **Documentary Film and the Politics of Radical Psychiatry** on 24 January 2024.

Dr Laura Pfuntner

Dr Laura Pfuntner, Senior Lecturer in Ancient History, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, worked on her second monograph: *Roman Civil Wars in the Empire: Provincial Experiences of Conflict and State Formation in the First Century BC* during her Sabbatical Fellowship.

Through a selection of case studies of individual and collective experiences of civil warfare in the central and western provinces of the Roman Empire, participants will explore individual and collective experiences of civil warfare in the central and western provinces of the Roman Empire, how this intersected with localized conflicts between provincial communities and the role of local power brokers.

Laura delivered a Lecture at the TRANSMARE Institute at the University of Trier, in Germany, on 15 November. This Lecture focused on Sicily’s

economic and political connections with the Adriatic region in the Roman period, and drew on some of the research on Roman civil warfare in the provinces that she has been conducting during her Sabbatical Fellowship.

On 3 December, Laura was a guest speaker on the BBC Radio Ulster show **Sunday with Steven Rainey**, to discuss the historical context of the Parthenon sculptures, or ‘Elgin marbles’ as they are more commonly known - both their creation in the 5th century BC and their controversial removal in the early 19th century AD - in light of the recent diplomatic dispute between the UK and Greece

Laura hosted a Research Workshop based on her monograph, on 13 December 2023.

She presented at the Annual Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America in Chicago on 5 January 2024. Her paper, **Urban Transition in the Italian Peninsula and its islands** focused on inscriptions as evidence for urban transitions in the Severan period in Sicily, and was based in part on the research she has conducted during her tenure. Laura participated in a panel discussion which included scholars from Europe and the US to discuss how archaeologists and historians interpret change over time in the archaeological records of cities (and of broader settlement systems) in Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia, from prehistory through late antiquity.

Previous Sabbatical Fellows 2022-23

Dr Lauren Dempster

Lecturer, School of Law and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Rights and Social Justice

Dr Peter McLoughlin

Senior Lecturer, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics and Mitchell Institute Fellow: Legacy



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FACE,
JUSTIC

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LEADERSHIP

Prof Richard English
Mitchell Institute Director
Politics and International Studies

Prof Marsha Henry
Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair in Women, Peace, Security and Justice
School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics

Prof Fiona Magowan
Theme Lead: Religion, Arts and Peacebuilding
School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics

Prof Louise Mallinder
Mitchell Institute Deputy Director
Theme Lead: Legacy
School of Law

Prof Kieran McEvoy
Senator George J. Mitchell Chair in Peace, Security and Justice
Theme Lead: Rights and Social Justice
School of Law

RESEARCH FUNDED POSTS

Prof Michael Semple
Professorial Research Fellow

Dr Stephen Herron
Research Fellow

FELLOWS

Legacy

Prof Louise Mallinder
Theme Lead
School of Law
Law

Dr Allely Albert
School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
Law

Dr Merav Amir
School of Natural, Cultural and Built Environment
Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology

Prof Gordon Anthony
School of Law
Law

Prof Dina Belluigi
School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
Education

Dr Danielle Blaylock
School of Psychology
Education

Prof Fran Brearton
School of Arts, English and Languages
English

Prof John D. Brewer
School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
Sociology

Dr Graham Brownlow
Queen's Business School
Economics

Prof Dominic Bryan
School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics
Anthropology and Development Studies

Prof Anna Bryson
School of Law
Law

Dr Garrett Carr
School of Arts, English and Languages
English

Dr Evropi Chatzipanagiotidou
School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics
Anthropology and Development Studies

Prof John Coakley
School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics
Politics and International Studies

Prof Marie Coleman
School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics
History

Prof Brice Dickson
School of Law
Law

Prof Joe Duffy
School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
Social Work and Social Policy

Dr Michael Duffy
School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
Social Work and Social Policy

Dr Ruth Duffy
School of Arts, English and Languages
History

Ms Lesley Emerson
School of Arts, English and Languages
Education

Prof Tony Gallagher
School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
Education

Dr Alison Garden
School of Arts, English and Languages
English/History

Mr David Grant
School of Arts, English and Languages
Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts

Dr Jonathan Heaney
School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
Sociology

Dr Kevin Hearty
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Prof Audrey Horning
School of Natural, Cultural and Built Environment
Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology

Prof Joanne Hughes
School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
Education

Dr Sarah Jankowitz
School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
Sociology

Prof Cheryl Lawther
School of Law
Law

Dr Mengyao Li
School of Psychology
Psychology

Prof Keith Lilley
School of Natural, Cultural and Built Environment
Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology

Prof Anne-Marie McAlinden
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Law

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School of Arts, English and Languages
Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts

Dr Peter McLoughlin
School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics
Politics and International Studies

Dr Cathal McManus
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Prof John Morison
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Social Work and Social Policy

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Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care

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Rights and Social Justice

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Sociology

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Law

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Anthropology

Prof John D. Brewer
Sociology

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University of Edinburgh

Prof Melani Cammett
Harvard University, Boston, USA

Prof Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela
Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch, South Africa

Prof Siobhán Mullally
University of Galway

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Prof Bertie Ahern
Former Taoiseach of Ireland

Prof Brian Dooley
Human Rights First, Washington DC, USA

Prof Andrew Heyn
Former British Consul-General in Hong Kong

Prof Avila Kilmurray
*Peacebuilding and Migration Executive,
Social Change Initiative*

Prof Christopher Maccabe CB
Former Political Director of the Northern Ireland Office

Prof Michael Maguire CBE
Former Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland

Prof Rory Montgomery
*Former Irish Permanent Representative
to the European Union*

Prof Jonathan Powell
Former Chief of Staff to Tony Blair

Prof Peter Sheridan
*Commissioner, Independent Commission for
Reconciliation and Information Recovery*

VISITING SCHOLARS

Dr Asha Achuthan
Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India

Prof David Cunningham
Washington University, St. Louis, USA

Dr Nandita Banerjee Dhawan
Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India

Prof Darren Kew
University of Boston, Massachusetts, USA

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Dr James E. Waller
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SABBATICAL FELLOWS 2022-23

Dr Lauren Dempster

Dr Peter McLoughlin

SABBATICAL FELLOWS 2023-24

Prof Colin Harvey

Prof Debbie Lisle

Dr Des O'Rawe

Dr Laura Pfuntner

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Clerical Officer

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Clerical Officer

Brett Walker
Clerical Officer



POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

Leverhulme LINCS / LINAS Doctoral Scholars

Jessica Barr

Machine learning-enhanced diagnostics of open quantum networks

Brian Byrne

Exploring Immersive Filmmaking as a Digital Resilience Tool with Refugee Communities in Northern Ireland

Colette Casey

Digital Narratives and the Performative Power of News in the Era of False Information: An Ethnography of Journalism in Northern Ireland

Michael Collins

The Vigilant Image: Documentary Technologies in the Age of Global (In) Security

Samantha Darragh

Using Hybrid Intelligence to Overcome Algorithm Aversion in Decision-making

Oliver Donnelly

Playing with fire? Monitoring and Engineering Political Interactions in Video Games

Caragh Duffy

Humans and Artificial Intelligence in Unmanned Aerial Systems: A Dangerous Relationship?

Felix Elliott

Harm in the Use of Open Sources Intelligence for Policing Purposes

Mark Elliott

Advancing Algorithmic Transparency in a Data Driven World

Karli Gibson

Security and Responsibility: Emergence, Decision, and Distributed Agency

Cecile Harrault

Algorithmic Decision Making and Online Content Moderation: Devising Technological and Regulatory Solutions to Preserve Fundamental Rights Online

Anna Holis

Beyond Binary Emotions: Emotional AI's Challenge with Neurodiversity

Shania Kirk

Can Business and Human Rights Frameworks Shape Accountability for AI in Information Ecosystems?

Adam Kirk-Smith

Emerging Algorithmic Technologies in Legal practice and the representation of legal knowledge

Cian Luddy

"He is /ourguy/" Trump's Securitized Moves and the AltRight Online Public

David Mark

Secure Environments, Legally Compliant Environments, Safe Environments: Understanding the Dynamics for Confidence with Algorithmic Decision-making

Ciara McHugh

Returning the Gaze: Global Perspectives on the Impact of Surveillance Technology in Police-Community Relations

Tomás McInerney

From Private to Public: The Inter-Operability and Governance of Private Sector Algorithmic Solutions in the Public Sector

Jason McKillen

When Does One Become Dangerous? Exploring the Use of Algorithms and Machine Learning in the Process of Detection of Dangerousness on the Basis of Previous Data

Anna Montgomery

The Smart Home as a site of control: Analyzing the impact on victim-survivors of domestic abuse

Louise O'Hagan

Detection and Prevention of Inappropriate and Criminal Behaviour in Social Media

Katherine Pittalis

Algorithmic Regulation of the Music Industry Regarding the Consumption of Music

Nora Poloni-Gallagher

Algorithmic Accountability: Public Control of AI Decisionmaking

Habeeb Ramos

What are the effects of Algorithmic Decision-making on Market Abuse Laws?

James Sweeney

Talking Technology: Regulating and ensuring the safety of intelligent voice assistants

Jarlath Warner

Bias in Lightweight AI for Smart Devices

Joshua Weston

Machine and Algorithmic Driven Discovery in Big Data: Implications for Scientific Reproducibility

Postgraduate Research Students

Darren Colbourne

When the Whole World's Watching: Relational Mechanisms, New Left Publics, and Comparative Mobilisations in the People's Democracy and Students for a Democratic Society

Brendan McKee

Nationalist Movements in the UK: Towards a Theory on Secessionism

Damien Rea

The Role of Civil Society in Transitional Justice in Colombia: Lessons to be Learnt for Northern Ireland

Patrick Thompson

Parliamentary Activism: Civil Rights, the CDU and the weight of Parliamentary Convention

GRADUATES

Judith Fullerton (Self Funded)

Cultural Trauma and Transgenerational Transmission in Northern Ireland

Tomás McInerney (LINAS DTP)

From Private to Public: The Inter-Operability and Governance of Private Sector Algorithmic Solutions in the Public Sector

Louise O'Hagan (LINCS DTP)

Detection and Prevention of Inappropriate and Criminal Behaviour in Social Media

Yumi Omori (Japan Student Services Organization)

Mothers' Experiences of Conflict and Conflict Transformation in Belfast

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University of Notre Dame

Peyton Marrone

University of Notre Dame

Zachary D'Amato

Union Theological Seminary



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