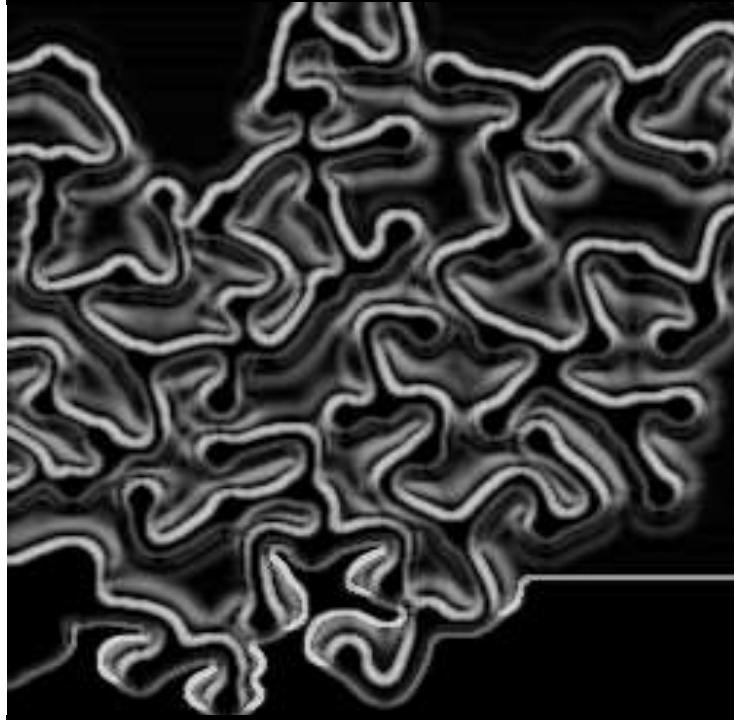


Intellectual Party 2010
Lancaster Sociology Summer Conference



ABSTRACT BOOK

Abstracts listed A to Z by surname

Abdullah Algarni, Criminology and Sociological Studies, Hull University

Theorizing Fraud in the Information Age: the Need for Theoretical Innovation

It has become obligatory for any theoretically informed discussion of fraud in the information age to analyse and examine the phenomenal growth of fraudulent activities on the Internet in relation to the central concerns of theorists of cyber-crime. Accordingly, the current paper intends to provide an insight into the underlying features of cyber-fraud with reference to the theoretical debate surrounding cyber-crime. One such issue that is frequently raised as a starting point when discussing cyber-crime is the issue of the novelty of illicit activities that are conducted in cyberspace. This issue has been a subject of an ongoing debate among criminologists; does it denote the emergence of a new form of crime and/or criminality? Would such novelty require us to dispense with (or at least modify, supplement or extend) the existing array of theories and explanatory concepts that criminologists have at their disposal? Answers to such questions appear in positive, negative and indeterminate registers. Some criminologists argue that cyber-crime is very much the same as 'old-fashioned' non-virtual crime, and merely uses some new tools that are helpful for the offender; what Grabosky (2001) dubs 'old wine in new bottles'. Other commentators, however, have suggested that the advent of "virtual crimes", cyber-fraud being a salient example of such crimes, marks the establishment of a new and distinctive social environment (often dubbed "cyberspace", in contrast to "real space") with its own ontological and epistemological structures, interactional forms, roles and rules, limits and possibilities. The task in this paper will be to consider the new concepts in theorizing criminal behaviour in cyberspace, and utilize them to build an overall theoretical perspective on fraudulent activities in cyberspace.

Erkan Ali, Sociology, Lancaster University

With an emphasis on the uncanny and the concept of presentiment, this paper considers an unlikely meeting between a writer (Walter Benjamin) and a photographer (Luc Delahaye) in Russia. Reading Benjamin's melancholic 'Moscow Diary' (1927) against Delahaye's photographic essay 'Winterreise' (2000), the paper emphasises the ways in which photographs may be contextualised by text and the ways in which, in return, photographs can amplify and specify a text. Taking its inspiration from the cycle of twenty-four songs by Franz Schubert, with which it shares its name, 'Winterreise' (literally, 'Winter Journey') has been described as a 'melancholy road story' which exposes the social depravity of Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union. And despite the seventy year gap separating their respective visits, the observations made by Benjamin and Delahaye are freakish in their similarity: improbably vibrant colours, mysterious red rags, the 'fearful blue sky' at night, the figure of the rag picker, the pure white snow and its effects on the senses, posters and billboards depicting images of paradise, and so on. What we find is a physiognomy of Russia which seems to have hardly changed since the early twentieth century; and these motifs are almost compensatory, making up for a bleak and featureless landscape which is otherwise devoid of colour.

Lisa Ashmore, Sociology, Lancaster University

Con-Forming Bodies: The Relationship Between Bodies and Image Guided Radiotherapy Technologies.

This paper will discuss bodies and their relationship with Image Guided Radiotherapy (IGRT) technologies. IGRT is currently being implemented in an increasing number of UK radiotherapy departments. A pre-treatment cone-beam CT scan (CBCT) is delivered with the aim of improving accuracy of radiotherapy treatments by allowing practitioners to verify, in 3D, patient position before the radiation beam is turned on, something which traditional verification systems cannot do.

Because of this increased visualisation inside the patient's body, new proximities are established between patient and machine and patient and practitioner. Analysing ethnographic fieldwork in two UK hospitals, this paper will present some of the demands placed upon patients undergoing treatment for prostate cancer using IGRT techniques. I will explore histories of patient bodies acting and being acted upon under normative notions, where patients are required to replicate a moment in their own bodily history, a pre-treatment 'gold standard' of internal anatomy positioning, which is filled with human and technical expectation. The visualization into the patients' bodies, which the IGRT technologies allow, means that the male patients' bodies need to be re-arranged in order for the service to 'work'; their bodies are subjectable to the demands of the machine. I will demonstrate that the recursive relationship between the 'con-forming' body and machine produces a new creation, an image, a cyborg. This creation animates the functionality of the machine, establishing its place within radiotherapy services.

Carla Banks, Sociology, Lancaster University

Practising Display at the Antiques Centre

Drawing on data collected at a local antiques centre, this paper will explore the practice of displaying goods engaged in by stall holders. I will examine the visual and spatial decisions made by stall holders in an attempt to reveal the impact that these display techniques have on the particular atmosphere (Baudrillard, 1968) of each of the stalls. It will be argued that the care and consideration afforded to displaying the antiques brings them to life, assigning them values beyond simply exchange and usability. By focussing on techniques of display, I aim to broaden our understanding of the commodity to include practices of marketing and retail merchandising which are usually overshadowed by an emphasis on production and/or consumption.

Stefan Beljean, Sociology, University of Konstanz

When Machines start taking Decisions about Men – Computer-based Candidate Selection and the Ethics of Delegation in Organizational Recruiting

We live in the midst of a second wave of automatization. In many social fields, information technology has come to assume roles and responsibilities that have previously been assigned to human actors. In electronic trading markets, computer systems are automatically matching bid and offer (Knorr Cetina & Bruegger 2002). In the insurance business, companies use expert systems to calculate risks and complex scenarios (Levy & Murnane 2004). In aviation, more and more parts of the flight process are run by autopilot (Weyer 2005). This paper draws attention to another context in which we can observe a similar development: Faced with high volumes of applications, most major corporations and organizations rely heavily on information technology when it comes to recruiting. My paper is meant to explore the implication of the new division of labor that emerges between these technologies and human recruiters. For recruiters the increasing sophistication of information technology represents both a chance and a challenge. On the one hand, technology holds the promise to facilitate their life. But on the other hand, it might lead to a trivialization and devaluation of their work. In this paper, I will focus on the tension that arises from these conflicting views. Based on an ethnographic case study in a large multinational corporation that has implemented an online recruiting system, I will analyze the hopes and fears that HR practitioners connect with the idea of letting computers evaluate and select applicants.

Louise Birdsell Bauer, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Concordia University

Evaluating Recent Trends in Part-time and Temporary Instruction at Quebec Universities: Trends from the Labour Force Survey from 1999-2009

In the past twenty years, many sociologists have contended with the challenges that face part-time and contract instructors in educational institutions, particularly in the U.K. and the U.S. (Abbas and McLean, 2001; Charfauros and Tierney, 1990; Husbands, 1998). In recent years, two of the most

central issues in the literature with regards to part-time and contract faculty are the prevalence of women in part-time positions (Donovan, C. et al., 2005; Smithson, J., 2005; Todd, Z. et al., 2008) and the institutional implications of an increase of sessional and contract faculty instructors in the university (Brown, D. and Gold, M., 2007; Knight, 2007; Lin, 2005; Omiecinski, 2003). In this paper, I will examine these two focal issues by analyzing trends in Labour Force Survey data from 1999 to 2009. I will provide a demographic profile of part-time and contract faculty in Canada, discussing the gendered nature of part-time instruction. I will argue that the profile of labour structures in Canadian university faculties, particularly in Quebec, increasingly resemble those described by British and American sociologists, particularly with respect to the gendered nature of part-time work and the increasing reliance on contract faculty members. Additionally, I will analyze the hours worked and salaries of part-time and contract faculty, suggesting that there exist a variety of complex economic and personal motivations for part-time teaching. I will conclude with a brief discussion of the implications of this analysis for university education and governance in Canada.

Md Bodyuzzaman Bappy,

Flooding and inequality.

In-country heavy rainfall and excessive water flow from upstream in India and Nepal caused devastating flooding and affected millions of people. These floods occurred in two spells between July and September, flooding areas around the Brahmaputra, Jamunda and Padma basis, affecting over 12 million people in 43 districts. The death toll from diarrhoea, drowning, snakebite and respiratory diseases reached 916 since flooding commenced in July. The damage to agriculture, infrastructure and local resources has impacted on the livelihoods of the poorest families. The second spell destroyed the attempt made by many poor farmers to recover their losses through replanting their crops. The poorest and vulnerable communities became more vulnerable as the floods ruined their agriculture, infrastructure, local resources and livelihood options. Concern's emergency intervention included a search and rescue operation, dry-food distribution, and other food and non-food relief distributions for 69,500 families. Concern aims to implement a rehabilitation phase starting January 2008 for 26,000 extremely poor families most affected by the floods.

Richard Bramwell, Sociology, London School of Economics

London's Youth Politics in the Space of Public Transport

The playing of music by young people on Londons public buses has attracted considerable attention in recent years, and has been associated with criminality or anti-social behaviour by the mainstream media and the capitals politicians. However, these responses to policing of buses stands in contradiction to London 2012s contribution to the Beijing Olympics closing ceremony, representing London through the playing of music on top of a bus. The contradictory responses to music playing by Londons civic authorities reveal a contemporary area of concern about young people, public space, technology, and black culture. This paper engages with the ethical relations that are reproduced through playing rap music on buses. This paper focuses on how young people use rap music to transform the space of the bus, making this public space more sociable. Despite attempts by the civic authorities to marginalise them, Londons junior citizens can be seen to ignore, challenge, and overturn official attempts to structure the use of Londons public buses. The playing of music on buses is a self-conscious appropriation of shared public space, and part of the mainstreaming of black culture in contemporary Britain. Indeed, the transformation of this space through an ethics of play raises significant questions regarding what public space is for, the position of young people in society, the role of popular art in shaping civil society, and how young people express their right to be themselves in public.

Mark Carrigan, Sociology, University of Warwick

Who We Are and Where We Come From: An inquiry into reflexivity, identity and culture in the lives of undergraduate students at a UK university

My research project is a longitudinal study of the relation between identity and culture in the lives of undergraduate students at the University of Warwick. I intend to explore how culture facilitates and frustrates the burgeoning personal identities of adolescents, as well as how these influences intersect with those of the structurally conditioned circumstances they confront throughout their adolescence. I have recruited participants from four departments: Sociology, English Literature, Physics and Warwick Business School. All my participants are first year students and I plan to interview them each term for the rest of their time at university. As well as my biographical analysis, which focuses on how each participant reflexively negotiates between objective circumstances and subjective projects, I am conducting a corpus analysis of the interviews in an attempt to map changing patterns in their language use onto pertinent features of their developing biography. The aims of my research are: firstly to develop realist theorising about reflexivity, identity and culture, secondly to develop methodological tools for studying reflexivity and thirdly to understand the situation faced by contemporary undergraduate students. This presentation will present my developing theoretical and methodological approach. It will also present the initial results from my participants first year at university.

Jodie Chapell , Sociology, Lancaster University

Biopiracies? Plants, patents and People in Peru

The presentation will cover aspects of my ethnographic fieldwork in Peru and will try to elucidate some of the relationships and webs of significance that connect plants, patents and people in Peru in the context of biopiracy work and issues. I argue that biopiracy is actually a number of biopiracies, which have different meanings and are made real as different entities in the three locations I studied - the academic office, the patent office, and two different indigenous communities.

Yi-Ping Cheng, Sociology, Lancaster University

Storage in home consumption

In this presentation I demonstrate that storage could be robust enough to be a research topic. I focus on one specific space: the living room at home. Through this I try to engage with the broader consumption theories and with research on home consumption. I discuss how the flow of domestic goods reveals differences between households and demonstrates family events and relationships. My research will focus on three topics; the first is what kinds of practical strategies do people use to manage the flow of goods; and the second is the time-space aspect in family events; then the third is tensions between family members. Analysis of my pilot interviews suggests people stem the flow of goods in various ways, and that objects are kept for different periods of time and for different reasons. Within the home, these processes reflect tensions between family members in relation to aesthetic preferences, gender divisions and negotiation with ordering systems at home.

Shireen Chilcott, Sociology, Lancaster University

Explaining the changing gender composition of town planning and electrical work

My overall PhD project examines the changing gender composition of four construction occupations. This paper compares and contrasts the position of female town planners with the position of female electricians. It begins by utilising the Standard Occupational Classification 2000 to consider the definition of town planning, which falls into major group 2 namely; professional occupations and electrical work which belongs to major group 5, the skilled trade occupations. Next, using Labour Force Survey and Census data I show that whilst women have made inroads into town planning, the

number of female electricians, despite being exceedingly low, has declined further since 1991. After that, I compare the routes of entry into education-based town planning and vocation-based electrical work. I draw on Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data and statistics provided by City and Guilds to highlight gender variations in the number of planning students and apprentice electricians. Thereafter, I consider my interviewees' accounts of why women have advanced into town planning and I highlight that many town planners work for local government in the public sector, where the working conditions are flexible. Following that, drawing on the personal experiences of my interviewees, I speculate on some of the reasons for the scarcity of female electricians and I draw attention to some of the problems female electricians face while their category is so uncommon. Finally, I discuss the methodological problems encountered during my research and I speculate about the implications of my findings for the more general processes of gender inequality.

Brigit Colton, Sociology, Lancaster University

Notes from the field: doing participatory research at an NHS arts for mental health project.

My research is with an NHS arts for mental health project who design bespoke art practice and appreciation programmes for people with severe and enduring mental health problems to assist them towards 'recovery'. Part of my research will be to access the service as a service-user would do, taking part in 6 months of art-studio based activity. I will present reflections on this part of my fieldwork, which will be in progress in June 2010, both in terms of the practical aspects of doing research this way and the analytical aspects, for example, how am I making sense of the experience?

Raheel Dhattiwala, Sociology, University of Oxford

What explains why some neighbourhoods are peaceful, others not? A study of Ahmedabad and the 2002 wave of Hindu-Muslim violence

My ongoing research examines the indicators of variations in intensity and occurrence of Hindu-Muslim violence at the neighbourhood level in the city of Ahmedabad in Gujarat state, western India, in 2002. This is a step further to my earlier research which examined these variations at the town level in Gujarat. One important finding was of violence being positively associated with towns having a high literacy rate, thereby questioning the intuitive argument that improved literacy leads to reduction in violence (Bobo and Licari 1989). The other finding showed support for the instrumental utility of politics: towns where the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party had lost in the previous election were positively associated with violence. Assuming that electoral rewards is a key factor in explaining variation in violence over space, it becomes intriguing to find spatial variations within towns (and cities) : why were some neighbourhoods that presented the same opportunity for electoral rewards as others in a town not attacked, or if attacked, why was violence controlled immediately? In my DPhil research, I examine hypotheses of literacy and electoral politics at the neighbourhood level using quantitative methods and will use ethnographic methods to study a neighbourhood of Hindu and Muslim slum-dwellers who maintained peace even as violence erupted at the geographical boundaries of the slum, comparing it with a similar slum locality where violence occurred. Elinor Ostrom's (1990) work on governance of common-pool resources through voluntary organisations than state intervention is an important theoretical base for understanding the peaceful slum-dwelling.

Selina Doran, Geography & Sociology, Strathclyde

"I probably big myself up a bit more on there": How the social network site Bebo influences its female users' identities and affects their social relationships

This project examines the extent to which the social network site Bebo contributes to the construction of its female users' identities as well as its effect on their social relationships. A review of the literature, as it pertains to notions of identity construction, Goffmanesque performances,

debates about cyberspace and elements of narcissism similar to social network site usage, is provided. Qualitative semi-structured interviews with five teenage girls and five adult females provide the findings. It is concluded that Bebo does have a substantial effect on the construction of female identity, in particular for those with malleable sense of selves. It is further concluded that both Bebo performances and narcissistic elements of Bebo relate to identity formation. In addition, it is found that Bebo does reconstruct and destabilize its users' pre-existing social relationships. Further areas of Bebo-related research are suggested.

Rebecca Fish, CGWS/Sociology, Lancaster University

'Very difficult people?' - Women with learning disabilities in secure services.

Women in secure hospitals are more likely to be diagnosed with a personality disorder, more likely to have experienced sexual abuse, and are more likely to stay longer in services than men. In learning disability secure units, women are a very small minority, however are thought by the staff to be the most difficult to deal with. Research suggests that women in these units are involved in more incidents of aggression and self harm than men, and that the staff and organisational responses to these behaviours are construed as punishment. My research will look at staff and service users' views of a forensic learning disability service in relation to gender, using ethnographic and interview methods.

John Gardner, Sociology, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

The Multiple Patient: The Enactment of the Patient During Diagnosis

This project argues for using Actor-Network Theory (ANT) to study medical interactions, and demonstrates that medical entities are not only culturally and historically situated, they are also materially situated. Using video and data supplied by the Applied Research into Communication in Health research team, this project followed Simon, a middle-aged male with chest pain, as he participated in consultations with his GP and cardiologist, and as he underwent a cardio treadmill-stress test. This project illustrates that the actors involved in producing intelligibility in each interaction varies. In the GP consultation, the GP and Simon were principal actors in rendering chest pain intelligible. In the treadmill stress test, the material instrumentation, carefully aligned with the Simon's body by the cardiologist, was vital to ensuring an account of the heart was produced. A resulting conflict between these two accounts meant that in the third interaction, the cardiologist produced an account of the heart as being risky, and Simon was instructed to self-monitor and self-manage himself daily. I found that the patient and his body are sometimes intelligible as somatic entities, sometimes as an expressive, accounting agent, and sometimes as a self-responsible, self-managing individual.

Jaya Ghosh, Applied Social Sciences, Lancaster University

Juvenile Justice System in India: Children's Perspectives and Experiences

The project proposes to study the experiences and perceptions of children who are in conflict with law under the Juvenile Justice System in India. The experiences of children in conflict with law are generally construed around issues of arbitrary arrest, torture and ill-treatment while in custody and the overall deprivation of liberty for children for minor offences, non-violent offences or even no offences. As a result, the issue of children in conflict with law has acquired an increasing concern not only for the governments and policy makers in Third World countries but for the social scientists and legal experts as well. The dismal portrayal of these children has called forth significant reform initiatives in these countries. Drawing upon research that I have already conducted amongst juvenile offenders for my Masters work, I propose to study, through the personal experiences of these children, the implementation of the Juvenile Justice System at a district level, its effectiveness and the status of children under it. This is also an effort to understand these children's views of the Juvenile Justice System, their understanding of child rights, including the right to participate in

decision making process and particularly their experiences with different stakeholders, viz. Police, Judiciary, Institutions, Probation under the JJS, and so on. By examining the JJS at the district level, I, therefore, propose to investigate larger foundational answers to the issues of child rights in India in the contexts of laws framed and implemented around socially marginalised and excluded children.

Natalie Gill, Sociology/ Science Studies, Lancaster University

The making of offenders through the relations of the wheeled bin

An encounter in a backyard between the Lancaster City Council and a local resident is analysed alongside a public meeting where locals attempt to negotiate with a council representative over implementation methods. The framing of the policy is disturbed in this encounter, when these locals resist the subjectivity of offender that the policy practices impose. A deadlock is reached where negotiation becomes circular. I unpack this deadlock and suggest this as an encounter of two forms of doing collectivity, one where community is figured strongly, and another where individuals are the unit of analysis. This paper brings into focus what's at stake with these waste policy implementation methods and suggests that an understanding of waste policy practices as performative is a way through this deadlock.

Daniel Gnoth, Marketing, Centre for the study of Agriculture, Food and the Environment, University of Otago, New Zealand

Context and behaviour change: Analysing effect of shifting house on habitual home heating behaviour.

The ability to change habits in relation to energy efficiency is generally something that requires immense effort from the individual. This study looks at the effect of shifting house on the ability to form new habits that are better in line with personal values. Using a longitudinal design, participants will be interviewed pre and post shifting about how they heat their home. The second phase will measure the effects of interventions including real-time feedback and pre-shift information. It is hypothesised that efficacy in ability to change as well as internal versus external motivations will be the primary variables in forming more efficient practices, and that moving house will give a window of opportunity for participants to behave more in line with their personal values than they did previously

Edgar Everardo Guerra Blanco, Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology, Bielefeld University

Self-description, environment description and protest: the invisible prisons of communicative systems.

It has been a tradition in social movements theoretical approaches to understand how a huge plurality of social and political actors without apparent links among them can concur to support and participate in the protests organized by a fraction of the society against the society itself. Social movements theories have mainly explained these protest phenomena from the perspective of social actors. Although these explanations have been fruitful in their empirical results, the social movements research has found its limits in the account of internal complexity, the complex interrelations with the protest environment and the role of the emergent level of a communication system. In order to avoid such problems related to a perspective focused on the agency, a systems theory perspective has been proposed for the analysis of a case study: the social mobilizations occurred in Mexico City as a result of a political post electoral conflict since 2006 until the recent days. In this sense, we understand a social movement as a protest system a social system that is different to interactions, organizations and society, and that in the context of a functional differentiated society it has emerged within the political system. Therefore, the system mobilizes the political communication against the political communication while in terms of its internal environment it operates self-referential, in operative closure and with openness with regard to its environment. The specific aim for this conference should be a systematic analysis of the system self-description and the environment description in the discourse of these protests and to show how

these discursive tools became a prison for its supporters defining their own features, the main characteristics of their opponents and the conflict system build between them.

Sarah Hards, Department of Social Policy and Social Work, University of York

Winding paths, shifting landscapes: Transitions in “sustainable” practices on the individual and social scales

Current UK policy stresses “individual behaviour change” as a means to address environmental problems, with numerous measures attempting to promote a shift to more “sustainable” ways of thinking and acting. However, major gaps remain in our knowledge of the personal pathways involved; particularly how and why participation in deliberately pro-environmental practices changes over time. There may also be a tendency for policy to underestimate the diversity of motives, meanings and manifestations associated with these pathways. Furthermore, the actions of individuals cannot be seen as independent of their socio-economic context or landscape, which is itself dynamic and evolving. Our understanding of this important topic could be benefited by further exploration of deliberate pro-environmental practice as a lived experience, and the relations between personal transitions and transitions on the social-historical scale. This paper aims to contribute to this task, drawing on an on-going research project that explores individual participation in practices aimed at addressing climate change. Narrative interviews, life-grids and life-graphs were used to map the evolution of this participation throughout the biographies of “environmentally-active” individuals. Alongside Social Practice Theory, Pred’s “Time Geography” and Lefebvre’s “Rhythmanalysis” are drawn upon to explore the nature of participation in these cases, and how it evolves throughout the life-course. Then, by comparing cases, the paper discusses how certain key practices have evolved on the societal level since the mid-20th Century, and the relations between these micro- and macro-scale transitions.

Satya Hazareesingh, Applying to Lancaster Sociology in 2010

Traffic Shaping Systems and Resource Distribution: Orchestration, Autonomy and Equity on the Road

This paper will outline different strategies and architectures, extant and emergent, for managing congestion across road networks. The paper contrasts strategies reliant on ‘higher-level’ control and orchestration with those seeking to delegate responsibility for the ordering of traffic to participants themselves, and will examine the complex relations between both and the distribution of road space amongst different ‘classes’ of road user. Ultimately the aim is to explore the relative merits of different pathways for achieving more ‘commonised’ traffic infrastructures. The discussion will be framed throughout by reference to John Urry’s distinction between *series* and *nexus* transportation systems. By way of entry the paper examines two contrasting applications of ‘intelligent’ infrastructure and pervasive computing to the problems of traffic congestion – one which preserves individual human sovereignty over vehicles and invites the *self*-modification of driver behaviour, the other which bypasses human awareness and volition altogether and delegates control to automatic vehicle guidance systems. The first is a form of hyper-coordination which nevertheless seems to preserve the *series* character of vehicular traffic, which *incentivizes* road-users (configured as rational economic actors) to alter their behaviour, in highly proscribed ways, through the use of *real-time pricing*. Here, the road itself is framed as a *market*, access to road space a priced commodity, heralding as Graham notes ‘differential geographies of inter- and intra-urban mobility’ (2005: 9). The second by contrast seeks to achieve a certain *equity* in the allocation of road space by integrating separate vehicles into aggregates which can be managed and directly orchestrated *en masse*, entailing clusters or ‘platoons’ of vehicles moving in a manner more typical of a flock of birds or school of fish. Rather than attempting to pre-empt congestion by prioritizing certain (premium-paying) participants, the aim here is to pre-personalise traffic flow and ensure the widest possible access for the greatest number of vehicles – distributing access by diluting ‘queuing time’ as equally as possible amongst *all* participants. The degree of human agential delegation necessary for achieving such a tight and hyper-coordinated *nexification* of movement however, seems to entail

bodies within traffic systems becoming more and more akin to mere passengers, passively 'ferried' around from location to location. Such 'technological' fixes to the problems of congestion ignores both the *embodied* and the wider 'social' contexts within which traffic is normally situated, reifying and treating as 'matters of fact' demand for road space itself, expectations regarding speed and unencumbered mobility, and driver behaviour whilst on the road. In conclusion therefore, through a consideration of specific examples, the paper shall ponder whether through re-design a 're-embodiment' of the traffic landscape could be achieved – where the human body itself is the locus for the negotiation of road-space amongst diverse participants. The paper considers whether such re-embodiment can serve as the basis for a more equitable distribution of road and street space, but where equality is an emergent outcome rather than pre-given, where *all* road users (including drivers, cyclists and pedestrians) are forced to take one another into account and 'compete' for space on more equal terms.

Andy Higgins, Politics, Lancaster University

Popular music - more than a footnote to history

From the 60's counter-culture onwards popular music (although vilified within the academy) has developed into a powerful cultural interface. Consequently Much political discourse is now articulated through non-traditional actors such as celebrities and particularly rock musicians. By playing a montage of 10 seconds from the 50 important popular protest songs I will catapult the listener back in to the moment and explain why music is such a unique and useful tool to interrogate politics and the political....

Maik Hoemke, Institute for History and Theory of Architecture - Chair for the History of Urban Design ETH Zurich Wolfgang-Pauli-Strasse 15, HIL D 73.3, 8093 Zurich, Switzerland

Increasing expansion of transport infrastructure is taking place in more and more countries. This trend, strongly encouraged by the globalization process, is reflected in ever-shorter journey times in both national and international travel. During such developments, extensive urban-planning alterations in areas that are being provided with new transport infrastructure tend to be viewed purely in terms of economic and efficiency benefits and particularly in terms of saving time. However, there has been little research on the socio-spatial effects of new transport infrastructure systems. Using a wide variety of empirical methods, the intention is to show the ways in which increasing transport infrastructure can be demonstrated, on the basis of social criteria. The new Lhberg Base Tunnel in Switzerland is to be taken as an example case for the purpose. When the Tunnel opened in 2007, the rural communes in the Upper Valais region acquired a strong new link with the catchment area of Berne. For example, the train journey between Visp (in Upper Valais) and Berne was shortened from 2 hours to less than 1 hour. The aim of the study is to demonstrate that research focusing merely on economic and physical effects in a given area, and ignoring the social aspects of new infrastructure, inevitably suffers a loss of quality. The special characteristic of the present study lies in the way in which it assesses infrastructure developments, in regions that were previously peripheral, on the basis of urban development phenomena and social phenomena.

Lara Houston, Sociology/Centre for Science Studies, Lancaster University

Inventive infrastructures: Researching mobile phone 'repair cultures' in Kampala, Uganda

Despite an intense focus on the urban, networked environment in both academic and popular arenas, there has been comparatively little exploration of the infrastructure that underwrites the 'information age' (Graham and Thrift 2007). The term itself refers not only to tangible physical systems, but also organisational and logistical relationships. Too often the valuable work of repair and maintenance has been flattened into an invisible substrate on which technological developments are written. This paper describes opportunities for researching mobile phone 'repair cultures' in Kampala, Uganda. In Uganda, infrastructure is not a uniform and invisible state-funded

system, but rather a collection of locally-focused, formal and informal micro-businesses, relationships of barter, gifting and 'favours' that provide services such as electricity through economies of car batteries as power cells and charging stations. What might we learn from considering Ugandan infrastructures as a new paradigm for the communications and computing industry as a whole? Developing cities of the 'global South' form a persistent blind spot in this area of research (Graham and Thrift 2007: 11). It is imperative to uncover the kinds of practices in use in emerging markets, firstly in order to be able to design appropriate services for them, but more importantly, because these communities are frequently amongst the most creative and surprising 'users,' customizers and innovators, and there is much to be learned and reflected back to industrial design processes (Lally, 2002). This is particularly important within countries on the continent of Africa, which are so often mis-read (Mbembe 2001).

Allison Hui, Sociology, Lancaster University

Travelling enthusiasts, or enthusiastic travel? Shifting perspectives on mobilities through a dialogue with theories of practice

Recent enunciations of a new mobilities paradigm cite the importance and value of approaching the social as composed not just of static structures and communities, but also of mobilities and immobilities. Though such a focus valuably reveals how many social theories remain rooted in sedentarist assumptions, it is often still unclear which mobilities should be followed, or how they relate to each other. Drawing from a study of patchwork quilters and birdwatchers, this paper suggests that bringing the mobilities paradigm into conversation with theories of practice helpfully frames the complicated relationships between the travel of people, things, and ideas. I consider whether travel can be deemed a practice in itself, or if it is rather dispersed throughout many other practices like enthusiasms. Focusing upon practices, rather than individuals making transportation choices, suggests that many areas of mobilities research, such as tourism, would benefit from more attention to the similarities between the everyday and exceptional or exotic, rather than their differences. Acknowledging the link between travel and practices also suggests that work on mobilities attend to the relationships between moving people, moving stuff, and moving vehicles.

Dieuwertje Dyi Huijg, Sociology, University of Manchester

On the Crossroad of Agency and Intersectionality: challenging white, female activists

Not acknowledging multiple forms of oppression reinforces the normativity of 'woman' as white (heterosexual, etc). In response, intersectionality is understood as the crossroad of axes: gender X race. Second, it is interpreted as expressions of positions on these axes: female X white. Less explored is the intersectionality of the expressions of power on those axes: subaltern/disadvantaged/subordinated X normative/advantaged/dominant. Agency, then, refers to the control that the subject, more or less constrained by structure, can exercise over one's self and social environment. It is associated with intentional and purposeful behaviour, reflexivity and consciousness, hence with a subject's (potentiality of) action. This supports agency in its activist expression where the subject resists, constructs, and organises conform her ideological persuasion with the objective of social change. But returning to intersectionality as expression of power, white, female activists' location appears a conflictive position in their struggle against social injustice; on the gender axis, at the disadvantaged and oppressed site, they construct their female agency in opposition to this socially unjust (sexist) system and its advantaged inhabitants; their activism is an activism contra. As white people, though, they inhabit the unjust (racist) system contra which they struggle, that privileges them and 'directs' their racial agency in passivity and omission; a non-agency. On the basis of interviews with (young) white, female activists from São Paulo, Brazil, I will explore how agency and intersectionality work simultaneously on this crossroad of gendered and racialised activism.

Mariah Ijaz, Sociology, Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan

Factors Affecting Stress among Female Pharmacy Students: Causes and Coping Strategies

Research co-authored with: Saima Afzal , Ghulam Yasin and Ahmad Saad. The gender shift in the subject of Pharmacy has created a stress of future scope among females which ultimately affects the stress level among females. This research endeavor aimed to explore the reason behind the selection of Pharmacy as career and the stress of studies, the female students were facing. However it also focused on the perceived scope of Pharmacy in Pakistan and its relation with the stress of studies. A sample of 120 female students was selected through the random sampling from 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and final professional years of Pharm-D students. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data. It was found that majority (46.7%) of females came to pharmacy field as they were referred by the other people and they did not have any interest in Pharmacy. However after becoming a part of Pharmacy profession most of them (61.7%) wanted to be a good pharmacist. Stress in studies was found as a resultant of having no interest in pharmacy. 28.3 percent female Pharmacy students had point of view that Pharmacy is more suitable and comfortable field for males than females. This point of view was developed because job opportunities in office work for females were less in number and field work was problem for females as it is restricted in Pakistani culture.

Juliane Jarke, Organisation, Work and Technology, Lancaster University Management School

Creating durable objects in virtual communities of practice: a proximal view

The concepts of communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), communities of knowing (Boland & Tenkasi, 1995) or thought collectives (Fleck, 1985) describe examples of people working together co-located and sharing a work practice, and thereby learning from each other. In recent years geographically-distributed organisations have been studied in order to investigate to what extent communities of practice can be virtual, and how knowledge sharing in these virtual communities may take place. Most of these studies analyse communities-in-the-being. The community of practice concept is used analytically and the development of communities is regarded retrospectively and from a distal perspective: hence results and outcomes are given priority, objects of thought and action are described asymmetrically. My PhD research project follows a different approach by taking a proximal view (Cooper & Law, 1995) and describing a community-in-the-becoming. Based on a longitudinal interpretive case study of a community-in-the-becoming the community of practice concept is used as a prescriptive tool; and everything is given equal weight. Hence the proximal mode of investigation enlightens the processes that facilitate community building instead of looking at the results and outcomes solely. The paper is concerned with the processes that aim to create durable objects: It will be discussed what work people do to make objects durable; how they make an object travel around in the community and ensure that it does not simply die off. Two features of the researched virtual community portal will be introduced distally, and then analysed and discussed through a proximal lens.

Charalampia Kerasidou, Sociology, Lancaster University

The World is the Interface. Or is it?

According to Dourish, one of the critical features that tangible computing and ubiquitous computing share is that 'they both attempt to exploit our natural familiarity with the everyday environment and our highly developed spatial and physical skills to specialize and control how computation can be used in concert with naturalistic activities' (2001a: 232). Here we see the idea of a universal and homogeneous human collective being naturalised on the grounds that we all share the same tactile and physical skills which are manifested through our physical, natural, intuitive interactions with everyday and familiar objects. Tangible computing then, as Dourish writes, seeks to capitalise on these, now naturalised and unquestionable, skills in order to build natural computational interfaces that fit seamlessly within our everyday, real world (2001b: 17). Exploring and reacting to these arguments, this paper seeks to ask, What is the nature of the nature that is invoked here and what is

at stake at adopting a universal language of natural familiarities, natural skills and everyday environments that, as the story goes, we all share? - Dourish, P. (2001a) 'Seeking a Foundation for Context-Aware Computing', *Human-Computer Interaction*, Vol. 16, pp. 229-241. - Dourish, P. (2001b) *Where the action is: the foundations of embodied*. MIT Press: Cambridge, Mass.

Buke Koyuncu, Sociology, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Turkey

Rereading National Identity Formation over a Recent Encounter: Modernist Islamism and National Identity in Turkey

Recently, Turkey has been witnessing a rich discussion on the definition of the Turkish national identity which represents, besides an effort of democratization, a rearticulation of the national identity. Besides effects of the post-1980s economic liberalization and cultural globalization, and the impact of organizations such as the EU, what has made this rearticulation possible was a shift in the internal politics of the country. More specifically, this period has also witnessed the rise of pro-Islam political parties, and the accumulation of both economic and symbolic capital by various groups who forwarded that they were adherents of Islam. As a result, a new discourse was formed bringing together Islam and capitalism, and integrating the universal values of modernity within itself. I prefer to call this discourse modernist Islamism as it seems not only to introduce a modernized version of Islam as practiced, but also to offer the latter as an identity frame, with a modernist motivation. This paper proposes that the emergence of modernist Islamism is both a cause and a consequence of the penetration of Islamist identity into the national identity field in Turkey. And through a case study on the party vision of AKP between the years 2002-2010, it tries to (1) outline the structural elements of the national identity field in Turkey (2) reveal the particularities of the new identity proposed by the modernist Islamist discourse and (3) offer a model to understand the transformation process of national identity.

Lenneke Kuijer, Department Industrial Design, Delft University of Technology (visiting researcher at Lancaster Sociology Department)

Bathing from a bucket: horrid past or sustainable future? Challenges in practice-oriented design

My research at the Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering of Delft University of Technology is about the integration of principles from practice theory into a design approach. My aim is to support designers to use their creative skills and, in close cooperation with 'users', develop innovations that can steer household practices toward lower resource consumption.

Dee Leahy, Sociology, Lancaster University

The construction of the epileptic brain: the critique of something useful.

In this paper I will explain the simplistic version of cerebral localisation: the dominant neuroscientific understanding that discrete sites in the brain are causally related to external movements on the body. I will juxtapose this version with the simplistic and dominant explanation of the epileptic seizure: that the specific movements of the spasm are causally represented in the brain. I will discuss the mutually dependent nature of the two. I will suggest that this simple version of the epileptic seizure may be a reified fiction and one which does not happen in practice but that it is a useful, if not foundational, model in neuroscientific understanding and practice. With reference to general brain research and to practices within epileptology I will demonstrate that this simple version of brain body correlation is constructed only against that which it excludes and upon which it depends. I will demonstrate that these exclusions depend upon the traditional dualism of matter and mind, and a sexed materiality in which both epilepsy and hysteria are deeply implicated, and that, as such, epilepsy -that which it includes and excludes - becomes a useful object that gets cited as both material, and therefore 'real,' but also as transcendent. I will suggest that it is this duality which gives it its explanatory force, a force which leaks into unexpected domains. Ultimately then this paper is

the critique of something useful it is about epilepsy: its history, its materiality, and its materialization.

WanJu Lee, Sociology, Lancaster University

Taiwan, Biobanking and the Political Economies of Promise

My doctoral research project analyzes the development of "biobanks" with a particular focus on the case of "Taiwan Biobank". Investment in the creation of biobanks, which are basically databases of genetic and health-related information, has been a global phenomenon since the start of the last decade and the completion of the "Human Genomic Project". In Taiwan, the establishment of a national biobank is regarded as the main element in the government's attempts to develop the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industry, to enhance national competitiveness in the bioeconomy, and to improve public health. At the same time, it also has been a controversial undertaking because of concerns about human rights issues. My aim is to examine how the Taiwan Biobank came to be conceived and developed and what the biobank means in the Taiwanese national context. I want to pay particular attention to the "promissory" dimension of how the legitimacy of the biobank is established with reference to certain expectations about its benefits for Taiwanese society and economy. Influenced by the work of Cooper (2007) and Sunder Rajan (2006) and others, my aim is to analyze local and global contexts of political economy of Taiwan in order to understand how biobanks are situated within the global distribution of power and knowledge production in biotechnology.

Jianmin Li, Sociology, Lancaster University

From farmers to citizens – the development of citizenship among migrant peasant workers in China

During the past thirty years, Rural-Urban migration has continued to be an intrinsic part of China's rapid transition towards market economy. With the restriction of the Dual System based on household registration system, there is emerging a new social group, the migrant peasant workers. That is to say, a large number of peasants do not spatially migrate at the same pace with their occupational transference, thus forming a unique working group temporarily working in urban areas like birds of passage. Over the last twenty years, the social class of migrant workers has grown with the process of China's industrialization and urbanization, and with large scale of FDI into the coastal area which has helped the integration of China into the world economic system and the development of international division of labor. In this article, migration primarily refers to the voluntary movement of rural laborers (migrant peasant workers), who leave their home villages for urban areas, seeking non-agricultural work opportunities, usually temporary or seasonal, sometimes together with their family members. My research intends to address whether and how the migration of these peasant workers have influenced their awareness and development of their social citizenship.

Billie Lister, Department of Applied Social Science, Stirling

Exploring the Sexual Circus - Working experiences of lap dancers in Scottish towns and cities'

Lap-dancing is a form of sex work which occupies a curious status within the UK labour market - although it is legal it continues to be an activity fraught with stigma. Despite some research which has revealed concerning working conditions for women working in venues, the recent alteration to Licensing in Scotland resulted in no change to the ways lap-dancing venues are regulated. On the 6th April 2010, legislation in England and Wales will change and all lap-dancing venues will have to submit themselves for scrutiny in order to receive a 'sexual entertainment venue' license. Although the stance here is not that policy makers should follow suit in Scotland, the changes South of the border could have brought about action and discussion regarding working operations in Scottish venues. This study will conduct semi structured interviews with women who work in Scottish venues or have left within one year. The purpose of the research is to allow women to report their own lived experiences and for the academic community to hear how this section of a relatively hidden workforce deal with an often chaotic, unpredictable working environment which fluctuates on sometimes an hourly basis. Currently, we tend to hear voices from those who view lap dancing as a form of violence against women. Often taking a very binary stance to the issue, women's voices are often muted as the nature of the work is reported from a very moralistic viewpoint. On the other hand, and less commonly, we hear views from those who see lap dancing as an individualised, choice based form of labour which should not be interfered with. Both perspectives mask the greatly complex an often conflicting nature of an occupation which is hyper-sexualised and gendered. In the current 'striptease culture' that we currently inhabit, it is unlikely that lap dancing will be eradicated. This being so, it is argued that working conditions should be investigated and changes made so that women have the right to work in a safe, secure and not exploitative environment.

Louise Madden, School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University

Relationships and Connection: Gender in embodied social relations

Traditional approaches to the internet present several problems for an investigation into the subjectivities that are made possible through it. Typically it is treated as an information space, that is disembodied and without material. Studies have focussed on content, communities and software within it that are often seen as detached from one another and existing rather apart from the rest of the social world. This conceptualisation supports notions of the technology as homogenous and smoothly functioning, acted upon by rational, expert subjects, while making irrelevant their gender, and operations of power. Here I seek to address these problems, by exploring how internet use is not only embodied, but constituted through relationships and connection. Drawing on new work in phenomenology (Hansen, 2006; Csordas, 2002) to examine the body and objects that surround internet use, and extensions of this work into looking at movement (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009) and connection (Latour, 2005) to find a way to theorise women's internet use that acknowledges the embodied quality of these technologies, and the web of interconnections between internet use and other areas of women's lives. This paper questions what it means to investigate relationships, and uses games and humour to persuade the audience of its implications, before moving on to an example using photographs, diary and interview material to chart the kind of relations a woman can enter into with the internet, and what implications these relations have for the production of feminine subjectivities.

Carter-Ann Mahdavi, Centre for Interdisciplinary Gender Studies, University of Leeds

'Choice' in Healthcare: The rise of the elective caesarean

The past 20 years has seen the concept of choice take a central role in socio-medical discourse. This is most apparent in maternal health where the role of choice is a primary focus for the NHS's approach to women's centred maternal healthcare. Historically, the concept of choice in maternal health has focused on the conflicting position health care professionals find themselves in terms of

treating the medical needs of the mother or the foetus. However, the development of the elective caesarean presents a new approach to maternal health where the traditional medical concerns of pregnancy and childbirth are supposedly being superseded by women's personal demands for a certain type of childbirth experience, regardless of health risks and benefits. This approach to the elective caesarean presents women as autonomous consumer subjects, uninhibited by the historical cultural significance of childbirth in Western society. Furthermore, the medical data that is emerging about caesareans presents no clear picture in terms risk and benefits to women and children. Yet medical data is the dominant source of knowledge provided for establishing 'choice' in UK healthcare. My research focuses on the positioning of elective caesarean within the culture of choice in the socio-medical climate in the UK. With an interdisciplinary approach, this paper presents the problematic situation in which the idea of the elective caesarean is being defined: are certain 'truths' about elective caesareans gaining strength, how do these truths fit with the medical and sociological research on maternal health and women's role as the autonomous patient?

Ana Makuc, CGWS/Sociology, Lancaster University

What is 'woman'?: The problematization of gender in cyberpunk science fiction literature

My research project revolves around the problematization of the female body, subjectivity and the concept of 'woman' in a specific subgenre of feminist science fiction literature that is called cyberpunk science fiction. It involves an exploration of the social effects of science and technology on aspects of contemporary gendered identity (such as race, age, ethnicity) as portrayed in the fictional worlds of some key male and feminist cyberpunk science fiction authors. Science fiction in this context represents a literary form that, by means of fantasy, draws 'an art that life can imitate' as it portrays a brighter and egalitarian future of human beings as subjects, or even posthuman sexless beings. Cyberpunk deals with the alteration of (gendered) identity or 'the nature of humanity, the nature of the self' (Bruce Sterling cited in Haran 2006: 247), by means of removable legs and arms, missing body pieces, interchangeable blood and organs, prosthetic substitutes, genetic alterations (Donawerth 2004), implanted circuitry, cosmetic surgery, brain-computer interfaces, artificial intelligence, and neurochemistry (Haran 2006). Concretely, it blurs the boundaries between humans, animals and machines, as well as between physical and non-physical machines. The research would compare female- and male-authored late twentieth century and early twenty-first century cyberpunk novels, short stories and graphic novels, addressing issues of embodiment, subjectivity and technoscience, by means of feminist psychoanalytic textual analysis.

David Mansley, Sociology, Lancaster University

Measuring collective violence

Misela Mavric, Sociology, Lancaster University

Networking Tourism

A substantial part of tourist experience is about networking and networks. This paper discusses networks involved in tourist experiences. Networks are social and material connections that can initiate movement, enable flows of information, afford navigations and stopovers and sometimes, they are sources for roots or memories. As I will show, mobilities paradigm offers a fruitful framework whereby the nature of these networks can be further explored. As such it allows discussing these networks as scapes and/or social networks that enable mobilities, more precisely flows of information, images, people and objects, and in turn affect or produce memories and emotions. As the mobilities paradigm claims, it is not the mobilities per se that are the subject of enquiry, but the effects, practices and networks they produce. These networks are either lasting or ephemeral, in place or beyond place, and fluid in their nature for they can change the form and purpose. Networking practices contour networks upon manifold needs and desires tourists have. Though fluid in character this paper attempts to sketch a preliminary categorisation of particular forms of networks and networking. I argue that networks affect imaginative travel, tourist

performances, and they shape or even create memories. Tourists are travelling with the help of a network, within a network, with a network and for a network. I therefore define networking for information, networking for facilitation and networking for sociality and discuss some general features of networks; geography, temporality, the ephemeral nature and weaknesses of ties.

Lucy Mayblin, Sociology, Warwick University

'Racial institutional orders': A viable framework for understanding current British asylum policy?

That the reception received by asylum seekers in Britain is increasingly punitive, casting such individuals as culpable, and that it marginalises those already on the margins of citizenship, has been discussed at length by scholars working on the subject. Explanations range from the charge of elite or popular racism to very real pressures on public services. This paper takes the 'racial institutional orders' framework developed by King and Smith (2006) to explain change in the American political system, and proposes that application to British asylum policy offers a great deal. Racial institutional orders are those in which a range of actors adopt and adapt racial ideas, aspirations and commitments in coming together to form coalitions (sometimes to structure governmental institutions). Using this framework, initial assessments of the British asylum system suggest that it reflects both historical continuity and change in British politics on the subject of immigration more widely. Therefore, restrictive policies are viewed as consistent with the restrictive, racist patterns of immigration policy operating over the past 200 years, as opposed to exceptional within the context of the past 60 years of the human right to asylum as enshrined in the 1951 Geneva Convention.

Julien Mchardy, Sociology, Lancaster University

Cyborg cyclist: Testing possible futures

This paper investigates product testing as a normative and experimental performance that both creates and restricts possible future assemblies. More specifically it is concerned with electric bicycles powered in tandem by humans and engines and how such cyborg cyclists are brought into being as sustainable subjects. How are electric and human riders deconstructed and reassembled differently through processes of testing, what tentative mappings and standards are assumed to make difference comparable and at what cost? What is the relation between stabilizing standards, criteria, geographies, technologies, parts and subjects to the emergence of future realities? What configurations gain potential and which ones can become possible within the conditions of the test? This investigation of how human motor tandems both constrain and give potential to imaginaries of sustainable futures is based on a three week ethnography of an electric cycling test and additional interviews with manufacturers, merchants and testers of electric bikes. To conceptualize testing as an active process of remaking future imaginaries will challenge linear ideas of innovation in which testing merely aligns products and corresponding needs that are equally taken to be already fully constituted. Instead, it will provide an account of how multiple distributed and provisional subjectivities are held together and broken up in the practices of testing and how the results of testing extends beyond the data which it produces. In conclusion the paper will discuss how systems of classification both create and neutralize difference.

Kate McNicholas Smith, Sociology, Lancaster University

Sexuality, Identity and Intelligibility: A feminist analysis of contemporary sex and relationships education (SRE)

I am interested in raising questions about the ways in which, in formulating ideas about sexual behaviour and relationships, sex and relationships education may work to reproduce social ideas about gender and sexuality. In light of this, I will explore the discourses of morality and values engaged with within SRE, as well as concepts of pleasure and empowerment, and ask what, if anything, their relationship is to understandings of gender. Similarly, I will consider the 'types' of sexuality, and indeed bodies, that are articulated within SRE, and ask if any appear to be absent from the debate; considering representations of 'appropriate' sexual relations and conceptualisations of 'sensitive subjects' (SRE guidelines, 2000). I will also be considering experiences within school more generally, for example playground interactions and homophobic and gender based bullying.

Sarah Metcalfe, Sociology, University of York

Therapeutic Emotional Labour, Relational Dynamics and Ethics in the Work of Mediums and other Psychic Practitioners.

Mediums and other psychic practitioners are now the driving force behind lucrative sectors where their work has become more diverse and globally visible. Authenticity then is thematic not only for much debate but also for practitioners during their utilization of their ostensible extra-sensory abilities. Underpinning much literature though is tacit understanding that these consultations have therapeutic focus although no agonistic sociological analytic utilization exists to conceptually comprehend both the services provided and client responses. Using Hochschild's concept this doctoral research intends to examine the ethical, therapeutic and normative aspects of the emotional labour of individuals participating in non-mainstream spiritual, health appraisal and bereavement services. Pilot data gained between July and August 2009 from 18 unstructured interviews with clients from the following UK regions Edinburgh, Newcastle, York, Manchester, and Nottingham, Bristol and Northampton and Spain, Finland, USA (California and Dallas), Canada and New Zealand, highlights that these consultations have both positive and negative impacts upon users. They are support driven and uplifting in nature but also prompt addictive behaviour, direct life trajectories and impinge upon client identities. Initial findings thus contradict claims that these consultations were primarily bereavement focused and have solely therapeutic basis. I seek to further develop methods in which to conduct in-depth ethnographic analysis of the relational dynamics in psychic consultations and the ethical stringencies which underpin that labour including of further interviewing clients as well as practicing psychics, mediums, and leading figures in national spiritualist organisation. I also intend to participate within a mediumship training course.

Leon Moosavi, Sociology, Lancaster University

Muslim Converts: Race & Islamophobia

My research is about Muslim converts in Britain. I am specifically interested in thinking about their experiences in relation to race and racism. I also draw upon ideas of Islamophobia by reflecting on what their experiences tell us about the concept.

Jennie Morgan, Anthropology, Manchester

Change and Everyday Practice at the Museum: An Ethnographic Study

International museum practice is characterised by discourses of the novel and the new. In response to academic and social critique museums are experimenting with new operating models. Particularly those that are outward focused and socially orientated. Transformation, rebirth, and reinvention are catch phrases which suggest that a so-called paradigmatic shift has occurred. However, little is known about how new goals for museum practice are experienced by staff, and

integrated (or not) into the types of activities that they do. This is surprising given that the implications of change on work practice and professional identity are of significant concern for people working in museums. In this paper I explore the legacy of a major refurbishment project at a municipal museum. Heralded publicly to be the future of new museums my aim is to examine how staff are experiencing and responding to a new model of practice. Based on observations from in-depth anthropological fieldwork I move beyond the intentionalities of particular change authors to engage with the everyday life of this institution. I focus on mundane, ordinary, and frequently overlooked material practices and things. In particular, I examine the activity of dusting display cases to ethnographically interrogate questions of expertise, skill and boundary making. My intent is to demonstrate that complexity lies at the everyday level. And, in doing so, expand ideas about who (or what) counts in the process of reassembling a new museum.

Patience Mususa, Social Anthropology, University of Cape Town

“There used to be order”: The undoing of a modernist vision of suburbia on the Zambian Copperbelt.

During ZCCM times there used to be order. The privatization of the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines on the Zambian Copperbelt also went in hand with a massive loss of jobs, leaving a majority of urban residents anxious to make a living and sustain access to water and energy. In the formerly middle class suburban area that is the focus of my study, residents dug wells in their backyard for water, cut trees that lined the streets to fire bricks; bricks moulded from the clay of anthills that dot the landscape. They also planted crops in their backyard and in the open spaces of the parks and golf club lawns. These processes of livelihood have given form to what is increasingly referred to as the villagisation of the city. Discourses on the villagisation of the city in Africa write of the loss of the modernist vision of city and refer for example to the shadow or mirror city (Devisch, 1996, de Boeck and Plissart, 2004) or have written of the city as a growing agricultural space (Freeman, 1991, Potts 1995). My paper, drawing from Tim Ingold's work on practice and perception (2000) and Judith Butler's ideas on iteration (1997) argues that a discussion of this loss of order would not be enough unless related to the processes through which we perceive, engage and give form to things in the world. Keywords: suburbia, villagisation, modernist, livelihood, process

Fredah Mwiti, Department of Marketing, Lancaster University

How Consumers in Kenya Organize Themselves into Social Collectives to Meet Consumption Goals

Consumption is considered largely a social phenomenon (Arnould and Thompson, 2005), and an important avenue for the formation of meaningful social relationships for consumers (Sassatelli, 2007). Studies examining of the impact of such relationships among consumers are mainly found in the context of brand communities (McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig 2002), sharing (Belk, 2010) and gift giving (Belk and Coon 1993). These studies have been useful in illuminating consumer to consumer interactions particularly in western contexts. However, little work has been done on such interactions in non-western developing country contexts like Kenya. Kenya is an especially important location for such studies as a strong sense of community, evidenced by pooling resources, still exists (Fiske, undated). Consumers in Kenya organize together through various avenues like cooperatives, revolving cycles and ‘Harambee’ to pool resources together for consumption purposes. The study will therefore utilize these contexts to answer research questions such as: How do the consumer to consumer interactions affect consumption behaviors? How are the social, economic and cultural capitals mediated through consumption-related activities? It is envisaged that by answering these research questions, the study will add to the body of knowledge in consumer research by illuminating consumption practices in a non-western concept.

Bart Neuts, Geography, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

Resource Use of Public Space in an Urban Tourist Environment: The Cost of Crowding

In urban tourist environments, public spaces of a city are consumed both by tourists and the local population. This co-consumption of space, and the consequences on resource use, can theoretically be linked to the specific characteristics of public space. Whether viewed from a physical or social context, public space definitions essentially focus on low barriers to entry, resting on the assumption of accepted resource use rights whereby no potential users should or could be excluded. This proposition of inclusivity links public space with that of a wider area of economic public goods. Until a given level of resource use, public space will be similar to a pure public good due to the non-subtractable nature of its physical characteristics. However, once this use level is exceeded, the space will become a common property resource. The resource becomes subtractable while the possibility of exclusion remains difficult, leading to a higher than optimal resource use and negative external effects on the community. This means that the host community might be subjected to certain societal costs if visitor numbers exceed the social carrying capacity of the destination. These costs can therefore be considered the costs of crowding and investigating them can not only lead to a more inclusive cost-benefit approach, but can also be an important step in the quantification of the largely psychological construct of crowding.

Louis Neven, Science Technology and Policy Studies - STePS Twente, University of Twente, The Netherlands (visiting researcher at Lancaster Sociology Department)

Invisible reconfigurations: how care technologies for elders change the meaning of home

The development of care technologies for elders is often accompanied by a specific discourse which consists of several related (semi)demographical statements like our population is ageing rapidly, the cost of care is increasing and there is an increasing shortage of people to care for elders. One of the common claims in this discourse is that elders prefer to live in their own homes as long as possible and that specific technologies can help them achieve this goal. By mapping changes in geographies of responsibilities and possibilities, this presentation analyses the reconfigurations that took place as a result of the introduction of an ambient intelligent monitoring system for elders into the homes of elders with dementia or other severe illnesses. Indeed, many elders expressed that they wanted to remain in their homes. Consequently, they accepted the system. The introduction of the system did in fact lead to several elders living at home longer. However, what the home actually is, was reconfigured on a physical, virtual and emotional level as a result of the introduction of the system. The elders did get to stay at home longer, but I will show that it was not the same home. Such reconfigurations are not taken into account in statements about the system. Instead there is a double ideograph present in the discourse on innovations for elders which positions these technologies as 'undeniably good things'. I will conclude that this double ideograph reduces the visibility of the reconfigurations of the elders' homes.

Philippa Olive, Sociology, Lancaster University

Pathways through urgent and emergency health care services for women who experience intimate partner abuse.

6% of women seeking health care at UK Emergency Departments do so with physical and psychological injury resulting from intimate partner abuse. The Department of Health has produced practice guidelines covering screening for abuse and subsequent interventions in the event of disclosure. These interventions include safety planning, risk assessment for herself and her children, documenting the abuse, photographing injuries, and referral to other agencies. However the knowledge base underpinning screening and interventions in this context is weak and inadequate. It is not known how women determine whether to disclose their abuse, the reasoning behind their decisions to take up or decline interventions and what the outcomes of screening and interventions in this context are. My research seeks to understand what people think they are doing in practice and what actually happens, to understand women's different pathways, to know the what, who, how, when, and why of pathways in order to inform policy and practice. The research question is thus: What are the alternate pathways and outcomes of abused women through urgent and

emergency health care services for needs arising from their intimate partner abuse? This paper will discuss methodological challenges concerning the multi-layered complexities of intimate partner abuse, Evidence Based Medicine and Emergency Health Care Services and propose that Realistic Evaluation Methodology is best suited as a research design framework to provide scientific explanation of the pathways through urgent and emergency health care services for women who experience intimate partner abuse.

Asmah Othman, University of Salford

Community Sentences in Malaysia. An Appreciative Inquiry of Offenders and Practitioners

This qualitative study centres on the Community Service Order (CSO), a new sentencing tool in Malaysia (based on Singapore's model) which is used as an alternative to custodial punishment for young offenders who have committed various violent crimes. The research aims to explore the experiences of a sample of youthful offenders and practitioners of CSO in Sarawak, Malaysia. This research represents the first independent academic evaluation of the CSO in Malaysia. Access to 'offenders' and practitioners have been specifically negotiated via the Malaysian Government. By using an Appreciative Inquiry methodology, this study aims to evaluate how such community punishments are experienced by those subject to them as well as by those responsible for their enforcement. The research draws upon evaluations of similar alternatives to custody via an international comparative perspective and will highlight limitations of the order as well as experiences of good practice in Malaysia.

Li-Wen Shih, Sociology, Lancaster University

Wanted baby—sex preference and the idea of health in Taiwan

While reproductive technology can be used for some specific purpose, like medical reason or social reason, what will be done through it? This project will mainly focus on how pregnant women experience cultural and medical norms which show in gene selection and sex preference in Taiwan. The purpose of this project is to discuss what makes Taiwanese pregnant women have sex preference for a boy baby and also how they come to know about the congenital malformation of foetus related to some specific genetic diseases. Here Donna Haraway's concepts of situated knowledge and the material-semiotic will be used to examine the way how pregnant women experience the idea of the foetus. In this project I will argue that the wanted baby symbolizes the broader cultural value of belief in scientific progress. This project first will review how the idea of health was practiced and understood by pregnant women. I will also argue that the idea of health is not as certain as is commonly assumed. Who is in charge of this result, since no one can make sure that there is not any potential genetic disease in the future? There are many stories I collected about how young pregnant women engaged with amniocentesis or CVS, and I will use them to discuss how pregnant women know get the idea of having a disabled child. In case of having a healthy child, I will discuss that how people get to know the idea of health by examining the information from hospital. Secondly, this project will discuss how the idea of burden is used/ understood by pregnant couples. There are two different attitudes whether if having a disabled child is a burden for the society according to my field work. These different positions draw me to pay attention how they situate themselves when discussing with ideas of burden. Therefore I will also examine how Taiwanese see and understand disabled children as a burden for society which based on medical language. Another main concern in this project is what kind of child is wanted, and how Taiwanese pregnant women experience it? In my observation on the BBS discussion group (BabyMother which is the most popular discussion group in Taiwan), inquires like 'how to get a boy baby' or 'when can I know the sex of my baby' are posted very often. This situation is also similar to my field work. Many of my participants share their pressure of having a son from their families. From the foundation of Confucianism, family is a very important idea in Taiwanese society, but it has its own strong value in favour of patriarchal blood kinship. For example, having a son is an important issue for a family to carry the family name. There is an old saying that "no male offspring to carry the family name is the

worst thing in the life". Although nowadays it is not the most important moral principle any more, some women still suffer from this traditional value. Therefore, this project will discuss how idea of health and sex preference is practiced through pregnant women's prenatal checks. I will demonstrate some of my participants' experience and also my participant observation in the hospital to discuss Taiwanese pregnant women's embodiment.

Maria Andrea Soco, Research Institute on Cosmopolitan Cultures, University of Manchester

Cosmopolitanism as spatial: experiences of return among migrant Filipino domestic workers

Recent literature on cosmopolitanism have begun to examine its emergence among the working classes, taking into account their increased transnational mobility in a globalized world. Labor migrants in particular have been seen to acquire new identities in the course of migration as contact zones and cultural exchanges multiply. In this paper, the concept of cosmopolitanism is used as a framework to integrate place-derived identities, new learning, and new perceptions of class and status among return migrant Filipino domestic workers. Through narrative interviews and participant observation, this paper highlights the spatialization of cosmopolitanism as returnees find that cosmopolitan identities cannot easily be transplanted in their home countries. Migrant domestic workers are able to feel cosmopolitan abroad, even within the context of capitalist-labor relations, in their consumption of cultural products and participation in class-based leisure activities within the context of a developed country, and in their cultural learning. However, the practice of cosmopolitanism in return has been constrained by place. Interviewees return to villages and not to cities, and the need to readapt to the norms and values of the community as well as the desire to be reintegrated, have led to a realignment of identities in favor of household and community expectations, although interviewees still construct themselves as more 'modern' and 'foreign' in their ways. This paper argues that the recognition of return migrant domestic workers as cosmopolitan would not only provide a more nuanced picture of reintegration needs but would also harness their ideas for the development of their communities.

Jen Southern, Sociology, Lancaster University

Playing hide and seek with locative technology.

Global Positioning Systems (GPS) technology is becoming ubiquitous in Sat Navs and mobile phones. It travels with us in our cars and our pockets. As illustrated in films like Pixars UP there is a strong ambivalence that surrounds GPS, it promises to save us from being lost whilst simultaneously leading us astray and allowing others to track us down when we hide. Using multiple and mobile research methods of ethnographic walks, digital arts practice and speculative software design this paper follows a technology that wont sit still, that plays at reliable witness from an intrinsically situated point of view and that suggests the panopticon while connecting us to the ground beneath our feet.

Susan Starling, Sociology, Lancaster University

State of the World: the rights of Nature and ecology as sustainable development

Lets start by stating that after the rights of man, the rise of the rights of Nature is a contemporary form of the opium of the people.' Badiou, 2008: 139 'Today, we are all potentially a homo sacer.' iek, 2009: 92 Millenarian apocalyptic visions of the end of nature abound. What is missing from these discourses is the figure of the excluded other, and hence, any 'subversive edge' (iek, 2009: 98). Such discourses view ecology as sustainable development, and this talk points to the weaknesses of this. The problem of how to know, to represent, nature is then considered. I argue that if we are excluded from nature as well as our symbolic substance, we end up with a series of metonymic lists (Swyngedouw, 2010). With regards impending ecological disasters, capitalism is posed as the problem by everyone from Worldwatch to the IPCC, whilst socialist capitalism is their proposed answer. However, I argue (drawing on iek, and Badiou's notion of the faithful subject) that communism is the only possible solution.

Vicky Steylaerts, Flemish Centre for Tourism Policy Studies, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium

Relational Tourism: turning a shallow encounter into a long-lasting local experience

The research topic of relational tourism fits in the larger framework of a study on informal accommodation by the Flemish Policy Research Centre for Tourism Studies (Steunpunt Buitenlands Beleid, Toerisme en Recreatie). Informal accommodation refers to a new segment in the hospitality industry, consisting of organised networks which can mostly be found online. (See e.g. CouchSurfing, Hospitality Exchange, etc.) These networks of hospitality provide a forum where travellers and accommodation suppliers can meet and relate to each other. Hosts and guests appear to be motivated to build relations through an alternative yet sustainable form of tourism, thereby turning swift and shallow encounters into longer-lasting and markedly local experiences. The latter can be referred to as relational tourism, an idea that brings to mind concepts such as sustainability, hospitality, reciprocity, cultural exchange and social identity. In relational tourism the experience is paramount, as tourists are offered to be immersed in the local culture. Interpersonal and environmental relations are encouraged, and historical and cultural sensitivity are stimulated (Institute of Tourism Studies, 2007). Relational tourism is considered a trend in the realm of tourism. The impact of relational tourism however, is not known, nor is it clear how both public and private sector behave toward this trend. A qualitative approach will allow to explore the topic of relational tourism in depth and from different perspectives, in order to make policy recommendations and contribute to the literature.

Diana Stypinska, Sociology, Lancaster University

The paradox of Critique as Security

The paper argues that the modern transition from understanding life as a contingent possibility to its comprehension in terms of a contingent risk is producing a paradox in the context of critique: critique as security. I start with a brief genealogy of potentiality, tracing its development in Greek philosophy and relating this to the works of Marx, Agamben and Heidegger. Then I turn to a modern shift, a shift from the understanding of life as potential to the nihilistic conception of life as a contingent risk, which, as Dillon argues, perfectly fits the framework of the biopolitics of security and its commodification of risk as principle of formation. Moreover, the understanding of contingency as risk leads to the securitization of critique - a requirement for critique to provide instant, actual solutions to the paradox of security. A process, which culminates in the conception of critique as security. To discuss this, I turn to Boltanski and Chiapello, discussing the processes in which capitalism assimilates critique. Finally, I make a distinction between potential and actual modes of critique in order to propose a solution to the contemporary aporia of critique.

Irene Swarbrick, Sociology, Lancaster University

Patients, Policies, Politics: some orderings of gender dynamics

Since 1999, there has been a raft of Patient Safety Initiatives in the NHS; reflecting policy driven attempts to reduce the numbers of patients injured, or even killed, because of accidental or deliberate harm by health workers. There is also a growing body of work attending to cultural factors such as teamwork, leadership, communication, and organisational structures, on the ability of NHS staff to work safely, and keep patient care safe. However, the impact on patient safety of gender relations, gender balance, and gender conflict has been under-researched and under theorised. I present work in progress from my thesis, which illustrates some of the hidden gender dynamics that impact on patient safety, and which are absent and unacknowledged in policy level discussions, design, and implementation.

Jennifer Tomomitsu, Sociology, Lancaster University

Strategies of Purification: How Modes of Exclusion, Containment and Removal Generate Image Objects

This presentation explores practices of purification and how they shape objects of inquiry in two imaging laboratories in the UK. Purification becomes necessary during microscopic imaging since 'dirt' interferes with the object being analyzed, causing additional lines or marks on the visual field (known as artifacts). However, I have found in my field sites that what counts as 'dirt' or sterility is highly variable across laboratory disciplines, and therefore myriad ways exist in which objects are treated and handled. This paper therefore investigates what counts as 'dirt' and how it is identified and eliminated by providing an ethnographic account of three strategies of purification which occur in these laboratories: exclusion, containment and removal. These strategies not only shape what there is to see, but they are also a means to isolate objects by keeping them independent from artifacts produced by dust, particles and other unwanted matter. What I show in this presentation is that artifacts are not necessarily distinct entities, but rather they are emergent through practice. Moreover, I argue that despite the scientists' attempts at keeping objects separate and independent from each other, images are often a result of the interference of 'matter out of place' which itself can be generative for knowledge production.

Stanley Webster, Sociology, Lancaster University

Ordering Practices

Building on existing practice theory and concepts of time, this paper aims to explore systems of synchronisation, co-ordination and scheduling that order the socio-temporal rhythms of daily life. It seeks to explore the relationship between new, existent and emerging practices and how these capture to a greater or lesser extent the time and commitment of practitioners. In particular it will explore the role that objects play in scripting the temporal commitments that practices require and how the valuing of certain practices relates to their positioning within the temporal fabric of daily life. Through further exploring these ideas, this paper intends to build on existing theories of practice and temporal rhythm to further develop understandings of how practices are temporally structured.

Gemma Wibberley, Sociology, Lancaster University

Dirty work and Dirty workplaces: the realities of Domiciliary Care

"There was this one woman, she didn't feel well, and I didn't know her, but as soon as I walked into her house, there is no other word to describe the state of the house than ..squalid, it needed condemning!, the stench,. and she was upstairs in bed, and her toilet wasn't working, she had no, no nothing, no cloths!, no nothing!, no nothing!, and I had to try and empty this very full commode in a non flushing toilet, and try and flush it with water, carry water from the bath and it was horrid, no gloves, no nothing!, nothing. its up to the clients to have the gloves and if they don't, you don't, it's just like horrid." (domiciliary carer Alex, original emphasis). The quote above from a domiciliary

carer suggests that not only should dirty work be analysed, but also dirty workplaces. Domiciliary carers go into elderly peoples' houses, and undertake activities that enable the elderly person to remain in their own home, such as bathing, dressing, feeding and changing catheters and colostomy bags. It is widely accepted that these activities are classified by many as dirty work (Stacey 2005.) This paper plans to explore the ways in which this dirt can infiltrate the workplace, and how domiciliaries manage this. Stacey, C. (2005) Finding dignity in dirty work: the constraints and rewards of low-wage home care labour *Sociology of health and Illness*. Vol.27, No. 6, pp 831-854

Niklas Woermann, Sociology, Lancaster University

Do you see what I see? – Practices of Seeing in an extreme sport

Working with the notion of social practices, I intend to discuss how bodily and material practices are intertwined with the visual in the constitution of Practices of Seeing, that is, in the skill of seeing something – be it subtle beauty, a hidden danger, or a chance overlooked. Practice theory – I think – can instruct us that 'seeing' is not only a prerequisite to most practical competences, but also a practice and situated accomplishment in itself. I intend to build on the ethnomethodological studies of work that have been examining such practices. Additionally, I discuss the notion of observation as a core element of Luhmannian systems theory, which can expand our understanding of how 'seeing' is reflexively constitutive of the order it focuses. Furthermore, Sehen is a core concern in Wittgenstein's late philosophy. The argument builds on an ethnographic study of the sport subculture of Freeskiing, a rapidly growing novel form of skiing similar to Snowboarding. I am interested in the various Practices of Seeing that are involved in 'doing Freeskiing': The 'learning by watching' of the athletes, the complex and highly coordinated organization of focus and stance during trick performances (which also adds a ritual dimension) as well as the various media practices that make up an important part of the Freeskiing routine, for example shooting pictures and videos of the training, watching and commenting the trials of oneself on video, editing one's own videos and sharing it on social media websites, watching professional ski movies with never waning interest, etc.

Aihua Zhang, Sociology, University of Birmingham

The Inheritance of Rural China in the Course of Social Transformation The Property Division under Multi-dimensional Perspectives

The inheritance of rural China mainly refers to the twice household division to the sons; it concerns the continuity of family property and patrilineal household. The laws entitle the same inheritance rights to male and female. Actually, in the all daughters family the daughters have the right to inherit, in the daughters and sons family the daughters have no right to inherit, the only thing they can get is the dowry when they married, the value of the dowry is far less than the sons can inherit from their parents. The national laws and regulations, local customs, the family's social support network can explain this phenomenon. The laws stipulate sons and daughters have the responsibility to support their parents when they do not have the ability to work, according to the custom of yang er fang lao the parents mainly supported by sons rather other by daughter, it is reasonable for sons to inherit the properties. The land policy of no change for thirty years makes the female who married lose the land-use rights. The mechanism of the family continuity behind the local customs entitles the sons inheritance right. The married daughters need both economic and emotional social support from her brother's family; to this consideration they would not advocate the right to inherit parental property.

An invitation to visit

We welcome applications from PhD and MA students registered at other Universities at home and abroad who want to stay for short periods as visiting students.

If you would like to visit the Department for more than a few days, the best idea is to get in touch with a member of staff:

Academic staff in the Department

Lawrence Busch, Monika Buscher, Anne Cronin, Bulent Diken, Anne-Marie Fortier, Graeme Gilloch, Bob Jessop, Michael R. Krätke, Adrian Mackenzie, Paul McCarthy, Maureen McNeil, Nayanika Mookherjee, Maggie Mort, Roger Penn, Celia Roberts, Andrew Sayer, Elizabeth Shove, Vicky Singleton, Lucy Suchman, Bronislaw Szerszynski, Richard Tutton, David Tyfield, Imogen Tyler, John Urry, Sylvia Walby, Claire Waterton, Yoke-Sum Wong, Brian Wynne.

Centres in the Department

Centre for Economic and Social Aspects of Genomics (Cesagen)

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Centre for Mobilities Research

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Gender Equality Research Network International (GENIE)

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- Photocopies of relevant academic certificates.
- A covering letter explaining what you hope to do while you are at Lancaster (courses to be attended, any individual supervision requests, research to be done, etc), and stating the timing and duration of your intended visit.
- Two letters of support from referees who know your academic work.
- For non-native English speakers only: documentation of your competence in English.

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If you have any questions please contact Rachel Hemmings,
R.Hemmings@lancaster.ac.uk

Some of the things visitors have said about us:

Katia from Denmark:

Lancaster University has given me the opportunity to recapture the rhythm of my PhD research and analysis.

The staff and fellow students have reminded me that intellectual exchanges are much more fun in an environment with enthusiastic, engaging, open and welcoming people. The Department of Sociology at Lancaster University is such a place.

Inari from Finland

I spent seven months as a visiting student at the Department of Sociology in 2008, and found the time fruitful and fun in terms of academic work, everyday life and leisure. I chose Lancaster University because of my PhD research topic which concerns domestic technologies, everyday life and design of future technologies. I had been inspired by writings and articles that originated from Lancaster University. When I arrived, I found a research culture in the Department that lived up to all my expectations. My own research progressed enormously during my visit. Staff in the Sociology department were helpful and friendly, and their academic expertise really contributed to my theoretical, conceptual and methodological thinking and writing. I was surprised by the informal (yet professional) atmosphere of the Department: you could contact any member of staff and they always found time to help you with your work even though they weren't your official supervisors.

We hope to see you again soon!

Turn back a page if you want to visit Lancaster's Sociology department for more than just a couple of days

