



The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 306, 5 August 2020

Events

Events have been added to the Courses & Events pages on The Network website – see: <http://www.seapn.org.uk/courses>.

Black Lives Matter

“Police surveillance of Black Lives Matter shows the danger technology poses to democracy”

https://theconversation.com/police-surveillance-of-black-lives-matter-shows-the-danger-technology-poses-to-democracy-142194?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20July%2027%202020%20-%201688116287&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20July%2027%202020%20-%201688116287+CID_0d1c1d5c6ea0e5b77cf56d94ba7517c4&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Police%20surveillance%20of%20Black%20Lives%20Matter%20shows%20the%20danger%20technology%20poses%20to%20democracy

(Source: *The Conversation*, 27 Jul 2020)

Alarming piece about surveillance:

“US police forces have been turning to technology to track down Black Lives Matter protestors. Content from social media platforms and affiliated sites has been instrumental in the authorities being able to identify protestors based on photos of their faces, clothes and hair, or on the fact that they posted while at the protests. Meanwhile, drones have been added to the police’s own means of capturing footage of the protests.

Making technology-driven state surveillance part of the police’s response to democratic protest sets a dangerous precedent. There is a risk that the power this gives to police to target protestors could be abused and have a chilling effect on freedom of speech and assembly. This is particularly true in the case of Black Lives Matter, given alleged evidence of the infiltration of US law enforcement agencies by white supremacists.”

“Black lives matter in Europe too”

<https://www.socialeurope.eu/black-lives-matter-in-europe-too>

(Source: email from Social Europe, 27 Jul 2020)

Short article by journalist Khaled Diab:

“No one should be smug about racism in Europe. Here too there is a toxic interaction between ethnicity, equality and the environment.”

“Why does racism prevail? Leading scholars apply their minds”

<https://theconversation.com/why-does-racism-prevail-leading-scholars-apply-their-minds-138363>

(Source: *The Conversation*, 5 Aug 2020)

“All people belong to one biological species and there are no human ‘races’. So why does belief in race persist? It may be a scientific misconception, but it is real. It defines the lived experience of many people and determines how governments act and how people treat one another. How did race come to have this power and this durability?”

This is the first of three really interesting recent articles exploring the outcomes of an international research project.

The others are:

- “How the dimensions of human inequality affect who and what we are”, <https://theconversation.com/how-the-dimensions-of-human-inequality-affect-who-and-what-we-are-137296>
- “We need to unpack the word ‘race’ and find new language”, <https://theconversation.com/we-need-to-unpack-the-word-race-and-find-new-language-138379>

Coronavirus/COVID-19

“Museums and galleries in extraordinary times”

<https://westcountrybylines.co.uk/museums-and-galleries-in-extraordinary-times/>

Interesting article looking at how museums in the SW have responded during lockdown – and what the future may bring.

“How disabled people have been completely disregarded during the coronavirus pandemic”

https://theconversation.com/how-disabled-people-have-been-completely-disregarded-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic-142766?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20July%2028%202020%20-%201689116297&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20July%2028%202020%20-%201689116297+CID_b1c98ac75fa52da1d85a575bf44a183a&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=How%20disabled%20people%20have%20been%20completely%20disregarded%20during%20the%20coronavirus%20pandemi

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(Source: *The Conversation*, 28 Jul 2020)

Powerful article:

“Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and the preparations for a ‘new normal’, we have continued to observe how disabled people have at best

been overlooked and, at worst, deemed expendable. We argue this is due to deeply entrenched ableism – society’s tendency to presume that everyone is able-bodied, thereby marginalising anyone who is not.”

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

“Steep rise in young rough sleepers in London”

<https://www.cypnow.co.uk/news/article/steep-rise-in-young-rough-sleepers-in-london>

(Source: Children & Young People Now *Update*, 3 Aug 2020)

“Data published by the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (Chain) found that between January and March 2020, there were 449 children and young people aged under 25 sleeping rough in the capital.

The figure for the first quarter of the year is 81 per cent higher than for the same period in 2019 (248), and 48 per cent higher than in the previous quarter (304).”

CHAIN is

“[...] the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN), a multi-agency database recording information about rough sleepers and the wider street population in London. CHAIN [...] is commissioned and funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and managed by St Mungo’s [...]” [Taken from: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>]

Diversity in books and other materials

Rethinking ‘diversity’ in publishing

https://www.spreadtheword.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Rethinking_diversity_in-publishing_WEB.pdf

(Source: CILIP Public and Mobile Libraries Group *Newsletter*, 23 Jul 2020)

This important report is the UK’s first academic study on diversity in trade fiction and publishing.

“The report highlights the assumptions made about reading audiences, publishers’ inexperience to reach more diverse audiences, the lack of creativity in looking for authors and promotion, the centralised nature of book-buying decisions in retail, and a general complacency when it comes to engaging with new audiences – among many other systemic challenges that can only be overcome with a less risk-averse approach.”

[Taken from Society of Authors news release, <https://www.societyofauthors.org/News/News/2020/June/Academic-study-rethinking-diversity>]

NB Fuller assessment to appear in *The Network Newsletter*.

Health & Wellbeing issues – Other Agencies

“Where to find support if you feel unable to approach your manager”

https://www.managers.org.uk/insights/news/2020/july/Where-to-find-support-if-you-feel-unable-to-approach-your-manager?utm_source=MEM_RK%20BM%2028%20July&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Coronavirus&&utm_content=FINDSUPPORTCOVERINGLETT&utm_i=SYT,6Z26J,4H1XSR,S2R0X,1

(Source: Chartered Management Institute email, *Better Managers*, 28 Jul 2020)

A brief CMI “Insight”:

“Not everyone will feel comfortable opening up to their manager about mental health and wellbeing issues at work, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't talk. Here are some other ways to help yourself.”

Disability issues – Other Agencies

“RNIB Bookshare reaches half a million books in accessible formats”

<https://www.newtonnews.co.uk/rnib-bookshare-reaches-half-a-million-books-in-accessible-formats/>

(Source: *STV Newsletter*, 293, 5 Aug 2020)

The RNIB book service is celebrating reaching half a million books.

“RNIB Bookshare, which supports print-disabled learners, has a vast UK education collection that provides textbooks and materials to support the UK curriculum from early years to adult education. The free service, which can be accessed by teachers, students and now parents in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, has a range of accessible formats so books can be read electronically or adapted to suit personal reading needs. Books for leisure reading are also available.

RNIB Bookshare has publications from 850 publishers including well-known names such as Taylor & Francis, Springer Nature, Harper Collins and Penguin. Some of these publishers have a direct feed, meaning they can upload new and existing material directly on to the system, so people are able to access what they need without any delay.”

Migration issues – Other Agencies

Mental health and suicides amongst Polish men in Scotland

<http://www.feniks.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Feniks-2020-Mental-health-and-suicides-among-Polish-men-in-Scotland.pdf?x83021>

(Source: *MEMO [Minority Ethnic Matters Overview]*, 669, 27 Jul 2020)

Important new research which shows that:

“[...] Polish men living in Scotland are reluctant to seek help in relation to mental health problems either from people around them and from specialists. The participants suffer from loneliness, homesickness and difficulties in creating meaningful friendships with other men whether Polish or Scottish. Often entangled in the stereotype of a self-sufficient and hard-working Pole, they felt pressure to succeed and to focus their life on work, which isolated them even further. The 'I can handle it by

myself' and 'don't want to bother others' attitudes refrained them from reaching out for help.” [p15]

Recommendations include:

- Designing an awareness-raising campaign targeting Polish men living in Scotland to initiate a social conversation about their mental health. It is essential to equip them in the necessary phrases that could be used to tackle the social stigma of a male mental health
- Raising awareness of the available sources of support both in the NHS and through organisations like Samaritans.
- Creating an information brochure in Polish explaining how the health system in Scotland works
- Create local socialising opportunities for Polish men both within their community (where the language barrier exists) and within the wider international environment. [Taken from p16]

Lift the ban: why giving people seeking asylum the right to work is common sense

<https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Lift-The-Ban-Common-Sense.pdf>

(Source: email from Refugee Action, 30 Jul 2020)

“The Lift The Ban coalition is made up of over 200 organisations which have joined together to campaign for the right to work for people seeking asylum. The coalition includes businesses, trade unions, charities, think tanks and faith groups.” [p2]

This important report is based on a literature survey, a skills audit and survey of people who have direct experience of the asylum system across the country, three focus groups, and a poll of businesses.

“People seeking asylum in the UK are only able to apply for the right to work after they have been waiting for a decision on their asylum claim for over a year. Even then, the few people who are granted such permission are rarely able to work in practice because their employment is restricted to the narrow list of highly-skilled professions included on the Government’s Shortage Occupation List.

This means that people are essentially banned from working whilst they wait months, and often years, for a decision on their asylum claim. Instead, they are left to live on just £5.66 per day, struggling to support themselves and their families, while their talents are wasted and their integration set back.” [p3]

The report argues that lifting the ban would

- “Strengthen people’s chances of being able to integrate into their new communities

- Allow people seeking asylum to live in dignity and to provide for themselves and their families
- Give people the opportunity to use their skills and make the most of their potential Improve the mental health of people in the asylum system
- Help to challenge forced labour, exploitation, and modern slavery” [p3]

“We want to build a life’: Europe’s paperless young people speak out”

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/03/europe-paperless-young-people-speak-out-undocumented-dreamers>

“A generation of undocumented Europeans – inspired by the ‘Dreamers’ in the US – are fighting for residency rights. A new Guardian series hears some of their stories”

Broader issues – Other Agencies

Children and young people’s reading in 2020 before and during the COVID-19 lockdown

https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/National_Literacy_Trust_-_Reading_practices_under_lockdown_report_-_FINAL.pdf

(Source: National Literacy Trust *Training and Resources Bulletin*, 27 Jul 2020)

This report outlines findings from the 10th Annual Literacy Survey in 2020, along with the NLT survey of children and young people’s reading during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Key findings include:

- Children are reading and enjoying reading more during lockdown but boys may be losing out
- Reading has also provided refuge in this difficult time, supporting children’s mental wellbeing and enabling them to dream about the future.
- However, barriers including a lack of access to books (with schools and libraries closed), a lack of quiet space at home and a lack of school/peer support have negatively affected some children’s ability to read and their motivation to read for enjoyment.
- Helping children sustain a love of reading beyond lockdown is crucial to supporting children’s literacy skills, wellbeing and life chances. [Taken from p2]