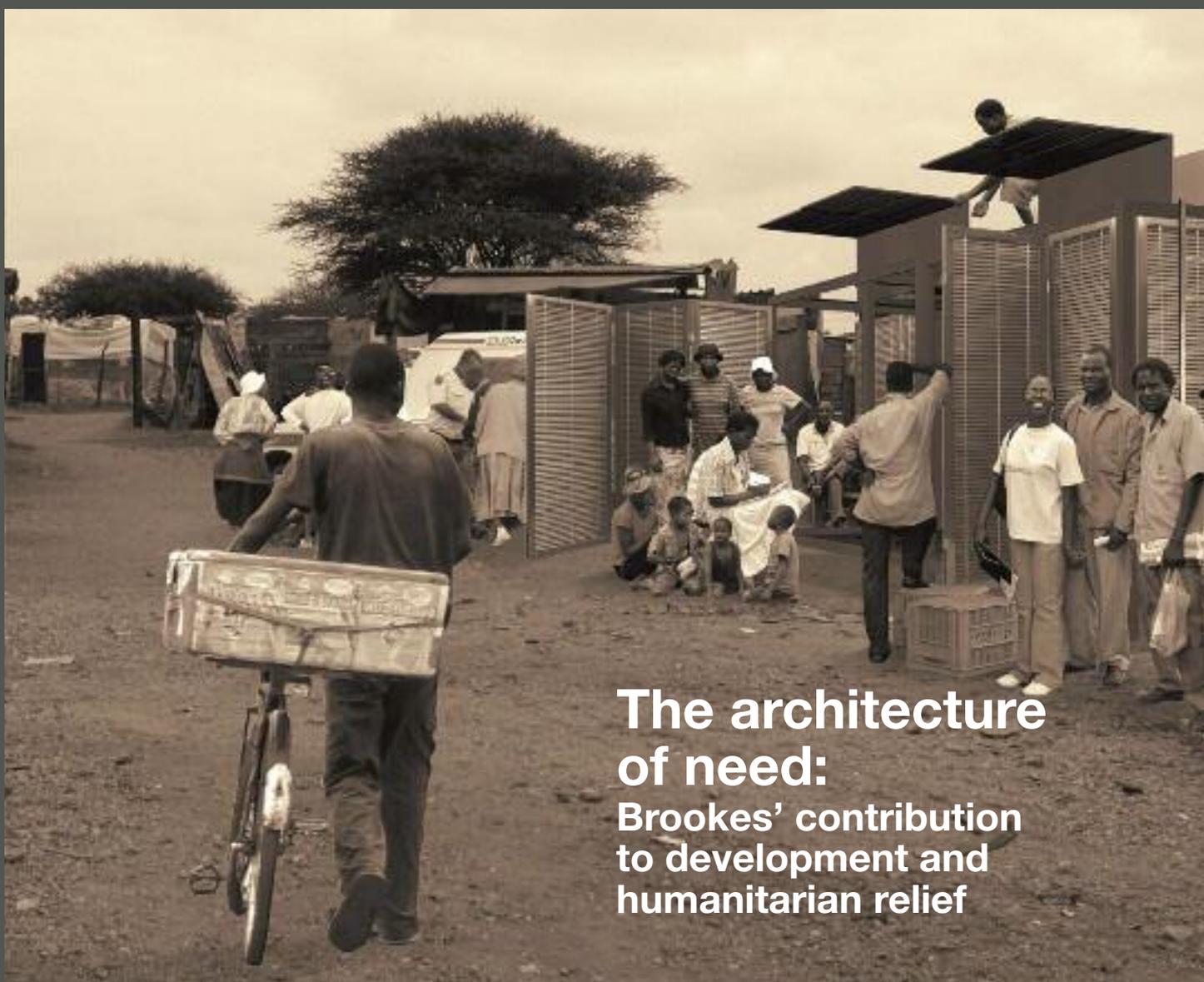


Volume 7 Issue 2
June 2011

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RESEARCH FORUM

The newsletter for the research community



**The architecture
of need:
Brookes' contribution
to development and
humanitarian relief**

Introducing Professor Alistair Fitt Anti-Terrorism, citizenship
and security in the UK **Understanding the past**

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Naomi Shinkins

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HELLO AND WELCOME...

To June 2011's edition of Research Forum, the university's magazine that showcases our current research.



This issue focuses on the third of the university's research themes, Leadership and Citizenship.

The articles present a flavour of the interest in this theme from history, art, politics and international relations, architecture and education. Covering a wide range of topics from the attributes of a national society through to how leadership for learning is fundamentally concerned with the extent to which education enables children and young people.

We are also very pleased to introduce Professor Alistair Fitt as the new Pro Vice-

Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Transfer. Alistair comes to Brookes from the University of Southampton and we are sure you will welcome him warmly to Oxford Brookes. To find out about his research interests and plans for the future, see his article on pages 10 and 11.

We hope you find the magazine enjoyable and informative, and we welcome your feedback via the editor at researchforum@brookes.ac.uk

Research Forum editorial team

RESEARCH NEWS



OUT OF AFRICA

An international team of scientists – including Professor Adrian Parker from Oxford Brookes – have revealed that humans left Africa at least 50,000 years earlier than previously suggested and were, in fact, present in eastern Arabia as early as 125,000 years ago.

The new study published in the journal *Science* reports findings from an eight-year archaeological excavation at a site called Jebel Faya in the United Arab Emirates.

The direct route from east Africa to Jebel Faya crosses the southern Red Sea. Professor Parker studied sea-level and climate-change records for the region and concluded the direct migration route may have been passable for brief periods in the past. During ice ages, large amounts of water are stored as ice, causing global sea levels to fall. At these times, the seaway of the southern Red Sea narrows considerably, making it easier to cross.

There was a brief period where modern humans may have been able to use the direct route from east Africa to Jebel Faya, said Professor Parker.

The new findings will reinvigorate the debate about man's origins and how we became a global species.

For more information, visit: www.brookes.ac.uk/outofafrica



BROOKES TEAM WARNS VIDEOS OF CUTE ANIMALS PROMOTE ILLEGAL TRADE

A team from Brookes is repeating warnings that online videos of cute animals promote illegal trade in them as pets.

Students Angelina Wilson and Amy Doughty together with lecturer Dr Anna Nekaris have been studying the slow loris trade – and are concerned that online videos of the cute creatures are creating a demand for them.

Videos showing slow lorises imply it is OK to keep the endangered animals at home. Online videos also show the nocturnal animals walking around and being handled in daylight. The charity International Animal Rescue is now calling on YouTube to take down the videos.

For more information, visit: www.internationalanimalrescue.org



BROOKES AND ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE ARCHITYPE WIN AWARD

Oxford Brookes and architectural practice Architype have won the 2011 'Cut the Carbon' Building magazine award. Architype, a design practice who have a long-standing reputation in sustainability, have been working on a Knowledge Transfer Partnership project with Brookes which is redefining the way architects approach low-carbon design.

The joint entry 'blew the judges away'

according to the summing-up.

Lisa Pasquale, Sustainable Design Development Manager from the School of the Built Environment, led the project and has been based at Architype's London office where she monitored the environmental performance of a range of sustainable buildings and developed tools to collate, evaluate and disseminate her findings.

PLANT RESEARCH COULD POINT WAY TO FOOD SECURITY

Scientists in the UK and USA, including a team from Brookes, have been awarded £6.1 million to improve the process of photosynthesis. This could improve global food security through significantly increasing the yield of crops for food production.

It is hoped the entire research project could even lead to the blueprint to make a fully artificial leaf capable of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

The focus of the Brookes project will involve combining algal and plant photosynthesis. Tiny, single-celled green algae that live in fresh water are able to concentrate carbon dioxide, making their photosynthesis very efficient. The funding has been awarded by the UK Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council and the US National Science Foundation.



AUTISM RESEARCH – HELPING TO FORGE REAL-LIFE FRIENDSHIPS THROUGH FACEBOOK

Brookes psychologists are attempting to discover whether Facebook can help people with autism develop skills for making strong friendships face-to-face.

Thirty people with autism from around Europe, who have been chatting online since September 2009, met up at the university last month for the Autism Connections Europe international meeting.

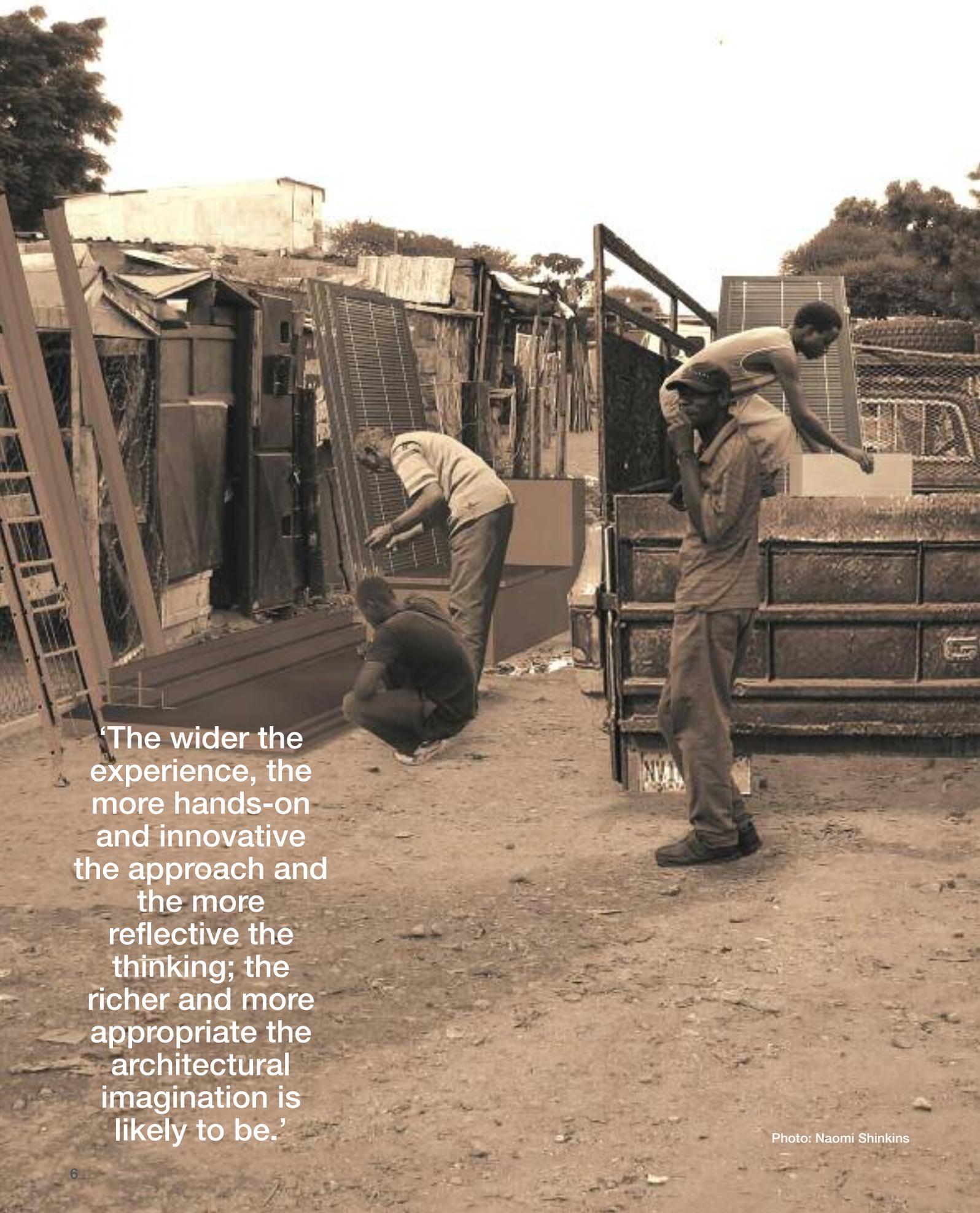
The meeting lasted three days and a conference took place on Saturday 9 April

which was open to the public, health professionals and anyone else with an interest in this area.

Dr Johnny Lawson, who is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Brookes, organised the four-day event; Autistic people think in a different way and the event was about trying to get people to understand that.

For more information, visit: <http://psych.brookes.ac.uk/ace>





‘The wider the experience, the more hands-on and innovative the approach and the more reflective the thinking; the richer and more appropriate the architectural imagination is likely to be.’

Photo: Naomi Shinkins

THE ARCHITECTURE OF NEED

There seems to be a strong case for architectural education to prepare students for practice in development and humanitarian relief situations. Yet it is uncommon to find design projects in architecture schools which take on development issues such as poverty, vulnerability, shelter after disaster, or slum upgrading.

Professor Nabeel Hamdi has run development-based studios in Rhode Island School of Design and University College London as well as Oxford Brookes. His book *Educating for Real* explores why architecture schools are reluctant to teach design in a development context, highlighting the difference between 'inside' and 'outside'. The 'inside' view of city design is the traditional top-down approach, where plans are set by policy makers and planning experts and instituted by local authorities, for the good of local communities. 'Outside' is the informal economy, the shanty town, the need to survive. He argues that educational establishments are natural 'insiders', and therefore teaching students about the processes of the 'outside' would not be part of their thinking.

A Centre for Excellence in the Built Environment (CEBE) funded research project has focused on the experience of the small number of design studios in schools of architecture which take on these issues as the driving force to produce designs appropriate for developing countries. The aim of the research is to find out what is successful about these design studios and to identify barriers to wider uptake of humanitarian and development issues in architectural education.

Melissa Kinnear of Design Unit D at Oxford Brookes says the benefits students get from the studio are skills in engaging the community and solving conflicts. She comments: You have to ask why these

issues are not in the mainstream architectural education because as an architect you deal with them all the time – they are very important in many real-life project challenges, whether in the developing world or the developed world.

'Although recent years have seen a considerable increase in the number of people living in abominable conditions as well as a rapid increase in the incidence of natural disasters rendering thousands of people homeless, few architects are aware of the possible contribution they could make to both development and humanitarian relief.'

The quality of the student experience is particularly striking. The students say they like being involved in real issues and they feel that they are making a difference. They report feeling more connected to global issues after they have worked on these issues in their designs. The field trips they undertake have a strong impact because the students are likely to witness the kind of

extreme poverty they will not have seen before. The tutors say this experience is likely to make the students ask questions of their role as an architect, and to make them behave more ethically in their personal life and professional practice.

Getting the field visit right is probably the most important element of the process, and each of the design studios puts much time and energy into making sure it works well. Maurice Mitchell of Diploma Unit 6, London Metropolitan University, also places emphasis on the field visit as a good learning opportunity. In the book *Learning from Delhi*, one of the key themes from Mitchell's design studio is that students of architecture working in a development context can find a more effective way to respond to rapid social, technical and economic changes and the associated humanitarian agenda.

But the barriers to wider uptake of such design studios include the challenging field trips, which are time consuming to organise, expensive, and can be risky. Students find it difficult to integrate development issues into the design projects and are concerned that future employers will not take it seriously. This, alongside difficulties in getting the content of the design work agreed as legitimate within universities, makes for a challenging area of study.

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CITIZENSHIP AND LEADERSHIP: A VIEW FROM EXTREMIST STUDIES

Professor Roger Griffin, Department of History, shares his work on the world of post-war fascism and terrorism.

Leadership and citizenship were not themes in the forefront of my mind when I embarked on my present project, a monograph series on terrorism *'Modernism and Fascism'* (Palgrave), the first two of whose 25 contracted volumes appeared in late 2010 on eugenics and nihilism respectively. Certainly the themes had a bearing on an earlier phase of my research specialisation on fascism. Indeed, the role played by the 'charismatic leader' in inter-war fascism, and the creation of a concept of citizenship based entirely on concepts of racial purity which excluded entire categories of human being from the Nazis' 'national community' were among the key topics that I hoped my theory would illuminate. However I doubt whether Brookes' *Research Forum* had that sort of leadership or citizenship in mind when they chose the theme for this issue and asked me to contribute.

The world of post-war fascism and terrorism which I now study is one where citizens exist simply as an abstract target for symbolic strikes against civil society, while power is rarely concentrated in

outstanding personalities. Even Osama Bin Laden's role as leader of Al Qaeda beyond that of being a spiritual guide and living myth was extremely questionable. The ill-fated threesome of the Baader-Meinhof-Ensslin gang who terrorized Germany for years achieved a high profile, but who can name the ring-leaders of the Red and Black Terrorism that blighted Italy in the 1970s or of the 9/11 and 7/7 attacks? Moreover in lone-wolf terrorism of the sort carried out by Timothy McVeigh and David Copeland, leader and follower are combined in a fatal synergy.

So what has leadership got to do with my recent work? Well, there is 'academic leadership' and even 'world leadership' in a particular specialism, indeed it is one of the criteria for promotion to professor! But the idea of achieving, let alone leading, some sort of 'consensus' on key issues in the human sciences is even more utopian than herding cats since a controversy is a free-for-all with no referee or 'cat-herd' to supervise proceedings. As for changing the conceptual paradigm in a discipline, this generally comes about not by convincing

one's peers, but only when enough of them have retired, died or otherwise bowed out of the struggle for hegemony to allow a new generation of scholars to arise, open to a fresh perspective which in due course gains prevalence through a somewhat arbitrary process of natural selection.

Nevertheless, emboldened by the widespread if not universal acceptance of my concept of fascism, what I set out to do in *Modernism and Fascism*, quite deliberately, was to change the dominant paradigm of modernism with an approach I hoped others in a wide variety of disciplines might find illuminating in their own research. In it I portrayed Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany as 'modernist states', a description based on extending the semantic field of 'modernism' far outside its comfort zone as a description of aesthetic phenomena. I recently presented a keynote session on the relationship between modernist art and fascist politics for an international hispanophone congress held by ASETEL, The Spanish Association for the Theory of Literature. This was also the occasion for the launch of the Spanish translation of



‘The world of post-war fascism and terrorism which I now study is one where citizens exist simply as an abstract target for symbolic strikes against civil society, while power is rarely concentrated in outstanding personalities.’

Modernism and Fascism and an interview for a national newspaper *El Público*. In May I received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Leuven in Belgium for my contribution to modernist studies.

But what of citizenship? In February I gave a presentation to the organisers of PREVENT, the government initiative to counter the intensive politicisation of British Muslims that can lead to terrorism. There I outlined an approach to radicalisation and deradicalisation that grows directly out of my work on ‘modernist rebellions’ against the spiritual bankruptcy of modernity, an ‘anomie’ which can be felt by disaffected Muslims in Bradford just as much as by alienated whites in Stepney. The PREVENT team are putting me in touch with the Department of Education because my somewhat savage critique of David Cameron’s announcement of the failure of multiculturalism and of the need for a more ‘muscular liberalism’ was followed by my own suggestions for how history could be used more effectively in secondary schools for liberal ends.

Among my proposals was a project to incorporate into curricula the harmonisation of British history with the history of other cultures, nations, and races so that pupils from any mix of ethnic identities could locate the components of their hyphenated British identity within a larger context. Next academic year I will take fractional study leave to work on a project funded by the Berendel Foundation designed to disseminate awareness of a tradition of ‘transcultural humanism’ latent in nearly all the world’s societies, religions, and humanity’s vast historical experience of multiculturalism.

The Research Excellence Framework demands that research has ‘impact’. It would be good to think that even without such an incentive, we are all working towards producing research that enhances not only specialist knowledge, but the humanity of a society in which the death of multiculturalism pronounced by our Prime Minister has been greatly exaggerated.

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INTRODUCING PROFESSOR ALISTAIR FITT

PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR, RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER



It's a great pleasure to have the chance to introduce myself, and I'm very glad to have actually started now in my new role here. I arrive at Brookes from the University of Southampton where I have been for the last 22 years, latterly as the Dean, Head of the School of Mathematics and then Pro Vice-Chancellor (International). By all accounts Diana Woodhouse will be a hard act to follow, but it's a big thrill for me to join a university on such a steep upward trajectory, and I am completely committed to ensuring that the research here goes from strength to strength.

There are busy and testing times ahead, of course. The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is approaching, and our performance will be a key signal to the outside world of where we stand in the research business. Every good university in the land is demanding more PhD students, more research money, more influence and more status, and you may be sure that we will be doing the same. The backdrop to all of this is, of course, very testing. The HE model that has persisted in the UK for many years has been thrown up in the air and turned inside out over just a few months, and nobody (least of all the politicians that made it happen) really knows where things will be in five years' time. Essentially, we're all taking part in a huge educational experiment whose basic axioms show every sign of having been 'made up as they go along'. Like all experiments, the results are not guaranteed, and it is my guess that there will be many more ups, downs, and unintended consequences of the new legislation than the ministers currently realise. Research funding in many (though not all) areas is being cut as the recession bites, and there is more and

more competition for every penny of external funding. It cannot be long now until the politicians realise (if they haven't already) that if they do the sums correctly then their new way of arranging the HE sector will inevitably cost more than the existing system. Further financial consequences are sure to follow.

What can we do? The right answer is that we're smart people and we can deal with this. The correct response is not to

'Research means many different things to many different people, but as far as I am concerned there are only two constants: be quality, be international.'

throw our hands up in despair and pronounce the whole thing to be impossible and universities to be doomed, but rather to be imaginative and cunning in where we seek funding, to optimise our REF return, and to be very sure that none of our effort is wasted. Good preparation, careful tactics and learning from each other are key factors here. Also, the recession will not last forever, and when things become easier we want to be in pole position to profit from any new research money that may become available. Finally, it is invariably the case in my experience that adversity also brings opportunity.

What are the key drivers for me as far as research is concerned? Research means many different things to many different people, but as far as I am concerned there are only two constants: be quality, be international. Whatever sort of research you are carrying out, if the basic quality is high then money, PhD students, recognition in your field, REF success, career aspirations, and everything else that is desirable will automatically follow.

Who's listening to you and who are you influencing? We want our research to be

played out not on an Oxfordshire, England or UK stage, but an international one. Research is a global business and we must respond to that. When I started my career, research was a rather personal occupation and it wasn't really the 'done thing' to shout about one's successes. That's all changed now, and one of my key tasks will be to tell as wide an audience as possible about all the great research success stories coming out of Brookes. You can take it as read that

I'll be contacting many of you asking you to give me boasting ammunition, and I'll be using that whenever and wherever I can, so if you have a great story to tell, please don't waste any time in letting me know about it.

What about my own research? I suppose that the best description of me is an 'industrial applied mathematician'. I work mainly in the fields of solid and fluid mechanics and asymptotic analysis, but pretty much everything that I do is focused on real problems. I have two PhD students that are finishing off their theses, and I am currently working on three sets of problems, namely flow and deformation in human eyes (I am happy to discuss interesting and unusual eye conditions with you if you wish!), the production of optical fibres and the flow of glass, and betting and gambling on horses, football and shares. I am the Officer Secretary of ICIAM, the world applied mathematics society, and a Council member of the IMA, the UK's applied mathematical professional society. I have every intention of remaining research active, so if you have an interesting problem that needs some mathematical input, then do send me an email.

Since my own research is by definition multidisciplinary, you might guess that I am a big fan of people working together in large groups. Though this is definitely true, it would be wrong to conclude that a corollary of 'multidisciplinary = good' is 'not multidisciplinary = not good'. In my view there is and always will be a place for the lone researcher – not everybody needs to work in teams and single-author outputs are just fine. There are many reasons though for encouraging multidisciplinary. I have personally observed many examples of unexpected and unforeseen interactions yielding huge mutual benefit. Most of these happy unions seem to occur when the participants in a joint research programme are not consciously working together, but simply 'comparing notes', and maybe that's the ultimate answer – multidisciplinary without realising you're doing it!

Finally, let me say that as I learn more and more about all the great things that are going on here, I become more and more upbeat about our future place in the 'world order' of universities. Ever since I was a PhD student, research and knowledge transfer have been the two most important things in my working life, and I'm looking forward hugely to making absolutely sure that they enjoy a higher and higher profile at Brookes.

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‘We found that members of ethnic minorities who were of lower socioeconomic status, and who had experience of racism, were likely to view themselves as potential targets of counter- terrorism policies.’

ANTI-TERRORISM, CITIZENSHIP AND SECURITY IN THE UK

Dr Michael Lister, Department of International Relations, Politics and Sociology and **Dr Lee Jarvis** from Swansea University are researching views of anti-terrorism in the UK.

Recent years have witnessed dramatic, and potentially enduring, changes to global anti-terrorism measures. At the point of writing, we are a little over twelve months into our research into the impact of those changes in Britain. Although conclusions offered at this point are both provisional and tentative, we would like here, briefly, to highlight four outcomes of particular interest.

Perhaps most importantly, it has become increasingly apparent that 'ordinary' people interpret anti-terrorism measures ultimately through a lens of security. Although this lens is negotiated in markedly different ways, individual support for, or resistance to, developments in this policy arena is typically grounded as much in concerns about security as they are in liberty. Fears over infringements on rights frequently emerge in our research, yet they are typically subsumed under a broader concern with their implications for either individual or collective security. Thus, we have found little evidence to suggest that British citizens engage in a 'balancing' or trade-off, of liberty and security, in contrast, perhaps, to much political, media and academic debate.

Second, to nuance the above a little, public understandings of security are marked by considerable sophistication and variance. These range from the comparatively narrow, in which security is equated to survival or contentment with one's life opportunities, to far broader understandings, where security is deemed coterminous with other political values such as freedom or equality. The complexity and

breadth of these conceptions offer a striking parallel with contemporary developments in security studies. And, intriguingly, there is evidence of support for conceptions of human security, security as emancipation, and securitisation, within public reactions to anti-terrorism developments.

'Perhaps most importantly, it has become increasingly apparent that 'ordinary' people interpret anti-terrorism measures ultimately through a lens of security'

A third emergent finding is that counter-terrorism policies are widely seen to target ethnic minorities (and not just Muslims). We found that members of ethnic minorities who were of lower socioeconomic status, and who had experience of racism, were likely to view themselves as potential targets of counter-terrorism policies. This perceived targeting, unsurprisingly, runs a substantial risk of producing alienation, apathy and even, potentially, the very extremism that counter terrorism is designed to eliminate. It also raises significant questions around citizenship, for, as one participant put it, 'Muslims are becoming a second-class citizen, without the rights of everyone else, basically'.

Finally, we have also gathered data on the diversity of attitudes towards specific counter-terrorism measures. Here, pre-charge detention was opposed by virtually

all of the participants in our research. Stop and search was seen as legitimate by some, although others opposed it either in principle or in practice, due to perceptions of its discriminatory employment against specific communities. Moreover, although there is concern about its vagueness, we did encounter cross-community support for the offence to incite or glorify terrorism, although the source of this support is probably different, with some Muslims supporting this measure as a mechanism for limiting the impacts of extreme voices.

Although the reasons cited for these, and other, scepticisms spanned concerns of necessity, efficacy, and legitimacy, hostility towards contemporary counter-terrorism policies was heightened in the context of measures such as anti-terror hotlines predicated on public involvement in this policy arena. Interestingly, a shared vision of security as a collective good transcends both the political appeals to public participation in counter terrorism, and public resistance to participating therein. In the former, this vision is couched, typically, in appeals to collective community responsibilities; in the latter, in a recognition of its likely impacts on the security of others sharing the same social space. Thinking through the implications of the ontological insecurity that characterises this positioning of 'ordinary' people as always, at once, citizens, suspects, stakeholders, and possible terrorists, we feel, should be a vital concern for future work in this area.

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AGENTS OF CHANGE AND ECO-CITIZENSHIP: SOCIAL SCULPTURE AT BROOKES AND BEYOND

In our times of great ecological and social change, there is a growing awareness that we all need to contribute to reshaping how we live in the world and how we can better understand the role of imagination in enhancing ecological and active citizenship. **Shelley Sacks**, Reader in the Department of Art and Director of the Social Sculpture Research Unit (SSRU) explains...

In 1998 I presented a paper on social sculpture and response-ability to the UNESCO Summit on Culture and Development, and the SSRU was launched at Brookes from this. With an interdisciplinary team of research associates I have continued to explore new methodologies of engagement and creative strategies that enable 'connective practice'.

These connective practices employ transferable 'creative strategies' designed to 'mobilise us internally', connecting self

and other, individual and community, imagination and action. The link between shifts in consciousness, attitudinal change and ways of narrowing the gap between information and action – questions posed by many change activists and organisations – also underpins the MA in Social Sculpture, a growing social sculpture graduate group at Brookes and other SSRU frameworks such as University of the Trees, Exchange Values and *Ort des Treffens*.

'It is about returning the aesthetic to its original meaning - as that which enlivens us and activates awareness'

Ort des Treffens – or Place of Encounter – was commissioned and funded by the city of Hannover and several German

cultural foundations in 2008. It focuses on the relationship between reflection and active citizenship, inviting citizens to explore the role of imagination in rethinking and reshaping our lives. It takes place throughout the city, open to any citizen that chooses to be involved. In this birthplace of Hannah Arendt and Leibniz it explores Arendt's question: 'How shall I conduct myself?' and Leibniz' notion that 'we live in the best possible of all worlds'. It engages citizens in two reflective encounters – with oneself and with the other – as the basis for shaping a more active and aware citizenship.

The encounter with oneself takes place on a yellow felt circle in one's home, at school, on the street, in the office. The encounter with the other takes place in the centre of the parliament building with five others who have all already 'encountered' themselves. Both processes involve



reflection on the question: 'What am I doing in the world?' In addition, recordings of these reflections play at 50 listening stations throughout the city, amplifying the innermost thoughts and views of citizens. The project, facilitated by a team of 14 people, stirred the imagination of many Hannover citizens, and is now continuing in Hannover as a 'citizens' initiative' linked to organisations like Agenda 21.

University of the Trees – an ongoing SSRU project, which is developing a collaborative bid with the Citizenship Foundation to the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) – offers 'a kit' of methods and 'instruments of consciousness' for exploring our relationship to the world and coming to creative action. It enables groups and organisations to use the kit, and towns, villages and cities to become a 'field of awareness'.

Invited by the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, I contributed one of these instruments – a Thought Wedge Process for facilitating participatory engagement – to the 2009 Climate Crisis Conference, when 50 Nobel Laureates and 100 CEOs met at St James's Palace to explore ways forward, including the role of culture and imagination, in mobilising greater engagement. In autumn University of the Trees will contribute this Thought Wedge Process to a symposium with the Forestry Commission, on the future of UK forests.

There has been much recent

collaboration with a focus on change and ecological citizenship. I included a text on 'giving' for the Institute of Social Banking and have been working on social sculpture processes with Dr Chris Seeley, CSR facilitator, Ashridge Management College. Visiting research fellow, Dr Hildegard Kurt has recently contributed to the recent EU Sostenatu process in Slovenia and Dr Wolfgang Zumdick has been involved in the German Arts Council's international Art of Survival programme. Dr Zumdick and I also ran a social sculpture series at RMIT University in Melbourne.

Interdisciplinary artist Joseph Beuys, co-founder of the German 'Greens', developed the idea of social sculpture which includes 'the invisible materials of speech, discussion and thought' and sees 'every human being is an artist'. It is about returning the aesthetic to its original meaning – as that which enlivens us and activates awareness. Understood this way, connecting the aesthetic and responsibility, or enlivened consciousness and our ability-to-respond, might make sense. Perhaps this is why the SSRU's work is interesting such a wide spectrum of people and organisations... because becoming active citizens is intimately linked with imagination and perception.

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EARTH FORUM

Earth Forum is one of the SSRU's current research projects exploring the role of imagination in ecological citizenship. It forms part of the Climate Fluency Exchange process in South Africa this year – towards the COP17 Climate Conference in December 2011 – and is one of the many 'other ways of knowing' processes initiated and developed by myself and the SSRU's active international network of co-workers and research associates.

Bringing stakeholders together to explore different takes on 'progress' and 'development', *Earth Forum* begins with a process in the Karroo region of South Africa, where Shell is set to start the toxic process of 'fracking' for gas. Supported by the British Council, the Commonwealth Institute and Rhodes University's Sustaining Commons Research Institute, *Earth Forum* like our other social sculpture frameworks, creates experiential 'arenas' based on our explorations of responsibility as 'an ability to respond'.



'I contributed one of these instruments - a Thought Wedge Process for facilitating participatory engagement – to the 2009 Climate Crisis Conference'

UNDERSTANDING THE PAST – INFLUENCING THE FUTURE

Dr Glen O'Hara, Reader in History of Public Policy, argues for the essential importance of historical learning to informing policy making.

‘**T**o govern is to choose’; and Charles Baudelaire’s maxim from the nineteenth century still holds true today. That’s the nub of my research: how do individuals, and especially governments choose both what they want and what they perceive to be ‘right’? My first book, *From Dreams to Disillusionment: Economic and Social Planning in Sixties Britain* (2007) focused on the long-term planning movement of that decade, a period in which experts and policymakers of all kinds were saying that Britain needed a look across the horizon at future trends and changes.

The planning movement eventually died away but the challenges remain. Should central government pay for a mile of motorway, or the pay of two hundred nurses? Should taxpayers subsidise relatively wealthy rail passengers through High Speed Rail, or focus resources on social security payments that – unlike spending on the transport network – won’t show on the Treasury books as ‘investment’? There seems no clear answer; but looking at the past history of these dilemmas does help us to understand our present policy tradeoffs.

Arts and humanities academics have a duty to contribute to present debates. I argue that the present government’s spending cuts go too far too fast, given that UK public debt is historically not high at all, and have written to this effect in articles and opinion pieces for the *History and Policy* website and for the *Times Higher*, *The*

Guardian and the *Financial Times*. I also write a blog, *Public Policy and the Past*. Hopefully these are useful contributions to the debate.

Then, in 2012, I’ll be publishing *Governing Post-War Britain: The Paradoxes of Progress*, which will look at the role of complexity in making more and more decisions ‘paradoxical’, achieving different, or even the opposite, results of what was originally intended. In the medium term I’ll be turning to another one of the themes

‘A collection edited by myself and Dr Tom Crook, will address the vexed question of how governments know and think statistically, one of the first steps towards decisions in modern governance.’

that framed this discourse; ideas of the future, particularly the concept of ‘modernity’ or ‘modernisation’. Over the next four or five years I’ll be writing *Tomorrow’s Worlds: Visions of the Future in Twentieth Century Britain*.

Away from these questions of twentieth-century policymaking, I’ve been looking at the formation of longer-term national ideologies or ‘characteristics’. It’s all too easy to get caught up in national stereotyping at a political level, arguing that Americans are ‘individualistic’, for instance, and so prefer libertarian governments. But these preferences are formed and reinforced by history – by the accretion of many forces and choices. Last year I published *Britain and the Sea since 1600*, which looked at the role of the ocean in

making the British peoples relatively ‘open’, ‘global’ and outward looking. I’ll be pursuing these concepts in a series of articles about ‘clean water’ and the international environmental movement over the next year or two, a research agenda that’ll also see me travel to Ghent to speak at the International Maritime History Conference. And I’ll be working with planning colleagues on writing histories of British docklands redevelopment over the last four decades.

These conjoined themes – choice and history in nation-making – are at the heart of what I try to bring to academia’s new ‘impact agenda’. For without a sense of how and why decisions have been made in the past, and lacking a deep understanding of nation formation and reformation, it would be simply impossible to grasp the policy choices before any government, let alone one as radical as this one. Our defence of threatened arts and humanities funding should rely on their intrinsic worth and their role in fostering habits and methods of critical thinking. But it can also rest on their role in understanding the present.

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CITIZENS OF THE WORLD?

**Professor Barrie Axford, Department of International Relations,
Politics and Sociology.**

What does citizenship mean in a 'globalised world'? If citizens are the legally recognised denizens of territorial states, what is a global citizen? How is a global society possible and what would hold it together?

There is no global state and many would argue that there is no world society either, if what is meant by that is something that approximates the attributes of a national society; a functionally integrated social whole supported by a sense of community. Of course many of us are citizens of the European Union, which is not a state, but only through being citizens of the union's individual member states.

At the same time, there are robust examples of global governance, the powerful appeal of cosmopolitan principles and the realities of living in a world where boundaries are being eroded. Today's world is characterised by new geographies of power where key actors include global firms, global markets, transnational networks of activists and digitised information flows. Such developments bring into question what constitutes a political community or a social and cultural order, where the boundaries of such constructs lie and who are to be allotted roles as legitimate and competent actors in them. All of which bears on the question of citizenship and the quality of democratic practice in arenas not circumscribed by the usual borders.

My own work over the past fifteen years

or so has been framed by the idea of globalisation. In *The Global System* (1996) I explored the tensions between different versions of world order and the potential for disorder carried by globalising processes. Next year my latest monograph, *Theories of Globalisation*, will return to this theme to examine the ways in which a focus on the global has shifted the ground of social-scientific explanations of politics, economics and culture. An integral part of this endeavour has been my concern to interrogate what citizen-based politics – politics from below – and different forms of civic association actually look like when practised beyond the borders of the territorial state and the bounded society. Inevitably, this line of research has pushed me to address the vexed question of what, if anything, constitutes global civil society (GCS)?

'Much of the writing on GCS has an incurably romantic gloss'

Much of the writing on GCS has an incurably romantic gloss. Transnational social movements are depicted as kicking against the pricks of global capitalism, advocacy networks take up the cause of indigenous peoples, and so on. None of this is wrong, but in the absence of a global state and a world society, GCS has become bracketed as the human face of globalisation and the perceived antidote to neo-liberal globalisation from above.

Criticisms allow that such activism exists but demur that much of it is actually local or international - not global action. And many critics are sceptical of the notion that an authentic civil society can be established beyond the nation state.

My own research has tried to get beyond what I see as the unhelpful limits imposed by these objections. In the first instance this has meant conceptualising civil society as more than agonistic. Rather, it encompasses a great deal of routine and pacific sociality, built through communication. Second, it seems to me that there is little point in trying to identify and evaluate the features of GCS by using concepts and models, as well as offering prescriptions, so patently tied to the national and its alleged virtues.

So, how is a global social system or world society possible; what would hold it together? In trying to answer this question I have been drawn to both communication theory and different forms of network analysis, none of which rely on the conventional wisdom about society formation found in classical sociological theory. My work partakes of a much looser conception. It relies upon various and intensifying forms of connectivity and communication between sub-global actors to produce a society effect, a pattern of networked individualism, perhaps through social media, and thus a sociological map of a differentiated and polycentric world.

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Marlene Morrison, Professor of Education focuses upon several recent research activities featuring leadership and education for citizenship, which provide a vehicle for exploring how leaders act when they move beyond advocacy to consider education as a means for students to live fulfilling lives.

I have long-standing research interests in leadership and management, in particular as they relate to leadership for learning and what connects both to social justice. Leadership for learning is much more than the mechanics of efficient management; it is fundamentally concerned with how, why and the extent to which education enables children and young people to become 'fully functioning human beings'. From the discipline of education, such interests map onto this university's thematic research interests in leadership and citizenship.

Eleven years ago, it was asserted that the phrase 'educating for citizenship' had a more problematic status in the UK than in many other democratic countries. Subsequently, there have been several attempts, notably in England, to introduce citizenship education into schools and colleges.

In 2008-2009, I was among several principal researchers in a multi-university team to explore citizenship, alongside other issues, in relation to 14-19 education among 52 educational organisations at the start of what was then considered to be a period of major education reform. The study focused on four dimensions of citizenship: aspects of formal and informal school and college curricula; the outcome of various experiences, like volunteering or community-focused activities; achievement;

and as an intention to vote or not.

Findings suggested that citizenship education was much more developed in some case-study organisations than others. Not all informants, whether adults or young people, were convinced of the centrality of citizenship to schooling. Interestingly, in organisations where the leadership proclaimed its central importance it was often least developed. Overall, positive aspects of provision were described mainly in terms of citizenship-focused curricula or as 'preparation for life'. In the student survey, fewer than 40% of respondents expressed an intention to vote in a future election.

My most recent research points to increasing recognition among many adults, including leaders, that meeting the educational, civic, and social needs of children and young people requires collaborative networks that extend beyond education organisations. A recent direction in my research is towards the leadership of inter-service and inter-professional practice for children and young people. Indeed, many recent government initiatives are predicated upon a persistent rhetoric that the potential of a state's citizenry is maximised when leadership promotes collaborative, inter-service, inter-professional, and/or 'joined up' and networked service provision.

During 2009-2010, central university funds were awarded to pursue, through desk research, explorations that included the leadership of collaborative inter-professional practice. As co-director, this involved colleagues from the School of Health and Social Care and the Westminster Institute of Education, and has encouraged inter-disciplinary approaches.

Researching how leaders lead learners to become more – whether socially, educationally, politically and/or culturally – continues to pose challenges about how we understand the exercise of power, and for which purposes. Relatively few empirical inroads have been made to understand precisely what education for citizenship implies, and for whom.

Similar arguments pertain in all education sectors. In which case, research findings which penetrate the boundaries between authentic and inauthentic approaches to citizenship and education are part of bigger agendas for leadership scholars and practitioners. I feel privileged to have made a small contribution to an ongoing narrative that will, I am sure, continue, and I would be pleased to hear from other academic colleagues working with similar concepts and/or empirical approaches.

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COMING UP:

all the latest research events to look out for in the next year

13-14 SEPTEMBER 2011

Women and Leadership conference

This conference will bring together academics, policy makers and women leaders in politics, business, public and voluntary sectors. It will focus on the experience of women who have achieved leadership roles and it will consider strategies designed to increase the presence of women in senior posts both here and abroad.

Gipsy Lane, Headington Campus.
For more information, visit:
<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/about/events/e-items/women-and-leadership>

28 SEPTEMBER 2011

Research induction and networking event

An introduction to the 'ways and means' of research at Oxford Brookes, including the institutional support available for research, research policies and procedures, and to the key people who will assist you in your research. A 'mini speed networking' session will take place and will be an informal way to meet other new researchers.

Room BG11, Buckley Building,
Gipsy Lane, Headington Campus
1:00 - 4:00pm (refreshments provided)

23 NOVEMBER 2011

Applying for research funding - Why is this important?

Why applying for research funding is important and explaining the role of the Schools Grant Panels. Plus a research application question time session.

Room TBA
1:00 - 4:00pm (refreshments provided)

28 MARCH 2012

'I've won my award! Hurrah! What do I do next?'

How to manage your research project, including the roles and responsibilities of the Principal Investigator, HR Issues for contract research staff, and finance issues at both school and university level.

Room BG11, Buckley Building,
Gipsy Lane, Headington Campus
1:00 - 4:00pm (refreshments provided)

13 JUNE 2012

Research induction and networking event

A re-run of the September 2011 event for new researchers unable to make the first date, or who started later in the academic year.

Room BG11, Buckley Building,
Gipsy Lane, Headington Campus
1:00 - 4:00pm (refreshments provided)

For further details on all these events, please contact:
researchforum@brookes.ac.uk

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