



University of
Portsmouth

Welcome to the School of Education and
Continuing Studies

Symposium

**Children's Cultures, Wellbeing and
Digital Society**

Friday 10 July 2015

Keynote Speakers

Dr Sarah Parsons

Professor Louise Arseneault

Welcome

Welcome to the School of Education and Continuing Studies Symposium on

‘Children’s Cultures, Wellbeing and Digital Society’

As a School of Education, we are involved in research activities based around the following research clusters:

- Children’s Cultures and Wellbeing
- Digital Society and Education
- Pedagogy and Practice in Education

With this conference we would like to share with you some of our and others’ research on their important issues.

We hope you enjoy the day.

Dr Wendy Sims-Schouten

With special thanks to Sandra Kerr for the administrative support for this event and to others for assisting today.

Timetable

Time		Room
09:30 – 10:00	Registration	Portland Atrium
10:00 - 10:15	Welcome by Dr Peter Starie	Portland 1.74
	<i>Head of School of Education & Continuing Studies</i>	
	Professor Pal Ahluwalia	
	<i>Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation</i>	
10:15 - 11:15	Keynote 1 – Dr Sarah Parson	Portland 1.74
	<i>‘Digital Worlds and Autism: Collusion or Communication?’</i>	
11:15 – 11:45	Coffee	Portland Atrium
11:45 – 13:00	Parallel Sessions	
	Parallel Session 1	Portland 0.28
	<i>Childhood, Mental Health and Wellbeing</i>	
	Parallel Session 2	Portland 0.41
	<i>Children’s Cultures, Research and Education</i>	
13:00 – 13:30	Lunch	Portland Atrium
13:30 – 14:30	Keynote 2 – Professor Louise Arseneault	Portland 1.74
	<i>‘Poor Social Relationships in Childhood: A Risk for the Development of Mental Health Difficulties’</i>	
14:30 – 15:45	Parallel Sessions	
	Parallel Session 3	Portland 0.28
	<i>Digital Society – Childhood and School Focus</i>	
	Parallel Session 4	Portland 0.41
	<i>Pedagogy and Practice in Education</i>	

Keynote 1

Dr Sarah Parsons

Southampton Education School, University of Southampton

Title: ‘Digital Worlds and Autism: Collusion or Communication?’

Recent media headlines have raised concerns about children’s use of personal technologies. Similar concerns were raised when researchers started to investigate the educational potential of technologies for children with autism, suggesting that there was a danger for children to become addicted and reluctant to re-enter the real world. Thus, the accusation – then and now - is that technologies create ‘digital bubbles’ that surround the user, such that the child is then less engaged with the ‘real world’, with potentially detrimental effects. For children on the autism spectrum, who are diagnosed according to the existence of social and communication difficulties, the implied accusation is even stronger: that by using technologies for supporting learning we are somehow colluding with children’s disability. This talk will take a critical look at this argument and present evidence that suggests a more positive role for technology in the lives of people with autism.

Keynote 2

Professor Louise Arseneault

*Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, Kings College
London*

Title: 'Poor Social Relationships in Childhood: A Risk for the Development of Mental Health Difficulties'

Bullying, victimization and social isolation are topics of concern for youths, parents, school staff and mental health practitioners. Children and adolescents who are victimized by bullies or socially isolated often show signs of distress and adjustment problems. However, it is not clear whether the absence of positive social interactions at a young age is the source of these difficulties. It is important to determine whether bullying victimization and social isolation are significant risk factors for psychopathology and whether they should be the target of intervention and prevention strategies.

This presentation will offer an overview of recent findings from a nationally-representative cohort study from the UK. The *Environmental Risk (E-Risk) Longitudinal Twin Study* follows 2,232 twins born in 1994-1995 in England and Wales. This birth cohort's families represent the full range of socioeconomic status and health in the general population. Follow-ups have been carried out at ages 5, 7, 10 and age 12 years.

Parallel 1 – Childhood, Mental Health and Wellbeing

Paper 1

Evaluating School Based Mental Health Literacy Programmes: A Systematic Review

Paul Gorczynski, PhD, CPsychol, Sport and Exercise Science Department, University of Portsmouth

School-based mental health literacy programmes aim to help children understand mental health problems, address stigmatizing attitudes, and access mental health resources. Although school-based programmes have been promoted as optimal ways of improving mental health literacy, their overall effectiveness in primary and secondary schools have not been evaluated thoroughly. The purpose of this review was to examine the effectiveness of primary and secondary level school-based mental health literacy programmes on mental health knowledge, attitudes, and help seeking behaviour in children under the age of 18 years. In total, 47 studies were included in this review and most showed a positive intervention effect on all three aspects of mental health literacy. The majority of studies evaluated mental health literacy programmes in secondary schools, focused on promoting knowledge and attitudes on mental illness in general, and involved more female than male students. Programmes varied in structure, length, delivery, and student interaction as well methods of evaluation. Given programme and methodological heterogeneity, results should be treated cautiously and it is not possible to determine which mental health programme was most effective at addressing mental health knowledge, attitudes, or help seeking behaviour. Suggestions for future school-based mental health literacy programme research and practice are discussed.

Paper 2

My Life as a Pupil: The Autobiographical Memories of Adolescents Excluded from School

Shaan Farouk, University of Roehampton

In this project, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, I examine the relationship between the biographical narratives of students attending a Pupil Referral Unit and their ability to form relationships with teachers and engage in learning. The investigation is based on the assumption that the personal narratives – which students have constructed to make sense of their lives – have a strong influence on their attitudes towards education. The participants were 30, 15-16 year old pupils who attend a large PRU in London. Each student was

interviewed about their personal recollections, with a particular focus on their time at school, and the influence these experiences have had on them. The findings highlight the perceived influence of home circumstances, peer relationships, teacher-pupil interactions and the present or absence of the parental voice. Moreover, when considering the content and structure of the young persons' narratives consistent observations were made about the influence that common sequences of experience had on adolescents' attitude towards school and engagement in education.

Paper 3

'Optimising Digital Technology (Dt) in Order to Support Children With ASD: - Using Dt to Develop Pupils' Social, Emotional, Communication Skills and Life Skills and Support Their Parents.' - A 20 Day Experience of a Home School Tutor Working With a Teenager with Autism

David Bara, Senior Lecturer of SEN in Early Childhood Studies, School of Education and Communities University of East London.

While many carers of children with challenging behaviour love their children the 'role was often described as a chronic strain for caregivers' (Griffin & Hastings. 2014; p.412). Section 2.5 of the National Curriculum states that: 'All schools should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE)' yet PSHE is not a statutory subject, so often children aren't taught these vital skills.

This case study describes the progression and development of a 14 year autistic child working exclusively with a home school tutor (HST) using digital technology. The child lived in poor housing conditions and exhibited aggressive behaviour. The HST worked with both the father and the pupil in order to achieve maximum benefit, creating a tailored program of study using the internet and a digital audio workstation focussing on:

- Life skills
- Family relationships
- Literacy skills including creative writing, grammar, punctuation
- Numeracy skills including price comparison/best value, fractions, time, temperature
- Triad of impairments

The case study showed that digital technology can help facilitate an holistic approach which addresses the child's educational and social needs alongside the parent's need for support in a way which meets both the requirements of the 'system' and that of the family.

Parallel 2 – Children’s Cultures, Research and Education

Paper 1

Why Does British Society Need to Keep Relocating Their Collective Understanding of Gender?

Sue Perfect, School of Education and Continuing Studies, University of Portsmouth

It is forty years since the introduction of legislation on gender equality (Sex Discrimination Act 1975) and yet the subject of gender equality still produces strong feelings, with each subsequent generation suggesting that it was only a problem for the previous generation. There has been a gradual acceptance that girls/women are both capable and able to access high status and high earning occupations on a par with boys/men and yet there is still strong evidence of discrimination in the work place. The danger when trying to explore gender is to see males and females as homogenous groups who share common experiences, without accepting that there are many differences, both between genders and in gender groups. Therefore it is not helpful to talk about boys in relation to girls, but this is the rhetoric that is reiterated in the: popular press, the media and the reporting of education attainment, suggesting that improvement for women and girls jeopardise the positions of men and boys. This presentation is going to explore how language can influence society’s perception of gender, the way educational policies and reporting reinforce gendered views and how the world of employment continues to reflect a gender bias.

Paper 2

‘Children Should Be Seen and Not Heard’: The Usage of Narrative to Give a Voice to Young People Who Have Experienced Bereavement at a Young Age.

Sukh Hamilton, School of Education and Continuing Studies, University of Portsmouth.

Whilst there has been a major change within western social practices and prevailing cultural attitudes in the way ‘voice’ and children have been seen; this has not been evidenced within the arena of bereavement and grief. Children are perceived to be lacking emotional dexterity to be able to cope with ‘scary’ topics, thus the need to protect and shelter them from complex traumatic elements and anything that may cause unnecessary pain such as loss, bereavement and explanations about death becomes paramount. Although

there has been an increase in scholarship in this area, the child's voice is still missing from contemporary policy and practice, as well as within the literature. There appears to be a lack of opportunities for both ownership and more importantly partnership through the process of loss. When the child does surface, this tends to be situated in health rather than education. Individual personal experience, comfort levels, and the inflexibility of the curriculum, often means that adults working with children have a set perception of how children should be taught to deal with death. This generally tends to be a reactionary response rather than a proactive approach. The internet is sourced because it is rife with material such as the Kübler –Ross model (1969), which is outdated and could even be counterproductive. These 'top down' adult led intervention models 'teach' children about loss and grief retrospectively, and are in direct contradiction to the rights of the child enshrined in UNHCR (1989) which argues that children have the right to be consulted about matters which affect them.

This presentation will report on the progress of a qualitative research project undertaken with children who have experienced significant bereavement. This research is vital in order to influence policy and practice on talking about grief with children. The research has three primary aims: to address a gap in the educational and sociological literature on grief and bereavement in the lives of children; to explore the usage of personal narratives in order to give children ownership of their grief and the tools to be able to map personal loss and grief; and finally to reframe the issue of children's grief within an educational studies context as opposed to being situated in the field of health studies.

Paper 3

Informed Consent with Children and Young People in Social Research: Is There Scope for Innovation?

Gina Sherwood, School of Education and Continuing Studies, University of Portsmouth

Over twenty years of research has enhanced our understanding about the methodological and ethical benefits and challenges of involving children and young people in research. Concurrently, the increasing bureaucratization of research ethics governance has reified expectations about the methods used to gain informed consent for research participation. This paper explores how social researchers are navigating this tension and whether there is any scope for innovation through the use of technologies in how children and young people provide informed consent to take part in research. The research team undertook a qualitative study talking to ten male and twenty-two female, UK-based social science researchers to find out their views and concluded there is a need for the co-creation of research information with children and young people and greater transparency by sharing creative solutions.

Parallel 3 – Digital Society – Childhood and School Focus

Paper 1

'Paddling in the Digital Wave'

Angela Scollan and Beth Gallagher, Middlesex University

This presentation discusses how early years practitioners manage digital technology to enhance or challenge digital access and socio-emotional experiences for children. Practitioner perceptions of digital learning opportunities are explored to identify pedagogical shifts and expectations to determine digital 'intent' and 'use'.

Marsh & Bishop (2013), Levin (2013) and Rubin (2014) document the changing digital world and how adults need to be skilled and digitally competent to support children. Bowlby's research on attachment and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System offer frameworks to inform practitioner influence upon the child's socio-emotional development during digital exploration.

This study is located in an interpretative paradigm. It evaluates data collected from 21 students working in a range of early years settings whilst also undertaking a BA Early Childhood Studies and EYITT programme using questionnaires and focus group interviews.

All participants were informed of the purpose of the research and ethical procedures to ensure confidentiality were in place (BERA 201).

The analysis of data gave importance to interpretation of 'why' practitioners offer digital technology within their practice. Findings indicate a discourse between 1) adult and child digital agenda 2) technological competence 3) recognition of the emotional support offered to children who move between digital and non-digital realms.

Paper 2

Using Video Diaries with Young People

Dr Julie Shaughnessy, University of Roehampton, London

This presentation arises out of experiences of researching the perspectives of young people about their education as part of a recent study in partnership with a youth work charity. The focus was to capture young people's perspectives of Alternative Education Provision (AEP) through the use of video diaries. The rationale for eliciting the young people's perspectives focused on a range of inter-related elements of the inclusion debate in England where there has been greater commitment towards children's rights, social justice and recognition of the need to address social and economic disadvantage (United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989; McCluskey, Riddell and Weedon, 2014). It is argued that video research offers opportunities for disempowered young people to co-construct their accounts with researchers offering the potential for richer understandings of experience (Gibson, 2005). Traditions within educational research have tended to be more reserved about the use of video particularly with hard to reach groups (Buchwald, Schantz-Laursen and Delmar, 2009). The potential for using video accounts is explored through one young person's diary. The presentation concludes with further exploration of the potential of using video diaries for eliciting data with hard to reach groups.

Paper 3

A Proactive Approach to Young People's Use of Social Media

Victoria Wang and Simon Edwards, University of Portsmouth

This article reports on a recent research project undertaken in the UK that investigated young people's use of a range of prominent of social media tools for socialising and relationship building. The research is carried out through the use of an online survey. The findings suggest that this sample of British young people's socialising and relationship management practices via a range of prominent social media tools reflect similar behavioural and linguistic categories used offline. The use of these social media tools provides these young people with an opportunity to manage simultaneously different categories of relationship in multiplicity of 'spaces' created by these tools. The findings also challenge the widely held belief that young people expose themselves to risks on social media because they indiscriminately befriend strangers. Neither is there significant evidence of 'unjustified' intent to harm others but rather intent to primarily support or protect those with whom relationships have been carefully established. In fact, our research suggests that online engagement through social media can be positive and constructive for youth people – it provides them with a challenging 'space' to practice relationship management strategies.

Keywords: Cyberbullying, social media tools, relationship categories, linguistic categories, behavioural categories, self-identity

Parallel 4 – Pedagogy and Practice in Education

Paper 1

'Give it a Try and See How it Goes, Because Being Creative is a Good Thing' -What Are the Implications of the Devolution of Creative Control from Teacher/Researcher to Student/Participant?

Zoë Leadley-Watkins, Senior lecturer in Education, Division of Education, London South Bank University

The topic of this dissertation is “*The devolution of creative control*”. I have discovered that the devolution of creative control can be used as a model for the solution of both the teacher – student and researcher – participant contradictions. The question that was asked was, “What are the implications of the devolution of creative control from teacher/researcher to student/participant?” The overarching research project uses a radical constructivist approach to consider this question from the perspectives of both teacher/researcher and student/participants. There are three stages of the research procedure: *Stage 1: Student/Participant Group Discussion; Stage 2: Student/Participant Lead Filmmaking; Stage 3: Student/Participant and Teacher/Researcher Self-reflections.*

Through conducting this research alongside the student/participants, we have both learnt that although there may be risk involved in the devolution of creative control, the benefits far outweigh the risks. Ultimately this research is a call for all teacher/researchers to resist and oppose limitations on their practice in order to provide further opportunities for the devolution of creative control into the hands of students and participants. So that education becomes something that is done *with* rather than done *to* students, and research becomes something that is done *with* rather than done *to* participants, in the ‘quest for mutual humanization’ (Friere, 1996, p56).

Paper 2

Digital Learning Design

Martin Simmons, Vice Principal | Sparsholt College Hampshire (incorporating Andover College Campus)

Martin Simmons, Vice Principal, and Ursula Bailey, ILT Manager, have been at the vanguard of a new Diploma and Apprenticeship in Digital Learning Design. Their journey started on a research tour in Washington State and British Columbia, taken in employer engagement at Olympia, another trip to the USA,

this time Utah, to check out a new VLE and now they are steering through the first cohort of learners at Sparsholt College, which many will think an unlikely venue for digital innovation. Join them on their journey and see how the next generation of elearning designers are being trained.

Paper 3

Improving the Preparation of Visiting Scholars: An Investigation into the Experiences of a Chinese Cohort.

Dr David Holloway, Principal Lecturer, School of Education and Continuing Studies, University of Portsmouth

Ms Dan Liu, Lecturer, Centre for Foreign Languages Training (International College), Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China

With globalization has come the internationalization of higher education. This is often demonstrated by the widespread movement of students around world with large numbers now travelling to higher educational institutions in the West from China, Africa and the Middle East. Whilst there is a substantial research literature that examines the experiences of these students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, little attention has been paid to the increasing number of visiting scholars from those areas who come to western universities in order to develop their research capabilities and work with western colleagues .

This study examines the preparation and experience of a group of Chinese visiting scholars, based in UK universities during the academic year 2014-15, who have been selected and sponsored by the China Scholarship Council (CSC). The CSC is a Chinese state organization that funds students and academic exchange visit programmes. It provides preparatory English language provision and some cultural awareness for the visiting scholars. Thirty one of Chinese academics were sent an on-line questionnaire inquiring about their preparation for their visit in China and how well they felt they were prepared. Follow-up interviews were carried out with 10 visiting scholars to explore their experience in more detail. The findings from the survey and interviews will be presented. These findings will be used to develop and improve the preparatory programme for visiting scholars delivered by CSC in China.

About the School of Education and Continuing Studies

A career in the education sector allows you to work in a vital and fascinating field. Whether you are aiming to be a teacher, a trainer, an administrator or an early years practitioner, the School of Education and Continuing Studies provides the ideal environment for you to undertake your study.

We offer a wide range of courses, from professional development training to undergraduate and Masters' degrees, alongside PhD supervision; the staff comprises a team of respected lecturers with teaching and research specialisms that embrace theoretical excellence and practical experience. On our PGCE Initial Teacher Training courses, you may either take a professional or postgraduate approach to teacher training, and you can be supported by subject knowledge enhancement courses in several fields if needed.

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BA (Hons) Childhood and Youth Studies with Psychology

BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies

BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies with Psychology

Postgraduate:

PGCE Business Studies, Computer Sciences, English, Geography, Maths, MFL & Science

PGCE Post Compulsory Education

MSc Educational Leadership and Management

MA Learning and Teaching

MRes in Education

Professional:

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Thank you for your support and we hope to see you next year



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