

Socio-Legal NEWSLETTER

No 49



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIO-LEGAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION

SUMMER 2006

SLSA 2005-06: BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS

In the last 12 months the SLSA has run another successful conference, awarded grants and prizes to promote socio-legal research and scholarship and supported students via free membership and bursaries. And that's just the start. In the next five pages, we bring all the latest news from the SLSA and highlight future plans.

- annual conferences
- prizes – 2006 winners and 2007 call
- small grants – 2005-06 summaries and 2006-07 call
- sponsorship for students
- changes to Executive Committee
- one-day conferences
- update on electronic directory and website redesign

SLSA Executive Committee membership

At this year's AGM at Stirling University, three members left the executive committee and six joined. We would like to thank **Paddy Hillyard**, **Tom Mullen** and **Lisa Webley** for giving their time and energy over the past few years and wish them well in their future enterprises. We would like to welcome **Dave Cowan**, **Dermot Feenan** and **Simon Halliday** and also the team from Kent who are organising next year's conference: **Helen Carr**, **Donald McGillivray** and **Susan Millns**. Contact details for all Executive Committee members are on page 2.

SLSA ANNUAL CONFERENCES

Stirling 2006 . . .

Many thanks to **Nicole Busby** and her team at Stirling for organising a very enjoyable and successful conference this year.

Kent 2007 . . .

Next year's SLSA annual conference is at Kent University, at the Canterbury campus. The dates are now confirmed as **3-5 April**. This is the Tuesday to Thursday just before the Easter weekend so members planning to attend would be well advised to **book early**, especially with regards to their travel arrangements.

Plans for the conference are progressing well and include a day-trip to France on Thursday afternoon for those intending to stay on for an extra day or so. The conference website is not yet active, but members will be emailed as soon as it goes up. In the meantime, please direct any queries to the conference organisers (see p 2). Detailed information about the structuring of the conference sessions will appear in the next newsletter.

and Manchester 2008

We are delighted to announce that the University of Manchester will be hosting the SLSA 2008 annual conference at their city-centre campus. More details will be announced in due course.

HART BOOK PRIZES AND SLSA ARTICLE PRIZE

Book prize judges' comments

This was an exceptionally strong year, demonstrating the health of socio-legal studies and, in the end, we decided that the book prize should be shared by two very different books, both of which have made substantial advances in their respective fields and to socio-legal studies more broadly.

Alan Norrie's *Law and the Beautiful Soul* is an important book which crosses a breathtakingly diverse terrain, co-locating socio-legal, critical legal, ethical and historical studies around common themes of contradictory identities in legal discourse and the nature of legal critique. It is a beautifully written book, which also demonstrates the author's own journey.

Katja Franko Aas' *Sentencing in the Age of Information: From Faust to Macintosh* is a clear, well-written book, offering a fresh and interesting perspective on the relationship between sentencing and information systems. The judges were impressed by its carefully crafted and sustained focus, wide-ranging discussion and perceptivity.

Lee Marshall's *Bootlegging: Romanticism and copyright in the music industry* is an outstanding book, in what was generally a strong field. We were particularly impressed by the book's capacity to tell an interesting and original story, the strength and energy displayed in the never-flagging interpretive and analytical agenda that wove the material together and made sense of it, and by the confident engagement of *Bootlegging's* author with an array of other writers in the field. **Fiona Cowrie**

Book Prizes

Main prize

Katja Franko Aas, Institute of Criminology and Sociology of Law, University of Oslo for *Sentencing in the Age of Information: from Faust to Macintosh* (2005) Glasshouse Press

Alan Norrie, School of Law, King's College, University of London for *Law and the Beautiful Soul* (2005) Glasshouse Press

Book Prize for Early Career Academics

Lee Marshall, Department of Sociology, University of Bristol for *Bootlegging: Romanticism and copyright in the music industry* (2005) Sage

SLSA Article Prize

Helen Carr, Law School, University of Kent for 'Someone to watch over me: making supported housing work' (2005) *Social and Legal Studies* 387-408.

See page 3 for details of this year's book and article prize rules and closing date.

Student bursaries available for British-German socio-legal workshop

A number of bursaries are available for PhD students who wish to present a paper at the First British-German Socio-Legal Workshop on Law, Politics and Justice at Keele University, 9-11 November 2006. Please contact Bettina Lange for details. **e b.lange@law.keele.ac.uk**

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SLSA website and directory

The SLSA website is currently undergoing an extensive redesign and restructuring. This also includes the process of integrating the directory into the website in its new electronic format. Members will be contacted via the email network over the summer with news on developments.

 www.slsa.ac.uk

. . people

COLIN SCOTT has moved to the Chair in EU Regulation and Governance at the School of Law, UCD Dublin. e colin.scott@ucd.ie

RICHARD COLLIER (Newcastle Law School, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne) has been awarded the 2006-07 British Academy Thank-offering to Britain Fellowship in the British Academy/Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowship competition (Jan 07-Jan 08). Richard will be a Visiting Fellow at the Socio-Legal Research Centre, Griffith Law School, Australia during November 2006 working on a project on Fathers' Rights, Law Reform and Masculinities. He has also recently secured funding for this research from the British Academy. He presented the plenary address to the European Law Faculties Association Annual Conference, Leuven, Belgium in February 2006 (entitled 'Why Research Legal Education?: Reshaping the (legal) academy - Reflections on the UK Experience').

TREVOR BUCK (University of Leicester) has been appointed Professor of Law at De Montfort University. He will take up his appointment from 1 September 2006.


JULIAN WEBB has moved from Westminster University to Warwick to become Professor of Legal Education and Director at the UK Centre for Legal Education.

At Kent, **PROFESSOR ROSEMARY HUNTER** will be joining Kent Law School from 1 August 2006; **PROFESSOR SALLY SHELDON** from Keele will be moving to Kent starting on 1 October 2006; and **SIMONE WONG** has been promoted to senior lecturer.

DANIEL MONK, SLSA treasurer, has been promoted to Senior Lecturer in the Law School at Birkbeck.

On 11 April 2006 **JOHN GRIFFITHS** delivered his final public lecture as Professor of Sociology of Law at the University of Groningen, a post he had held since 1977. In recent years, his research and writing has focused in particular on the legal regulation of socially problematic medical behaviour (such as euthanasia). In the coming years he expects to remain actively involved in such research as an emeritus professor in (supervision of) research in that area.

Professor Griffiths' final lecture was entitled, 'How I became a sociologist of law and what I did once I was one (an essay in Whig autobiography)'. The lecture describes the life of an academic as a succession of accidental turns of fate which, in retrospect, can be seen as necessary steps in the direction of a particular profession and approach to scholarship: birth into an academic family; a more or less accidental choice to study philosophy; a similarly accidental choice to study law at the Yale Law School at a time when the confrontation between legal realism and the legal philosophy of Ronald Dworkin was getting under way; two years assisting US Supreme Court Justice Fortas who took legal realism all too literally; an appointment at the Yale Law School in a period of social and political turmoil and intellectual excitement and of renewed interest in the 'interdisciplinary' study of law (the late 1960s); two years at the Law Faculty of the University of Ghana where legal pluralism and the inadequacy of Weber's sociology of law

were tangible features of daily life; autodidactic metamorphosis into a sociologist of law during several years at the Law School of New York University; and finally in 1977 appointment to the new Chair in Sociology of Law at the University of Groningen. Scientific convictions (for example, that the ultimate objective of an empirical social science is explanatory theory), strategic choices (for example, for a micro-level approach) and the most important subjects of research and theory (legal pluralism, conflict processes, and the social working of legal rules) reflect the influence of intellectual experiences that long precede commitment to an academic life as a sociologist of law. The lecture will be published shortly. A fairly complete bibliography of Griffiths' (electronically accessible) writings is to be found at:  www.rug.nl/bibliotheek/catalogibestanden/elekpubrug/keur/2_griffiths_.

One-day conferences

The SLSA Executive Committee would like to receive proposals from members for one-day conferences. If you have an idea for a conference you should contact a member of the SLSA Executive Committee and they will be able to advise you on how to proceed. One-day conferences are expected to be self-funding, but if the SLSA decides to support your event then it guarantees to underwrite the cost. You are also able to advertise the day as an SLSA one-day conference and are able to use the newsletter, website, bulletin board and email network for this purpose.

SLSA-HART SOCIO-LEGAL BOOK AND ARTICLE PRIZES

As the SLSA-Hart prizes go from strength to strength, don't miss this year's deadline to put forward your nominations: Monday 27 November 2006.

Rules

The Executive Committee of the SLSA wishes to receive nominations for three annual prizes.

- **the Hart Socio-Legal Book Prize**
a book prize, open to all, for the most outstanding piece of socio-legal scholarship published in the 12 months preceding the closing date for nominations
- **the Socio-Legal Article Prize**
an article prize, open to all, for the most outstanding piece of socio-legal scholarship published in the 12 months preceding the closing date for nominations
- **the Hart Socio-Legal Prize for Early Career Academics**
a prize for the best book, published in the 12 months preceding the closing date for nominations, emerging from a previously awarded PhD, MPhil, LLB or MA

The aim of the prizes is to celebrate and promote the work of socio-legal academics. The winners of the prizes are traditionally announced at the dinner during the SLSA annual conference. The value of the prizes will be: for the Hart Socio-Legal Book Prize, £250; for the SLSA Article Prize, £100; and, for the Hart Socio-Legal Early Career Prize, £250. On previous occasions, the judges have sometimes exercised the power to divide the whole sum equally between the winners. The rules governing the prizes are as follows.

- 1 Nominations for each of the prizes can be accepted from any one member of the SLSA, including the author(s) of the nominated publications. Nominations are also welcome from publishers provided a statement is enclosed indicating that the author has consented to the nomination (see Rule 9, below).
- 2 The Hart Socio-Legal Book Prize and the Socio-Legal Article Prize are open to all academics. For the Hart Socio-Legal Prize for Early Career Academics (a prize for the best book emerging from a PhD, MPhil, LLB or MA and published in the 12 months preceding the closing date for nominations) authors nominated must be early career academics. By this we mean lecturers in the 'old' university sector; lecturers and senior lecturers in the 'new' university sector; research fellows, research associates, and research assistants in both sectors; and postgraduate students. All books submitted by early career academics under this scheme will automatically also be considered for the Hart Socio-Legal Book Prize.
- 3 Nominations must be accompanied by two copies of the publication being nominated.
- 4 All book nominations MUST include a clear statement indicating which of the book prizes (the Hart Book Prize / the Prize for Early Career Academics) the work should be considered for. Any nomination which does not include this information will ONLY be considered for the Hart Book Prize.
- 5 The winners of the three competitions will be determined by an SLSA sub-committee, which will include at least one external expert co-opted to the sub-committee for this purpose.
- 6 The SLSA seeks to encourage both single-authored and collaborative work. Jointly-authored work may be

submitted for any of the prizes. However, in the case of collaboration between an early career academic, as defined in Rule 2, and a co-author who is not an early career academic, a book will only be considered for the Hart Socio-Legal Book Prize. There is to be no restriction on the number of co-authors permitted.

- 7 Individual book chapters are eligible for the article prize. Edited collections are not eligible for the other prizes.
- 8 In relation to the Socio-Legal Article Prize only one submission may be made by any one individual.
- 9 Eligibility for nomination will be determined, if appropriate, by academic status at the time of publication, not at time of nomination.
- 10 Books and articles by eligible authors will be considered provided that: (i) they have been published within the 12 months preceding the closing date for nominations; and (ii) they have not been nominated in an earlier SLSA prize competition.
- 11 The nomination must include (i) a statement of the month and year in which the book/article was published; (ii) a statement showing that the author has consented to the nomination.
- 12 The prizes will be awarded to the successful candidates at the SLSA's annual conference, and details of the winners will be published in the SLSA newsletter.
- 13 Works by members of the SLSA Executive Committee are not eligible for nomination for any of the above prizes.

The closing date for this prize is the last Monday in November each year. This year's closing date is **Monday 27 November 2006**. If you have any queries about these prizes you should contact Fiona Cownie. [e f.cownie@hull.ac.uk](mailto:f.cownie@hull.ac.uk)

SLSA SMALL GRANTS 2006-07

*The next round of SLSA small grants is now underway. If you've been considering applying for one, then now is the time to take the plunge. For advice on how to put together a successful application see John Flood's article in SLN 45:1** SLSA members interested in applying for a small grant are reminded that the deadline is **31 October** each year. In 2004, the Executive Committee increased the amount available for awards to £8000 – up to a maximum of £1500 per individual grant – to encourage socio-legal research initiatives in practical ways.

The Research Grants Committee takes into consideration: the coherence and costing of the proposal and the applicant's likely contribution to socio-legal scholarship, including anticipated publications or enhancement of the prospect of future research grants from other grant-making bodies. Funding will not normally be provided for conference attendance or to subsidise postgraduate course fees. Funding will not be provided via this scheme for one-day conferences or for seminar series. Feedback will be given to unsuccessful applicants. No member will receive more than one grant per year. Executive Committee members are not eligible for the scheme.

Examples of small grant reports and summaries are now available on the SLSA website. Go to www.slsa.ac.uk/prizes&grants and follow the link. If you have any queries about this scheme, please contact Tony Bradney. [e a.bradney@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:a.bradney@sheffield.ac.uk)

*Available at www.slsa.ac.uk/newsletter

SMALL GRANT SUMMARIES

Here, this year's successful applicants give details of their research projects. They will report their progress in spring 2007.

Cohabitation

Simone Wong, Kent Law School

The SLSA small grant will be used towards holding a workshop at Kent Law School on 2 September 2006 for the purposes of bringing together academics carrying out socio-legal research on home-sharing relationships. The workshop will have space for 20 delegates including eight invited speakers. Delegates will be invited from other academic institutions (and other disciplines) in the UK as well as relevant statutory bodies and lobbying groups.

The aim of the workshop is to enable the group to consider and discuss the Law Commission's Consultation Paper on Cohabitation which was published on 31 May 2006, and the implications of the commission's proposals for cohabitants (opposite and same sex), both legal and fiscal, with a view to drafting proposals for a group response to the Consultation Paper. Some of the key research questions which the 2006 workshop will be concerned with are:

- whether the marriage model for domestic relations is being stretched in an unsuitable way;
- whether the proposals address the reality of contemporary patterns in cohabitation and other domestic relationships;
- whether the remit of the Law Commission Paper (limited to couple-based cohabitation) is too narrow;
- the extent to which the proposals may have a differential impact (and a possible detrimental impact) on cohabitation relationships.

The workshop will also provide an opportunity for the group to consider other major funding applications which may be made to develop further networking. Papers presented at the workshop may also provide for conference presentations by participants for a fuller discussion of the issues as well as submission as journal articles for publication. [e s.w.y.wong@kent.ac.uk](mailto:s.w.y.wong@kent.ac.uk)

The champion of children's rights?: Children's ombudspersons' powers to enforce children's rights

Brian Gran, Case Western Reserve University

Neither public nor private, children's ombudspersons are characterised as independent institutions endowed with legal powers to protect children and enforce their rights. 'Law', including legislation and legal offices, is sometimes employed to mend public-private gaps in social policies. Public and private authorities provide a wide variety of social policy programs and services, but often gaps appear where individuals do not receive benefits, services, or protections. Children are vulnerable to falling into public-private gaps in social policies. For instance, a child's welfare is usually the responsibility of his or her parent, but when a parent fails, who is responsible? Most people would answer the public sector, but this answer is incorrect in many countries. In response

to these gaps, some governments have established children's ombudspersons' offices. This project compares children's ombudspersons from across the world, with a focus on the four UK children's commissioners. I am studying the legal powers children's ombudspersons possess, their independence and decisions to use those powers, and their impacts on mending public-private gaps in social policies. Data for the study are archival evidence, legislation and interviews with public and private actors, including children's ombudspersons. An important scientific advance the proposed research will make is examining how law is used to mend public-private, social policy gaps facing children – asking why children's ombudspersons mend some public-private gaps and not others. This research will have a broad impact through its contribution to law and policy making, especially laws affecting children's welfare and interests. Journal articles and a book manuscript will be published from this research.

Role of national human rights institutions at the international level: lessons from Africa

Rachel Murray, University of Bristol

National human rights institutions (NHRI) are organisations established in particular countries by constitution or statute with promotional and protective mandates on human rights. These institutions often carry out a variety of functions at the national level including advising on legislation and policy, education and awareness-raising, case work and litigation. Many of the institutions also operate at the international level and there is an increasing recognition of the importance of using this arena in their work. However, given the fact that the independence of some of these NHRIs has been questioned, many people are concerned that giving them some status at the international level will simply be giving another voice to governments. As a result, many of the Treaty and Charter bodies under the UN are only starting to consider what formal recognition should be given to NHRIs. In order to facilitate their participation at the international level, NHRIs have created an International Coordinating Committee and institutions meet regularly at UN and regional fora. In Africa, NHRIs meet regularly and have created a secretariat of

African Human Rights Commissions. They have attended meetings of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. Despite this activity at the international and regional level, however, very little has been written on this issue.

This research looks specifically at NHRIs in Africa and how they have worked through the regional conferences, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and what role they play at the UN.

While some information can be obtained from UN and other official documents and secondary literature, funding has been provided to enable a more comprehensive collection of such material by attending the Secretariat of the African National Institutions in South Africa and by speaking to personnel there. In addition, given that many African NHRI attended the UN Human Rights Commission session in March/April 2006, funding also enabled attendance at the session to speak to these organisations, to the NI Unit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and personnel in UN Treaty and Charter body mechanisms.

The intended output is a book entitled *The Role of National Institutions on Human Rights at the International Level: Lessons from African Institutions*, to be published by Hart Publishing.

Prosecutors and end-of-life decisions: legal theory and legal practice

Richard Huxtable, University of Bristol
 Legal theory maintains that euthanasia, assisted suicide and related practices will not be tolerated, yet examination of the law in action suggests that in reality the situation is far from straightforward. Prosecutions of health professionals are rare, despite evidence that such practices occur, whilst laypersons who have allegedly engaged in 'mercy killing' are more likely to find themselves in the dock. However, even in these latter cases, a murder conviction is highly unlikely, despite rhetoric to the contrary. There is also confusion over the (il)legality of such practices as 'death tourism', where a seriously ill person is helped to travel to another jurisdiction in order to be assisted in their suicide; whether or not the travel companion has committed a crime in this jurisdiction remains open to question.

Against this backdrop, funding has been granted in order to begin to explore

the attitudes and policies of Crown Prosecutors in relation to such contested cases. Where they arise, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) requires 'mercy killing' cases to be referred to the Chief Crown Prosecutor (CCP), or a designated representative, in each of the 42 regional offices. The intention is to conduct interviews with a small sample of CCPs, before issuing a postal questionnaire that will be designed to gauge attitudes and seek to identify policies related to scenarios, which will be based on real legal and/or clinical cases. The research questions include: Which (in)activities that will or might end a patient's life are prima facie criminal? How far will or might the identity/status of the individual influence the decision to prosecute? And how far are the law as stated and as applied in this context consonant with one another? In addition to constituting a freestanding piece of research, it is hoped that the study will also amount to a pilot project for a larger investigation of practices and attitudes in this context.

Public interest immunity: the relationship between bureaucratic and legal norms

Maureen Spencer, Middlesex University
 Behind the assertion of public interest immunity claims, government and state officials have frequently denied parties to trial proceedings access to information and thus arguably also to justice. How far has the development of the doctrine been determined by bureaucratic interests? This research examines the archival background to the leading cases in this area from 1942–68. It applies Weber's analysis of the rational-legal state bureaucracy to an understanding of the origin and growth of public interest immunity. The research will attempt to address the extent to which the rise of civil service professionalism with its concomitant emphasis on secrecy and confidentiality affected an intermingling of bureaucratic and public interests. In particular, I will examine the content of claims made on grounds of national security where extensive judicial restraint has historically been shown in questioning the assertions of the administration. Research I have already conducted has revealed that civil service lawyers were motivated to make a claim of national security in *Duncan v Cammell Laird* [1942] AC 624 largely by considerations of litigation management (see M Spencer, 'Bureaucracy, national security and access to justice' (2004)

Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly 55(3): 277). It is generally accepted that civil servants' perceptions of the need for confidentiality as a necessary ingredient of good administration affected the development of the doctrine of public interest immunity but my study will subject this to empirical analysis by a detailed examination of departmental and Cabinet papers and by an examination of private papers including those of Lord Simon, Lord Chancellor, 1941–45, who gave the leading speech in *Duncan v Cammell Laird*. The influence of that landmark judgment in other jurisdictions, including that of the United States will also be examined. The investigation will compare the private observations of ministers and their officials with the version of events accepted by the judges and endorsed in the Law Reports which are usually taken as the basis for academic discussion of the doctrine. These will provide material with which to assess possible contradictions and connections between the roles of the judiciary and the civil servants as social actors in determining the shape of the immunity. By using archival as well as legal sources the research will contribute to the intellectual, social and political history of a doctrine which has assumed even greater importance today in the light of the heightened tensions on national security. The intended outcome is a monograph on the history of public interest immunity.

Structures of professional firms

Daniel Muzio and James Faulconbridge, Lancaster University

This project seeks to advance, through new empirical research, our understanding of management and organisation in large law firms. This has recently become particularly topical; especially in connection with the development of an increasingly sizeable body of literature on the professional service firm (PSF) and on the implications that these raise for the development of professionalism as a distinct work-organisation principal. However, the existing literature with its propensity for neat models has neglected the intricacies and varieties of professional firms. Furthermore, existing work tends to emphasise dramatic change within professional contexts and this might underestimate substantial areas of continuity as well as the robustness of professional values, ideals and practices. Finally and, perhaps most importantly, little is explicitly said with regards to the working conditions and personal experiences associated with these new modes of professional organisation and operation. In other words, accounts of professional change and organisation are too often disconnected from the realities of legal work and from the lives of individual solicitors.

In this context we seek to contribute to this important research topic through the in-depth empirical analysis of the multiple organisational forms, management strategies and working cultures that characterise large law firms in England and Wales. Our efforts will be supported by the recourse and combination of two distinct methodological approaches. Initially, secondary data sources (primarily *The Lawyer Annual Surveys*) will be used to elaborate a typology of large law firms. Secondly, representative firms from each category will be selected as case studies. These will be further investigated through a programme of in-depth semi-structured interviews covering the full range of professionals (senior partners, salaried partners, associates and trainees) with each firm. This will help us in turn to clarify some of the gaps in the literature on professional service firms and their organisation whilst at the same time giving prominence to the voices of individual professionals and their lived experiences.

THE EUROPEAN GROUP: MARGINAL TO WHAT?

In his extensive and post-Onati conference discussion 'Towards a European sociology of law' (SLN 47:1, 4-6) David Nelken comments that it would be regrettable should such a project be compromised by reproducing the 'somewhat artificial split between the recently founded European Society for Criminology and the more critical but somewhat marginalised European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control'. In this personal comment, Phil Scraton reflects on his association with the European Group, soon to hold its 34th Annual Conference.

It is a beautiful May Saturday in Padova 2006. The patio doors along the length of the recently refurbished lecture theatre are open, the scent of early summer flowers occasionally wafts across the room. I teach four sessions over eight hours to postgraduates drawn mainly from Northern Italy, although there are also students from Greece, Argentina and Colombia. Each year I come to Italy's second-oldest university to give seminars on critical criminological theory derived in my primary research. However intense the discussions, however punctuated by Ilaria's unhesitating translation and however exhausted at the day's end, it is always an exciting and privileged experience. It encapsulates precisely why I was first drawn to academic work. And, like so many other opportunities, it began with the European Group.

Its full title, the somewhat curious and long-winded European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control, masks its radical edge. As a young lecturer at the Open University I was intrigued by the stacks of bound European Group Working Papers occupying every inch of floor space in Martin Loney's study. He enthused relentlessly about the group to anyone who would listen. Finally, in 1984 I went to Cardiff, now occasionally referred to as the 'left realist' conference. While British members disputed the appropriateness or otherwise of the 'left idealist' label, those outside the debate – geographically and politically – looked on in astonishment. The sometimes acrimonious exchanges seemed a sideshow. For this was the height of the 1984-85 coal dispute and Thatcher's all-out attack on the unions, following on from the sinking of the Belgrano and the deaths of 10 hunger strikers in the H Blocks. The New Right's authoritarian grip was exemplified by the continuing increase in the powers of the police and security services and the expansion of European prisons accompanied by a parallel diminution in political accountability.

Never before had I attended an academic conference alongside striking workers and their families. Sessions were packed, the atmosphere electric and much of the broader European analysis has since proved prophetic. Yet the most moving moment came on the final evening. We were guests of the miners at a welfare club high in the South Wales valleys. Following passionate speeches from miners' leaders and Women Against Pit Closures and the full emotion of a male voice choir, Beppe Mosconi and Bill Rolston sang songs of struggle from Italy and Ireland. I have not missed a conference since.

It was with a wry smile that I read David Nelken's brief reference to the European Group in his important article on the possible agenda for a European sociology of law. There is no 'split' between the group and the relatively recent European Society for Criminology. From the outset it was clear that the society had a different agenda and so it has progressed. Unfortunately, our conferences have occasionally clashed in time and place. David's comment that the European Group is 'somewhat marginalised' is not particularly controversial but raises the question: 'marginal' to what? To administrative

criminology? To mainstream academic discourses? To the British Society of Criminology or the European Society for Criminology? To the priorities of government departments, funding agencies or publishers? To the UK Research Assessment Exercise? If the answers are affirmative then perhaps all is well. For it is precisely to challenge the 'mainstream' that the European Group was established. Fast approaching its 34th annual conference it remains true to its roots. While some might caricature the group as 'old-fashioned', as 'reductionist', as representing the 'State' and its institutions as monolithic rather than multi-layered and complex, three decades of conferences and a mass of publications reveal the naiveté of such comments.

Back in Padova the postgraduates are engaged in a sharp discussion around the complexity of political institutions and the overarching reach of structural relations. With contributions from Latin America and Southern Europe the exchange focuses on Sivanandan's conceptualisation of globalism. It is clear that while accepting the inherent diversity of power in interpersonal, social and societal relations, power relations – within international structures of production, within contemporary patriarchies and within the internalised dynamics of neo-colonialism – remain central to contextual critical analysis. Later that evening conversations range from the political and economic marginalisation of the diverse immigrant communities in Via Anelli, on the edge of affluent Padova, to the expansive scandals in Italian soccer now enveloping politicians and the Vatican. It is inconceivable to attempt to make sense of these issues without foregrounding analysis of structural relations.

The Padovans' primary research in communities and prisons on difficult and contentious issues is carried out on a shoestring yet it provides an essential alternative to the state-sponsored evaluation studies passing as research. It demonstrates commitment to alternative discourses, yet not without personal risk or professional consequences. It typifies the marginalisation of critical analysis by established academic interests that serve and service advanced democratic states and their institutions. If such work is to be categorised marginal, it should be with regard to the politics of marginalisation directed against its critical priorities and its political implications. For it is from such challenging research that 'troubling recognitions', so well identified by Stan Cohen in *States of Denial*, emerge.

In his account of the evolution of the National Deviancy Conference, Stan Cohen (1981:240-1) comments that the its 'most notable institutional achievement' was its role in the creation of the European Group which had 'become a force in bringing together like-minded sociologists and activists in Western Europe'. The group's founders were committed to connecting academic research and community-based activism, resisting the pre-eminence of 'conservative, positivist and functionalist orientations within criminology' and their translation into state policy and institutional practice. It was resistance to what Nils Christie (1994:58), himself a founding member, later named 'useful knowledge': useful only to state institutions and their managers. Utility, in this context, erodes the capacity and opportunity for 'critical thinking'. The European Group, initially focusing on the structural relations of class, political economy and state power, expanded its reach to 'overcome other national, linguistic, ethnic, sexual and gender barriers in an effort to develop a critical, emancipatory and innovative criminology, particularly in research and dissemination' (see www.europeangroup.org/history).

In September 2005 the 33rd annual conference came to Queen's University, Belfast. It was the group's third visit to Ireland, each typifying a direct connection to local events. The 1981 Derry Conference, 'The Politics of Internal Security', was held in the context of the ongoing hunger strikes. The 1995 Crossmaglen Conference reflected the moment of the ceasefires and the optimism of the Peace Process despite presentations

constantly being interrupted by military helicopters coming and going to the adjacent army barracks. Ten years on the 2005 Belfast Conference, 'Crime, Justice and Transition', explored the significance of transition in understanding definitions of 'crime' and 'justice', political constructions of criminalisation and ideologies of 'other'. It provided an opportunity to consider the theoretical and political imperatives of transition focusing particularly on crime and criminalisation, criminal justice and punishment, and social justice and human rights. While the timing had particular significance for Ireland, the aim was to broaden the debate, theoretically and politically, around 'transition'.

The 2005 conference was gripped by a powerful and dignified opening address from Geraldine Finucane. Her husband, Pat Finucane, was murdered in their home on 12 February 1989 by two Loyalist gunmen operating in collusion with the British State. He was shot 14 times in front of Geraldine and their three children. Pat Finucane was a prominent and principled lawyer who had worked to challenge the injustices suffered by many Republicans, including representation of those on hunger strike. A month before he was murdered a Home Office Minister in the Thatcher Government, Douglas Hogg, stated in Parliament that there was 'a number of solicitors who are unduly sympathetic to the cause of the IRA'. The Loyalist organisation that claimed responsibility for the murder alleged that Pat Finucane was an officer in the Provisional IRA – an allegation denied by the police.

What eventually emerged was the involvement by police, military and security services in Pat Finucane's murder, in protecting the killers, in initiating a cover-up and in undermining investigations. Persistent demands and campaigns for a full independent inquiry into state collusion in several killings, including that of Pat Finucane and of human rights lawyer Rosemary Nelson in March 1999, led to Canadian Judge Peter Cory recommending public inquiries in each case. In September 2004 the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland stated that the 'Government is determined that where there are allegations of collusion the truth should emerge'. The Finucane family expressed profound concern regarding proposed restrictions on the 'public' nature of an inquiry. A UK Government official told the Human Rights Commission in Geneva that a 'large proportion' of the inquiry 'would probably have to be held in private'. Geraldine Finucane has remained at the forefront of the campaign to access the truth of her husband's murder and the cover-up that followed. Her talk covered the long sequence of events and argued there should be no hierarchy of death, that her family's case is not one in isolation.

Other plenary sessions were also significant. They included comparative analyses of 'societies in transition' and the 'implications of transition for criminology'. Returning to the local theme, Bill Rolston introduced the 'current political situation' in the North of Ireland. The panel included Danny Morrison, former Sinn Fein publicity director, David Ervine, of the Progressive Unionist Party with close links to the Ulster Volunteer Force, and Margaret Ward, author of *Unmanageable Revolutionaries: Women and Irish Nationalism*. Again, this proved to be a momentous and moving session. It was followed by an afternoon visit to the Loyalist Shankill community and to Republican West Belfast where Laurence McKeown's film on the hunger strikes, *H3*, was shown. (Full conference papers, including Geraldine Finucane's opening address are at www.europeangroup.org.)

The 2006 conference, 'The Regulation of Migration, Asylum and Movement in the "New Europe"', will be held at the University of the Peloponnese, Corinth (31 August–3 September). It will consider the regulatory responses to the movement and surveillance of people throughout Europe in the context of the 'war on terror'. As the European Union is going through unprecedented expansion, other key events, such as the

assassination of the film director Van Gogh in the Netherlands and the uprisings in Paris suburbs, have reignited controversies over immigration policies and models of integration within Europe. This expansion has revived theoretical and political debates about immigration, state borders and sovereignty.

It promises to be another engaging conference, a forum where established academics, community activists and new researchers present alongside each other, where reputations are irrelevant and where postgraduates and others developing new work have space and opportunity to meet and share ideas. On numerous occasions we have been virtually bankrupt yet the European Group has survived and the British/Irish section now holds an annual Easter conference. Whatever the frustrations we share over the group's somewhat erratic communication, precarious finances and uncertain future venues the collaborations, support, exchanges and friendships have had a lasting significance for the many participants, occasional or regular. In terms of research, publication, teaching and campaigns the European Group has made a marked and lasting contribution.

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Articles

- The judge as 'political advisor': behind the scenes at the national industrial relations court – M Spencer and J Spencer
 The Climbié inquiry: context and critique – J Masson
 Strategizing for the future through the Civil Partnership Act – L Glennon
 'An unfortunate coincidence': Jews and Jewishness in twentieth-century English judicial discourse – D Herman
 The Aliens Act 1905 and the immigration dilemma – H Wray

Book reviews

- J Rehman: *Islamic State Practices, International Law and the Threat from Terrorism: A critique of the 'clash of civilisations' in the new world order* – U Khaliq

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Articles

- Ranking of UK law journals: an analysis of the Research Assessment Exercise 2001: submissions and results – G Little, K Campbell and A Goodacre
 Regulation and social solidarity – T Prosser
 Waiting for Enron: the unstable equilibrium of UK auditor independence regulation – D Kershaw
 Prosecuting 'gross' medical negligence: manslaughter, discretion and the Crown Prosecution Service – O Quick
 The deep colonising practices of the Australian Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody – E Marchetti

Book reviews

- S Deakin and F Wilkinson: *The Law of the Labour Market: Industrialization, employment, and legal evolution* – B Simpson
 N MacCormick: *Rhetoric and the rule of law* – S Veitch
 T Mathiesen: *Silently Silenced* – J Feest
 M Kohnman: *Bodies of Difference: Experiences of disability and institutional advocacy in the making of modern China* – M Stein
 M Nussbaum: *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, nationality, species membership* – L Johnson

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE: SOME WORK IN PROGRESS

Avrom Sherr and Simon Thomson of the University of London's Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) are working on an assessment exercise which will ultimately test the quality of all legal aid suppliers in England and Wales. It is a process of peer review, in which practising lawyers – working within the same specialist areas as the suppliers – evaluate closed case files and assign grades for quality according to prescribed criteria.

This note explains the process and the ways in which the data generated by peer reviewers have been used to evaluate the competence of the suppliers of legal services under review; the competence of the peer reviewers themselves, to ensure that the reviews are of a consistently high quality; and issues of professional competence which are beginning to arise out of the overall results.

In recent years, ballooning legal aid expenditure has made reform a more pressing political issue; between 1997 and 2004 the overall cost of legal aid grew from around £1.5bn to over £2bn.¹ However, the cost rises throughout this period were not uniform, so while the criminal legal aid spend increased by 37 per cent, legal aid expenditure on civil and family matters (excluding asylum) was, in fact, down 24 per cent.² These and other worries have prompted the government to start looking at ways to reform the whole system of legal aid.

As the agency responsible for the allocation of legal aid funding, the Legal Services Commission (LSC) was eager to establish an efficient and effective means for evaluating the quality of suppliers' advice. But gauging the quality of legal work is difficult; the exclusivity and opacity of lawyer-client relationships coupled with the strength of the legal profession have traditionally made efficient and effective evaluation all but impossible.

Recent changes, however, mean that it is now more possible to audit the performance of legal service providers. The possibility for carrying out such research comes about because of a confluence of circumstances, including a statutory instrument passed to enable researchers to look at confidential lawyers' files; a new system for organising publicly-funded legal aid work called 'contracting'; the undermining of professional confidentiality and privilege; the dependency of lawyers on legal aid funding; and, perhaps most significantly, the development of a new methodology for auditing the competence of legal professionals. That methodology, also developed at the IALS, is peer review. IALS acts as an impartial third party, managing the implementation of the system and monitoring its progress. Development of the peer review methodology, as it applied to the evaluation of legal practice, was part of the research into the Civil Contracting Pilots, published in *Quality and Cost - Final report on the contracting of civil, non-family advice and assistance pilot*.³

Currently, for a peer review, a random sample of 25 is selected from a supplier's closed case files. Using standard criteria and a rating system developed with IALS, the peer reviewer examines the files, rating them individually, before assigning a rating for overall quality for the supplier. The rating for the overall quality would ordinarily be the rough average of the ratings given the individual files the peer reviewer had examined; however, the peer reviewers are given some latitude. This means, for example, that one or two appalling mistakes

might result in an otherwise good supplier receiving a bad rating for overall quality. Likewise, one or two spectacular successes may elevate an otherwise good supplier to the heights of greatness. The criteria are designed to highlight the quality of the *information* gained from the client and other sources, the *advice* given based on that information, and the *actions* taken following that advice.

From the project's inception, IALS has been involved in the selection of peer reviewers, and in their training and monitoring. This is an ongoing process, which involves occasional training exercises, scrutiny of peer reviewers' reports, the production of guidance notes, and review meetings. The objective has been to select 'peers' who are operating at the same level as other legal-aid practitioners. Because of their professional experience, peer reviewers know the political landscape of legal aid and are aware of current issues in public funding. They, too, want to complain about the lack of funding and the pressure in legal aid work, but also to show that, in spite of these difficulties, their colleagues are doing a good job. Perhaps most importantly, we are beginning to learn that peer reviewers can differentiate between work which is bad, work which is good and work which is excellent.

The peer review process assigns ratings for the quality of the supplier's advice and legal work, on a scale from 1–5. The LSC expects all suppliers to be in the range 1–3. Those rated 4–5 will be ineligible for future legal aid work unless, on re-examination, they can satisfy the LSC that they can provide work of sufficient quality. The ratings are as follows:

- (1) excellence;
- (2) competence plus;
- (3) threshold competence;
- (4) below competence;
- (5) failure in performance.

To qualify as a peer reviewer a practitioner must receive a peer review rating of 'excellence' or 'competence plus'.

Inter-reviewer consistency has been monitored in a number of ways. A proportion of the files from suppliers are cross-reviewed by a second reviewer. If there are any serious discrepancies between the ratings the two reviewers have awarded the files, IALS will probe further to find out why. It is understood that if a peer reviewer's work consistently and significantly varies from that of their colleagues they will be removed from the peer review panel.

All results and data are gathered from the peer reviewers by the LSC. These are entered into spreadsheets and sent to IALS for evaluation. IALS has developed methodologies based on these data to supplement the cross-rating tests and be more certain of the consistency of rating between peer reviewers, and is now piloting a quantitative test for not only inter-reviewer consistency, but the self-consistency of peer reviewers as well. This will ensure that, while in exceptional circumstances peer reviewers will have the flexibility to award better or worse overall ratings to suppliers, in most cases the overall ratings will be reflective of the quality of files reviewed.

The quantitative analysis is based on two sets of figures that are generated for every peer reviewer:

- the mean of the ratings for overall quality given to all the suppliers they have reviewed (mean supplier rating or MSR); and
- the mean of the ratings given for all the individual files they have reviewed in those suppliers (mean file rating or MFR).

Inter-reviewer consistency is monitored by comparing a peer reviewer's MSR with the mean MSR of all peer reviewers. Peer reviewers' mean ratings for overall quality have a more or less

normal distribution, so the work of those in the top or bottom 10 per cent is given special attention. These quantitative measures are merely indicative and once the particulars have been taken into consideration, outliers are oftentimes found to be quite in order. Nevertheless, this does provide a useful mechanism for identifying peer reviewers who may be experiencing difficulties in order to assist them and rectify any problems that may have occurred as a result.

There is also a quantitative test for peer reviewers' self-consistency. A peer reviewer's MSR is subtracted from their MFR to find their 'difference'. This number can be positive or negative, depending on whether the peer reviewer characteristically gave providers better or worse ratings for overall quality than the file ratings suggested they should: the bigger the difference (positive or negative), the bigger the disparity between the ratings for overall quality and the ratings they gave the files.

In a large sample of peer reviews, the difference between the MSR and the MFR should be small. If there is a pronounced difference, this may be evidence of a concentration of providers with a few exceptionally good or exceptionally bad files warranting the awarding of overall grades that are not representative of most of the files reviewed. Alternatively, this could reflect the failure of the peer reviewer to maintain consistency between the more 'objective' review of case files and their impression of a provider's overall quality as represented in the provider grade. In other words, a major difference between MSR and MFR for any specific peer reviewer would seem to show a 'bias' upwards or downwards in their ratings for overall quality that are not merited or deserved by the file ratings. Although one would expect a peer reviewer sometimes to go above or below the MFR for particular providers' ratings for overall quality, one would not expect a peer reviewer consistently to go in one direction most of the time.

Difference is also usually distributed so, once again, it is possible to identify the top and bottom 10 per cent and carry out a more qualitative investigation to determine why their results diverge so substantially from those of the other peer reviewers.

The peer review methodology provides a simple test for whether or not suppliers are improving – if proportionally more suppliers are getting better ratings for overall quality – but it now has a rough indicator of improvement in the consistency of peer reviewers as well. The consistency mechanisms will always identify the top and bottom 10 per cent of peer reviewers, but by looking at the size of the standard deviations for each test it will be possible to identify whether the peer reviewers are becoming more or less consistent over time. IALS is pleased to report that preliminary examinations of the data suggest that the standard deviations are indeed shrinking, suggesting greater consistency, both between peer reviewers – and within them.

More interestingly, for the first time the details of the work of practitioners can be analysed in terms of their quality and effects on a random basis over a wide range of providers and lawyers. This should provide some wonderful data in the long run.

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Use of the Welsh language in the courts

Catrin Eflur Huws, lecturer in law at the Centre for Welsh Legal Affairs, University of Wales Aberystwyth recently completed her doctoral thesis: an empirical study into the use of the Welsh language in the courts in the 21st century.

The project involved an empirical study of bilingual policy and practice within the legal system in Wales and featured participation by the courts, the police, the National Probation Service, CAF/CASS, the Witness Service, Victim Support, the Crown Prosecution Service, private firms of solicitors and court users. Its aim was to consider how the right to use the Welsh language in legal proceedings developed during the 20th century and to evaluate whether the current legislation in the form of the Welsh Language Act 1993 has succeeded in its objective of placing the Welsh and English languages on a basis of equality.

The research findings indicate that the use of the Welsh language in legal proceedings has increased during the 20 years since a similar study was conducted. In addition, Welsh is often used on a different and more ad hoc basis than is envisaged by the legislation. Nevertheless, barriers and restrictions continue to affect linguistic choices in a legal setting, including the inherent weaknesses of the legislation, the policies and practices of legal bilingualism and aspects such as linguistic identity, language status and linguistic empowerment.

An article in Welsh entitled 'Deddf yr Iaith Gymraeg: sail cydraddoldeb ynteu sail i adeiladu arni?' ['The Welsh Language Act 1993 – a foundation of equality or a foundation to build upon?'] and based on the research for the thesis is due to appear in the forthcoming edition of the *Wales Journal of Law and Policy*. This thesis was supervised by Ann Sherlock of the University of Wales Aberystwyth and Professor Anne Barlow of the University of Exeter. For further information about this research project, please email e.trh@aber.ac.uk

Social and Legal Studies 15(3)

The Ordeal of St Sepulchre's: a middle-class campaign against organized prostitution in early nineteenth-century London – T Simpson

Setting 'em-up: personal, familial and institutional grooming in the sexual abuse of children – A-M McAlinden

Homophobic violence, cultural essentialism and gentrified sexual identities – S Tomsen

Cross-cultural brokering in the legal, institutional and normative domains: inter-cultural mediators managing immigration in Catalonia – J Agusti-Panareda

Other inhumane acts: forced marriage, girl soldiers and the Special Court of Sierra Leone – A Park

I'm not one of those women's libber-type people but . . . gender class and professional power within the third branch of the English legal profession – A Francis

Social and Legal Studies 15(4)

Genetic fathers and families: an exploration of the impact of the growing social and legal importance of genetic fathers in Britain – C Donovan

'Dogs are "registered", people shouldn't be': legal consciousness and lesbian and gay rights – A Warwick

Unicorn among the cedars: on the possibility of effective smart regulation of a globalised industry – M Bloor

Poets, revolutionaries and shoemakers: law and the construction of national identity in central Europe during the long nineteenth century – I Pogany

Legal systems and globalisation

Amanda Perry-Kessaris, senior lecturer at Birkbeck School of Law, has been awarded a Leverhulme Research Fellowship to pursue a project entitled Law and Investor-State-Civil Society Relations. The project aims to deepen our understanding of the relationships between legal systems (laws and institutions) and 'globalisation' through the example of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the south Indian state of Karnataka. Foreign investors, states and civil society regularly interact as part of the globalisation process. However, they share little in the way of objectives, perceptions and expectations. Those who share little in common are unlikely to develop relationships of trust. Trust is important because it facilitates productive interactions. In the absence of trust, productive interactions can be facilitated by legal systems. But legal systems may themselves be ineffective. This project will examine when, why and how investors, the state and civil society use, abuse or avoid the Indian legal system as a mediator of their relationships. Drawing on Roger Cotterrell's law-and-community approach, foreign investors and representatives of government and civil society will be considered as actors within a Karnatakan investment community – an 'instrumental' network of relationships arising as a consequence of foreign investment.¹ Karnataka's legal system will be considered as a potential mediator of relations among this community of actors. Communities are secured by bonds of mutual interpersonal trust.² But these bonds may be strained or broken, particularly by the geographical and moral distances that characterise global economic relationships such as FDI. In the absence of trust, legal systems can act as a 'communal . . . resource', providing the 'cement' to support communities, or at least productive community-like relations.³ Is this the case in Karnataka? Why or why not? What are the wider implications – social, governance, economic – for the actors? The results of this project will be published as *Global Business, Local Law: The Indian legal system as a mediator of investor-state-civil society relation* (2007) Ashgate.

Amanda Perry-Kessaris

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JLS special issue

The *Journal of Law and Society* invites expressions of interest concerning the guest editorship of the JLS Special Issue (spring 2008). Readers are invited to contact the editor with their proposal. Send a list of authors, agreed and yet to be confirmed, and working titles of each contribution. Prepare one page explaining the purpose and range of the collection. The issue is normally around 75,000 words, inclusive of footnotes and carries between 8 to 10 papers. The deadline for completed copy is November 2007. The issue will also appear as a book published by Blackwell, Oxford. A decision on the 2008 publication will be taken in September 2006 thereby allowing the editor one year to produce the copy. The Special Issue for 2007 is entitled 'Democracy's empire: sovereignty, war and the constitution of legal order' and edited by Stewart Motha (Kent Law School). Contact Philip Thomas, JLS Editor: Cardiff Law School, Cardiff University, Cardiff CF10 3XJ e thomaspa@cardiff.ac.uk.

Access to water

Bronwen Morgan benefited from an SLSA small grant in 2003 that provided the seed money for her global comparative research on access to water. She recently submitted the final report to the ESRC who funded the subsequent fieldwork, and the following recent and imminent publications trace the early results of the research: 'Social protest against privatization of water: forging cosmopolitan citizenship?' (in *Sustainable Justice*, Marie-Clair Cordonier Seggier and Justice Weeramantry (eds), Martinus Nijhoff, 2005); 'Turning off the tap, urban water service delivery and the social construction of global administrative law' (*European Journal of International Law* (2006) 17:215–47); 'Technocratic and convivial accountability' (in *Public Accountability*, Michael Dowdle (ed), Cambridge University Press, 2006); 'Emerging global water welfarism: access to water, unruly consumers and transnational governance' (in *Consumer Cultures, Global Perspectives*, Frank Trentmann and John Brewer (eds), Berg Press, 2006).

News from the Law Commission

Cohabitation law consultation

The Law Commission published its consultation paper *Cohabitation: The financial consequences of relationship breakdown* (Law Com Consultation Paper No 179) on 31 May. The paper, available at www.lawcom.gov.uk, is open for consultation until 30 September 2006. In response to this the SLSA has funded a one-day workshop on cohabitation at Kent University on Saturday 2 September 2006 via our small grant scheme. See page 4 for details.

Housing

The Public Law Team at the Law Commission published an Issues Paper on *Housing: Proportionate Dispute Resolution* on 11 April 2006. For this project, the Law School at Kent is hosting the Law Commission's first web-based discussion forum. The forum is primarily for the discussion of housing dispute resolution methods and to share users' experiences of those methods. It is designed to encourage debate and contributions from people whose views are not normally represented in consultation exercises. To contribute see www.kent.ac.uk/forums/lawcommission.

Further to one of the largest consultation exercises ever undertaken by the Law Commission, the *Renting Homes* report was published on 5 May 2006. The Law Commission found that nearly a third of the UK population rents and the current law is archaic, complex and inflexible. The Law Commission is proposing a radical new scheme featuring: identical contracts for council and housing association tenants; improvements to council and housing association tenants' rights; government-approved model contracts to make private renting easier, cheaper and more flexible; compulsory written contracts for all who rent; and a clear and practical legal framework for supported housing. Martin Partington, who has been in charge of the review, said: 'Our recommendations deliver better regulation, giving government new flexibility to provide and deliver social housing. They also make clear the rights and responsibilities of landlords and renters. This is an historic opportunity to deliver a modern legal framework for renting homes.' The recommendations result from one of the largest consultation exercises ever undertaken by the Law Commission: over 70 public events were addressed, and over 400 written responses received to the two consultation papers.

For details of all these projects, see www.lawcom.gov.uk.

The impact of legal services and legal aid

The LSRC's 6th international conference was held with great success at Queen's University Belfast in April. The historic setting saw nearly 100 leading policy makers, researchers, professionals and academics from the legal services field gather together to discuss the 'Transforming lives: the impact of legal services and legal aid'.

The conference, organised in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission and the Scottish Legal Aid Board, provided the opportunity to discuss and promote LSRC work whilst learning from people's experiences in other legal aid jurisdictions. Thirty speakers from around the world presented papers on diverse but highly relevant topics. Pascoe Pleasence, Alexy Buck and Nigel Balmer from the LSRC presented findings from the 2004 English and Welsh Civil and Social Justice Survey. These findings, which were recently published in the second edition of *Causes of Action: Civil law and social justice*, concern the incidence of civil justice problems in England and Wales and the social profiles of those people who are most likely to experience them. It was a unique platform on which findings from similar surveys in Northern Ireland, Canada and America could be compared and contrasted with the LSRC material.

Amanda Finlay, Director of Legal Aid Strategy at the Department of Constitutional Affairs, said of the conference: 'I very much appreciated the opportunity to hear direct from researchers such a wide range of evidence from so many countries on the way in which legal advice and assistance can touch and help people with multiple problems. I was struck by the similarity of experience in so many countries of the snowballing of problems and the way these hit the most vulnerable. I have been feeding back this experience immediately to the new Social Inclusion Steering Group and to colleagues in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit.'

For more information about the conference or the LSRC, please email cate.fisher@legalservices.gov.uk. **Cate Fisher**

Doing law differently

In March, the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor, Lord Falconer unveiled a blueprint for coherent reform of the way law is done. The programme is set out in a document, *Doing Law Differently*, published by the DCA. The programme charts constitutional changes introduced by the department, including recent changes involving the role of the Lord Chancellor as well as plans and proposals for the future. The document also gives outline details of a cross-Government review of the operation of the criminal justice system and, especially, the courts with the aim of making the operation of the courts simpler, speedier and with a more extensive use of summary justice.

This wide-ranging document is divided into five main sections covering: constitutional and judicial reform; re-engineering criminal justice I – courts and the community; re-engineering criminal justice II – speedy, simply, summary; rebalancing legal aid; reshaping legal services. Lord Falconer said: 'The law needs to be done. But the way we do law needs to change. We need to do law - but we need to do law differently. Our maxim for the way we do justice must be: speedy, simply, summary. For instance, people want much speedier justice. They want to see an end to delays in court, with the aim of seeing a crime followed as quickly as possible with it being dealt with by the courts: crime today, court tomorrow. Britain's justice system is one of our country's greatest strengths. We need to sustain our system, but improve and reform it too. That's what the programme of reform set out in *Doing Law Differently* aims to do.' *Doing Law Differently* can be found on the DCA website at: www.dca.gov.uk.

Bristol's MSc in Socio-Legal Studies recognised by ESRC

In February, the ESRC gave its stamp of recognition to the University of Bristol's MSc in Socio-Legal Studies based in the School of Law in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, as well as to the doctoral degree that follows. One of only three generalist programmes in socio-legal studies (as opposed to criminology) recognised nationally, Bristol's programme also received six 'quota' post-graduate 1+3 scholarships over two years from the ESRC, the highest number in the country. The MSc, which accepted students for the first time this academic year, is a unique interdisciplinary taught programme which provides formal research training from both sociology and law departments. The law courses have been tailor-made to cater to students from both law and non-law backgrounds and the core programme is supplemented by an optional course that can be drawn from almost anywhere in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law. The Law School's existing strengths in this area, which include a joint appointee with sociology, have been strengthened by the appointment of three new staff at professorial level this academic year. The programme is now well-placed to support research in both domestic and international comparative settings, in topics as diverse as: family; crime and criminal justice; civil justice; housing; regulation and corporate governance; human rights and social movements; globalisation and development; administrative justice, disputes and disputing; medicine; and gender. Those interested in learning more can find further general information at www.law.bris.ac.uk/research/centres.html and www.law.bris.ac.uk/courses/mscsociolegal.html.

Asylum and Immigration Tribunal in Scotland

Sarah Craig, Maria Fletcher and Kay Goodall at Glasgow University Law School have been awarded a grant of £50,417 by the Nuffield Foundation to fund a project, entitled Reviewing the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) in Scotland – an evaluation of reconsideration applications and onward immigration and asylum appeals. The project will examine how the Court of Session supervises the decisions made by the AIT. The Court of Session has the task of reaching the final decision in immigration and asylum appeals, and the decision must be reached in the knowledge that individuals may face serious human rights violations if returned to their country of origin. But the court's power of review is limited in a number of ways, recognising the need to achieve finality and to discourage abuse of the process.

The specific objectives of the research are:

- to evaluate the ability of the Court of Session to review the 'rightness' of AIT decisions by analysing the new forms of judicial review introduced in 2005 limiting the grounds for appeal to an 'error of law' over a one-year period;
- to draw together views from a range of relevant parties, from appellant to government, and produce a set of indicators taking account of the need for cases to be processed quickly and effectively while offering justice and accessibility to the individual. This will enable others to assess the extent to which the system is meeting the needs of all parties involved;
- to offer a unique Scottish perspective into how the Court of Session reviews decisions made by the UK administered immigration tribunal system and examine any wider issues arising from distinct judicial systems operating together in this area of law.

For more information contact p.aaron@lbs.gla.ac.uk.

Pauline Aaron

Database of PhD dissertations

The Network of European Union Centers of Excellence in the United States (EUCE) is inviting graduate students pursuing a doctoral degree in topics related to the European Union or transatlantic relations to submit their names and dissertation information to a new database of PhD dissertations currently under construction.

The goal of the database is to help doctoral students identify fellow candidates working in similar areas in the United States and anywhere else in the world. To participate, go to the EUCE Network website at www.unc.edu/euce/dissertation.htm and download a short form which can be filled in and returned online.

Bringing together young researchers and innovators across Europe

A date for your diary . . . 26 August 2006 – the inaugural meeting of the European Postgraduate Researchers Working Group will take place at the 2006 European Society of Criminology (ESC) Conference in Tübingen, Germany. The Working Group provides the opportunity for early stage researchers and lead/senior academics to come together and discuss, develop and collaborate on new and innovative criminal justice research at the European level.

As a member of the Working Group you will have the opportunity to present your research; discuss innovative research techniques; ask questions and seek guidance on publishing work, pursuing academic/research careers and applying for research funding. More importantly it will provide you with a forum to network and to set up future research collaborations across Europe. To be part of this first meeting and the development of this new group please contact: Lisa Burns [e l.k.burns@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:l.k.burns@sheffield.ac.uk) t +44 (0)114 222 6859. For more information and to view details of the Working Group go to www.esc-eurocrim.org/workgroups.shtml. We look forward to meeting you there!

Jenny Johnstone

Websites

Law books

Two new websites (under the Auspices of the NYU School of Law) Global Law Books and European Law Books have recently been launched. They will post reviews of books published in the fields of European and regional integration, international law and economics, and the broader field of global economic, regulatory and cultural integration. They hope to reflect the current state of the literature on the European Union, global law and international trade and help identify, clarify and shape some of the current debates in these areas of the law and are inviting potential reviewers to sign up. www.globallawbooks.org www.europeanlawbooks.org

Canadian studies

The British Association of Canadian Studies Legal Studies group has a new website where interested parties can find information about the group and its annual conference. www.lanacs.ac.uk/fass/organisations/canadian/index.htm

Working class drop-out

Recently published on the Joseph Rowntree Foundation website is *Rethinking Working-Class 'Drop-Out' from University*. Based on a range of qualitative methods, this research questions the negative portrayal of students from disadvantaged backgrounds who do not complete their initial university course.

Read or comment on this research at www.jrf.org.uk

. . . books . . .

Family Law, Gender and the State (2006) 2nd edn, Alison Diduck and Felicity Kaganas, Hart £27/€40.50 798pp The second edition of this work on family law, comprising text, cases and materials, provides not only an explication of legal principle but also explores, primarily from a feminist perspective, some of the assumptions about, and constructions of, gender, sexual orientation, class and culture that underlie the law. It examines the ideology of the family and, in particular, the role of the law in contributing to and reproducing that ideology. Structured around the themes of welfare, equality and family privacy, the book aims to offer the benefits of a textbook while also giving students a wide-ranging set of materials for classroom discussion, using the case method to demonstrate how various issues might be resolved. As well as providing a firm grounding in family law, the text sets the law in its social and historical context and encourages a critical approach by students to the subject. It provides an ideal introduction to family law for undergraduates, but will be equally helpful for postgraduate students of family law for whom it provides a challenging set of materials situated within a theoretically rich set of ideas and arguments.

Reorganization and Resistance: Legal professions confront a changing world (2005) William LF Felstiner (ed), £3500/€52.50 368pp This work analyses the ways in which the legal professions of nine countries (England, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Canada, the US, Mexico, Australia and Korea) and one continent (South America) have confronted the internal and external political, economic and social upheavals of the past 20 years. It documents how change and resistance are inextricably tied together in an oppositional tension where the greater weight shifts gradually from one to the other, even shifts backwards at times, but in the long view runs in the direction of change. The most obvious instance almost everywhere is the struggle of women in legal professions where improvement is undeniable even as resistance is varied and stiff. The book charts the way demographic shifts have changed the work of lawyers, the way that the revenue from law practice has been redistributed, and the extent to which barriers based on race, class, religion and gender have shrunk or shifted. It describes how some professions have been forced by government or co-regulation with government to reorganise. It also documents how others have not kept pace with transformations in the economy and changes and challenges to legal education take centre stage while demographic shifts and institutional reorganization are of much less importance.

Housing Law and Policy in Ireland (2006) Padraic Kenna, Clarus Press €49 This book examines housing law and policy in Ireland, within a modern and easily understood framework. Drawing on legislative, jurisprudential, policy and human rights norms, this book presents a clear description of the origin and current status of Irish housing law and policy. Property rights, mortgages, planning, building standards, regulation, State housing supports and subsidies are considered in the context of contemporary housing policy issues. The controversial issues surrounding both rural housing and the growing and newly regulated private rented sector are uncovered and explored. Indirect measures which impact on housing law and policy, such as consumer rights, family and equality law and other developments are analysed alongside the emerging European dimension to all aspects of Irish housing law and policy. This unique work, the first book on housing law and policy for the Irish market, offers a timely and important contribution to this hotly-debated issue. Up-to-date, clear and extensively referenced, it is essential reading for all those interested in housing law and policy in Ireland.

The Age of Consent: Young people, sexuality and citizenship (2005) Matthew Waites, Palgrave Macmillan £55

This book addresses the contentious issue of how children's sexual behaviour should be regulated. The text includes: a unique history of age-of-consent laws in the UK, analysed via contemporary social theory; a global comparative survey of age-of-consent laws and relevant international human rights law; a critical analysis of how protectionist agendas shaped new age-of-consent laws in England and Wales in the Sexual Offences Act 2003; in-depth theoretical discussion of the rationale for age of consent laws; an original proposal to reduce the age of consent to 14 for young people who are less than two years apart in age; responding to contemporary concerns about young people's sexual behaviour, sexual abuse and paedophilia. This book will engage readers in law and socio-legal studies, sociology, history, politics, social policy, youth and childhood studies, and gender and sexuality studies; and professionals and practitioners working with young people.

A Sociology of Jurisprudence (2006) Richard Nobles and David Schiff, Hart £16/€24 264pp This book presents an accessible introduction to Niklas Luhmann's theories and also seeks to explore and develop Luhmann's claim that jurisprudence is part of law's self-description.

Luhmann on Law and Politics: Critical appraisals and applications (2006) Michael King and Chris Thornhill (eds), Hart £35/€52.50 and £22/€33 216pp This collection of essays includes critical and reconstructive contributions by a number of distinguished social theorists, political theorists, legal scholars and empirical sociologists. Together, they provide evidence of Luhmann's extensive and diverse relevance to the issues facing contemporary society.

Costs and Cautionary Tales: Economic insights for the law (2006) Anthony I Ogus, Hart £20/€30 328pp The aim of this book is to provide an overview of how economic analysis can enrich an understanding of law and can provide standards for its critical evaluation.

Landmark Cases in the Law of Restitution (2006) Charles Mitchell and Paul Mitchell (eds) £50/€75 416pp In this collection of essays, a group of leading scholars look back and reappraise some of the landmark cases in the law of restitution. They range from the early 17th century to the mid-20th century, and shed new light on some classic decisions.

Teaching Legal Research, 2nd edn (2006) Peter Clinch, UKCLE £8 The UKCLE's latest publication, Teaching Legal Research, is now available. Written by Peter Clinch (Cardiff University), the book provides guidance and advice on how to develop and run a legal research skills course, with numerous illustrations and examples drawn from practical experience. Order a copy or download the full text from www.ukcle.ac.uk/resources/tr.

Delivering Affordable Housing through Section 106: Outputs and outcomes (2006) Sarah Monk, Tony Crook, Diane Lister, Roland Lovatt, Aoife Ni Luanaigh, Steven Rowley and Christine Whitehead, Joseph Rowntree Foundation This report examines the effectiveness of s 106 planning agreements in delivering affordable homes. As government statements suggest the increasing importance of s 106, this timely research seeks to address current knowledge gaps regarding the outcomes of s 106 planning agreements. Available from www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/details.asp?pubID=789.

Living and working in areas of street sex work: From conflict to coexistence (2006) Jane Pitcher, Rosie Campbell, Phil Hubbard, Maggie O'Neill and Jane Scoular, Joseph Rowntree Foundation In the light of debates about managing the 'street scene', this study looks at whether residents and street sex workers can share residential areas. It reflects on the scope for improving relations through initiatives such as consultation, mediation and awareness raising. Available from: www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/details.asp?pubID=783.

Surviving Domestic Violence: Gender, poverty and agency (2006) Paula Wilcox, Palgrave Macmillan £45

Surviving Domestic Violence follows a group of women on their journeys through and away from abusive relationships. Using a gendered lens, seven influential social dimensions are examined: power, emotion, children, home, economic resource, informal and community support. Struggling with domestic violence and poverty, women actively pursue safety for themselves and their children. A gendered analysis of external structural contexts as well as individual responses reveals the constraints women face in achieving support to gain safety. The book concludes that an overall strategy to decrease domestic violence needs to focus on economic independence for women, enhancing responses towards them and their children not only from formal agencies but also from informal support networks and the wider community.

The Copy/South Dossier (2006) Alan Story, Colin Darch and Debora Halbert (eds), Otterbein College, USA This book covers issues in the economics, politics, and ideology of copyright in the global South. In 50 articles by 11 authors, the dossier critically analyses a wide range of copyright-related issues, including education, culture, economics, and technology, that impact on the daily lives (and future lives) of those who live in the global South. The dossier is being distributed free at www.copysouth.org. Alternatively, contact Copy South at contact@copysouth.org to receive a free copy in the post.

Defamation: Comparative law and practice (2006) Andrew T Kenyon, UCL Press This book investigates defamation law and litigation practice in England, Australia and the United States, combining close legal analysis and extensive empirical research to examine central aspects of defamation law. The book centres on two themes: the treatment of a publication's meaning, and the protection of media speech by privilege defences and constitutional doctrines. What role does a publication's meaning play in defamation? How is media speech protected by qualified privilege in England and Australia and by constitutional rules in the US? How do defamation laws and litigation practices affect the ways in which reputation and free speech are protected in each country? By drawing on substantial research in England, Australia and the US, the book answers these questions and re-evaluates defamation law's most important doctrinal issues. Contents include: defamatory meaning and relevant defences in England and Australia; litigation practices in England, Victoria and New South Wales; qualified privilege: English and Australian law and practice; US defamation law and practice; Lucas-Box and Polly Peck in Australia; comparative defamation law and practice.

The First Women Lawyers: A comparative study of gender, law and the legal professions (2006) Mary Jane Mossman, Hart £30/€45 240pp This is a pioneering study of the lives of the first women to practice as lawyers presenting new evidence of the lives and struggles of these early legal heroines which took place at a time of considerable optimism about progressive societal change.

. . . journals . . .

The journal *Public Law* welcomes submissions from across the whole range of scholarship dealing with constitutional and administrative law, including socio-legal studies, legal theory, doctrinal analysis and comparative law. There are two main sections: articles (up to 9500 words) and shorter analysis pieces (up to 4000 words). The editor is happy to discuss proposed submissions informally. Contact: Professor Andrew Le Sueur a.lesueur@qmul.ac.uk.

Legal Studies has a new editorial team and a new publisher, Blackwell. The editors are Rob Merkin, Jenny Steele and Nick Wikeley and the first issue of 2006 is now available online. Contributors include Robert Bagshaw, Douglas W Vick, Nicholas Hopkins, Emma Laurie and Peter Cumper, **p14**

p 13 ◀ John Keown, Maurice Sunkin and David Nelken. Back issues will be available online soon.
 www.blackwell-synergy.com/loi/lest.

Human Rights & International Legal Discourse, published by Intersentia, is a new peer-reviewed law journal that focuses on the interplay between human rights law and international law. It is designed to encourage the critical study of the increasing influence of human rights law on international legal discourse. In addition to traditional public international law, the journal aims to focus on the interaction of human rights law with specific domains of international law, including international development law, international environmental law, international criminal law, international labour law, and international trade law. The journal places special emphasis on promoting a north-south dialogue. Contact Kim Van der Borgh k.van-der-borghthull.ac.uk.

Regulation & Governance is a new quarterly journal edited by John Braithwaite (ANU), Cary Coglianese (Harvard) and David Levi-Faur (Haifa). It aims to serve as a leading platform for the study of regulation and governance by political scientists, lawyers, sociologists, historians, criminologists, psychologists, anthropologists, economists, and others. Published by Blackwell, the journal seeks to provide a forum for major new research, debate, and refinement of key theories and findings in one of the most important fields of the social sciences. It is committed to open and critical dialogue and encourages scholarly papers from different disciplines, using diverse methodologies, and from any area of regulation. The editors hope to advance discussions between various disciplines about regulation and governance, promote the development of new theoretical and empirical understanding, and serve the growing needs of practitioners for a useful academic reference. For further information, including submission instructions and details of how to become a reviewer, see: www.blackwellpublishing.com/rego.

After an extraordinary 20 years as co-editor of *Law & Policy*, Keith Hawkins, Professor of Law and Society at Oriel College, Oxford, and his co-editor of 10 years, Murray Levine, Professor of Psychology and Law at SUNY Buffalo, will be stepping down. The 2007 incoming editors are Fiona Haines, Department of Criminology, University of Melbourne; Nancy Reichman, Department of Sociology, University of Denver; and Colin Scott, Chair of EU Regulation and Governance, University College Dublin. See www.blackwellpublishing.com/lapo for more information.

The *International Journal of Law in Context* is a new journal from Cambridge University Press. The editors are Michael Feenan and Carrie Menkel-Meadow and the book reviews editor is Alison Diduck. It will be a forum for interdisciplinary legal studies and will offer intellectual space for ground-breaking critical research. It will publish contextual work about law and its relationship with other disciplines including, but not limited to science, literature, humanities, philosophy, sociology, psychology, ethics, history and geography. The aim of the journal is to explore and expand the boundaries of law and legal studies. To read a free online sample copy of the journal and for more information visit: www.journals.cambridge.org/jid_IJC.

. . . and articles

'Vanishing trials: an English perspective' (2006) R Dingwall and E Cloatre, *Journal of Dispute Resolution* reviews recent trends in civil litigation in England and Wales. It highlights that the decrease in numbers of trials illustrated in earlier research has been associated with a decrease in numbers of claims, and discusses how this can be understood in the light of the successive reforms made to the court system.

- **INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE: THE PRACTICE OF FREEDOM: EMANCIPATION THROUGH CLINICAL LEARNING?**

Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London: 12-13 July 2006
 Contact Philip Plowden [e philip.plowden@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:philip.plowden@northumbria.ac.uk).

- **LAW AND LITERATURE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA: PASSAGES - LAW, AESTHETICS, POLITICS - Call**

University of Melbourne: 13-14 July 2006
 A conference committed to critical and theoretical analysis responding to the contemporary political conditions of today.
 Contact Amy Harrington [e law-cmcl@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:law-cmcl@unimelb.edu.au).
www.law.unimelb.edu.au/cmcl

- **MEDEA: MUTATIONS AND PERMUTATIONS OF A MYTH**

Clifton Hill House, Bristol, UK: 17-19 July 2006
 Contact Dr Heike Bartel [e heike.bartel@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:heike.bartel@nottingham.ac.uk) or Dr Anne Simon [e a.simon@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:a.simon@bristol.ac.uk).

- **WHY AND HOW? THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL DIRECTIONS IN LAW, FEMINISM, GENDER AND SEXUALITY**

University of British Columbia: 24-26 August 2006
 Contact Anisa de Jong, Centre Coordinator [† 01227 82 4474](tel:01227824474)
[e centrelgs@kent.ac.uk](mailto:centrelgs@kent.ac.uk) www.kent.ac.uk/clgs/events.html

- **REGIONALISING INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW**

University of Canterbury, Christchurch, NZ: 19-20 August 2006
 The International Law Group of Canterbury University School of Law is pleased to invite the members of the Socio-Legal Studies Association to submit papers. This conference is intended to provide a forum to discuss the necessity, validity and practicality of regional responses to international crime in all its various forms. Keynote speakers: Judge Tuiloma Neroni Slade of the International Criminal Court and Professor William Schabas of the Irish Centre for Human Rights. Further information at www.laws.canterbury.ac.nz/regionalisingicl.

- **SYMPOSIUM: FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY AND THE STATE**

Sussex Law School, University of Sussex: 15 September 2006
 This event is principally by invitation, but there are some unallocated spaces being made available for those who have a keen interest in the subject. If you would like more details please contact Craig Lind [e c.lind@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:c.lind@sussex.ac.uk), Jo Bridgeman [e j.c.bridgeman@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:j.c.bridgeman@sussex.ac.uk) or Heather Keating [e h.m.keating@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:h.m.keating@sussex.ac.uk).

- **CENTENNIAL CONFERENCE ON LEVINAS AND LAW**

McGill University Faculty of Law, Montreal: 17-18 September 2006
 The event challenges leading and emerging scholars of Levinas in multiple disciplines to imagine and apply ethical styles of thinking, engagement, and judgment across the socialscape. With a limited enrolment, working through a round-table format, the conference will pursue the goal of shifting legal academic work on Levinas into high gear, to transform what has been said into a living process of saying. Registration and additional information at www.ccll.mcgill.ca or contact [e ccll@mcgill.ca](mailto:ccll@mcgill.ca) or [e desmond.manderson@mcgill.ca](mailto:desmond.manderson@mcgill.ca).

- **RISK AND REGULATION 2006: 5th ANNUAL RESEARCH STUDENT CONFERENCE**

LSE: 21-22 September 2006
 CARR is organising this conference for students whose research focuses on a topic related to CARR's agenda. It is intended as a forum for intense and constructive discussion and debate between students and is designed to help them improve their research projects. There will also be keynote speeches and master classes led by members of CARR. Apply online at: www.lse.ac.uk/collections/carr.

- **LATIN AMERICAN NETWORK OF LEGAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

Mexico: October 2006
 Bi-annual conference: this network brings together socio-legal scholars and indigenous rights activists. [www http://relaju.alertanet.org/](http://relaju.alertanet.org/)

- **1st ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON EMPIRICAL LEGAL STUDIES**

University of Texas Law School: 27-28 October 2006
 Featuring presentations of original empirical and experimental legal scholarship by leading scholars from diverse fields. It is jointly organised by Cornell Law School, NYU School of Law and the University of Texas Law School. General inquiries: Prof Bernard Black [e bblack@law.utexas.edu](mailto:bblack@law.utexas.edu). Registration: Peggy Brundage [e pbrundage@law.utexas.edu](mailto:pbrundage@law.utexas.edu).

● **1st BRITISH-GERMAN SOCIO-LEGAL WORKSHOP: LAW, POLITICS AND JUSTICE**

Keele University: 9-11 November 2006

This interdisciplinary workshop will provide an opportunity for exploring mutual interests in research, for exchanging ideas and comparative perspectives, and for establishing closer ties between the two socio-legal communities. For more information see:

www.keele.ac.uk/research/lpj/sl_conference. A number of SLSA bursaries are available for PhD students who wish to present a paper at the workshop. For further information please contact Dr Bettina Lange, School of Law, Keele University, Staffordshire ST5 5BG, England, e b.lange@law.keele.ac.uk.

● **GEORGIA (USA) POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE**

Savannah: 16-18 November 2006

Attendees and presenters are welcome from all disciplines worldwide. For information about submitting proposals and past agendas visit

www.gpsanet.org or e gpsa06@georgiasouthern.edu.

● **21st CENTURY SLAVERY: ISSUES AND RESPONSES**

University of Hull: 23-24 November 2006

A two-day international conference organised by the Wilberforce Institute for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation (WISE), at the University of Hull, UK. In 2007, the UK will commemorate the 200th anniversary of the legislation abolishing the slave trade. Legislation in 1834 went further and abolished slavery – or so it was hoped. The reality is that slavery continues to exist in many forms in virtually every part of the world, despite the fact that most countries have signed up to national and international legislation opposing it. Contact Professor Gary Craig e g.craig@hull.ac.uk

● **HUMSEC PROJECT: HUMAN SECURITY - Call**

Ljubljana: 23-25 November 2006

The HUMSEC Project is working towards a better understanding of links between transnational terrorist groups and criminal organisations in the Western Balkans and their role in the peace-building process. The project invites suggestions for presentations in English. Titles of proposed papers, plus 300-word abstracts are invited by 4 September 2006. www.etc-graz.at/cms/index.php?id=403

● **CONFLICTS BETWEEN FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS**

Human Rights Centre, Ghent University: 15-16 December 2006

To identify, examine and analyse the different jurisprudential and legistic techniques and criteria that are used explicitly and implicitly by judges and legislators to deal with conflicts between fundamental rights. Deadline for submission to e eva.brems@ugent.be is 15 July 2006.

● **11th ANNUAL SEMINAR IN FAMILY LAW: YOURS, MINE AND OURS?**

Staffordshire University Law School: 3 February 2007

To include a series of presentations on money, property and children. Contact e p.j.booth@staffs.ac.uk for information.

● **ACCOUNTABILITY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Brussels: 16-17 March 2007

This international conference is designed to explore the manners, mechanisms and fora in which accountability can be realised for violations of human rights committed by, or attributable to, international organizations and their staff. Enquiries should be directed to Prof Eva Brems, Human Rights Centre, Ghent University: e eva.brems@ugent.be.

● **UKCLE EVENTS PROGRAMME 2006-07**

For details see www.ukcle.ac.uk/newsevents/ukcle.html.

- **Toolkit for teaching: 18 September 2006** A seminar for beginning teachers and postgraduate teaching assistants (University of Cambridge)
- **Enhancing learning in law through Web-based technology: 20 September 2006** (Aston University)
- **Effective assessment strategies in law: 20 September 2006** (University of Bradford)
- **Learning in Law Annual Conference: 4-5 January 2007** (University of Warwick)

● **EUROPA INSTITUTE MacCORMICK LECTURES 2006**

Old College, University of Edinburgh

A themed series of lectures in which speakers will address various aspects of the EU constitutional debate. Enquiries to Jo Shaw e jo.shaw@ed.ac.uk or Drew Scott e andrew.scott@ed.ac.uk.

- **28 September:** Professor Neil Walker, European University Institute, 'Europe in constitutional limbo: democratic deficit and sovereignty surplus'
 - **31 October:** Professor Jo Shaw, University of Edinburgh (Inaugural Lecture), 'Citizenship and constitutionalism in the European Union – what role for political rights?'
 - **1 December:** Professor Deirdre Curtin, University of Utrecht, 'Constitutionalism and governance in the EU'
 - **8 December:** Professor Sir Neil MacCormick, 'Reflections on the constitutional future for Europe'
- **BALDY CENTER FOR LAW & SOCIAL POLICY, SUNY BUFFALO, NY: EVENTS**

For information about all these events contact e baldyctr@buffalo.edu or www.law.buffalo.edu/baldycenter.

- **Law, buddhism, and social change: 20-21 September 2006** This conference explores whether law can help to improve society best with strong government and legal intervention or by taking a minimalist approach. Can Tibetan Buddhism guide or help navigate this debate? Run in conjunction with a visit of HH Dalai Lama to the University at Buffalo. Organiser: Rebecca French.
 - **'Absolute convictions': a conversation with author Eyal Press and an exploration of the legal, medical, economic, and religious issues raised by the abortion culture wars: 12-13 October 2006** This conference will re-examine the issues of law, medicine, social movements, religion, and class raised by the legal and social struggles over renewed attempts to overturn the legality of abortion in the United States. Organisers: Lucinda Finley, Martha McCluskey and Athena Mutua.
 - **Interpersonal violence: using qualitative research to test hypotheses: October 2006** This workshop will address the use of qualitative research methods, exploring different approaches to collecting, managing, and analysing the data better to understand court's consumers' experiences with specialised 'problem-solving' courts. Organisers: Catherine Cerulli and Suzanne Tomkins.
 - **'It's my water' – governing the Great Lakes ecosystem: 10-11 November 2006** This binational conference aims to establish an interdisciplinary transboundary working group to address questions of governance reforms and the Great Lakes. Organisers: Barry Boyer and the Baldy Environmental Governance and Stewardship Working Group.
 - **Public health emergencies and legal preparedness: a cross-border challenge: 17 November 2006** This one-day, interdisciplinary symposium will examine aspects of legal preparedness in anticipation of community emergencies caused by a natural disaster, acts of terrorism, or the sudden outbreak of infectious disease. Organisers: Sheila Shulman, Donald Rowe and Thomas Feeley.
- **THEMATICS: A WORKSHOP SERIES**

Birkbeck School of Law

In late 2006-early 2007, Birkbeck Law School will host a series of cross-disciplinary workshops in which themes of salience to the force of law will be broached by invited speakers drawn from across the humanities and social sciences. In particular, this series seeks to foster engagement across a range of scholarly constituencies concerned with 'the international' and what implications these have for theorising about international law and law more generally. Provisional dates and themes proposed for this series are as follows:

- **Secular Theology:** 6 October 2006
- **Sovereignty and Community:** 3 November 2006
- **The Law of the Law:** 1 December 2006
- **Globalisation/la Mondialisation:** 12 January 2007

Queries and expressions of interest may be directed to Richard Joyce e r.joyce@law.bbk.ac.uk. This workshop series is being convened with the support of the AHRC. For more details, see www.bbk.ac.uk/law.confer.shtml.

SLSA conference 2007



KENT
UNIVERSITY OF KENT

3–5 April 2007

For further information visit www.slsa.ac.uk