

Summer 2013

Holdsworth

An annual publication from Birmingham Law School



Professor Damien Waismley, School of Dentistry, May 2013

CEPLER – a year of success

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Also in this issue:



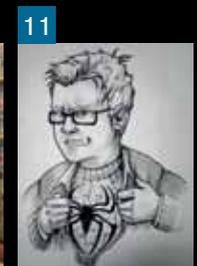
From the Head of School



Taking a different path



Poppy for President



A superhero to his students

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

From the Head of School

It's been another busy year. The current research assessment period (REF) ends at the end of 2013. We need to do well in this, as we did in the last one in 2008, to retain our position as a leading Law School. We will do well because of the huge efforts, particularly in this final lap, made by my colleagues. And the annual National Student Survey (NSS), which measures the quality of our teaching, always looms large. Doing well in this is vital to maintaining our excellent reputation. Balancing the demands of teaching and research is not always easy, but our research-led teaching helps students to get the benefit of our research and teaching often inspires our research. Then there are our new developments: CEPLER, cutting-edge conferences and seminars, and plans for new programmes. All these, and much more, are highlighted in this issue. I hope you find it as interesting to read about as we do to engage in it.



Next year we are able to take the exciting step of delivering Holdsworth electronically. This will reach our international alumni faster and more effectively and, of course, going paperless will help us to do our bit for the environment.

Professor Andrew Sanders, May 2013.

Holdsworth will be delivered electronically in 2014. To ensure that you receive your copy, please check that we have your up-to-date email contact details at www.your.bham.ac.uk. If you wish to receive a paper copy of Holdsworth, please contact Charlotte Heap at c.heap@bham.ac.uk or call 0121 414 2787.

Alumni Impact Fund sends student to G20 Youth Forum

Law student Siu Yin Wong has become the first University of Birmingham student to attend the G20 Youth Forum, supported by the University's Alumni Impact Fund. The G20 Youth Forum provides a platform for delegates from different backgrounds and countries to discuss and exchange ideas.

This year's Youth Forum took place in St. Petersburg in April and was attended by more than 1500 young leaders, students, academics and government representatives. Siu Yin Wong tells us about his experience:

'The opportunity to speak and debate with students from all around the world was an intellectually stimulating experience. I met people from the United States, Japan, Korea, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Africa, United Kingdom and so many other places.

'The topics for discussion included legislation, cultural problems, energy crises, economic developments and international relationship issues. I participated in the law and legislation discussions and conducted a presentation on the topic of judicial independence in Hong Kong.'

This experience encouraged Siu Yin to develop: 'I received some positive feedback but also encountered some really challenging questions which I hadn't considered before.'

As well as debating topics, the Forum included a Silver Ball (themed around Russia's Silver age) which gave delegates a chance to relax and network with influential business people and government officials from around the globe.

On returning to the University, Siu Yin Wong writes, 'I would like to say a huge thank you to the College of Arts and Law and the Alumni Impact Fund for the financial support to attend the G20 Youth Forum. I am really grateful – without this help my trip would not have been as relaxing and fun as it was. I would also like to thank the University for selecting me as its representative at such an important and international event.'

www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving/index.aspx

More Mooting *than ever before*

It was another great year for mooting at Birmingham Law School. CEPLER allowed us to increase the number of moots we held, with thanks to the participation of the local legal community. Next year we will introduce a final year mooting module, assisted by CEPLER, which will form part of participating students' final year assessment.

Lord Dyson, Justice of the Supreme Court and Master of the Rolls, judged the Camm Cup Mooting Final this year, and the winner was 2nd year LLB student Rachel Pavey. The topic of the final was undue influence in contract law. We asked her how she felt:

'I feel very privileged to win the 2013 Camm Cup Mooting Competition. It was an extremely valuable experience to receive feedback from, and be put through my paces by, top practitioners and Lord Dyson. Although it was challenging and nerve-racking, I enjoyed every minute of the competition. As a result I have been inspired to pursue a career at the Bar. I am really looking forward to taking on the role of Mistress of the Moots in the next academic year and encouraging other students to take up mooting.'

We then spoke to Arrin Nouri and asked her to reflect on her year as Mistress of the Moots:

'Mooting is such an important activity for any Law student as it provides a key opportunity to develop advocacy and legal research skills. It has been a pleasure to work alongside Theresa Lynch, Mooting Co-ordinator, to organise competitions and skills sessions this year. I am very proud of the large number of students involved and I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as Mistress of the Moots.'

In our other competitions, Clare Elliott won the Postgraduate Cup and Megan Durnford was victorious in the First Year Cup.



(L-R) Camm Cup Finalists: Victoria Scott, Lord Dyson, Zahra Damji, Rachel Pavey



The year in Holdsworth

This has been another successful year for the Holdsworth Club!

We knew that it was going to be good when more than 250 new members joined at the start of the year, demonstrating the interest and commitment of new students at the School. The Club has continued to attract support from, and maintain links with, the country's top law firms and these partners helped us to put on an array of careers events tailored to our students.

Our annual Christmas trip took a group of students to Rome. We also organised a trip to London to see Mamma Mia and have held many other exciting events with a variety of firms, from Champagne and Chocolate evenings to mock interviews. I think it's fantastic that we continue to hold these wonderful and varied events year on year for our members.

Lecturer Martin George was appointed Deputy Director of The Holdsworth Club this year, working alongside George Applebey. Holdsworth Drama has now become part of the committee structure and will have a representative on the committee as of next year.

We transformed the Clarendon Suites in Edgbaston for our Cirque du Soleil themed Ball, which was another great success. The Holdsworth sports teams have maintained their high standards, participating at intra-league level and also at the Manchester Sports tournament.

The year ended on a high as we had the pleasure of welcoming Justice of the Supreme Court and Master of the Rolls Lord Dyson to the University for the Annual Presidential Address. It was a great opportunity to hear his views and spend some time with such an eminent judge and distinguished lawyer.

Concluding the year, our elections attracted an encouraging amount of support and it is great to be able to hand over the reins to another group of enthusiastic and capable students to maintain our success.

Hannah

Hannah Short
Holdsworth Chair 2012-13



The Holdsworth Committee at the Cirque du Soleil Ball



(L-R) Catriona Seaverns, Katie Harris, Priya Jethwa, Charlotte King, Nitisha Acharya, Lady Dyson, Tom Horton, Lord Dyson, Martin George, George Applebey, Professor Viv Harpwood of Cardiff Law School, Hannah Short, Poppy Wilkinson, Amy Harding, Vanessa Narsingh.

Lord Dyson's Holdsworth Presidential Address

On Friday 15 March 2013 Lord Dyson, Justice of the Supreme Court and Master of the Rolls, delivered this year's Holdsworth Presidential Address on the topic of 'Compensation Culture: Fact or Fantasy?'

Lord Dyson's lecture explored the realities of what the press have termed 'compensation culture' and whether the judiciary is somehow responsible for it.

Discussing the details of famous cases that became tabloid headlines, he stated,

'The damage caused by the perception that we have a compensation culture happens before matters reach the door of the court'.

Lord Dyson concluded that the idea of a compensation culture was mostly a myth.

After the lecture, Lord Dyson had lunch with members of academic staff and the student committee of the Holdsworth Club. He then spent the afternoon judging Birmingham's prestigious Camm Cup Mooting final (see page 2).

Lord Dyson was accompanied by his wife, Jacqueline, a graduate of Birmingham Law School. We profile Lady Dyson on the back cover of this edition of Holdsworth.

Taking a different path

We spoke to four graduates whose law degrees were the springboard for very different careers.



Making Digital Media

Chris Unitt (Law, 2002) was a qualified solicitor who became an expert in digital media while freelancing. He started his own company which was acquired by Made Media where he is now an Account Director.

'The Law School was a fantastic place to study – I had great lecturers and made good friends. Bearing in mind what I do now, it's funny to remember being helped by a friend to sign up for my first email account while I was at the Law School. Most essays were handwritten back then.'

After qualifying for the litigation team of a national firm, Chris found that life as a solicitor didn't suit him.

'I took some excellent advice from my supervising partner who pointed out that I was plenty young enough to do something different. I left the firm and began promoting my freelancing services online. Soon people were asking for my advice on how to promote themselves and that led me into digital media.'

'Now I'm helping to build websites, mobile apps and software products for major theatres and performing arts venues in the UK, USA and Australia. My job is a mixture of sales, project management and training – I talk to clients about what they need to achieve and then come up with solutions with our designers and programmers.'

Chris still benefits from his background in Law: 'I learned a lot of lessons as a solicitor – good habits such as prioritising workloads, managing clients and the need to be adaptable and take creative approaches to problem solving. In my new career it can be tricky to prove your credentials. Being able to throw in the fact that I used to be a qualified solicitor helps – it's usually taken as shorthand for 'not an idiot!'



Building Birmingham's Future

Anthony McCourt (Law, 2004) began his legal career with Wragge and Co in Birmingham, qualifying as a solicitor with ambitions to become a barrister. He was inspired to turn his attentions to property development, however, when working with clients responsible for the iconic Mailbox development in Birmingham.

'I was drawn to the prospect of creating a lasting, tangible difference to the city that I came to love after moving here to study at the Law School. Property development is about more than just building a hotel or a home, it creates jobs, stimulates the economy and changes lives.'

Now developing a mixed use property in the middle of Birmingham City Centre, Anthony remembers his first visit to the city, on Valentine's Day 2001: 'I fell in love with the campus and never looked back. You can't beat Birmingham Law School – it's academically brilliant and there are so many opportunities through the Holdsworth Club. I was even lucky enough to represent the University at an international debating competition in Cape Town.'

Anthony believes that his law background helped him to develop the career that saw him found Court Collaborations and become the youngest ever Birmingham Young Professional of the Year in 2008.

'I realised that I wanted to instruct lawyers rather than be one. In complex development projects, it's so important to be able to break down a problem, analyse the details and see the bigger picture and a law background gives you that and more.'



Going her own way

Award-winning writer, Tasmina Perry (LLB Law, 1990) used her Law degree as inspiration for one of her best-loved novels.

'I remember my graduation so clearly – it was a boiling hot day and we all gathered in front of Old Joe to pose for pictures and say goodbye – we felt as if we could go on and conquer the world,' recalls Tasmina Perry, who went on to do just that, just not in the way she perhaps expected at the time.

Upon leaving Birmingham, Tasmina continued her law studies, qualifying as a solicitor, but it was a gap-year job at Granada Studios Tour, working in their hot dog caravan, that was set to change her path and kick-start an award-winning writing career. 'I hadn't really given journalism much thought but there was an up and coming band who would often come and dance in front of us. One day I approached the friendliest looking member and asked for an interview,' she explains.

It turns out that the band was Take That on the verge of superstardom and Tasmina, after completing her legal training contract, used her exclusive insight into one of the country's favourite boy bands to land a job at *more!* magazine.

Tasmina admits to having always been obsessed with magazines and soon found herself in her dream career, travelling the world and interviewing the stars. Within two years she was editing *more!* and went on to edit other national titles including *Instyle* before landing a book deal in 2005. She is now an eight times Sunday Times bestselling novelist and is proof that you can put your law degree to use in many different ways – Tasmina's sixth novel, *Private Lives*, is set in a scandalous media law firm and she feels that the novel's success was down to the authenticity and legal knowledge that she brought to the book.

'Did I make a false start studying Law? Perhaps, but it's important to try lots of things and find out what you're good at and passionate about. I'm sure I wouldn't have been made an editor so quickly if I hadn't been a qualified solicitor' she concludes.

Where has your life taken you? We would like to hear from you about your life since graduation and hear your recollections about your time on campus. Please send your stories to Charlotte Heap, College Alumni Relations Officer, c.heap@bham.ac.uk or call 0121 414 2787

From Law to Fine Art!

Gillian Holding (Law with French 1981) left her successful career in Law to pursue her dream of becoming an artist.

'I loved my time at Birmingham. I was in the second intake of Law with French students; it was a radical idea in those days to combine Law with another subject and I think we seemed a bit exotic! Unusually, we were taught politics and literature in French to prepare us for our third year of studying French Law at the University of Limoges.

'I lived on the Vale and the walks to campus were a memorable part of everyday life. Campus was, and is, extraordinarily beautiful – when I went back a couple of years ago, I found it quite surreal; familiar yet unrecognisable. All the trees had matured, and new buildings had appeared.'

After graduating, Gillian took the conventional route – moving to London and qualifying with her articles with Linklaters. She then moved to France – making the most of her language skills in their Paris office.

'Living in Paris was brilliant. When I wasn't at work, I was making the most of all the art opportunities there.'

Despite her interest in art, Gillian returned to London in the late 1980s and, after moving to Leeds, became a partner with Booth & Co. (now Addleshaw Goddard). She couldn't shake her desire to be an artist, however, and finally took the plunge in 1999. She emerged a decade later with a first class degree in Fine Art and numerous solo exhibitions and award nominations. For Gillian, this major life change has no regrets.

Holbeck Botanicals No. 5 (2011) Digital drawing and manipulated photo print

'I truly love being an artist. My Law background gave me focus and a discipline to work, to understand the business side of things and adopt a professional drive to a creative career. And of course, my first career really helps me to appreciate the freedom and creativity of my second!'

Keep up with Gillian's career, including her two current solo exhibitions, at www.gillianholding.com which also has links to her blogs.

Academic profile: Antonia Layard, Professor of Law and Geography



Antonia Layard joined Birmingham Law School in August 2012 from Cardiff Law School. A graduate of Oxford, Columbia and LSE, and a qualified (non-practising) solicitor, her research into law and geography explores how law, legality and maps construct cities, places and 'the local'. She is an Economic and Social Research Council Fellow researching *Localism, Law and Governance*.

Welcome, Antonia. Why did you choose to join Birmingham Law School?

I came to Birmingham largely because of Professor Andrew Sanders's vision for the Law School and the many great colleagues in the department. I was encouraged that there are so many women in post here, including at senior levels. I was also reliably informed that the students are great: hard working, fun and often politically engaged.

How are you enjoying it so far?

Very much. It's an attractive campus where you bump into people, which is great for a quick chat. I've made lots of friends and professional colleagues through the Institute for Advanced Studies, an interdisciplinary project that brings academics together. It's great to have that

daily interaction between natural and social scientists, historians, musicians and lawyers.

Law and Geography is an unusual area of study. Can you tell us what it means and how it relates to the more traditional subjects that alumni will have studied?

While 'Law and ...' studies have been around for some time, legal geography is emerging in the UK. I'm not a trained geographer but draw on geographical scholarship to research the legal construction of cities, how they're put together and how people and places are affected, or unaffected, by legal rules and systems of governance. You can draw on any aspect of law to do legal geography but I mainly work in property law and what I've called 'laws of place', planning, compulsory purchase and highways law. The sub-discipline sits neatly within socio-legal studies although I read cases, legislation and (lots of) policy documents so still consider myself to be a 'proper' lawyer.

Tell us about the research and projects that you're currently engaged in?

I've been working on localism and planning lately, researching with storytellers and photographers as well as geographers in communities in Bristol and Birmingham to see how people understand the 'local' and whether these understandings can be captured by conventional legal processes. I'm also very interested in how we understand 'public' property. For example, if land is an asset that belongs to a local authority who can decide to charge a fee to use a 'public' park, or give 250 year leases to multinational property companies for shopping centres, or develop social housing

sites into primarily private apartment blocks, what does 'public' mean in these situations?

My book on *Law, Place & Maps* is nearing completion. It explores how, despite the current emphasis on place-making in towns and cities, each piece of land is first and foremost someone's property. Can we have a 'law of place' that is any different from a 'law of property'? In writing the book I've become quite obsessed with maps: title plans, highway maps and nature reserves, and how they govern space, setting up a different legal regime inside and outside of 'the boundaries'. Like many parents, I first came across the power of these maps when looking at school catchments for my three children. Once you start to realise the work they do, you see maps everywhere.

What are your plans for the future?

I'm introducing a new module, Commercial Property and Regeneration Law, on the LLM. I hope to work with commercial solicitors, planners, developers and policy makers to give a 'real life' account of how commercial and legal processes are used to construct retail, economic and residential urban spaces. We've got some great contacts in the field through CEPLER and we've had very positive feedback about introducing a course like this, especially 'regeneration law', which as far as we know isn't offered anywhere else in the UK.

If you would like to get involved in the commercial property module, contact Charlotte Heap at c.heap@bham.ac.uk



PROFESSIONAL LEGAL
EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Leading the way in Professional Legal Education

www.birmingham.ac.uk/cepler

Birmingham Law School's Centre for Professional Legal Education and Research (CEPLER) has enjoyed a busy and eventful first year, with additional recruits to the CEPLER team, new and expanding initiatives, and the appointment of an esteemed external Steering Group. The CEPLER launch conference in November presented a thoughtful and stimulating programme to a large and diverse audience of legal practitioners and academics.

Leaders in Law

Through the careful stewardship of new Head of Centre, Professor Sonia Harris-Short, CEPLER has forged a supportive partnership with No5 Chambers.

The CEPLER Leaders in Law lecture series was launched in February with two events: a lecture from the prestigious Law Commissioner, Professor David Ormerod and a panel event on 'A Question of Sport and the Law' featuring the

Football Association Head of Governance and Regulation, Darren Bailey (Law, 1990). Future lectures include: Stephen Parish, Chair of Norton Rose; Nazir Afzal OBE, Crown Prosecutor for the North West; Lord Justice Ward; and Lord Justice Rix.

The University was proud to host this year's Criminal Bar Association Spring Conference and CEPLER was able to fund a number of student places, providing a detailed insight into the challenges of life in the Criminal Bar.



Pro Bono activity increases

Under the CEPLER umbrella, Birmingham Free Legal Advice Group (FLAG) has increased its support to the community through additional collaboration with No5 Chambers. Together with long-standing partners, Mills & Reeve, this has enabled FLAG student volunteers to increase the range of cases on which FLAG can assist. This year, FLAG has advised members of the public in more than 40 cases in areas such as: Family and Divorce, Employment, Tenancy and Neighbourhood Disputes, Wills and Probate and Civil Litigation. This has broadened the skills and experience of an unprecedented number of student volunteers:

'An excellent opportunity and by far one of the most beneficial extra-curricular activities that I have undertaken at University.'

Nathan Needham, student on FLAG.



CEPLER and No5 Chambers: (L-R) Professor Michael Whitby, Head of the College of Arts and Law, Professor Paul Bleasdale QC, Professor Sonia Harris Short, Director of CEPLER, Professor David Lock QC, Professor David Eastwood, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham, Professor Ian Dove QC, Professor Andrew Sanders, Head of Birmingham Law School.



'Birmingham FLAG provides trainees at Mills & Reeve with the opportunity to be involved in pro bono work at an early stage in their career and as Chair and Vice-Chair we have had a real say in how the scheme is run and have put many improvements into practice. FLAG provides a chance for trainees to be exposed to responsibility and decision-making processes.

Sometimes there are difficult decisions to make or problems to solve but knowing that an individual in the local community is in need of legal advice is never far from your mind, and seeing letter after letter of advice signed off makes all the hard work worthwhile. These are people who deserve lawyers' expertise just as much as fee-paying clients and we hope that FLAG continues to be able to provide this invaluable service. Being shortlisted for two LawWorks Pro Bono Awards 2013 will give FLAG the recognition it deserves.'

Mills & Reeve

The Pro Bono Lecture Series featured two fascinating and very well-attended presentations from Pete Lowen, Chief Executive of Birmingham Law Centre, and Carrie Sperling, Director of the Arizona Justice Project.

The Street Law group has worked closely with the West Midlands Probation Service, presenting to six groups on the subjects of parental responsibilities and drugs legislation. They also staged a seminar on euthanasia at a local secondary school and are working with the University's Outreach team.

CEPLER Careers

In addition to an extensive careers programme, CEPLER's dedicated office space has facilitated a weekly session drop-in with the Careers Network.

The partnership with No5 Chambers has secured a number of guaranteed internships and CEPLER is working to diversify the Law School's careers provision to include non-commercial legal opportunities.

Alumni-judged Moots boost student experience

Ten of our alumni have lent their time and expertise to judging mooting competitions at the Law School since October. Their generosity enabled more Law School students than ever to benefit from the mooting experience.

Mark Beasley graduated in 1985 and is now a partner at Shakespeares Puttman LLP in Birmingham. He took part in judging a First Year Moot Competition in the autumn term and said 'It was a pleasure to reconnect in a meaningful way with my old Law School and to revisit the delights and challenges of the Moot from the other side of the bench!

'It was great to see the many changes that have taken place and to experience again a vibrant, confident Law School and its latest batch of future lawyers and business leaders.'

Sport and the Law – panel discusses the future for sport in Britain and beyond.

Following the outstanding success of British sport in 2012, CEPLER was delighted to welcome a panel of experts as they discussed the future for sport in Britain and beyond.

As the London2012 legacy plan aims to 'Inspire a Generation', outstanding University of Birmingham alumni joined our leading academics to look at the impact of governance and regulation on Europe's sporting environment. Can anti-doping and equality regulation positively affect participation? Does the continued rise, and communicative freedom, of social media present a danger to sport's reputation?

On Monday 25th February, during the 150th Anniversary of the Football Association, we were delighted to welcome their Head of Governance and Regulation, UoB alumnus Darren Bailey. He was joined by fellow Law alumnus Julz Adeniran, Great Britain and England 110m Hurdler, and Marketing graduate Michelle Leavesley, head of Citidesk Sport Communications. Dr Leon McRae, of Birmingham Law School, and Dr Jonathan Grix of Sport and Exercise Sciences completed the panel which was chaired by James Lee, Director of Careers for CEPLER.

While on campus, Darren Bailey (Law, 1990) also delivered a Law in Practice seminar to students where he discussed his career in sports law from carving a niche for himself in a private practice to devising legal frameworks for Rugby World Cups.

Darren is organising an exclusive internship at the FA for a Law student next year.

Can you help to shape the lawyers of the future?

CEPLER is seeking to expand the number and range of internships and work experience opportunities for students – are you able to offer a high quality Birmingham Law School student some practical experience to support and enhance their studies?

It's a competitive market and while our students already benefit from some fantastic schemes, we're keen to offer a range of different experiences to give them a boost. We're calling on our alumni to offer

experiences within their private practices, chambers and even non-law firms.

Work experience is vital for our emerging future lawyers and leaders. Are you able to offer an opportunity ranging from a short placement to a full summer internship?

Please contact Charlotte Heap, College Alumni Relations Manager, at c.heap@bham.ac.uk or call 0121 414 2787.

Spotlight on research

The Institute of European Law

The highlight of the last 12 months in European Law was our international conference, *Integration or Disintegration: the Future of European Law*. Held last June on the Edgbaston campus, we welcomed nearly 100 scholars and practitioners from 22 countries to discuss the legal ramifications of the recent Eurozone crisis.

Also in June, scheduled to coincide with the conference, was the latest in our annual lecture series. Every year we invite an eminent scholar or practitioner to speak to students and invited guests on a current issue in European law. This year Professor Alan Dashwood, emeritus professor at Cambridge University, spoke on the topic of Judicial Activism and Conferred Powers – Is the Court of Justice of the European Union falling into bad habits? The lecture covered the wider topics of conferral and, therefore, competence of the EU and the role of the Court in determining these crucial issues.

Finally, we would like to thank Nina Slokar Boc who joined the Institute for seven months with us last year as part of the European Commission's Erasmus placement scheme. Nina assisted with several projects of the Institute and provided administrative support and coordination of the abstracts and papers for the July conference. She is now a judicial trainee in the investigation division at the District Court of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Centre for Health Law, Science and Policy

It has been another productive year for the Centre for Health Law, Science and Policy, a research centre based at the Law School.

Professor Marie Fox's co-authored article 'The new politics of male circumcision: HIV/AIDS, health law and social justice', published in the journal *Legal Studies* won the prestigious Society of Legal Scholars article prize for 2012. Similarly newsworthy, and demonstrating how Birmingham research influences the legal world, the Court of Appeal cited Dr Stephen W. Smith's recent book, *End-of-Life Decisions in Medical Care* in March in the case of *Aintree University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust v James & Ors* [2013] EWCA Civ 65 (01 March 2013). The book, published in 2012 by Cambridge University Press, examines the legal and ethical issues that arise at the end of life and identifies ways to regulate decisions and minimise abuses based on ethical principles.

Dr Smith and Director of the Centre, Professor Jean McHale have received funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to run two seminars which will be held in Birmingham in September 2013.

The two events, 'Law and Regulation of New Health Technologies: Religion, Faith, belief and the scientific imperative: reconciling the irreconcilable?' and 'Conscientious Objection' will involve national and international invited speakers and participants from a range of disciplines and interest groups.

The seminars are part of a broader AHRC research network and the David Price Memorial Seminar Series, 'The Influence of Faith and Belief on the Formulation, Content and Operation of Health Law in the United Kingdom'. This seminar series involves events held at the Universities of Birmingham, De Montfort, Leicester, Nottingham and Nottingham Trent throughout 2013.

AHRC funds Legal Epidemiology project

Dr Claire McIvor, senior lecturer at Birmingham Law School, has been awarded a research networking grant from the AHRC for her Legal Epidemiology project.

Epidemiology is a core public health science that looks at determinants of health outcomes in human populations. Using medicine, research methodology and statistics as their key tools, epidemiologists are trained to draw causal inferences from empirical data. Legal Epidemiology refers to the use of epidemiologic methods and evidence to resolve problematic questions of causation in law, most notably within the context of personal injury litigation. The grant will be used to establish an international network of lawyers and scientists committed to working at the interface between law and epidemiology.

The Legal Epidemiology project is a collaborative, interdisciplinary project involving the following key participants: Professor Maurice Zeegers (epidemiologist, Maastricht University), Professor Michael Faure (lawyer, Maastricht University) and Professor Sana Loue (epidemiologist, Case Western University).

The UN Human Rights Council – A critique and early assessment

Routledge published Dr Rosa Freedman's latest book in March, but it was officially launched at an event at the UN Library in Geneva on 28 May, organised by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office jointly with the United Nations. The book examines the creation and formative years of the United Nations Human Rights Council and assesses the extent to which the Council has fulfilled its mandate. Dr Freedman teaches International Human Rights Law at Birmingham and has written for the *Guardian* and the *Huffington Post*.



Dr Rosa Freedman (centre) with Ambassador Karen Pierce (head of UK Mission to Geneva) and Blandine Bluckacz-Louisfert, (Chief, Institutional Memory Section, Library, United Nations)

Law student is next Guild president



Despite her looming final exams, Poppy Wilkinson is surprisingly unruffled and calm as she sips her tea in the Bramall cafe. The Guild of Student's President for 2013–14, Poppy believes her Law pedigree was key to her election success.

Asked how she had juggled campaigning and studying, Poppy laughs 'Like most Law students, I've become expert at managing my time, which made the long hours campaigning much easier! Being analytically-minded, and using the diplomacy skills that my course has taught me, allowed me to deliver a winning manifesto based on increasing the accessibility of the Guild for all students.'

As Treasurer and Secretary of the Holdsworth Society, Poppy talks fondly of the diversity of friends made and experiences gained. Recalling their efforts to get corporate sponsorship, she says, 'Meeting with leading

professionals in law firms in Birmingham and London was fantastic. It certainly boosted my confidence and my faith in my persuasiveness'

On the subject of the election of four female Sabbatical Officers this year, compared to just one in previous years, Poppy is diplomatic but emphatic.

'It is significant because it's such an increase on past years but I think it's important to note that we won because we are the best people for the job.'

After exams, Poppy will focus on delivering on her promise to equip students for life after Birmingham in a challenging climate – with a brief pause for a belated ('Well, apart from a few glasses of wine on election night!') celebration.

'I want to thank my campaign team properly – they're the unsung heroes. Then, it'll be down to work. Student expectations are higher than

ever and it's my job to work with the University as a 'critical friend' to ensure that ours are the best all-round graduates. University is a stepping stone into the real world and it is important that the Guild focuses on what matters on campus – value for money, accommodation, finances...' she pauses and smiles, 'And social relationships too!'

As Poppy finishes her cup of tea and prepares to head off to the library, talk turns to the funeral of former Prime Minister Baroness Thatcher which is splashed over the front pages. Could her ambitions to become a commercial solicitor after the presidency take a back seat to becoming the next female Prime Minister?

'Ask me in a year!' she chuckles, 'Maggie Thatcher said 'Not in my lifetime' but you never know!'

Holdsworth Drama's Pygmalion

In March the Holdsworth Drama Club put on three performances of George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* at the Crescent Theatre, Birmingham. The famous play, in which a Victorian dialect expert wagers that he can teach a London flower girl to speak 'proper' English and thus be taken for a lady, was first performed in 1913 and was the inspiration for the famous Lerner and Loewe musical *My Fair Lady*.

SGH Martineau LLP sponsored the performances but our thespians also raised money and awareness for the production with a series of campus bake sales and entertainment nights at local pubs.

Many staff and students attended and enjoyed the performances, and the team

are planning an even bigger and better production next year.

We spoke to Sarah Lodge, who was responsible for promoting the play:

'Both the cast and committee really enjoyed being part of *Pygmalion* this year and we like to think the bar has been set high for future productions! Being part of the drama group is also a fun way to meet people, and perhaps learn a few new skills – this year's production involved some of us learning to waltz! We are always looking for enthusiastic people to be in the cast or backstage crew and hope that new students will join us for a break from the pressures of legal work. We also hope to see alumni of the Law School and University at our future performances.'





Academic profile: Dr James Treadwell, Lecturer in Criminology

Tell us how you became a criminologist?

Growing up in Birmingham and being familiar with some of its less salubrious settings, criminology was always going to connect better than, say, ancient history. I fell in love with the subject and when I graduated I went to work for NACRO. I played football with young people involved in crime while I did a Master's degree in criminology and this led me into the Probation Service to work with very serious offenders. I then became a lecturer at Birmingham City University and undertook my PhD in criminology.

Can you tell us about your current research project on the 2011 English Riots?

I spent time on the streets watching what happened and talking to those involved in the riots. I knew there would be a lot of discussion afterwards but only one chance to capture the authentic voice of the riots in the moment so that is what I tried to do. There is an article that tells more in the British Journal of Criminology at the moment called 'Shopocalypse now'.

Can you tell us about your work on the English Defence League (EDL)?

I worked as a researcher on the EDL: speaking to the rank and file members when the organisation first came to prominence. Some of their first demonstrations happened in Birmingham and I felt it was important to understand the perceptions of hate crime perpetrators because understanding can help shape criminal justice interventions.

And finally, I understand you're a pretty nifty kickboxer – can you tell us a bit more?

I have been involved in martial arts for years, and I have trained and fought in boxing, kickboxing and Muay Thai (the Thai form of kickboxing) over the years. I plan some academic work drawing on it in the future...

Dr James Treadwell joined Birmingham Law School in January as a lecturer in criminology. He previously worked at the University of Leicester and the Centre for Criminal Justice Policy and Research at Birmingham City University, where he also undertook his doctorate. Before becoming an academic he worked at the crime reduction charity NACRO and is a qualified Probation Officer. The author of the bestselling Sage textbook *Criminology*, James was the academic advisor to the Howard League Commission into Ex-Military Personnel in Prison in 2011 – the first criminologist to undertake empirical research in this field.

You're clearly a local boy, James. Tell us why you joined Birmingham Law School?

I studied in Birmingham while training to be a probation officer in the 1990s, and knew the Law School and its fantastic reputation. I had been to lectures at the School and had always wanted to work at the University. It is a really friendly collegiate place that produces world-leading research, including in my specialism (criminal justice and criminology), so I thought I might fit in.



New LLB Law with Criminology launching

In 2014 Birmingham Law School will be launching a new LLB Law with Criminology programme – a qualifying law degree that will focus on the nature, extent, causes, and control of criminal behaviour in both the individual and in society. The programme will be taught entirely within the Law School and draws upon the significant expertise of our academic staff, including Dr Treadwell, to offer a wide range of specialist modules in criminology.

Head of School's Award for academic superhero

Each year Birmingham Law School invites students to nominate members of staff for the Head of School's Award for Excellence in Teaching or Supporting Student Learning.

The award is intended to reward staff and raise the profile of learning and teaching activity throughout the University. Nominations can be made for anyone in the School who supports student learning. The winner receives £500 as well as the kudos.

The winner of the 2013 award is Martin George, Lecturer in Law at Birmingham Law School and Deputy Director of the Holdsworth Club. Martin is the module leader for Land Law on the undergraduate LLB programme, and Commercial Conflict of Laws on the postgraduate LLM course. Nominations for Martin cited his 'enjoyable, thought-provoking and imaginative lectures', that 'he is genuinely happy to help and cares about his students' success', and 'his use of technology, particularly social media, to promote student interaction and intellectual engagement.' He is described as 'inspiring, quirky and interactive', 'brilliant', and 'a fantastic lecturer whose views and arguments are easy to follow.'



An undergraduate law student, Elen Russell, draws Martin George.

Martin George was delighted to win the award, saying, 'There has never been greater emphasis on the quality of teaching in higher education and investment in the student experience is vital if universities are to flourish in the new funding and fees regimes. The University very much supports members of staff in delivering this. I am privileged to be part of a first-rate Law School which cares deeply about its students.'

The Challenges of Transnational Investigations: international conference

In March the Institute of Judicial Administration at the snow-bound University of Birmingham hosted a conference on the Challenges of Transnational Investigations.

The three-day, invitation-only event was co-funded by the Hercule programme of the European Commission and was filled to capacity. The event facilitated dialogue between academics, practitioners and policy-makers on the challenges to the achievement of criminal justice in cross-border cases.

The rich discussions focused upon topics such as prosecutorial leadership of investigations across borders, the particular challenges of investigating offences against the financial interests of the EU, securing defence rights in transnational proceedings and the challenges of ensuring judicial control of the same.

Discussions were informed by presentations from, amongst others, a Vice-President of Eurojust, the President of the European Criminal Bar Association, the inaugural director of the UK's Serious Organised Crime Agency and academics of the EuroNEEDs study network. The EuroNEEDs study is headed by the IJA's director, Dr Marianne Wade and it provided empirical insights into the need for and the needs of a European (EU) criminal justice system. By utilising the factual rigour provided by the study, the conference was focused on practicable solutions to what are often emotive issues.

Practitioners and other delegates also raised important questions on topics such as the sense of utilising enormous state resources to combat narcotic substances used recreationally but not to fight the multi-million dollar trade in counterfeit medicines, which causes enormous harm to already vulnerable individuals.



Winterbourne after the snow had thawed!

Discussion thus ranged from the very point of criminal justice systems to the role of the EU within them. The international and professional mix of attendees provided a range of very different opinions and produced a fruitful and enlightening experience for all. Held in the University's beautiful Winterbourne estate, this event was Birmingham at its best, despite the crippling winter weather.

Holdsworth meets...

Charlotte Heap meets Lady Dyson, wife of the Master of the Rolls, and a Birmingham Law alumna



Lady Jacqueline Dyson jumped at the opportunity to explore campus again as she accompanied her husband, Justice of the Supreme Court and Master of the Rolls, Lord Dyson to Birmingham Law School for his Holdsworth Club Presidential Address.

As we enjoyed a warm drink on a very cold and windy day, Lady Jacqueline Dyson reminisced about her time studying at Birmingham Law School in the late 1960s.

'It was a wonderful time to be on campus – we worked extremely hard but we used to enjoy all of the things the University had to offer. I lived very close to campus, played badminton at the Monroe Sports Centre regularly and enjoyed many a concert in the Barber Institute.'

Lady Dyson stayed at University House, which is now home to Birmingham Business School, and enjoyed her first year so much that she became Resident's Association president so that she could stay there throughout her studies.

'At the time, University House was unusual – it was one of the first unisex halls of residence in the country. The common areas were great for socialising. Living in such a prime location was great for attending lectures and working in the library as well.'

After graduating in 1969, Lady Dyson pursued an academic career and is a longstanding member of the UCL Law Faculty and the Honorary Secretary to their alumni group the Bentham Association. As we explore the changing campus, including the upgraded Law School facilities and the fantastic Bramall Building, Lady Dyson acknowledged the role that alumni play in shaping the experience of current students.

'A new alumni-supported concert hall is fantastic for students – these projects can only help in attracting the best students to the University but alumni can also give back expertise and knowledge.'

Lady Dyson admits to encouraging her husband to take on the role of Holdsworth Club president. She laughs: 'It's a pleasure to be back to catch up with familiar Law School faces and see my husband deliver his Presidential Address and judge a mooted competition.'

'A lot has changed on campus and in higher education but the traditions of the Holdsworth Club are thriving. It is a great experience for students to interact with high profile alumni and legal professionals.'

Stay in touch!

We always want to hear your news – whether it's a new job, a new programme of study, or perhaps you just got married. If you would like to find out more about volunteering for the Law School, or make suggestions about the content of the newsletter we would love to hear from you.

To stay in touch and receive regular events notifications, please make sure we have your current email address. Join your.bham, the online Birmingham alumni community, at www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni and join 9000+ of your fellow alumni in our LinkedIn group, called 'University of Birmingham Alumni and Friends.'

Learn more

Charlotte Heap
Alumni Relations Manager
College of Arts and Law
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT
Tel: 0121 414 2787
E: c.heap@bham.ac.uk



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