



The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 378, 14 July 2023

Events

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

Black Lives Matter/Anti-racism

Dear Stephen: race and belonging 30 years on

https://assets.website-files.com/61488f992b58e687f1108c7c/64415d79ee634162e3f4b6d1_Stephen%20Lawrence%20ChillCreate%20Presentation%20Look%20%26%20Feel%20Vis3-min.pdf

(Source: email from the Runnymede Trust, 14 Jul 2023)

New report from the Runnymede Trust and the Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation, in which the authors:

“[...] hope to remind one another that the vast majority of people in the UK support the path to racial justice, and that we can and will get there together. We offer this piece of work in that sentiment of hope, and of course in memory and honour of Stephen Lawrence.” [p3]

It includes:

- Trends in social attitudes and young people’s experiences
- Catching up: young people in Eltham in 2023
- Creating futures: classrooms, careers and communities for change.

Climate emergency/the environment – Other Agencies

“Six reasons why I'm calling for a queer climate movement”

https://friendsoftheearth.uk/system-change/six-reasons-why-im-calling-queer-climate-movement?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=climate&utm_content=FY2223-06_lm2306022_june-2023-eneews

(Source: *Friends of the Earth News*, 29 Jun 2023)

Terrific post!

“You might be wondering what on earth LGBTQIA+ liberation has to do with tackling the climate and nature crises. But look beneath the surface and it goes beyond allyship: we’re intimately connected by shared values and goals. Here are 6 reasons why we need a truly queer environmental movement [...]”

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

Young people’s engagements with heritage: tackling inequality & other opportunities for public policy

https://artsconnect.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Young-People-and-Heritage_Final-Report.pdf

Important new report:

“The Institute for Community Research and Development examined seven case studies across England using qualitative research methods. While distinct, each project utilised heritage to address social exclusion, foster social cohesion, enhance health and wellbeing, and improve the lives of young people.” [p ii]

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

Digital exclusion

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5803/ldselect/ldcomm/219/219.pdf>

(Source: *Digital Unite Newsletter*, Jul 2023)

The 3rd Report of Session 2022–23 of the HOL Communications and Digital Committee has just been published.

It urges the Government to “publish a new digital inclusion strategy and establish a new cross-government unit with direct input from Number 10” [p3] and to focus on five key actions:

- Act decisively to help with the cost of living
- Invest in basic skills
- “Boost digital inclusion hubs: there is inadequate support for community-based digital inclusion hubs. Domestic and international evidence suggests place-based inclusion support works. The Government should build on existing examples in the UK, focusing on libraries and other local amenities.” [p4]
- Prioritise competition alongside local benefit – to ensure that smaller providers are not crowded out
- “Future-proof public services: the Government must review the increasing use of predictive machine-learning tools in public services. Digitally excluded groups are likely to be poorly represented in some datasets that inform algorithmic decision-making. They face a growing risk of marginalisation as a result.” [p4]

Older people and ageism issues – Other Agencies

“No country for older people...?”

<https://theageactionalliance.org/2023/07/06/no-country-for-older-people/>

(Source: *Later Life AGEnda*, 10 Jul 2023)

Important brief article about the impact of recent changes (eg the proposed closure of railway ticket offices) on older people.

Neurodiversity issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

“Sensory Toys Success at Harbury Village Library”

https://communitylibrariesnetwork.org/2032-2/?utm_source=Community+Managed+Libraries+National+Peer+Network&utm_campaign=21f7bba273-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_11_11_2022_11_58_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_577d4ece1b-21f7bba273-325855371

(Source: Community Libraries Network *Newsletter*, Jul 2023)

“Harbury Village Library has shared with us their recent success in securing funding from their local WI to purchase a collection of sensory toys to support young library users who are neurodiverse.”

Includes examples of the kinds of toys purchased.

Autism issues – Other Agencies

“‘Dehumanising policies’ leave autistic people struggling to access health, education and housing – new review”

https://theconversation.com/dehumanising-policies-leave-autistic-people-struggling-to-access-health-education-and-housing-new-review-202997?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%2030%202023%20-%202669726951&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%2030%202023%20-%202669726951+CID_8598cae26df30ecd0d1a261133f9eb9f&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Dehumanising%20policies%20leave%20autistic%20people%20struggling%20to%20access%20health%20education%20and%20housing%20%20new%20review

(Source: *The Conversation*, 3 Jul 2023)

“We reviewed the evidence from a range of government and non-government research and reviews to understand how well autistic people fair in relation to government services. We looked at the areas described by William Beveridge, founder of the UK welfare state, as “the five giants”: health, education, employment, poverty and housing. Our findings, which focused on England and Wales due to differences relating to devolution, were bleak [...]

In every area of government services, we found policies that failed to account for known autistic needs. These failures have a cumulative impact throughout life. A lack of accommodations in education leads to less likelihood of securing accessible employment and greater reliance on benefits and social housing.

To improve this, the policy-making process needs to be made accessible to disabled people so that services meet our needs. This could include

ensuring that consultation processes reach out to a broader range of autistic people, and then meet their needs to submit evidence.

It is also important that policy-makers put evidence from the autistic community ahead of evidence provided by non-autistic ‘experts’ who fundamentally misunderstand autism, can have conflicts of interest, and thus can not speak on our behalf.”

Migration issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations: Libraries of Sanctuary

“NAG Public Libraries Project of the Year Grant: Oldham Libraries – ‘Language Barrier Breakers’ project”

<https://nag.org.uk/public-libraries-project-of-the-year-grant/>

(Source: LinkedIn)

“This work will support vulnerable ethnic minority residents to easily access library resources that develop English Language Skills, promote social integration, and support their wellbeing. The project will receive £5000 to enable them to offer a range of bespoke wordplay, conversation, and craft activities for weekly English and support sessions. The money will support the purchase of infrastructure items like tablets and course materials but also offer broader training and awareness for all staff to ensure everyone feels confident approaching the challenge of language barriers.

The project will be presented to other NAG members at an event in 2024 and will be featured in our Members’ journal *Taking Stock* to enable sharing and discussion.”

Migration issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

“75th anniversary of the arrival of the Windrush generation”

<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/75th-anniversary-of-the-arrival-of-the-windrush-generation/>

(Source: MEMO [Minority Ethnic Matters Overview], 795, 26 Jun 2023)

Useful “In Focus” briefing prepared by the HOL Library.

Press release: “Community projects supporting Hong Kongers receives [sic] £2.6m funding”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/community-projects-supporting-hong-kongers-receives-26m-funding>

(Source: MEMO [Minority Ethnic Matters Overview], 796, 3 Jul 2023)

“Organisations who help Hong Kongers coming to live and work in the UK have been awarded £2.6 million by the government today (26 June 2023).

This further year of funding for the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) Welcome Programme for 2023/24 has been allocated to 47 civil society organisations, providing BN(O) visa holders with vital language, employment and mental health support.”

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“A short history of refugees coming to Britain: from Huguenots to Ukrainians”

https://freemovement.org.uk/a-short-history-of-british-bespoke-refugee-schemes/?mc_cid=5a8a71c18e&mc_eid=7d8713d645

(Source: *Free Movement Weekly Newsletter*, 26 Jun 2023)

Useful, brief summary of migrations to the UK.

“How music therapy can help rebuild the lives of refugees”

https://theconversation.com/how-music-therapy-can-help-rebuild-the-lives-of-refugees-205881?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%2027%202023%20-%202664526891&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%2027%202023%20-%202664526891+CID_6be903d9eaa64dd58da04fa54ef77d56&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=How%20music%20therapy%20can%20help%20rebuild%20the%20lives%20of%20refugees

(Source: *The Conversation*, 27 Jun 2023)

Interesting article:

“During the course of my research, I have worked with a range of displaced people, including refugees and asylum-seeking families, focusing on families with children under the age of 3. My studies have shown that people who have had music therapy find it useful and supportive for a number of reasons.”

“Many people think it’s impossible to be LGBTQ+ and religious – this ‘homosecularism’ is dangerous for asylum seekers”

https://theconversation.com/many-people-think-its-impossible-to-be-lgbtq-and-religious-this-homosecularism-is-dangerous-for-asylum-seekers-204570?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%2028%202023%20-%202665926907&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%2028%202023%20-%202665926907+CID_f035d140cc7c1d4f935217349fec9cee&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Many%20people%20think%20its%20impossible%20to%20be%20LGBTQ%20and%20religious%20%20this%20homosecularism%20is%20dangerous%20for%20asylum%20seekers

(Source: *The Conversation*, 28 Jun 2023)

Interesting article that explores some of the assumptions and background:

“Historically, conservative interpretations of various religious doctrines have vilified queer people. At the same time, many LGBTQ+ rights movements have secular roots, and have challenged conservative religious institutions to advance their cause. We are left with the misconception that LGBTQ+ people must necessarily distance themselves from religion.

However, many LGBTQ+ people maintain strong religious faith and convictions, and navigate complex relationships between these identities.”

Rights and risks: migrant labour exploitation in London – research report

<https://youngfoundation.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Rights-and-Risks-Migrant-labour-exploitation-in-London-Final.pdf?x55643>

(Source: *Equally Ours Newsletter*, 29 Jun 2023)

Important new research report:

“The Mayor of London commissioned this research to help inform the development of a strategy to improve access to advice and support for migrant workers experiencing abuse and exploitation in London.” [p8]

“Debunking migration myths: the real reasons people move, and why most migration happens in the global south – podcast”

https://theconversation.com/debunking-migration-myths-the-real-reasons-people-move-and-why-most-migration-happens-in-the-global-south-podcast-208635?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%2029%202023%20-%202668226935&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%2029%202023%20-%202668226935+CID_f9bf5018f1aa554a3b7253cfd72ceaba&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Debunking%20migration%20myths%20the%20real%20reasons%20people%20move%20and%20why%20most%20migration%20happens%20in%20the%20global%20south%20%20podcast

(Source: *The Conversation*, 30 Jun 2023)

“Around the world, borders between countries are getting tougher. Governments are making it more difficult to move, especially for certain groups of vulnerable people. This comes with a message, subtle or not: that people are moving to higher-income countries to take advantage of the welfare system, or the jobs of people already living there [...]

But evidence shows that much of what we think about migration – particularly those of us in Europe, North America and Australia – is wrong. Political narratives, often replicated in the media, shape the conversation and public attitudes toward migration.”

“Should refugees claim asylum in the first safe country they reach?”

https://freemovement.org.uk/are-refugees-obliged-to-claim-asylum-in-the-first-safe-country-they-reach/?utm_source=Free+Movement&utm_campaign=8a28636f25-Asylum+updates&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_792133aa40-8a28636f25-116428530&mc_cid=8a28636f25&mc_eid=7d8713d645

(Source: *Free Movement Refugee and Asylum Update*, 21 Jun 2023)

Important article which begins:

“Over and over again we hear that refugees should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach. There are variations on the theme. Genuine refugees claim asylum in the first safe country. Refugees should or even must claim asylum in the first safe country. The asylum seekers coming to the UK from France are really economic migrants, not refugees, because they didn’t claim asylum in France.”

and concludes:

“So, to sum up, there is no obligation on refugees to claim asylum in the first safe country they reach, although many in fact do. The United Kingdom receives a tiny number of refugees compared to other countries in the EU and beyond. There are multiple reasons why refugees might want to move on from refugee camps or travel to find family members or better prospects. If they do so, and would face a well founded fear of being persecuted in their home country, they are still refugees. There is a system within the EU called the Dublin system under which refugees can be sent back to their point of entry to the EU to have their asylum claims processed there. But the United Kingdom lost access to that system due to Brexit.”

LGBTQ+ issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

A year of hate: anti-drag mobilisation efforts targeting LGBTQ+ people in the UK

<https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Anti-Drag-Mobilisation-Efforts-Targeting-LGBTQ-People-in-the-UK.pdf>

(Source: Left Foot Forward *Right Wing Watch*, 1 Jul 2023)

Important new report from the Institute for Strategic Dialogue:

“Research by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) has found that in the year since June 2022, anti-drag mobilisation in the UK has become a key focus for a variety of groups and actors. Antivaxxers, white nationalist groups, influential conspiracy theorists and ‘child protection’ advocates have at times formed an uneasy – even fractious – coalition of groups opposing all-ages drag events. The driving force behind these protests is a mix of far-right groups and COVID-19 conspiracists.

While public debate about what is appropriate entertainment for children, and at what ages, is absolutely legitimate and deserves fair hearing, the identified tactics used by these actors only serve to undermine that discussion with chilling consequences for free expression, and create fertile ground for a potential uptick in violence. Furthermore, our analysis has found evidence that the UK is importing anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric and strategies from similar movements in the US, with the ‘groomer’ slur – used to frame LGBTQ+ people as a danger to children – becoming commonplace among anti-LGBTQ+ campaigners.” [p4]

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

Broader issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

The Bridge Network (2012-2023): reflections on strategic work with Children and Young People in Education, Culture and the Arts, funded by Arts Council England

<https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/The-Bridge-Network-2012-2023.pdf>

(Source: Cultural Learning Alliance *Newsletter*, 26 Jun 2023)

“The Bridge network was established in 2012 by Arts Council England (ACE) to connect the cultural sector and the education sector so that children and young people had access to great arts and cultural opportunities wherever they live. The network was made up of ten regionally embedded organisations and was co-funded by ACE and the Department for Education (DfE) at the cost of £10 million a year [...]

This new report was commissioned by the ten former Bridge organisations and written by Dr David Parker. It documents the function and evolution of the Bridge role and reviews how the organisations who fulfilled it made it work locally, what legacies might remain, and what stands to be lost if replacements do not emerge.

ACE stopped funding the Bridge network at the end of March 2023. The report acknowledges the implication of this decision being that ‘for the first time in over 40 years, cultural learning has no form of infrastructural support that explicitly recognises the need for linkage between the cultural and education sectors.’”