# Symposia Abstract Book - Main Abstract Book with Submissions and Programme (All Symposia)

Marginalised communities in higher education ( 0470 )

**Contributors:** Jacqueline Priego-Hernández, Lindsey Runell, Lisa Lucas, Neil Harrison

**Chair:** Neil Harrison[1] ,

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**Rationale Text:** Higher education has historically been typified by elite systems, where few members of society had the opportunity to attend by dint of the availability of places, qualification thresholds, discrimination or direct and indirect costs.  Students were disproportionately men from the middle and upper classes, with little or no support to enable disadvantaged groups or individuals to participate.  In many countries, higher education was originally a colonial pursuit, with a small number of universities predominately serving the expatriate European community rather than indigenous peoples. Over the last 20 years or so, the political and academic spotlight has increasingly shifted to focus on which individuals and communities have access to higher education.  This is partly due to concerns about international competitiveness in the 'knowledge age' and partly a result of wider emancipatory movements to address structural inequalities and expand educational opportunities to groups who have been deliberately excluded or whose participation has been curtailed by legal constraints, personal circumstances or socioeconomic privilege. While evocative, the term 'marginalisation' is somewhat slippery.  It brings to mind ideas about pushing to the edges – people who are present, but peripheral and unrecognised.  Marginalised students are in our universities, but they are unlike other students in key ways that compromise their opportunities to engage and thrive in the environment.  Marginalised communities may appear to policymakers, university staff and other students as out-of-step, displaced and even a distraction from the main business.  Mowat (2015, p. 457) argues that marginalisation is more than a state of being, but encompasses 'a sense that one does not belong and, in so doing, to feel that one is neither a valued member of a community and able to make a valuable contribution within that community nor able to access the range of services and/or opportunities open to others.' This symposium emerges from a new addition to the SRHE's book series entitled 'Marginalised Communities in Higher Education: Disadvantage, Mobility and Indigeneity', published in August 2021.  The book comprises twelve substantive chapters drawn from five continents, each exploring the higher education participation of a sociocultural group that is marginalised in one way or another.  Three of the symposium papers exemplify the process of marginalisation and what it means for students' experiences of systems that can seem distant, uncaring or hostile.  The fourth paper presents a new conceptualisation of

marginalisation in higher education, drawing on these and other examples from across the world.

**Linked Submissions:**

| Mon 15:35-15:50

Getting to University: Experiences of Students from Rural Areas in South Africa ( 0625 )

Lisa Lucas[1], Sue Timmis[1], Kibbie Naidoo[2]

[1]University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom [2]University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa

**Research Domain:** Student experiences (SE)

**Paper Abstract:** This paper provides evidence from the ESRC/NRF funded SARiHE (Southern African Rurality in Higher Education) project that investigates how students from rural backgrounds in South Africa negotiate the transition to university. We explore the experiences and challenges of students from rural backgrounds of getting to university, how they learned about higher education, made applications and ultimately gained a place at university. We draw on the work of Holland et al (1998), who framed the idea of transitions between different worlds and trajectories through life worlds and the relationship these have with identity making and agency. The project employed a participatory methodology where students were co-researchers who generated data about their lives and their experiences at university. Findings focus on ideas about the value of higher education, access to information for applying to university, the importance of role models such as teachers, church elders, graduates and family and access to technology.  

| Mon 15:20-15:35

The Collateral Impact of Post-Prison Supervision on College Experiences in the United States ( 0628 )

Lindsey Runell[1]

[1]Kutztown University, Kutztown, The United States of America

**Research Domain:** Higher education policy (HEP)

**Paper Abstract:** In the United States, released prisoners are marginalized, because of their criminal pasts and in spite of their efforts towards crime avoidance. Most face collateral consequences of incarceration which are embedded in social stigmas and reinforced through policies that constrict opportunities for employment, housing and reintegration. Being under community supervision is yet another layer in this conditional liberty status which is imposed upon ex-offenders who have already atoned for their criminal transgressions by serving time in prison. This post-incarceration marginality is a potent, but not insurmountable effect of the American criminal justice system. Participation in

higher education during and after incarceration can increase employability and lower recidivism risks. Less is known about how parolee involvement in college might influence parole officer supervision of formerly incarcerated individuals across campus and community settings. This paper will explore that connection drawing from experiences shared by parolees who took classes at a four-year university.

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| Mon 15:50-16:15

Marginalisation in Higher Education: Proposing a New Conceptual Model ( 0629 )

Neil Harrison[1], Graeme Atherton[2]

[1]*University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom* [2]*University of West London, London, United Kingdom*

**Research Domain:** Student experiences (SE)

**Paper Abstract:** New marginalised communities are constantly emerging to demand fair access to higher education, while new forms and expressions of the <em>process</em> of marginalisation evolve.  It is important to seek broader meaning-making to help us to understand the mechanisms of marginalisation and to better inform policy and practice; if we simply treat every marginalised community as unique and decontextualised, change will be piecemeal, precarious and transient.  This final paper therefore aims to pull together the findings from the preceding three papers &ndash; plus other chapters in the book on which this symposium is based &ndash; as a stepping stone towards proposing a new four-dimensional conceptualisation of marginalisation in higher education: <em>by society</em>, <em>by systems</em>, <em>by time/space</em>, and <em>by relevance</em>.  The paper will also suggest actions that policymakers, university managers and educators might take towards an inclusive future for higher education across the globe.

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| Mon 15:05-15:20

'More Than Just Saving the Government Care Costs': Re-Presenting Student Carers' Narratives in the UK ( 0635 )

Jacqueline Priego-Hernández[1], Debbie Holley[2]

[1]*University of Portsmouth, Portsmouth, United Kingdom* [2]*Bournemouth University, Bournemouth, United Kingdom*

**Research Domain:** Student experiences (SE)

**Paper Abstract:** <p style="text-align:justify">There are over five million unpaid carers in the UK, and it is estimated that around 3% of this population are students. Yet, research with student carers is scant, with studies focusing mainly on the challenges posed by combining caring with studying full-time. This participatory study bridges this knowledge gap by providing evidence of the experiences of student carers through biographic and photography-based methods. By using the conceptual tools of intersectionality and transitions as analytical lenses, it shows that student carers&rsquo; narratives display fluid, involuntary and sometimes painful life transitions, all brought together by caring vis-&agrave;-vis the university experience. Furthermore, caring intersects with manifold social divisions in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, social class and disability. The paper concludes with three policy recommendations derived from the findings.