

YouButey!

The newsletter for all JOMEc staff

The countdown for our departure from Bute to our new home in Central Square is under way! This past week the University splashed the news on its main website, complete with a video featuring an animated flythrough of the different floors put together by the interior designers at IBI. If you haven't seen it yet, please have a click now. It's rather impressive, and promises to be helpful for student recruitment, not least on Open Days, as well as at international events (including those engaging our alumni) and for fund-raising purposes.

<https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/campus-developments/projects/school-of-journalism-media-and-culture>

Our projected student numbers are looking healthy for this September. Several factors appear to be underpinning the marked growth in applications we are experiencing, particularly at PGT level. JOMEc's success in recent league tables is certainly beneficial (QS World University Rankings by Subject places us fourth in Europe and 23rd globally), and we appreciate further efforts from within the College and University – investment in our website, international outreach, targeted publicity, improved alumni relations, etc – are playing important roles too. Admissions have been centralised to a large extent, but we still retain academic oversight, and we are grateful to those academic and PS colleagues keeping a close eye on these matters.

Strategic planning is underway, led by John Jewell, to recalibrate our three BA degrees to further strengthen their external profiles and internal coherence, including enhanced professional dimensions with an eye to employability in rewarding careers. At the same time, we continue to enrich our commitment to complementary areas of provision, especially with regard to the cultural and creative industries, screen-based media, and digital information issues. The latter emphases were agreed as part of our revised business case for expanding

student numbers to support relocation to the city centre.

At PGT level, discussions are underway with the BBC regarding a degree apprenticeship scheme, with Richard Sambrook taking the lead. Moreover, we have secured College approval for two new MA degrees, namely MA in Cultural and Creative Industries (led by Julie Brown) and MA in Digital Documentary (led by Janet Harris). Both are in the final stage of paperwork (responding to review recommendations), with decisions imminent regarding launch dates. For our PGR provision, major changes have been initiated by Stephen Cushion to improve the student experience, progress monitoring and overall completion rate.

As I write, a new workloads committee is under way. Its remit is to administer oversight of everyone's day-to-day responsibilities to ensure an equitable allocation of duties within a culture recognising the importance of achieving a sensible work-life balance. Its membership is Simon, Stephen, Naomi, John, Tim, Jo and Anna. To be candid, we were hoping the new workloads software would help us to gather the necessary information for this process, but instead everyone is asked to ensure they share pertinent details in their PDR paperwork and discussions. In this context, may I also thank Tim and team for all of their hard work putting together JOMEc's case for Athena Swan recognition.

Lastly, we all know it has been a difficult few weeks with the strike action, but I believe we have come through it as a School stronger than ever. My sincere gratitude to everyone for demonstrating the courage of their convictions while, at the same time, recognising differing opinions with mutual respect. It has been a 'teachable moment' for our students, the majority of whom have been remarkably understanding and supportive. Progress is by no means guaranteed, but it would appear we are securing the basis for a much improved way forward.

Thank you, **Stuart**

CONFERENCES

Data Justice Conference

21-22 May, Bute Building

An international conference exploring research on, and practices of, social justice in an age of datafication.

The collection and processing of massive amounts of data has become an increasingly contentious issue. What are the implications for social justice? In what way do initiatives around the globe address questions of data in relation to inequality, discrimination, power and control?

Exclusive interview with Lina Dencik, p2

25 Years of Jurassic Park (1993)

8 June, Bute Building

An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Palaeontological Imagination, co-ordinated by Ross Garner.

Fan Studies Network 2018

29- 30 June, Bute Building

A two-day programme will continue FSN's long-standing tradition of offering an enthusiastic space for interdisciplinary researchers at all career stages to connect, share resources, and further develop their research ideas. See Lucy Bennett for details.

Bruce Lee's Cultural Legacies

12-13 July, Bute Building

The fourth annual martial arts studies conference seeks to explore and assess the impacts, legacies, effects and consequences of the images, ideas, films, programmes, writings, philosophies, choreographies and principles of Bruce Lee, on the 45th anniversary of his death.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bruce-lee-cultural-legacies-tickets-40943754873>

Mapping The Magazine 5

20-23 July, Chicago

The fifth edition of *Mapping The Magazine* will take place at Columbia College, Chicago. The first three editions of the conference, founded by Tim Holmes and Donald Matheson, ran in Cardiff. The fourth (2016) took place in Sydney. Delegates from around the world will discuss the magazine form across multiple disciplines.

JOMEC Diary

- 18 May
Deadline for Athena Swan
Bronze Award submission
- 23 May
Equality & Diversity Committee
13.00 -14.30, rm 0.31
- 24 May
MA Journalism Public
Administration final timed
assignment
- 6 June
Research seminar
Professor Jim McGuigan,
Loughborough University : 'The
Paradox of Neoliberal Culture'
- 15 June
Final final deadline for UG
marks to be entered in SIMS
- 20 June
UG internal exam board
11-12.30, rm 1.20
- 27 June
UG external exam board
11-12.30, rm 1.20
- 27 June
PGT internal exam board
13.00-14.30, rm 0.31
- 4 July
PGT external exam boards
10-11 & 11-12.30, rm 0.31
- 4 July Research seminar
Professor David Ryfe, t.b.c
Brown Bag lunch, 0.05

STOP PRESS

The MA in Magazine Journalism, led by Jane Bentley, has been re-accredited by the Professional Publishers Association (PPA), with a positively glowing report.

Q&A – Lina Dencik

In a significant development for JOMEC, Lina Dencik, Arne Hintz, Joanna Redden and Emiliano Treré will develop the Data Justice Lab. Lina explains their aims

The Data Justice Lab will be examining the relationship between datafication and social justice. What is meant by datafication?

Datafication refers to the trend in which more and more of our social life is digitally mediated and turned into data points that can be collected and analysed by a range of actors, most prominently corporations and governments. This now includes everything from our communication to our friendships to our consumption habits to our tastes, interests and hobbies

With developments in sensors, wearable technology and the Internet of Things, it also increasingly includes our movements, expressions, bodies, homes and cities. Often this data requires computational power to collect and analyse and is done with a view to identify patterns as a way to predict (and shape) future activities and behavior.

Why should we (ie we the people) be concerned about datafication?

Actually the question is not just that people 'should' be concerned about datafication but also that many people are, yet feel they can't do much about it. The key issue with datafication is that it involves some very significant transformations in society that need to be properly understood and discussed. On the most immediate level, we need to think about what it means when our activities and behaviour are tracked and monitored in a ubiquitous and continuous way – what Mark Andrejevic refers to as a shift to 'environmental surveillance'. This has significant implications for what we might consider core rights and freedoms in liberal democracy, such as the right to privacy and freedom of expression.

This is further problematised by the fact that many of the data systems and processes that are now in place happen without people necessarily knowing that data about them is being collected or how that data is being used. Most



of the infrastructure that underpins the datafication of society stems from private and commercial companies who own, design, and sometimes implement the technology. Collecting and analyzing massive amounts of data has become the dominant business model of the digital economy and processes often remain opaque, outside the purview of the public and without much public accountability.

This is a concern because the companies that own and develop these technologies, as well as those actors who make use of them, hold an enormous amount of power over those people who are subject to such data collection and analysis. Data mining can be exploited to shape the experiences and opportunities available to people and data-driven decision-making can have significant implications for how and if people can participate in society. This is no longer about what advertisements we might see on our social networks

Just recently we've had a lot of news coverage on how that logic is also easily extended to political information and campaigning for example. Less talked about are the ways in which data analytics is being integrated into decision-making that determine key aspects of our lives, such as our ability to get and keep a job, a mortgage, whether we can freely cross borders, receive welfare, or even if we go to prison or not.

Continued on p4

YouButey Taste Test

No 1: Coffee shops near 2 Central Square – when you need to get out for a cup of joe or you want to impress an important visitor...



Milk & Sugar cafe and bistro, 1 Central Square

Milk & Sugar is a small independent chain that tries to look like a rather corporate coffee shop, which makes it suitable for business visits. The branches have slightly different menus if you are after food (<https://www.milkand-sugarplease.com/menu>). The coffee is a standard experience – OK and consistent, but nothing out of the ordinary.

YouButey rating: B++

Pumpkin, station concourse

You've been on a train journey, you



know what a Pumpkin is like. The coffee is strong and the shortbread is good. Acceptable in an emergency but the milieu and ripped armchairs make it somewhat unsuitable for meetings.

YouButey rating: C++

Gourmet Coffee, station concourse

If you can overlook the prime position between two very drafty doors, this place is a gem. The coffee is artisanal standard and the cakes are superb. Take



your guest here if you want to demonstrate your indie cred.

YouButey rating: A

Uncommon Ground, Royal Arcade

Excellent seating arrangements permit everything from one-to-one coaching to a board meeting. The coffee is not bad in this indie roastery but the wifi can be a bit sketchy, depending on how many Arcade Hipsters are checking their MacBooks for tips on beard waxing. Apparently it's also popular with students, so you might want to check who's around before venting about module feedback.

YouButey rating: A-



Starbucks, bottom of St Mary Street

We need to know your name. We know where you live. It's a Starbucks.

YouButey rating: class traitor



Dear Darth

I'm a little anxious about our move to Central Square and the amount of space I will have in my new office. Can you offer advice on what I can expect in my new space?

I am also feeling a little unmotivated to start packing up my belongings. Do you have any tips? Yours sincerely

A wannabe member of the galactic empire

Find your lack of faith disturbing ... Each sole academic office will have two storage units that offer approximately 7.2 linear square metres of storage. Storage in the shared office spaces can vary because of the shape and different sizes of the offices.

Staff will be provided with a number of packing crates that will allow for the amount of storage they have available to them, along with their desk belongings. University IT will be overseeing the packing of IT equipment and telephones.

Unmotivated? Perhaps I can find new ways of motivating you ...

Colleagues are asked to pack up their personal belongings in readiness for the removal company to start work from Friday 7 September. An email has been sent to all staff advising that there is a supply of confidential waste bags, refuse sacks and green recycling bags in the administrative office and I see that colleagues have communicated to all when they have books that may be of interest to others.

You will be contacting colleagues individually in the very near future with information on their new office space, the storage available and the number of packing crates they will be provided with.

Please be aware that offices and teaching rooms must be empty of any IT or personal belongings for the new occupants, understood to be Architecture, to use as soon as possible after JOMEC's departure. Therefore, colleagues are asked to dispose of any unwanted items well ahead of the Friday 7 September deadline as it can take some time for Estates to make arrangements to dispose of items.

Remember, the ability to destroy a planet, I mean empty an office, is insignificant next to the power of the force. A Jedi would say may the packing force be with you. I say I hope, for your sake, the space you leave behind is empty, as Architecture are not as forgiving as I am ...

Q&A with Lina Dencik, cont'd

Beyond the concern with a lack of transparency surrounding such processes, there is also a significant concern with the ways in which data-driven systems entrench and introduce different forms of bias and discrimination under a veneer of technological 'objectivity'.

When some of these systems have been properly interrogated, for example, they have often shown to reinforce forms of discrimination towards the most marginalized groups in our society. Or, they are imbued with errors or models that are inconsistent with social reality (Joanna Redden recently put together a *Data Harm Record* with illustrative examples of this that is available on our [Data Justice Lab website](#)). Yet their opaque technological nature make them difficult to challenge.

At a more abstract level, we might also want to think about what it means when what counts as social knowledge is confined to automated processes. More and more data about us might be generated, but turning something into a data point means that it needs to adhere to what can be tabulated and quantified. Data systems need to be able to scale to have meaning, and complexity doesn't scale very well. Yet our social lives are infinitely complex.

What happens to all the aspects of our embodied lived experiences that cannot be abstracted into an algorithmic process? And what happens to our society when all that information and those complex social relations are excluded from the decisions that govern our lives? This becomes a key question, not just for notions of democracy, but also fundamental concerns with human dignity, autonomy and social justice.

You have been awarded a significant number of grants to fund the various projects that the Data Justice Lab will research. Can you tell us how the money will be spent?

I started the Data Justice Lab together with Arne Hintz and Joanna Redden. Recently, we have also been joined by Emiliano Treré. Together, we currently have a number of different projects with grants from a range of funders. This includes a large grant from the European Research Council, a medium-sized

grant from the Open Society Foundations, and a smaller grant from IDRC (in collaboration with the NGO, IT for Change). We have also been successful in getting internal grants from the University, including a CUROP grant, seedcorn and development funding.

With the grant money we have been keen to develop the research efforts of the lab by recruiting research assistants and PhD students. I am also recruiting a post-doc at the moment, with a further post-doc to be hired in two years time.

This has allowed us to pursue our overall research agenda from a number of different angles and to produce what we believe to be very useful research that can be used by a range of stakeholders. At the moment, for example, we are in the process of creating a user-friendly publicly accessible map over the uses of data analytics, and data-driven scores in particular, in UK public services. We hope this will be a useful resource for civil society, journalists, policy-makers as well as the broader public to provide concrete details about developments in what remains a very information-poor area in public debate.

We are also keen for the Data Justice Lab to be a space that facilitates engaged research, where we can foster debate and connect concerns both within and beyond academia. To that end, we are using the money to organize workshops, stage events, and provide training in data-related research and investigation. This includes, for example, a training session we are organizing with Richard Sambrook in September on investigating and reporting on data systems and algorithms, thinking about how we can transfer the methods we are using for our research into journalism education.

We are also organising a large international conference on the theme of 'data justice' that will take place at Cardiff University on **21-22 May**. The conference brings together leading scholars, civil society groups and practitioners from around the world working on data-related issues and will include both academic paper panels and hands-on workshops. We have been delighted and a little surprised by the amount of interest in this conference and hope it will help situate JOMEC as a key place for this kind of research and practice.

Our research team is based in room

0.50 of the Bute Building, with the potential of moving to Central Square if there is space. We have more projects pending and continue to grow so it is important for us to have proper infrastructure to support our development.

If you could achieve three things as a result of work done by the Data Justice Lab, what would they be?

For me, one of the driving motivations for establishing the Data Justice Lab has been to shift the debate on the relationship between digital technologies and society. Often we are confined to very simple binaries that suggest that the issue is one of (state-)security and efficiency on the one hand vs. individual privacy and data protection on the other. Or we are invited to understand developments as being merely technical and quantitative in nature.

What we have tried to do with the Data Justice Lab is to expand the framework for understanding what is at stake with datafication and highlight the politics of data-driven processes. The notion of 'data justice' is precisely to suggest that an increasingly datafied society raises questions not just for the protection of personal data or individual privacy, but goes to the heart of how society is organized and what we might think of as social justice. This also means that advancing these developments cannot be confined to technologists or engineers, and discussions on societal challenges need to include people beyond digital rights groups that can also speak to long-standing concerns with forms of inequality, discrimination and corporate power. We need to situate datafication in an appropriate social and economic context in order to advance more collective and systemic responses. A lot of the work we are doing at the Data Justice Lab is trying to contribute to that.

Linked to that, a central objective of the Data Justice Lab is to forge connections between actors that are often operating in separate arenas. In shifting how we understand the relationship between digital technologies and society, we are also trying to broaden the stakeholders that are invited to the table to discuss issues related to datafication. In some of my previous research, I found that many groups that we might think of as being concerned with social justice

(e.g. labour activists, anti-discrimination groups, environmental activists etc.) do not necessarily see datafication as a concern of relevance to their agendas. One of the things we are trying to do in our research at the Data Justice Lab is to work with these kinds of groups to gain a deeper understanding for the ways in which data-driven processes relate to their social justice concerns and bring technology and social justice activists into closer dialogue.

This also extends to practitioners who are increasingly working with data systems in their work, such as policy-makers, civil servants, social workers, educationalists, health workers, immigration officers and law enforcement. We often lack a proper understanding of how data analytics is situated in practice and we rarely hear from voices 'on the ground' about issues and concerns. With the Data Justice Lab, we hope to create a space where such connections and dialogue can take place.

Thirdly, I think one of the key things we want to achieve with the Data Justice Lab is to advance knowledge and debate on digital technologies and data-driven processes within Europe. A lot of the discussion so far has been driven by developments in the United States and advanced with a US-centric understanding of both the challenges and responses. Whilst we can learn from this, and need to be informed about this (not least as the tech giants of today are predominantly US-based companies), we also need to have a better understanding of developments in Europe and think about what is at stake within that context. With Emiliano's contribu-

tion, we are now also extending that to thinking more about developments and perspectives emerging from 'the South'. If we want to have a nuanced response to some of the challenges we are facing, also at a global level, these perspectives are important. With the Data Justice Lab, we want to contribute to elevating research and viewpoints emerging from these contexts outside the US.

Are there other universities working on similar projects or is JOMEC leading the way?

As is often the case with new developments, there has been a rapid explosion of research in what is commonly referred to as 'critical data studies'. Our work at the Data Justice Lab largely falls under this bracket and we have drawn a great deal of inspiration from colleagues and institutions elsewhere.

In the United States, there is a longer tradition of this kind of research, and institutions like Data & Society have been at the forefront of many of the discussions so far. Our interest in studying these developments from a social justice perspective also draws inspiration from organisations such as the Center for Media Justice, also in the United States, and the work of Virginia Eubanks and Seeta Peña Gangadharan with their project Our Data Bodies.

Within Europe we are seeing a lot of great research emerging from colleagues in Germany working at places like HIIG or WZB and initiatives such as Algorithm Watch, and in the Netherlands at places like University of Amsterdam, Tilburg University and Utrecht University, where there are a number

of projects looking at data activism and data ethics. Closer to home, Oxford University currently has some interesting projects on the societal implications of a data-driven economy, and it has just recently set up a Digital Ethics Lab. Essex University also has a large project on Big Data and Human Rights, and we continue to draw inspiration from established scholars in the field such as Evelyn Ruppert at Goldsmiths with her project on data and the management of populations and Helen Kennedy at Sheffield University with her work on data power.

I am just about to go to Australia where I will meet colleagues working on related issues, such as data sovereignty, and will speak with people about their research on predictive policing, automated welfare services and the implications of data extraction for indigenous communities. We are also doing some work with the organization IT for Change, which is an NGO based in India, and we have participated in events with the Digital Asia Hub that has done a lot of work on these issues from within an Asian context.

This is just some of the great work happening in this area, and while we continue to pursue our work within an explicit frame of data justice, we are part of a larger network of researchers and organisations engaging with related topics. Considering the scale of the issue at hand, we need this larger network to interact with and learn from each other. I think the interest we have received in our upcoming conference is testament to that and also to the role of the Data Justice Lab within that network.

Nickname Corner

In an attempt to revive the glory of the primary school playground, *You Butey!* invites you to identify the person who answers to this evocative nickname:

Sail Away

This issue of *You Butey!* was put together by Stuart Allan, Lina Dencik, Zhou Enlai, Tim Holmes, Julie Jewell, Nikita Khrushchov, Kelly Selway, Jo Marshall-Stevens and Darth Vader. Please send news, event dates and gossip to HolmesTA@cardiff.ac.uk



SPOT THE DETAIL: You probably walk past this every day, but what is it?