

# CIRCY NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2024

A warm welcome back to everyone at the start of this new academic year. And also, a very warm welcome if this is your first CIRCY newsletter! In this Autumn newsletter, we have a number of exciting events to share with you, and also a few small news items.

Firstly, please take a look through this newsletter for some key dates for your diary. We will be circulating calendar invites around soon, and we hope to see you at some or all of the upcoming events this term. Our events are open to everyone across the University of Sussex community.

Secondly, we have some news about changes to the key contacts for CIRCY over the coming term. Sadly, the end of September marks the end of Emily's time with us the postgraduate research assistant for CIRCY. Though she has only been with us for a year, in that time Emily has made a huge impact on our work, providing fantastic support to Liam, Perpetua and Simon in organising CIRCY's events and activities. Emily is now working for Institute of Early Years Education

(see below) and will remain in touch with CIRCY and Sussex through her continued work in the early years policy sector. I'm sure all CIRCY members will join us in thanking Emily for her enormous contribution to CIRCY over this last year.

In September, we will also be welcoming our new postgraduate research assistant, Kirsty Fraser, who will be starting her doctoral research with us funded by a new CIRCY studentship. You can find out a bit more about Kirsty below. You will be able to email Kirsty via [circyadmin@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:circyadmin@sussex.ac.uk) with any queries about CIRCY events or activities.

Finally, I will be on study leave this term, and so Perpetua and Simon (CIRCY's Deputy Directors) will share responsibility for leading CIRCY over this term. Any queries that would usually come to me can be re-directed to Simon and Perpetua until the start of January.

Wishing you all a productive start to the year.

**Liam Berriman, CIRCY Director**

## Meet Kirsty! Our new research assistant.

We are delighted to introduce Kirsty Fraser, an experienced practitioner in the Youth and Community work field, as she embarks on her PhD journey with the Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY). With over 15 years of experience in championing the participation and voices of children and young people in various settings, Kirsty's work has always focused on amplifying youth voices and ensuring their meaningful engagement in decision-making processes.

Kirsty's doctoral research, entitled "Empowering Voices: A Participatory Action Research Approach to Enhancing Children's and Young People's Involvement with Research from Design to Dissemination", will investigate innovative ways to involve children and young people in research projects. Her work aims to establish a dynamic children and young people's research advisory group, where individuals from diverse backgrounds can actively contribute to academic research at the University of Sussex and beyond."



Kirsty Fraser  
([circyadmin@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:circyadmin@sussex.ac.uk))

## ... and goodbye to Emily!

"As Kirsty starts with the team, I will be leaving my role with CIRCY, after 6 years at Sussex! I've loved my time with the team and learnt so much so want to thank everyone who has supported our work and events across the past year, especially the support of Liam, Simon, Perpetua and Eve whilst I've been with the team.

I'll be continuing my venture in education through my work with the Institute of Early Years Education, as a content writer for their membership body. It's a brand new launch that we are incredibly excited to share with you! Do take a look and get in touch if you have any questions. [www.instituteofearlyyearseducation.org.uk](http://www.instituteofearlyyearseducation.org.uk)."

## CIRCY Autumn Term Events

### CIRCY/CSWIR Thinking-feeling-writing space:

What is 'thinking-feeling' and how can it contribute to research and writing practices?  
with Dr Jette Kofoed

3 October / 11-12:30pm / Sissay Room (108), Essex House

Dr Jette Koefed, Univ of Aarhus, Denmark, has a long-standing interest in care, ethics, methodology and writing practices alongside expertise in researching young people's digital cultures. In this session we will have the opportunity to explore with Jette one of her distinctive papers and to think, feel and write together about generative forms of academic practice that help to create space and time for care and ethical reflection.

### Killing Children in British Fiction: Thatcherism to Brexit

Book launch with Dominic Dean

22 October / 2-4pm / Arundel 230

In this launch event, Dominic Dean will introduce and explore his new SUNY Press book, *Killing Children in British Fiction: Thatcherism to Brexit*. This book emerged from a simple yet disturbing observation: Contemporary British fiction is full of children killing or being killed.

Considering novels and films alongside actual murder cases and moral panics, the book develops this insight into a unique account of British fiction and cultural history from the Thatcher to Brexit eras, where the child provides a figure for understanding conflicts over the British future. Working within and often challenging existing scholarship in childhood studies, literary studies, and critical and queer theory, *Killing Children* explores how the child, at once materially present and representative of an unsecured future, provokes relentless fantasies, fears, and violence from adults.

### The Nuances of Sibling Violence

with Luiza Vafina

Date and Time TBC

Luiza Vafina is a visiting researcher from the Institute of Education, University of Zurich. Sibling violence is the most common form of family violence (Eriksen & Jensen, 2009) and it remains an underresearched issue (Elliott et al., 2020; Davies, 2023). When talking about sibling violence, scholars distinguish between sibling emotional, sexual, financial, psychological, and physical abuse (Elliott et al., 2020), with the latter being mostly focused on in the previous research – perhaps since it is more accessible to measure it than the other forms of violence (Hoffman & Edwards, 2004). Simultaneously, it is still a matter of debate on how sibling violence is exactly to be defined (Meyers, 2015, p. 25) and how children themselves perceive it. This article aims to fill in the research gap. Using Honneth's recognition theory, it unravels the nuances of sibling violence occurring in children's daily lives and discusses the effects they have on children – in here and now. Finally, the normativity and the current policy on family violence are discussed.

CIRCY Seminar on Cultural Landscapes of Childhood  
With Dr Ben Highmore  
Date and Time TBC

Further details about this event will follow later in the term.

## Research Visitors

Luiza Vafina will be joining from the Institute of Education at the University of Zurich from the 28th October until the 15th November. Luiza is a member of the WoKidS – Children’s well-being in German-speaking Switzerland research project, which is part of the multinational study Children’s Understandings of Well-being – Global and Local Contexts. As part of the study, Luiza is conducting a doctoral research project on sibling relationships and subjective wellbeing. Luiza will be presenting her work at a seminar this term, and if you would like to arrange to meet with her during her visit, you can contact her directly via [luiza.vafina@ife.uzh.ch](mailto:luiza.vafina@ife.uzh.ch).



The last academic year seems a long time ago but we’re excited to share a compiled report of our work and research within CIRCY. Our 2023/24 Annual Report is now available to view and read here: [CIRCY Annual Report 2023/24](#).

## Contact Information

We’re ready for the new term and you’re invited!

Join the CIRCY mailing list for all updates, news and latest events by emailing us at [CIRCYadmin@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:CIRCYadmin@sussex.ac.uk). Get in touch with any questions you have, too.

## What is CIRCY?

The Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY) is a pan-university research centre at the University of Sussex, with a membership that spans social sciences, arts, humanities and professional fields including social work, law, education and health. CIRCY's research is interdisciplinary and international in scope, united by a critical engagement with children and young people's lives in time, and a focus on the rights, voice and welfare of the child or young person at the centre of inquiry.

## Get in touch!

[circyadmin@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:circyadmin@sussex.ac.uk)

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