

Introduction

This first issue of the Journal of Early Career Research in Humanities and Social Sciences (JECRHSS) focuses on the theme 'Justice and Equality'. Contributions from early career researchers working across the Humanities and Social Sciences were invited through an open call for papers in May 2019. The resulting collection is a rich and diverse set of articles, which address a wide range of topics across this theme.

Justice and Equality are pressing contemporary concerns. Or rather, perhaps it is more fitting to say that matters of *injustice and inequality* continue to dominate academic and political debate. Since the global financial crisis, wealth inequality has grown in many nations (Piketty, 2014). In the UK and US, health inequalities have reached an extent not seen for over a century (Dorling, 2013). In the wake of Brexit, discussions of trust, tolerance and citizenship, have assumed a renewed societal and political prominence (Brown et al., 2019).

Justice and Equality are also, in the words of Professor Kate Pickett, 'essential preconditions for the freedom of thought and expression that allows excellent research to flourish.'¹ Appropriate to the multidisciplinary nature of JECRHSS, these are concepts which assume different meanings in distinct fields of study; which lead to varied research questions and methods; and which trigger both consensus and contestation. By inviting contributions across the Humanities and Social Sciences, this first issue sought to expand and enrich our understanding of Justice and Equality. The articles selected for this first issue most certainly achieve in this ambition.

The articles in this issue

In this issue, four articles are presented by early career researchers working across the Humanities and Social Sciences. Shirin Al Abdulqader's contribution, 'Digital

¹ Professor Kate Pickett's vision for Justice and Equality at the University of York.

<https://www.york.ac.uk/research/themes/justice-and-equality/kate-pickett/>

Socialization: Exploring the Effects of Technology on Sociolinguistics', explores the impact of 'technologically mediated discourse' for linguistic diversity, the formation and expression of identity, minority groups' languages, social recognition, and community belonging.

The next contribution, from Ruari Lewis, 'Justice in Warfare: Do drones pose unique ethical issues in conflict?' examines whether drones should be considered in a unique ethical category; and demonstrates the divergent conclusions reached by Just War theory and by adopting a postcolonial perspective.

Laura Oxley's article, 'Justice and Equality in the use of punishment in schools', considers the ever-contentious issue of school punishment practices: tracing historical definitions, and questioning whether punishment can ever be justified or employed fairly.

The issue closes with Alison Edward's provocation 'Equality in heritage protection: an impossible goal', which characterises the current system of heritage protection in England as one which prioritises unrepresentative and elitist representations of the past.

All of the authors featured in this issue attempt to ground their academic interests within historical, social and political contexts. Through their work, we encounter nuanced and progressive theorisations of justice and equality; albeit theorisations which attempt to join with lived experiences and empirical observations.

Taken together, this first issue reminds scholars of the value of multiple perspectives and the importance of context; as we strive to better understand the complex forms and applications of Justice and Equality across the Humanities and Social Sciences.

References

Brown, E., Szczepek Reed, B., Ross, A., Davies, I., & Bengsch, G. (2019).
'Constructing Europe and the European Union via Education: Contrasts and

Congruence Within and Between Germany and England', *Journal of Educational Media, Memory and Society*, 11(2).

Dorling, D. (2013). *Unequal health: The scandal of our times*. Bristol: Policy.

Piketty, T. (2014). *Capital in the twenty-first century*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.