



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Law School

2020

Justice in times of crisis

Alumni newsletter

Interview with Lord Reed • School news • Alumni features

A memorable year

In a year of challenges and disruption, at Edinburgh Law School we continue to strive for excellence across research and teaching.

Little more than a year after our long-awaited return to Old College, the Law School once again had to decant, in what would mark the beginning of a strange and uncertain time for all.

Despite this, staff and students rose to the challenge with a rapid and, under the circumstances, smooth transition to a new remote working environment. As semester one draws to a close, we are reflecting on the successes of hybrid teaching and congratulating our students on their maturity and adaptability during a trying start to the year..

Though the year may have been coloured by extraordinary events of global significance, we continued to excel in the realm of research, with new projects launched, while findings from existing projects contributed to important legislative changes. We continue to live up to our name as Scotland's leading legal research institution, and you can **read about a few of our current projects on page 29.**

This year has also seen the recognition of our dedication to excellence, as the Law School rises in the **world subject rankings. Read more on page 10.**

While, as always, we were sad to say goodbye to staff members who moved on

to new chapters this year, we have also had the pleasure of welcoming a number of new colleagues to our community. You can **read our staff news on page 3.**

This year also brought into focus the continuing injustices against people of colour and other minority groups. We are committed to fighting injustice, and support all our community and beyond in their aim for equality and safety. **You can read an article with some of our BAME students and alumni on page 21.**

Of course, it has also been an exciting year for you, our alumni, with fantastic achievements within and outside of the legal field. **Read our interview with new Supreme Court Justice Lord Reed on page 15.**

We hope this annual newsletter finds you well this year of all years, and we look forward to hearing and celebrating more of your news over the next few months.

Stay informed

Keep your contact details up to date to ensure you receive relevant updates about alumni features, events and news from your University community.

[Go to the Alumni Portal](#)

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School news

This year the mantle of Director of Alumni Relations has been taken up by Professor Nehal Bhuta, Chair of Public International Law and co-director of the Edinburgh Centre for International and Global Law.

I celebrated the beginning of 2020 with family in Sydney, Australia. The warm Australian summer was overshadowed – both physically and metaphorically – by the unprecedented bush fires on the outskirts of Sydney, a stark reminder of the global climate change emergency. We did not know it then, but this would be a year in which words like “emergency,” “unprecedented,” and “world-changing,” would be invoked daily, in an inadequate effort to grasp the crises that have roiled every aspect of our lives: a global pandemic, political change, the devastating images of the killing of George Floyd and its reverberations around the world, to name just a few.

As we approach Christmas 2020, my first and most deeply held wish is that this Newsletter reaches you and your family in good health. Many have lost loved ones this year, and experienced other life-changing disruptions and upheavals; as a community of students, scholars and graduates, Edinburgh Law School has been profoundly touched by this turbulent year, and I hope that all members of our community can find the time and space to reflect on all that we have experienced – losses and blessings; challenges and incredible resilience.

This newsletter reflects the many, many, ways in which Edinburgh Law School’s community of learning and practice have risen to the challenges of the present: through leadership in legal practice and the administration of justice; by adapting to the new conditions of learning and teaching; by an unbending commitment to equality, diversity and access; and by continuing, despite the challenging circumstances, our transformative research and



public engagement on some of the most important questions of law and policy for our times. This includes pathbreaking research in the fields of law and health, inequality and crime, peacemaking, poverty and constitutional transformations.

Throughout this year, we have continued to benefit from the support of our many extraordinary alumni. As graduates of Edinburgh Law School, you remain vital participants in our essential mission of transformative legal thinking and teaching. As we start to slowly put the last 12 months behind us, our task is not only to restore our reserves of commitment and resilience, so heavily taxed by these challenges, but also to reflect on how we can renew our community of research and teaching in ways that allow us to fully grapple with the needs, demands and hopes that a post-pandemic future will bring. We hope that you will join us in this renewal.

Professor Nehal Bhuta
Director of Alumni Relations

Professors McAra and McVie win ESRC Celebrating Impact Prize

On 9th July 2019, Professors Lesley McAra and Susan McVie were announced as the winners of an ESRC Celebrating Impact Prize in the Outstanding Public Policy Impact category.

The professors were awarded the prize for their work on the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime (ESYTC) which followed the lives of 4,300 young people over two decades, tracking development, interactions with police and courts, and the physical and social structure of the

neighbourhoods where they lived. Ultimately, the study provided key evidence for the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Bill, which was passed in May 2019. The study showed that criminalisation of vulnerable children at a young age increases the risk of repeat offending and, eventually, adult criminality.

On winning the award at a ceremony held in London, the professors paid tribute to the young people who took part in their study, saying “this award is for them”.



Professor Bryan Stevenson receives honorary doctorate



Professor Bryan Stevenson, founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative, a human rights organisation based in Montgomery, Alabama, and Aronson Family Professor of Criminal Justice at NYU Law, was presented with an honorary doctorate from the University of Edinburgh at the Law School graduation ceremony on the 9th July 2019.

Addressing the graduating students, Prof Stevenson gave a touching speech in which he talked about his relationship with his grandmother, and encouraged the new graduates to pursue justice and positive change.

This followed the previous evening's Ruth Adler Lecture, in which Prof Stevenson discussed the persistent 'injustice quotient' and how justice can be achieved through proximity, changing narratives, and staying hopeful. The lecture proved to be a hugely popular event, with tickets selling out well in advance and a large number of people watching the talk via live stream.

PSRP hosts Local Peace Processes workshop at the British Academy

On 9 October 2019, the Political Settlements Research Programme hosted a Joint Analysis Workshop on local peace processes at the British Academy in London.

The workshop brought together leading researchers, peace-builders, mediators, and representatives from the United Nations, the UK Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Speakers included practitioners working to support local peace processes in Yemen, Syria, Nepal, Myanmar, Philippines, Libya, Jordan, Afghanistan, and Iraq. As part of the workshop, Professor Christine Bell, Director of PSRP, and researcher Ms Laura Wise, shared early findings from PSRP research on local peace processes from the PA-X Peace Agreement Database.



LLM student wins 2019 Colin Donald Environmental Law Award

Gemma Hayes, a student on the LLM in Global Environment and Climate Change Law, was named winner of the 2019 Colin Donald Environmental Law Award.

This award is co-sponsored by the conservation charity the National Trust for Scotland and the University of Glasgow. The competition is judged on the submission of essays on any topic of environmental law written by students as part of their studies at a Scottish university.

Gemma won the award with an essay on the relationship between the European Convention on Human Rights and environmental protection. In her essay, Gemma argued for the adoption of an amendment or an additional protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights, which would enshrine a right to a healthy environment in order to compensate for gaps in the existing jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights and also to ensure that the European human rights system keeps pace with other international developments.

Stephen Small, the National Trust for Scotland's Solicitor and Secretary said: "It was a difficult choice given the quality of all of the entries submitted, but Gemma's essay shone through with its excellent structure and logical points of argument. She has a great future ahead of her."

Dr Filippo Fontanelli appointed adviser to Scottish Parliament Committee on Europe and External Affairs



In September 2019, Dr Filippo Fontanelli, Senior Lecturer in International Economic Law, was appointed as adviser to the Scottish Parliament Committee on Europe and External Affairs to advise on matters of international trade law.

Dr Fontanelli contributed to the organisation of expert hearings and prepared a background paper for the committee, detailing the status of the international agreements that the UK has concluded to replace the ones currently in place between the EU and third countries.

Dr Kasey McCall-Smith presents draft bill for UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to Scottish parliamentary and youth groups

Since autumn 2018, Dr Kasey McCall-Smith has served as member of an expert advisory group on incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The group, convened by the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland and the Scottish Children's Alliance (Together), is composed of international law and children's rights experts from across Scotland, the UK and further afield. The group discussed and devised a draft bill for the incorporation of UNCRC into Scots law. The draft bill was presented to the Scottish Government on 20 November 2018 and was one of the options in the Government's UNCRC incorporation consultation.

Dr McCall-Smith presented an overview of the draft bill to the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group on Children and Young People on 12 June 2019. On 28 August, she spoke to a wide range of policy makers and civil society groups about the value of direct incorporation of the UNCRC at a policy seminar organised by YouthLink Scotland in Glasgow. The ongoing consideration of implementation of the UNCRC and how to support incorporation of other human rights treaties was also a theme of the spring 2020 Human Rights Clinic.



Professor Laura Macgregor appointed to Chair of Scots Law

Professor Laura Macgregor has been appointed as the Chair of Scots Law at Edinburgh Law School, taking up her role from July of this year.

The Chair of Scots Law was established in 1722, with Alexander Bayne its first incumbent, it was subsequently held by legal luminaries such as John Erskine, David Hume, George Joseph Bell, Sir John Rankine and, most recently, Kenneth Reid. In the 297 years since the creation of the Chair, Professor Macgregor will be the first woman to hold it.

Professor Macgregor spent several years as a practising solicitor with two Edinburgh law firms before beginning her academic career at the University of Glasgow in 1997. She joined the Edinburgh Law School in 2002. Her interests lie in the field of commercial law, and her research considers Scots law in its comparative context, both European and global. She is the author of *The Law of Agency in Scotland* (2013), published in the prestigious Scottish Universities Law Institute series. Currently undertaking research into the law of partnership, her recent article, "Partnerships and Legal Personality: Cautionary Tales from Scotland" will be published in 2020 in the *Journal of Corporate Law Studies*.

“ I am absolutely delighted to be appointed to this historic and important chair within Edinburgh Law School. It is a challenging time to take on this role, with events such as Brexit lying over the horizon. Supported by my excellent colleagues in private law, I am confident that we can meet such challenges, ultimately achieving our aim of creating a diverse, inclusive and welcoming place to study. ”



Professor Philip Alston, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights delivers Ruth Adler Memorial Lecture

On 1 October 2019 we welcomed Professor Philip Alston, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, to deliver the second Ruth Adler Memorial Lecture of the year.

Professor Alston spoke on 'Making the Digital Welfare State work for people' in a public event co-hosted by the Edinburgh Centre for International and Global Law.

The lecture addressed 'the application of digital technologies by governments' and how this is 'transforming governance', particularly in the welfare sector.



Professor Alston described the premise of his lecture: 'The emergence of the digital welfare state in the UK and elsewhere should be a cause for celebration because of the immense potential that artificial intelligence, data matching, and automation have to create a better and more supportive world for those most in need in society. But experience to date points in a very different direction. The digital welfare state is often endlessly intrusive and demanding, it is rigid and heartless, and it is driven by notions of efficiency and cost-savings that have all too little to do with welfare. Can it be turned around?'

Professor Alston is one of the world's leading scholars and practitioners of international human rights law. He is John Norton Pomeroy Professor of Law at New York University School of Law, and Faculty co-Chair of the NYU Law's Center for Human Rights and Global Justice. Professor Alston was appointed as UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights in 2014, having held a range of senior UN appointments for over two decades, including UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions from 2004 to 2010. In April 2019, he released a report on his mission to the United Kingdom in his capacity as Special Rapporteur, which examined the consequences of austerity on the enjoyment of human rights in the UK.

SFJP complete 200-mile cycle tour of Scotland

In September 2019, Professor Sharon Cowan and Dr Chloë Kennedy, along with Professor Vanessa Munro of the University of Warwick, undertook a cycle tour of 200 miles in order to deliver a series of Scottish Feminist Judgments Project (SFJP) workshops.



As well as leading workshops in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen, the tour was also a fundraising activity, ultimately raising more than £6,700 for Rape Crisis Scotland, Scottish Women's Aid and the Scottish Transgender Alliance.

The SFJP is part of a global series that aims to imagine how important legal cases might have been decided differently if the judge had adopted a feminist perspective.

On completing the tour, Professor Cowan said: "It was exhilarating to see how deeply engaged the students were with the idea of seeing law from different perspectives. This shows

that there is real potential for critical projects like this to help shape our future legal profession, cultivating not only the necessary skills of close legal analysis and legal writing but also empathy and compassion."

Dr Kennedy added that "Student feedback on the workshops was overwhelmingly positive and indicated a strong desire for more sessions of this kind. Several students wrote that feminist judgments teaching should form part of the mandatory curriculum for law students."

Law School graduate wins two prestigious University prizes

In summer 2019, graduate of the LLB at Edinburgh Law School, Iona Bonaventura, was awarded two prizes for outstanding achievements over the course of her degree.

The Lord President Cooper Memorial Prize Scholarship is the most prestigious undergraduate prize awarded by Edinburgh Law School and is given to “an Honours student of outstanding distinction on completion of his or her law degree”.

The Sir William Darling Memorial Prize is awarded by the University of Edinburgh to a student who “by example, scholarship or pre-eminence in sport has done most to advance or enhance the reputation of the University.” Iona was awarded the prize for her involvement not just in the Law School community as President of the Law Students’ Council and participant in the LawPALS scheme, but also in the wider community through her volunteer work with the Ethnic Minorities Law Centre.



On her awards, Iona said: “It is an immense privilege to receive this recognition from the University. Both awards represent four years of extremely hard work which would not have been possible without the support of my professors and fellow students. Becoming part of the academic community at Edinburgh Law School has been a life changing experience. I feel very fortunate to have spent my time here surrounded by people who are genuinely committed to making a positive impact through research and education. I hope that the work behind these awards can contribute in some way to this community which has already given me so much.”

FLAC named as finalist in Scottish Legal Awards

Edinburgh Law School’s Free Legal Advice Centre was this year named as a finalist in the Scottish Legal Awards. With 2020 marking its 17th year, the Scottish Legal Awards “recognise Scotland’s leading firms, teams and individuals who operate at the forefront of our national legal system”. FLAC was named one of the finalists in the Community Contribution category.

This is the first year FLAC has been recognised by the Scottish Legal Awards, following three consecutive years of appearing on the shortlist for the Herald Law Awards of Scotland in the Pro Bono category. Established in 2007, FLAC is a student-led project that offers Diploma students the opportunity to gain advisory experience while providing pro bono legal advice to the public.

On making the list of finalists, Director of Pro Bono at the Law School, Rebecca Samaras, said she was “pleased the judging panel have recognised everything we are providing to the community”.

2019 also saw FLAC’s inaugural Pro Bono Fair held at the Law School during Pro Bono Week in November. The fair brought together representatives from a number of charities and organisations from across Scotland who showcased their work and gave presentations to students and members of the legal profession.

Pro bono week is an annual, national week that highlights the important pro bono work across the country. It is endorsed by the Law Society, the Bar Council, and the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx). The aim of the week is to promote and support those offering pro bono services.

Lindsay Jack delivers talk at Ministerial Roundtable



In late November 2019, Mrs Lindsay Jack spoke at The Scottish Parliament as part of a Ministerial Roundtable, which was one of a series held by Minister for Community Safety Ash Denholm MSP.

The roundtable was the third in a series of three exploring issues of equality and diversity in the legal profession and it focused on widening participation and access. In addition to being invited to attend, Lindsay was identified as an 'influential individual' in this area and asked to kick off the discussion by delivering a ten-minute talk

on some of the main issues in the current landscape. Attendees included current law students, legal practitioners, The Law Society of Scotland, widening access practitioners and directors of widening participation, and the Commissioner for Fair Access, Professor Peter Scott.

Democratic Process Institute visits Edinburgh to discuss youth engagement in conflict resolution

On 11 December 2019, 15 delegates from across Turkey visited Edinburgh as part of the Democratic Progress Institute's comparative study visit. Laura Wise and Robert Wilson of the Political Settlements Research Project led a session on 'Navigating Inclusion in the Changing Landscape of Peace Processes' with the group, drawing on PSRP research and parallels with PSRP work supporting women's meaningful inclusion in peace processes across the Middle East and North Africa in a discussion that encouraged participants to reflect on the opportunities and challenges for youth inclusion in peace processes globally.



In her presentation, Laura Wise set out the broader research questions of the PSRP and invited the delegates to think further about the examples they were familiar with and the inclusion conundrums involved in the various stages and levels of process. By addressing the salient questions surrounding inclusion, the presentation offered a nuanced conception of how inclusion can be understood. Questions and challenges over who is included, why they are included and how different types of inclusion can be managed in order to navigate the tensions between these different forms of inclusion, were all put to the audience. The PA-X Peace Agreement Database was also shown to the delegates.

Following on from this and picking up on some of the themes discussed by Laura, Robert Wilson gave a presentation on the Yemeni Voices Project, setting out the broader challenges and wider questions around ethics and design involved in the interactive inclusion project. Examples of the potential power of civic groups in Yemen traditionally excluded from the national process were explained. To add further context to these examples, the staging website was then shown to the delegates and the power of the iterative nature of the project in gathering Yemeni experiences and viewpoints was also explained.

Find out more about the PA-X and Yemeni Voices projects on the PSRP website: www.politicalsettlements.org

Edinburgh Law School rises in world rankings

Edinburgh Law School has risen in the most recent world Law School rankings.

The 2020 QS World Universities Rankings saw Edinburgh Law School rise 7 places from 29 to 22. With an academic reputation score of 84.8 and an overall score of 81.9, Edinburgh is one of seven UK universities, and the only Scottish university, to make it into the top 30 in the area of law and legal studies.

The Law School also rose to 15th in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings for Law, again making it the only Scottish Law School within the top 20.

Edinburgh Law School students accepted to 2020 cohort of CGI U



Several students of Edinburgh Law School have been accepted to the 2020 cohort of the Clinton Global Initiative University (CGI U), which supports “students who are committed to take action and address the world’s most pressing challenges”.

Each student or group of students accepted to the programme makes a ‘commitment to action’ about a particular issue.



Akhil Ennamsetty (LLM Human Rights) will embark on a project titled ‘Centre for Rights Activism’ which aims “to provide quality legal aid to the victims of human

rights abuse in the tribal villages of the Northern Telangana region in India” as well as creating general legal awareness.

Laura Glocker (MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice), Mattis Leson (LLM European Law), and Markus Lakenbrink (LLM Corporate Law) will undertake to “inform and educate the public and, foremost, pupils about the German Constitution to tackle misinformation, especially with regard to the freedom of speech.” The group will do this through preparing workshops and recruiting legal professionals and students to give interactive classes in schools. They also aim to create a website where the public will be able to access reliable and easy to understand information.

Anna Martinez, Nina Pusic, and Andrea Scarpello (all studying the LLM Global Environment and Climate Change Law) form the team ‘Thinking Global, Acting Local’ and aim to use “their unique and diverse skills to mitigate the devastating impacts of climate change”. The three students, who hail from Gibraltar, Croatia, and Italy, will undertake a project to enable all undergraduate students across the University to study climate change.

The annual three-day conference of the CGI U was due to take place at the University of Edinburgh in April 2020, but has been postponed due to the outbreak of Covid-19.

Professor Tierney announced as new RSE Fellow for 2020



Professor Stephen Tierney, Professor of Constitutional Theory and Deputy head of School, was named among the 2020 Fellows of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) in March of this year.

This year's intake of 64 fellows will join the 1,600 current fellows of the society who represent a full range of disciplines and subject areas, from sciences to the arts to industry and public life. The aim of the RSE is to contribute to the 'cultural, economic and social well-being of Scotland and the wider world'.

Professor Tierney is currently a Senior Fellow of the Centre of Constitutional Change. He has published nine books and is currently writing a third book for OUP on Federalism and editing a book on Federalism and the UK with Robert Schutze.

Dr Gillian Black announced as Commissioner for Scottish Law Commission

Dr Gillian Black, Senior Lecturer in Family Law, has been announced as one of the Scottish Law Commission's new Commissioners.

The appointment is for five years during which time Dr Black will work part time leading projects on surrogacy and damages for personal injury, whilst remaining as a part-time Senior Lecturer at the Law School.

Dr Black has been a lecturer at the Edinburgh Law School since 2005, and has teaching and research interests in family law, contract law, and privacy. On the subject of her appointment to the SLC, she said:

"I am looking forward to taking up this role and contributing to the work of the Commission, especially in relation to surrogacy and damages for personal injury - these are both important areas of law which can have a critical impact on people's lives."

Also appointed at the same time was Mr David Bartos, a practising arbitrator and an alumnus of the University of Edinburgh.

Lady Paton, Chair of the SLC, said in a statement: "I congratulate David Bartos and Dr Gillian Black on their appointment as Commissioners. David Bartos will lead our project on leases and our joint project with the Law Commission of England and Wales on automated vehicles. Dr Gillian Black will lead our joint project on surrogacy, and our project on damages for personal injury. It is vital for our society that the law on these matters is kept up to date and in tune with today's values and beliefs, and that business and commerce can rely on a legal system that meets modern needs."

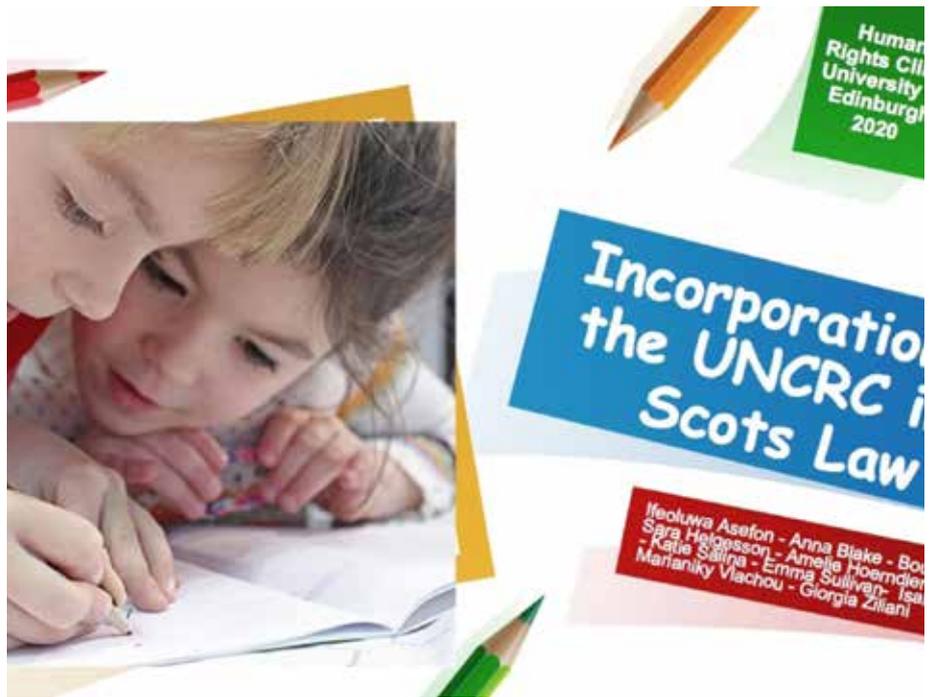
The Scottish Law Commission was established in 1965 and offers the Government independent advice on law reform in order to "improve, simplify and update the law of Scotland".



LLM Human Rights Clinic students present research to Scottish Government

In April 2020, two groups of students of the LLM Human Rights Clinic presented research findings to the Scottish Government.

The children's rights group, in conjunction with the clinic project partner Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights), examined how the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has been used by courts throughout Scotland and the broader UK to decide cases affecting children since its ratification in 1991. Under the supervision of Juliet Harris (Together) and Dr Kasey McCall-Smith, the group also compared the use of the UNCRC to similar



cases in foreign jurisdictions. The overarching aim was to demonstrate where gaps in existing law could be filled by the UNCRC to better promote and protect children's rights.

The presentation delivered key findings from the individual research briefs and larger group report developed across the semester and focused on a child's right to be heard across a range of areas that affect them, including in family matters, law and policy development, and cross-border concerns - such as unaccompanied children in migration and abduction cases. In each area, the students analysed existing law and judicial opinions against the rights set out in the UNCRC. The presentation then offered insight as to how the outcome for children might have been improved if a holistic approach to using the UNCRC had been deployed.

The children's rights clinic group included: Ifeoluwa Asefon; Anna Blake; Boudicca Hawke; Sara Helgesson; Amelie Hoerndler; Emma Howell; Katie Salina; Emma Sullivan; Isabella Szabolcs; Marianiki Vlachou; and Giorgia Ziliani. The presentation to the Scottish Government was delivered by Ifeoluwa, Boudicca, Sara and Marianiki.

Later in the month, a second group of students from the LLM Human Rights Clinic delivered research findings on behalf of the women's rights group project. The project examined Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) as the key tool used by Scottish Government to fulfil its public sector equalities duty (PSED) in promoting gender

equality. Throughout the semester, students were supported by Emma Ritch (executive director) and Eilidh Dickson (policy and parliamentary manager) from the project partner Engender.

The presentation to members of the Scottish Government Equalities Unit and Engender outlined key areas of tension between the existing policy and practice of carrying out EQIAs in Scotland. The group evaluated the impact of EQIAs conducted by the government over the past few years to determine whether they had any demonstrable impact in terms of gender mainstreaming and improving gender equality in line with the requirements in the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). They focused specifically on four areas of rights: participation in political and public life; social security; health; and gender based violence. The group further explored the theory behind frequently contested issues relating to gender mainstreaming, such as the distinction between 'sex' and 'gender' and how intersectionality is rarely considered. The project report aims to support Engender's advocacy work on promoting incorporation of CEDAW into Scots law and to deliver useful analysis of the current EQIA practices used by the Scottish Government.

The project group included: Stephanie Fernandez, Amal Matovu, Ryan Oakes, Mi Peng, Jess Robinson, Ann-Kathrin Steger, Laura Stelzer and Martina Trusgnach. The presentation was delivered by Amal, Jess, Laura and Ryan.

Alumni News

It has been another exciting and successful year for our alumni, many of whom are tackling some of the biggest issues of the day and making waves in everything from politics

Law School alumna Jenny Davis completes solo ski to South Pole

On 10 January 2020, athlete Jenny Davis completed a solo ski to the South Pole, becoming the 8th woman in history to have done so.

Jenny's first attempt to reach the South Pole in 2018 was interrupted after 21 days when she had to be medically evacuated. This second attempt saw Jenny successfully ski the 715 miles to the South Pole from Hercules Inlet, Antarctica in just 42 days, skiing between 14-16 hours per day and transporting all 80kg of her equipment with her. During a journey that brought challenges such as a broken stove and a severe case of 'polar thigh' injury – which has required two operations including a skin graft since her return to the UK – Jenny pushed on to the Pole with updates on her progress being shared on social media by her father.



Photo: Jenny Davis

Jenny graduated from the University of Edinburgh with an LLB (Hons) in 2008 before completing her Diploma in 2009. Prior to embarking on her career as a professional athlete, Jenny worked in corporate law specialising in energy. In 2016, Jenny also had the opportunity to coach the first Iranian women's running team. She is a proud ambassador of charities Children in Need and Women in Sport, as well as a Polar Ambassador for the STEM initiative.

On achieving her goal of reaching the South Pole, Jenny said: "I feel hugely privileged to have been able to return to Antarctica for a second attempt to reach the South Pole and can't thank my sponsors Atkins and The North Face. It wasn't easy to recover from the disappointment of last year, so I was determined to push through the pain of my injury and make it to the finish line this time. With polar expeditions, the balance between success or failure is on a knife's edge at all times, so that moment when the Pole came into sight and I knew that I would achieve what I set out to do was huge for me personally.

"I want to thank the Mr. Alex Woollard and his team at the Royal Free Hospital in London for their excellent care and the medical team in Antarctica for all their help and support throughout the expedition. There are some amazing people in the medical profession around the world, all of whom deserve our praise."

Sheriff Peter Braid appointed as Senator of the College of Justice

Law School alumnus Sheriff Peter Braid has been appointed by Her Majesty the Queen, on the recommendation of the First Minister, as one of five new Senators of the College of Justice.

Sheriff Braid graduated from the Law School in 1980 with first class honours, winning the Lord President Cooper prize for best student. He entered the solicitor branch of the profession, becoming a partner in Morton Fraser in 1985 and a solicitor-advocate in 1995, dealing predominantly with commercial litigation. He was appointed as a sheriff in 2005 and currently sits in Edinburgh. In 2015, he was appointed as one of the first appeal sheriffs in the Sheriff Appeal Court, and as a designated Personal Injury sheriff.

Senators of the College of Justice are judges who sit in the Court of Session and the High Court of Justiciary. They deal with a wide range of civil matters, particularly complex and high value cases based on contractual disputes, judicial review, delict (a civil wrong) and the law relating to property, revenue, commerce, companies and intellectual property. Cases of constitutional importance have become more frequent.

LLM graduate leads debate on climate change



Photo: Pixabay

Cleo Verkuijl, graduate of the LLM in Global Environment and Climate Change programme 2012-13, and now working at the Stockholm Environment Institute, is widely cited in the Press as one of the authors of a major UN report on fossil fuel production and the climate.

This first-ever Production Gap Report, which is a collaboration of several research and academic institutions and experts, provides the analysis, policy options, and findings that governments need to better align fossil fuel production with global climate goals. It is modelled after, and complements, UNEP's annual Emissions Gap Report. It highlights the

concerning gap between Paris goals and countries' plans for fossil fuel production. It also provides a go-to resource for policymakers, researchers, and civil society on winding down fossil fuel supply in line with the Paris Agreement goals.

The report's main findings include:

The world is on track to produce about 50% more fossil fuels in 2030 than would be consistent with limiting warming to 2°C and 120% more than would be consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C.

This production gap is largest for coal. Countries plan to produce 150% more coal in 2030 than would be consistent with limiting warming to 2°C, and 280% more than would be consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C.

Oil and gas are also on track to exceed carbon budgets, with continued investment and infrastructure locking in use of these fuels, until countries are producing between 40% and 50% more oil and gas by 2040 than would be consistent with limiting warming to 2°C.

National projections suggest that countries are planning on 17% more coal, 10% more oil and 5% more gas production in 2030 than consistent with NDC implementation (which itself is not enough to limit warming to 1.5°C or 2°C).

You can read the full report at productiongap.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Production-Gap-Report-2019.pdf

For many years after leaving Edinburgh, Cleo also taught on our eLLM course, The Law of Climate Change.

Alumnus interview

Commitment to Justice

Following the announcement of his appointment last July, Lord Reed was sworn in as President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom on 13 January. As an alumnus of the Edinburgh Law School, Lord Reed took the time to speak to us about his time as a student of the University of Edinburgh and his new role.

Lord Reed is an alumnus of the Edinburgh Law School and graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1978 with a First Class Honours LLB, also winning a Vans Dunlop Scholarship. He went on to become Scotland's youngest judge in 1998 at the age of 42 and was appointed as a Justice of the Supreme Court in 2012. He has served as deputy to Lady Hale, whom he now succeeds as president, since 2018.

Prior to his appointment to the Supreme Court, Lord Reed sat in the Outer House of the Court of Session, then in the court's Inner House until 2012.

What is your enduring memory from your time at the University of Edinburgh?

My most important memory is of meeting my future wife.

What lessons from that time are still relevant to you today (from the classroom or outside it)?

One important academic lesson was the importance of the historical context in which court decisions are taken. I began



Photo: Courtesy of UK Supreme Court

to understand that the law was not an abstract and timeless structure of coherent rules, but a messy and contingent body of cases and legislation, decided or enacted at different times and in different intellectual and political contexts. A second important lesson was the importance of a careful reading of cases, including the submissions made to the court. Textbooks serve a useful purpose, but they have inherent limitations.

Looking back, what opportunity made the biggest difference to your career path?

I have been fortunate enough to have many significant opportunities. The most important possibly occurred when I was 41, and the then Lord Advocate, Lord Hardie, offered me the opportunity to become a judge on the Court of Session. It meant giving up the rewards of private practice as a QC much earlier than normal, but it enabled me to have an unusually long and influential career on the Bench. A year later, the then Lord President, Lord Rodger, offered me the opportunity to become one of the UK's ad hoc judges at the European Court of Human Rights, where I have sat on some of the most important cases of my career. My philosophy has always been that life is short and you only experience it once, so you should take the interesting opportunities that are presented to you, before they run out.

In the first few months of your presidency, the coronavirus situation has meant that we have all faced unique challenges. How has the Supreme Court had to adapt during this time? What might the long-term implications of this time be for Supreme Court

justice, in your opinion?

The Supreme Court adapted very quickly to working online. We have been hearing appeals using video software, with the footage being livestreamed on our website to provide public access. Documents are lodged with us electronically. We process applications for permission to appeal, interim orders, interventions and so forth with the Justices speaking to each other over Skype. So we have continued to function, although our new ways of working lack the spontaneous engagement of face-to-face encounters. Nevertheless, I think that our eyes have been opened to the

“ My philosophy has always been that life is short and you only experience it once, so you should take the interesting opportunities that are presented to you, before they run out.



value of video links, particularly for meetings with people who are situated overseas or in other parts of the UK.

What are some of the other big challenges you are facing in your role as President of the Supreme Court?

The principal challenges include increasing (or even maintaining) the current level of gender diversity on the Court, building a stronger relationship between the Court and Parliament, building stronger relationships between the Court and the judiciaries of England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, developing an international strategy for

the Court, and coping with the volume of litigation likely to result from Brexit and the coronavirus crisis.

Who or what inspires you most, and why?

In my role as President, I am inspired by the thought that I have the privilege of performing the role previously performed by Tom Bingham, for whom I have the greatest admiration. More generally, I suppose that what inspires me, day after day, is a commitment to doing justice as best I can.

What advice would you give to current and future law students with aspirations to enter the legal profession?

If you want to have an enjoyable and satisfying career as a lawyer, always remember that your responsibility is to do your best to secure justice for your clients. Always remember, too, that the legal world is small and tightly connected. A reputation for integrity can be lost in an instant, and once lost can never be recovered.

Have you returned to Old College since the redevelopment of the building? If so, what were your thoughts?

I am afraid I haven't been able to visit Old College since the refurbishment yet, but I am greatly looking forward to seeing it. I was invited to the opening last September, but it clashed with a sitting in Hong Kong.

Many thanks to Lord Reed for giving us this interview.

Lord Hodge appointed as Deputy President of the Supreme Court

Two alumni of the University of Edinburgh Law School now fill the two most senior positions in the UK Supreme Court for the first time. Following the swearing in of Lord Reed in January, fellow alumnus Lord Hodge was named as the new Deputy President of the Supreme Court, succeeding Lord Reed.

Lord Hodge was previously the Scottish Judge in Exchequer Causes and one of the Scottish Intellectual Property Judges. He has been a Justice of the Supreme Court since 2013.

On the subject of Lord Hodge's appointment, Lord Reed commented: "I am delighted to congratulate and welcome Lord Hodge [...] He has made an important contribution to the work of the Court since his appointment in 2013, and his previous experience of judicial administration will stand him in good stead as our Deputy President. I am looking forward very much to working with him in his new role."

Lord Hodge said: "I feel honoured to have this opportunity and look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues from each of the jurisdictions of the United Kingdom in upholding the rule of law."

Speaking of both appointments, Professor Martin Hogg, Dean of Law and Head of School, observed: "The Edinburgh Law School is delighted at the news of these recent appointments. Lords Reed and Hodge are two of our most distinguished graduates, and through their professionalism and passion for the rule of law they manifest the values that the School has always sought to nurture in its graduates. The School wishes them the very best in their new roles, and is confident that under their leadership the Supreme Court will flourish."

Karina McTeague receives honorary degree at winter graduation



Photo:

Alumna Karina McTeague joined last year's graduands to receive an honorary Doctor of Laws at the University's graduation ceremony on 23 November.

Karina graduated from Edinburgh Law School with an LLB in the 1980s and has had a distinguished career in law and in the financial sector, both within Scotland and internationally. Having undertaken a number of notable industry roles across the UK (with the Bank of Scotland, Halifax, HBOS plc, Lloyds TSB Scotland plc and Lloyds Banking Group) Karina became the Chief Risk Officer, North America, with Lloyds Banking Group in January 2011. Following a secondment as Strategy Director at the British Bankers Association, Karina joined the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) as the Director of Retail Banking Supervision in 2013. In 2018 she became the FCA's Director of General Insurance and Conduct Specialists. As recently announced, Karina has recently taken up a new role with Visa Europe to be their CRO.

Karina was nominated for an honorary degree for her commitment to gender equality within the law. She has broken glass ceilings with her success in the legal and financial sector and is a keen advocate for gender equality in the workplace, galvanising colleagues in the industry to take practical steps towards addressing the decline of gender parity from graduate to the highest levels of the legal profession. This drive to tackle the challenges of achieving gender equality within the law, led to her becoming a founding member of the Edinburgh Foundation for Women in Law, of which she is still a strong supporter and advisor.

As part of the graduation celebrations, Karina gave a lecture for the Foundation titled, 'Gender Discrimination: Are Scottish lawyers different?' on 21 November.

Alumnus and lecturer co-author article for British Medical Journal



Photos: Courtesy of Gilberto Leung; Edinburgh Law School

Gilberto K K Leung, clinical professor at the University of Hong Kong, and Gerard Porter, Lecturer in Medical Law and Ethics at the Edinburgh Law School, have published a paper in the British Medical Journal on the subject of apologies and liability in the healthcare profession.

The article examines apology laws in Great Britain and a number of other countries, concluding that the “lack of sufficiently clear apology protection” can hamper open disclosure and candour between medical professionals and patients.

Academic neurosurgeon Gilberto K K Leung graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 2017 with his LLM in Medical Law and Ethics, which he studied online over 32 months.

“Over the years, I have become increasingly drawn towards the subject of Medical Law and Ethics, not only as a tool for problem-solving but also as a fascinating intellectual discipline by itself,” Leung said in a statement, crediting his LLM with furthering this interest: “Enrolling in the Edinburgh LLM programme is one of the best decisions I have made in my career. It has vastly broadened my horizons and fundamentally changed the way I approach, conceptualise, articulate, and debate about matters in medicine, law, ethics, and beyond.”

A number of Leung’s course works produced as part of the LLM programme have since been published in peer-reviewed publications, including the inclusion of his award-winning Final Dissertation in Medical Law International.

This recent published article is one of Leung’s post-LLM collaborations with tutor Gerard Porter, who said: “We are immensely privileged to have such talented and motivated students on the LLM Programme. Working with Gilberto on the article on apology laws was a great experience that gave me fresh insights into how the law is perceived by doctors. It is also very gratifying to see our students reach such a high level of expertise in medical law and ethics.”

Alumnus appointed Dean of the Faculty of Law, Thammasat University

Assistant Professor Dr Munin Pongsapan has been appointed Dean of the Faculty of Law at Thammasat University, Thailand.

Dr Pongsapan has been part of the faculty since 2003, and in 2006 received a scholarship to undertake an LLM at Cambridge University followed by a PhD at the University of Edinburgh. His thesis, entitled ‘The Reception of Foreign Private Law in Thailand: A Case Study of Specific Performance’, was supervised by Law School academics Professor Paul J du Plessis and Professor Laura Macgregor.



Photo: Thammasat University

On his appointment, Professor Laura Macgregor said: “I extend my warm congratulations to Professor Pongsapan in this important new role. It was a delight to work with him on his thesis, and to welcome his colleagues from Thammasat University on research visits. We look forward to strengthening our collaboration in future.”

Professor Paul du Plessis commented: “It is great to see our former PhDs excel. I wish Professor Pongsapan well and look forward to collaborations between our two great Law schools.”

MP Joanna Cherry receives legal honour for work in parliament

SNP MP and alumna of the Edinburgh Law School, Joanna Cherry, was last week elected an Honorary Bencher of Middle Temple, one of four Inns of Court in London.

The Masters of the Bench (Benchers) are elected by peers from the Inn's members who have been called to the bar. Honorary Masters of the Bench are elected from other professions where individuals have excelled.

The prestigious honour was awarded to the QC in recognition of her work in Parliament and was supported by fellow lawyers, notably former Tory attorney general Dominic Grieve QC and David Anderson QC, the latter citing Cherry's "excellence as a lawyer" and "strong commitment to justice for all" as the reasons for her award.

On being elected an Honorary Bencher, Cherry said: "I am honoured to receive this recognition of my work in Parliament and at the bar.

"While Scotland has its own separate legal system, there have always been strong fraternal links between the Scottish and English bar. The transition from law to politics is challenging and I have been greatly assisted by the support of friends old and new at both the Scottish and English bars."

Alumnus testifies at US Congressional House Judiciary Committee Hearing

On 19th June 2019, the United States House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties convened a hearing on HR40 and the Path to Restorative Justice.

For over twenty years, members of the United States House of Congress have introduced HR40, a bill to study the feasibility of reparations for the wrongs of slavery and segregation. These forms of racial domination lasted in the United States from 1619 until slavery ended in 1865, which was replaced by racial segregation until 1968. Reparations is the claim that some form of redress is owed the victims of slavery and racial segregation.

The hearing, which took place on "Juneteenth" (a holiday commemorating the emancipation of slaves in Texas in 1865), was a momentous occasion in the modern history of the reparations movement and examined the subject of reparations to the descendants of slaves as well as "persistent inequalities" faced by black Americans.

The Committee heard testimony from Eric J. Miller, who graduated with an LLB from the Edinburgh University Faculty of Law in 1991, where he specialised in Jurisprudence, Sociology of Law, and Penology. He is now a professor at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, California, and a member of the team of lawyers who sought reparations for the victims and descendants of a race massacre in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1921, when the white citizens of the town, along with the state national guard burned down 35 city blocks, killed between 100-300 African Americans, and rendered 5,000 people homeless overnight.

Professor Miller testified alongside National Book Award winner Ta-Nehisi Coates, Hollywood actor and community activist Danny Glover. Drawing on his experience in litigating the Tulsa reparations case, Professor Miller testimony addressed the legal basis for reparations, and the possibility of a detailed, direct, financial accounting for the federal, state, and municipal wrongs done to African Americans during slavery and segregation.



Photo: Courtesy of Eric Miller

Rev Alistair McGregor QC

The Law School was saddened to hear of the passing of Reverend Alistair McGregor QC.

Rev McGregor was an alumnus of the Edinburgh Law School. He joined the bar in 1967 and took silk in 1982. He later became a Church of Scotland minister.

On behalf of the Law School we send our condolences to the Reverend's family and loved ones.

Share your news with us

We love to hear from our alumni with news and updates, and as well as our annual newsletter we also publish news all year on our website.

If you have a piece of news, please do get in touch with the Law School by emailing us at:

law.alumni@ed.ac.uk



Respect and Criminal Justice: book publication

Dr Gabrielle Watson's first book, *Respect and Criminal Justice*, has been published by Oxford University Press (Clarendon Studies in Criminology). It is the first study of 'respect' in policing and imprisonment in England and Wales, where the value is elusive but of persisting significance.

Gabrielle is the Shaw Foundation Fellow in Law at Lincoln College, Oxford and an alumna of Edinburgh Law School (LLB with First Class Honours, 2011).

"The book's publication is especially timely in this political moment, as we reflect on the stark, seemingly intractable problems of police misconduct and deep structural racism," Gabrielle commented. "Part of the push for reform must involve the simple act of listening, followed by the search for robust theoretical ideas with which to frame the debate.

"In matters of policing and criminal justice, respect need not be utopian. It simply requires a degree of mutual understanding when it is owed to, called for, deserved, elicited, or claimed by another. With a sense of modest realism, the book sets out those challenges in detail—and envisages the advances that could be made—in inscribing respectful relations between state and subject."

Respect and Criminal Justice is available from Oxford University Press.



Photo: Courtesy of Gabrielle Watson

“Our legacies are valid, and they will be celebrated for generations”

What are the experiences of BAME students at Edinburgh Law School, and how were things different twenty years ago? Alumna Naeema Sajid joined three current law students to talk about the way things have changed, some of the ways they haven't, and explore what it means to study and practise law in the current climate.

Naeema Sajid is an alumna of Edinburgh Law School, which she joined in 1995, completing first her LLB and then her Diploma. Prior to embarking upon her Diploma, Naeema worked at the Scottish Parliament as a parliamentary researcher and advisor, and later secured a traineeship at the Crown Office. Naeema has had a varied career, with experience in both the public and private sector, in criminal and civil law. She has worked as a solicitor for the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, and more latterly was a partner specialising in Child and Family Law in a top ten Scottish firm. Naeema is also one of the founding members of the Scottish Ethnic Minorities Lawyers' Association (SEMLA) which was launched in 2017. >



Mukai Chigumba is a third year law student and the current President of the ACS. Mukai is also a co-founder of BlackED as well as the finance director for the group, and was last year's Vice President of the Model African Union.



Dorcas Baah is a fourth year law student at the University of Edinburgh, originally from Ghana but living in Scotland for 13 years. Dorcas was last year's ACS President and is also one of the founders of the BlackED movement. >

Timmy Pinnick is a fourth year law student at the University of Edinburgh who lives in London and is originally from Nigeria. Timmy was the Vice President of the University of Edinburgh African Caribbean Society (ACS) for the last academic year, and is also one of the founders and directors of BlackED, a new organisation started this year working with the University to improve experiences for black students and staff on campus.



What inspired you to study law?

Naeema: I got married when I was 17, and within a couple of weeks I realised that I didn't want to be a stay-at-home Asian woman. That just wasn't me. I was a bit of a rebel at school and as a result I didn't concentrate on the academic side of things, but after I got married so young I decided what I really wanted was a career. I was always interested in the law, but I had no aspirations of actually becoming a lawyer because academically I viewed myself as a failure.

To get to Edinburgh University was a huge step for me and it took me a number of years to get there. I ended up going to Stevenson College to do an SNC in Business Studies, then after that I went to Napier and did an HND in legal studies. Back in the day, that wasn't enough to get into Edinburgh University so, while having a child, I resat five Highers. If there's an unconventional and difficult way of doing things, I will find it!

I thought I might go into an admin role within the legal profession, but once I took a few steps there was no stopping me. I had that drive to just keep going.

Timmy: I actually decided to do law very last minute. I was set on studying Chemical Engineering, but coming up to the UCAS deadline I reflected on what I was interested in and really it was society. I love how, in the legal world, things are always evolving and adapting. So, that's why I wanted to do law – plus I'm kind of argumentative!

Mukai: For me, law is a family thing: my mom is a judge, my older brother is also a lawyer. So, it was always an option growing up. Even when I was

doing my O-levels I picked subjects knowing I was going to do law. Then at some point, I had a moment of confusion when I wanted to do business, but last minute I turned back to law, and I remember after my first semester I thought 'Where did this confusion come from?' Law felt natural, like it was well within my natural abilities.

Dorcas: I first decided to pursue a career in law because I was very interested in social justice. When I started first year, I quickly realised that there was a lot of inequality in the study and practice of law – from the inaccessibility of legal representation for minorities,

“ There are more discussions about things which I think will channel more change. I'm quite optimistic about where we will be 20 years from now. ”

to the over-policing of BAME communities, and so on. That harsh reality really spurred me on in my desire to do well in my academics and establish projects where I could use skills from my law degree to contribute to a better society for all of us. That's also why I've become the Research Coordinator at the Edinburgh International Justice Initiative (EIJI), which is a student-run pro-bono law clinic that provides resources on international human rights issues. Along with my law degree, my work with EIJI and ACS has helped me closer to my goals of representing and defending disadvantaged and marginalised voices.

Naeema, what are some of your memories from when you were at the Law School?

Naeema: From an academic point of view, I remember finding it really challenging and having to work very hard. On top of that, by the time I went to do the LLB I had a three-year-old and was pregnant with my second child, so I had a real lack of time. Anything I did I squeezed in so I could go to all the lectures and all the tutorials, but then I'd be up overnight with the children. Trying to do any studying was really difficult. I used to end up studying from midnight onwards, which looking back was counterproductive, because then I went to university and fell asleep at nine o'clock lectures! So, I won't pretend it wasn't a real struggle.

From a cultural and social point of view, I also found it a struggle because in the culture I come from the women stayed at home, especially a mother. And I lived with my in-laws, so there were certain expectations of what I did when I was at home. Even though I wanted to study, I still had the cooking, the cleaning, the caring role – that was very much for me to do. My studying had to fit around all of that, as opposed to all of that fitting around me and my studying.

I remember Freshers' Week was meant to be where everybody socialised and got to know each other. I just didn't have the capacity to be able to do that. The soft skills you gain from that, and the personal development you get from it, is crucial in any career, and that's probably something I lacked. I just didn't have the scope for it, and I wish I had done it more.

Mukai: My mom had my older brother when she was 18, so both

she and my dad went to university together and she had a very similar experience. A lot of times when I talk to her and she hears that I'm in societies, she'll mention how she wasn't able to do things like that. So it sounds really familiar, even though we have different cultures.

Timmy: When I was coming into the Law School it did take me some time to warm up to being in the university environment. I think for me it was more the fact that I was one of three black girls in my whole cohort of nearly 400 students. I was really hard on myself, constantly thinking 'I have to focus on studying because I have to prove myself.' I had this idea that people would think I wasn't good enough because they had this perception of me as a black woman. I didn't see it coming either because I've been in a white majority environment for most of my education so I thought it would be an easy transition. I can say now that I'm much more involved than I was in first year, and I feel a lot more comfortable within the Law School. Not much has changed in that respect, I think I'm just more used to it.

Naeema: Sometimes it's our own personal perceptions of things, isn't it? It's not easy trying to put them to one side to enjoy the experience for what it is.

I had some wonderful friends who would keep me awake in lectures, or at the very least share their notes with me when I did fall asleep. I believe there's a lot more awareness now of cultural differences. And a little more acceptance, but we've a lot of work still to do.

Mukai: I had an experience similar to Timmy's. Coming to the university I felt very intimidated because you don't really see yourself as fitting in, because you get there and everyone is white. You go to the library or any important place and if there are paintings they're all of white people. All of your professors are white and very few are women.

In first year, I even had this idea that I wouldn't be able to get a traineeship because it didn't feel attainable. I was an international student, and also black, so what were the chances of that? I wasn't engaged in anything on campus at all. If you told me in first year that I'd be doing everything that I'm doing now in third year, I would have said you were lying.

I do enjoy the academic side because it's very interesting, but as you all know, law is a very competitive programme and if you're in a tutorial everyone wants to be the one to get the right answer. I was the complete opposite. I felt like I didn't want to compete and if I joined the competition I would have had to be twice as good

because, just looking at me, people were thinking, 'There's no way she's smart,' or 'She only got in because of the diversity quota.' I wondered why I should even try to prove anything.

Now things are so much better. I'm more involved in so many things and I'm so proud of myself because I went from doing zero things to doing 100 things, which is great.

Naeema: It takes courage to do that. What you just said reminds me of when I got my traineeship with the Crown Office. One of my fellow students, he basically said to me: 'How come you got it and I didn't? They must have wanted to tick a box.' That was about 20 years ago, and it's interesting how we are still sharing those experiences and those thoughts. At that time I was already doubting myself, but for weeks on end I questioned whether what he had said was true. So it saddens me that we're in 2020 and we are still thinking like this.

“ I want to leave the university better than it was when we came into it. ”

Dorcas: My experience in the Law School has been a journey. I remember sitting in my first lecture in first year, and the thought that popped into my mind was: 'I am just another face in the crowd.' I felt severely unspecial. I had been a high-achiever in high school, but suddenly I was sitting in a room with 150 other high-achievers, and I couldn't distinguish myself. My voice – which was usually loud and enthusiastic! – was caught in my throat, and I felt overwhelmed just making one class contribution.

Imposter syndrome really gripped me; and it was heightened by the fact that I was part of a small cohort of BAME people studying my course. Although in a way I felt like the 'one who had made it', a little voice kept asking me whether I truly deserved a seat at the table. The rest of first year involved unlearning that extremely warped perspective. It took the support of a strong network of family, friends, my faith, as well as my amazing Personal Tutor to make me realise that I was more than capable. Also, I felt myself being increasingly drawn to leadership positions within the Law School, first as Class Representative and then as a Student Ambassador, which all helped me feel like my presence there was legitimate.

Timmy: What I would say is that, between my first year and now, there are a lot more black people on campus. That said, I still feel like we are a big minority group, but I think that has definitely helped with my comfort on campus. Especially after BLM, there are at least more discussions about things which I think will channel more change. I'm quite optimistic about where we will be 20 years from now.

Mukai: In the past year, in terms of societies, we've seen such a huge surge. We now have a South Asian Society, Model African Union, Afrobeat, a BME Law Society. I don't know what happened, but I remember being a first year looking for societies to join and I'm so happy that now that I'm President of the ACS, I have so many I can tell others to go to.

I think particularly this summer, it's become much easier to discuss race. For instance, with BlackED, we have two seats on the Equality Diversity Inclusion Committee which has been really helpful in terms of creating change. I think we had almost 15 different meetings in a period of two and a half weeks with different people: the Principal, the Centre of African Studies, basically anyone who saw our open letter and liked it and reached out. Just being able to talk to all these different people increased my own racial literacy and my own courage to speak about things.

Naeema: It was mentioned there about a lack of representation within the university in terms of diversity when it comes to lecturers, professors, etc. How important do you think that is?

Mukai: Very. For instance, I've had three female lecturers and I've done 16 courses. I don't think that is enough, and I think the reason why it's important is I want to feel like I'm a part of the university. At the moment I don't see myself.

Timmy: For me, seeing that these are the people who are really respected in their field and not one of them looks like me makes me think: 'How am I going to do this? Can I do this?' It gets a bit disheartening. Sometimes it's not even me questioning my ability, it's more whether the world I currently live in will allow me to reach a point where I can do that, because I'm looking at myself: I'm not a British citizen, I'm Nigerian, so I'm an immigrant. I'm black, I'm female. It just seems like there are all these hurdles, and when I look at the people teaching me and lecturing me, I can't hold on to something and say, 'But they did it; I can do it too.'

Naeema: I'm very much a strong advocate for having identifiable role models in professions, because it really makes such a difference. That's one of the reasons we formed SEMLA and it pains me to see that we still don't have enough people

of colour in our university. That to me is a failure. On whose part? I don't know. Perhaps the part of people like me who haven't put themselves forward to do it. But equally, the institutions do need to have a collaborative approach to be able to fill these gaps.

Dorcas: I can speak to my experience of the progress that I've seen over my four years at the University. All of the societies that have been formed have genuinely enriched my experience as a black law student. Other ACS partnerships with the Law School, primarily through Lindsay Jack [Director of Equality and Diversity], have transformed the dynamic of studying law as a BAME student.

In terms of representation in the Law School, I was delighted to see the Adam Lecture Theatre rededicated as the Usha Kasera Lecture Theatre. Seeing a minority name plastered on a room in Old College, at least for me, was symbolic of the continuity of BAME voices at the University of Edinburgh. Our legacies are valid, and they will be celebrated for generations to come.

I think the way forward now, in terms of representation, would be to see more BAME staff in the Law School. I remember encountering my first BAME professor in first year, and then being taught by my first black professor in second year. Seeing myself reflected in the academic staff who were teaching me meant more than I can describe. It wasn't only legitimising, it was also profoundly motivating.

Naeema, can you tell us a bit about SEMLA and what the group does?

Naeema: SEMLA was formed in 2017 by a group of five volunteers. We focus on supporting ethnic minority lawyers and law students in Scotland. From the outset, we've been supported by leading organisations such as the Law Society of Scotland and the Faculty of Advocates. Our main objectives are to assist not only those wanting to enter the profession, but also those wishing to progress within the profession.

I met with the other SEMLA members and I instantly felt a connection and respect for them. We all have very different backgrounds and very different experiences, which means we have a very broad range of skills to offer our members.

Our events are focused on bringing key individuals together. For example, students and trainees to managing partners, board members and indeed the Lord Advocate. The idea is to allow people the opportunity to talk to and learn about each other, opportunities that many of us in my era didn't have. We've also been very fortunate in collaborating with

some wonderful organisations to offer our members work experience, for example Burness Paull, Shell UK and most recently NatWest. We are indebted to these organisations; without their support and resources we couldn't do this.

With Covid, it's been challenging because of not being physically able to hold events. However, it's also been enlightening. We've had the opportunity to review what we do and how we do it, much like many organisations, in all industries the world over.

A further example of what we have been doing is our recent 'Connect with SEMLA' campaign, which we launched in June. All of the committee members prepared short videos about our individual journey into law and our experiences within the profession. We then invited people to get in touch with us if they wish to talk and perhaps get some support during these uncertain times. It was a great success and I felt I learned a lot, particularly from our young members.

How has studying law changed your perspective?

Timmy: I'm just more critical. Studying the system and having more of an understanding of how things work, I'm able to better ground the things that I believe in actual fact. I studied Punishment and Society this year, and I knew that the system was intrinsically racist already, but we looked at specific examples – how, for example, in the States when they started the war on drugs they specifically focused on drugs that were being cycled within the black community and those were the ones that were being treated with the harsher sentences.

I think coming into uni I thought the law was this rigid thing. I knew there were flaws, but I didn't think there was so much room for development.

Mukai: I'm very interested in restorative justice. Law is the bedrock of society, that's my personal belief, but I do think that the legal system is broken at the moment, because this idea of rigid laws, right or wrong, is not working. For example, I come from a country where there's a lot of corruption, and the idea that all these people are going to be jailed is actually not feasible. So, we could talk instead about how we can move on and change our society to stop these things happening again.

Society needs to change, and something that I'm passionate about is looking at the future. Right now, when I'm studying law, I know that this is not what the future of the legal industry is going to be like. I see so much potential and so many things that are going to change.

Dorcias: I think the interrelatedness of law with many disciplines, like politics and international relations,

has made me appreciate the interconnectedness of various aspects of my life. From the parallels between advocating for justice, to being ACS President, to being a law student, I can see how all of these passions are preparing me to enter the global legal and political sphere. Overall, my law degree has grown my desire to create a fairer, more representative society that provides spaces for everyone to be able to progress together.

What are your plans after your degree?

Timmy: One key area I'm really interested in now is medical law. I think it's so relevant, especially because of the focus on drug testing and clinical research due to Covid-19. Healthcare is something that is such a fundamental right and I feel like the laws and regulations associated with it often get overlooked, but it's something that affects every single person. For example, there are so many instances where there's a negative disproportionate effect on the BAME community within the healthcare system and I think some of these issues can be solved through appropriate regulation.

Dorcias: I am very interested in international human rights and international criminal law. I see myself going on to work somewhere like the International Criminal Court, the United Nations, or the African Union. I think that studying law has furthered my interest in the realm of human rights and criminal law and made me extremely passionate about preventing impunity and representing victimised and oppressed voices.

Mukai: I'm an aspiring solicitor. I'm interested in information and intellectual property, because I've noticed that for most of the African continent we don't have a central system of data where we can just find out simple things. It's really difficult to find any research or anything about the African continent.

I'm also interested in mining law and environmental law because my country has a lot of natural resources and I've seen just how detrimental the use of certain chemicals or mining can be on the environment, and I'm very interested in preserving it. I want my children and my grandchildren to be able to live in a world where the environment is still intact.

Trade and travel laws in light of the pandemic in a more globalised world is something else I'm interested in, because I do think that after Covid there is this idea that we're just going to go back to normal, but what if certain elements that are working are incorporated into our everyday life?

I also love public law, because for me, these are the people that create the laws that form society. I genuinely enjoy all of the public law courses I've

done and my friends always say they don't know what I see in it, but for me it just comes naturally.

Timmy, Mukai, and Dorcas, can you tell us about your involvement in ACS and how that intersects with studying law?

Mukai: ACS is the African Caribbean Society. It's been at the University of Edinburgh since 2012, and we embrace and celebrate African and Caribbean culture. We do various events, from serious panel discussions – like one on female genital mutilation that we had last year – to more casual ones, like Black Excellence, which was a talent show. Usually we do things for Black History Month, and we also have a social responsibility to respond and make statements whenever relevant things come up in public discourse.

When I joined ACS, I wanted to be more engaged with societies on campus, but I wanted it to be genuine and authentic, and I felt that in this role I'm doing work to help other people just like me.

When we talk in class about certain elements of the law and how this all comes from this ancient law, and because of it we now have *this* law – it's inspiring to me in the sense that I see how the laws of this country are very much connected to something that happened in the past, and being Zimbabwean it's something that I'd like to encourage within my own country, for people to find a basis for their laws that is very local to them. I think that's why the legal system in this country works quite well, because there's a centuries-old progression. With some of the events we've been planning this year, I think of things that I've learned in class and how it's different for African countries, and try to highlight that and discuss it.

Timmy: I personally joined ACS in second year and it was amazing to me, because here was the group of black people that I was looking for at the University and it felt like family. The following year and third year I became VP. One thing in particular that we wanted to do is increase visibility for issues affecting BAME people on campus, particularly African and Caribbean people. The Law School was really great with that; they helped us with so many different events, even if it was just a logistical thing. One thing in particular was the screening of *When They See Us*, and I just loved the fact that the Law School wanted to get involved with showcasing something like that and talking about the issues that stemmed from it.

Dorcas: I remember hosting our screening of the *When They See Us* docu-series and facilitating the discussion afterwards, and simply hearing the contributions of BAME Law students honestly made me very emotional. It was beautiful to be in a room

where people empathised with my struggles and were equally dedicated to fighting beside me to for a fairer, more equal society, especially for BAME communities.

Timmy: There's also BlackED now. One thing that we're hoping to do is improve racial literacy on campus. We're also trying to collaborate with a bunch of different groups, and in light of BLM we've had so much more support than I think we would have before. We just hope that we can make as many changes we can, especially with me leaving next year. I want to leave the university better than it was when we came into it.

Mukai: We started with an open letter, and it turned into the BlackED movement. There were seven of us: all women, all black. The number one thing that we want to create is an anti-racist culture at the University. What that means is we want everyone to be diametrically opposed to racism, because we noticed that the University isn't really good at dealing with racial discrimination. Nobody knows of anyone who was ever expelled for it. So, this is very much a product of students. It feels bad that we have to do this in the first place because the University should be doing it already.

Dorcas: I think the resurgence of global interest in the BLM agenda has made BAME students more vocal about their experiences and given us the confidence to speak about our individual, though often similar, stories. The simplicity of the BLM message that we matter has reignited our desire to be acknowledged in every space that we occupy. It's been overwhelmingly surreal in the best possible way.

BLM has also highlighted the importance of mental health in BAME communities and re-educated allies about the traumatising effects of racism, police brutality, and microaggressions on BAME students. Personally, I've reminded myself to take meaningful rests, because they're really integral to my resistance as opposed to detracting from it.

Find out more about the Scottish Ethnic Minority Lawyers' Association at

www.semla.org.uk

Learn more about the BlackED Movement at

www.facebook.com/blckedmovement

The Law School and Covid-19

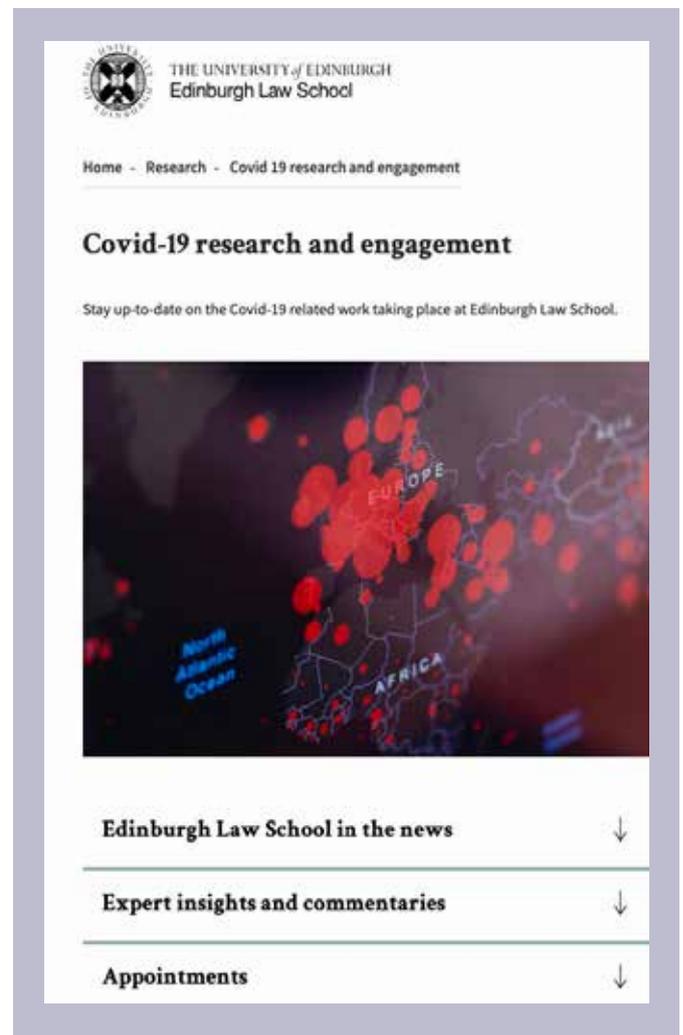
When the nationwide shutdown came into force in March of this year, the Law School also closed its physical doors. But teaching, research, and professional services continued virtually.

Along with the other Schools at the University of Edinburgh, and indeed the vast majority of institutions and businesses across the country, the Law School faced a sudden departure from normal proceedings earlier this year when an unprecedented nationwide lockdown came into effect. While students grappled with anxiety over their impending exams, teaching staff were forced to quickly establish ways of delivering the final few classes of the year virtually, while professional services bid farewell to their offices and made the move to working from home.

As the upheaval of this rapid exodus from campus settled somewhat, the Law School found a new day-to-day rhythm of remote working that involved becoming more familiar with colleagues' kitchens and living rooms than anyone ever expected. Despite the challenges of this unusual time, and the stresses of a global pandemic, teaching continued to the end of the semester, and the summer was spent preparing for the return of students in September.

Living up to our reputation as a leading research institution, many of the Law School academic staff members have been working hard on producing important work relating to Covid-19 and the legal implications of this unique time in history. The expert insights and commentaries produced by the Law School staff have discussed everything from

labour law to economics, to national security and ceasefires. You can see the complete repository of all the Covid-19 research and insight to come out of the School on our website at www.law.ed.ac.uk/research/covid-19



As the Law School staff adjusted to home working, pictures of new workspaces and other aspects of lockdown life were shared weekly in the staff newsletter, to help keep our community connected.



Photo: (Above) Toby Beveridge; (Below) Judith Rauhofer



Photo: (Above) Kasey McCall-Smith; (Below) Sam Purves

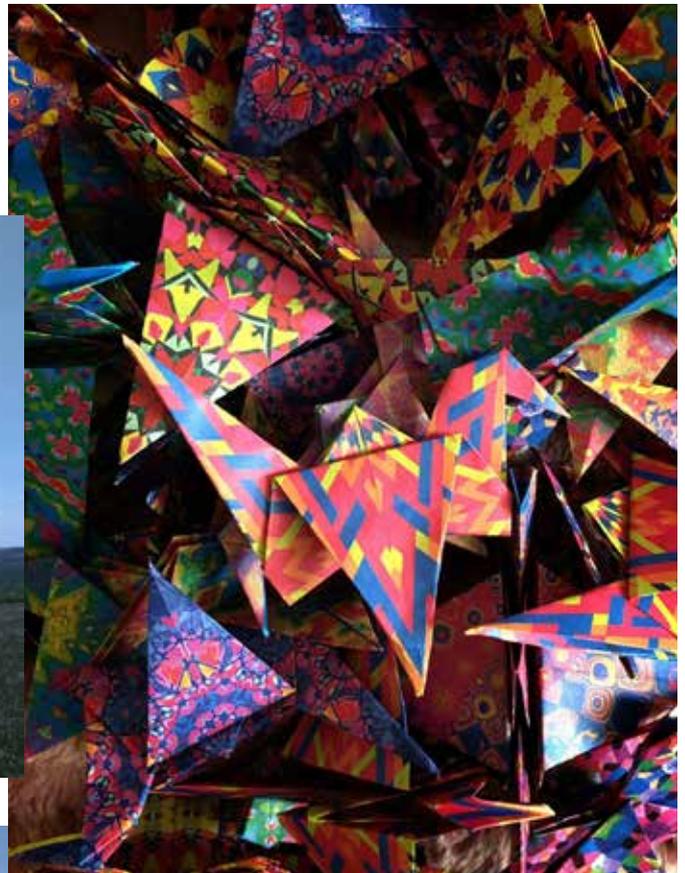


Photo: (Above) Simone Duffy; (Below) Martin Hogg



Research for our times

As Scotland's leading legal research institution, Edinburgh Law School produces world-class research projects every year on a wide range of subjects. Read about just some of our recent outputs here.

Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime

Now in its eighth phase, the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime (ESYTC) is a research programme that has been running for 21 years. The project consists of a major longitudinal study of a cohort of around 4,300 young people who started secondary school in the City of Edinburgh in 1998, and follows their progress through questionnaires and data from official records including education, social work, and criminal conviction records.

The project is co-directed by Professors Lesley McAra and Susan McVie, who in 2019 were the winners of an ESRC Celebrating Impact Prize for their work on the project. The study has had a real-world impact since its inception, being instrumental in a recent decision by the Scottish Government to raise the age of criminal responsibility to a minimum of 12 in the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Bill which was passed in May 2019. The study showed that criminalisation of vulnerable children at a young age increases the risk of repeat offending and, eventually, adult criminality.

The change to the minimum age of criminal responsibility is the culmination of a series of transformations



Photo: Pixabay

in youth justice policy in Scotland all influenced by Edinburgh Study findings including: transforming the Scottish youth justice policy framework from a target-driven culture predicated on harsh and punitive approaches to a welfare-based and holistic paradigm which emphasised 'getting it right for every child' and 'early and effective intervention' (from 2006). The national roll-out of a new Whole Systems Approach to dealing with young people in trouble across all 32 Local Authorities (from 2011) resulting in dramatic reductions in youth offending and major reductions (for the first time since records began) in the number of young people held in custody. It also formed the sole basis for major amendments to the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 (Part 8, section 188), restricting the disclosure status of offences committed in childhood, and enhancing employability amongst young adults.

As a result of all of these changes compared to 2006/07 there are now 14,000 fewer children referred annually to the children's hearings system, 23,000 fewer under 21s being convicted in Scottish courts annually, and 3,000 fewer under 21s being sent to prison annually. By keeping these young people out of the criminal justice system this has had a substantial beneficial effect on reducing the number of adults in the system in later years.

Find out more about the study at www.edinstudy.law.ed.ac.uk

Saving our Seas through Law

With more than 10,000 miles of coastline, Scotland has a responsibility to ensure their long-term sustainable use.

A research team at Edinburgh Law School led by Professor James Harrison collaborated with the Community of Arran Seabed Trust to exchange knowledge on the existing legal framework for marine environmental protection on the one hand, and the extant practical challenges in implementation of the law at the local level on the other hand. The SOS-Law Project ultimately aimed to recommend ways of strengthening the Scottish legal framework.

As part of the project, recommendations were discussed with a broader stakeholder group at a workshop hosted by the Law School in July of last year. The project also produced a number of policy briefs on matters from the

Scottish Marine Protected Area Network to fishing restrictions and legal tools for the management of these protected areas.

Find out more about the project at www.law.ed.ac.uk/research/research-projects/saving-our-seas-through-law



Photo: L J Cunningham / Lighthouse, Holy Island, Arran / CC BY-SA 2.0

Artificial Intelligence and the International Rule of Law

What is the relationship between international legal obligations and the emerging applications of artificial intelligence in the laws of war, human rights and refugee law?

The Artificial Intelligence and the International Rule of Law project aims to explore these fundamental questions with a series of workshops, looking at three areas in particular: AI and battlefield decision-making under the laws of war; AI and the digitalisation of welfare policy; and AI and refugee determination and border control.

Each workshop will develop a case study based on an existing technology or in-development platform, and engage with policy-makers, computer scientists, technologists, industry representatives and individuals working at the cutting-edge of developing and using these systems.

The aim of the workshops is to build an international network of research and collaboration which develops common frameworks of understanding and knowledge exchange on issues related to AI and international rule of law.



Photo: www.unsplash.com/@franki

Professor Nehal Bhuta and Dr Rebecca Sutton of the Law School are two members of the project team which also includes fellow researchers from the University of Edinburgh as well as international members.

The workshop series is funded by Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland under its inaugural Carnegie Research Workshops scheme, and is also supported by the University of Edinburgh's College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Challenge Investment Fund, Edinburgh Law School and the Edinburgh Futures Institute.

Go to www.law.ed.ac.uk/research/research-projects to discover more of our research projects.



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