

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY LECTURES FOR ALL

# INSIGHTS

VIRTUAL LECTURES

February – May 2021

**Free online lectures**

### ■ Tuesday 9 February

#### **President Biden: a clean slate, a correction to the norm, or more of the same?**

Dr Sophia Gaston, Director, British Foreign Policy Group

The mission, tone and scope of President Biden's presidency will be shaped by America's domestic landscape, with implications for how the 'special relationship' between the US and the UK will evolve in the post-Trump era. The Director of the British Foreign Policy Group – an independent think tank working to strengthen the UK's international engagement and understanding of global affairs – considers the issues.

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### ■ Thursday 11 February

LGBT+ History Month Lecture

#### **Is the gay novel dead?**

Paul Burston, Journalist and Author

Novelist Alan Hollinghurst declared that 'the gay novel has had its day'. Nothing could be further from the truth. The political context may have changed, but the need to tell our stories is as strong as ever. Paul Burston is the author of six novels and curator and host of award-winning LGBTQ+ literary salon, Polari, at the Southbank Centre.

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### ■ Tuesday 16 February Note: 6.30pm start

Defence Lecture

#### **Why do we fight? Evolutionary neuroscience meets conflict studies**

Dr Mike Martin, Visiting War Studies Fellow,  
King's College London

Political scientists often argue that ideas and values cause people to sacrifice themselves for the groups that they live in – be they bands of hunter-gatherers, or nation states. But this runs up against evolution, which is about survival and reproduction of the individual. Dr Martin will explore the theory that certain subconscious desires drive people to fight in wars, and what is more, enjoy doing so. He will argue that morals, religions and ideologies, and the cognition behind them, actually limit warfare by helping humans build larger social groups.

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■ **Thursday 18 February**

**The Corona crash: How the pandemic will change capitalism**



Grace Blakeley, Economist and Author

The coronavirus pandemic heralded one of the most catastrophic financial crashes in history. In March 2020, stock markets collapsed. In April unemployment figures skyrocketed and the price of oil went negative. Meanwhile, the human cost is recorded in an ever-spiralling death toll as the world, it seems, was in lockdown. Whatever happens, we can never go back to business as normal. This moment calls for a radical programme similar to the Green New Deal that demands social justice, equality, and an economy with the future of the planet at the fore. If not, the alternatives may be even worse than we feared.

■ **Thursday 25 February**

**Age of the techno-scene: Why we will need the arts and humanities to tame the tiger of the '4th Industrial Revolution' and artificial intelligence**



Professor Andrew Thompson, Nuffield College,  
University of Oxford

It is widely argued that the '4th Industrial Revolution' will be fundamentally different from earlier industrial revolutions in 'scope, complexity and scale'. What challenges will the digital age and proliferation of information, processed at ever greater speeds, pose to the future of society, the health of democracy, the distribution of power economically, and to our quintessential human capacities of self-reflection, empathy and compassion? This lecture examines the crucial role of research in the arts and humanities as we head into, and try to make sense of, the '4th Industrial Revolution'.

[www.ncl.ac.uk/events/public-lectures](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/events/public-lectures)

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## ■ Tuesday 2 March

### **Child poverty in the North East region**

Jonathan Bradshaw, Emeritus Professor of Social Policy, University of York



Celebrating the life and contribution of Professor John Veit-Wilson and the move of the North East Child Poverty Commission to Newcastle University, this lecture will consider the evidence on the most recent trends and spatial distribution of child poverty in the North East, reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of that evidence, in particular in the context of Covid-19. It will also include a review of the impact of the post-Covid interventions and prescribe an agenda for future action.

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## ■ Thursday 4 March

### **Stuck: How vaccine rumours start and why they don't go away**

Professor Heidi J Larson, Author and Director of The Vaccine Confidence Project



Debates around vaccines' necessity – along with questions around their side-effects – are occurring now more than ever. Today's anti-vaccine positions find audiences where they previously did not exist. Professor Larson will discuss how, more than anything, the issues surrounding vaccine hesitancy are about people feeling left out of the conversation. A new dialogue that addresses the many types of vaccine hesitancy and the social factors that perpetuate them is long overdue.

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## ■ Tuesday 9 March

Fickling Lecture on Developments in Children's Literature

### **What is life?**

Sir Paul Nurse, Chief Executive, Francis Crick Institute



Nobel prize-winner Paul Nurse has spent his career revealing how living cells work. In this lecture, he will consider the question 'What is life?' by discussing five great ideas of biology, ranging from the 'cell' to 'the logic of life'. By considering these concepts, a direction of travel is set towards a definition of life.

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■ **Thursday 11 March**

## **What's the story? The job of directing character-led action films**

Marc Jobst, Writer and Director

'A director must be a policeman, a midwife, a psychoanalyst, a sycophant and a bastard', said Billy Wilder. Making a television series involves hundreds of brilliant creatives. The director has to lead those skills to a single vision, within the pressure of time and budget. Director of action shows *The Witcher* (Netflix), *Daredevil*, *The Punisher* (Marvel) and intense character dramas, *Hannibal* (NBC) and *Tin Star* (Sky/Amazon), Marc Jobst considers the truth in Billy Wilder's words.

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■ **Thursday 18 March**

## **Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate crime – why is it rising and what can be done?**

Iman Atta OBE, Director Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks)

Tell MAMA works to support victims of anti-Muslim hatred and ensures that incidents are mapped, monitored and measured across the UK. It provides training for local authorities and police groups in understanding the changing nature of anti-Muslim hate. Iman Atta will explore anti-Muslim prejudice and suggest what action is needed to address the rise of racism in our communities.

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■ **Tuesday 23 March**

## **Britain and Europe: An unsettled history**

Professor Helen Parr, Keele University

Membership of the European Commission and European Union was connected, directly or indirectly, to an unsettled history; Britain's adaptation to its role in the world after the end of Empire and the changed global politics following the Second World War. In this lecture, Professor Parr will explore how Britain's relations with Europe, and sense of its role in world politics will continue to adjust after Brexit.

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## ■ Thursday 25 March

### Three tales from the biomedical frontier



Winners of the Faculty of Medical Sciences' postgraduate public speaking prize describe their quests at the cutting edge of science and how their findings may underpin the medical treatments of tomorrow.

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## ■ Tuesday 27 April

Tyneside Geographical Society Lecture

### Why geographers need to stand up for the planet



Zion Lights, Author and Activist

The global landscape of planet Earth is changing due to the climate and ecological emergency. How can we develop methods of adaptation and mitigation to protect countless species from extinction? Geographers have been studying climate change, and its causes and effects, for decades. This study is essential, but now is the most momentous time to become actively engaged, to shape what the future will look like. This planet, and all life on it, needs you to take a stand.

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## ■ Thursday 6 May

### Brexit and Agriculture: What's next for British farmers?



Dr Carmen Hubbard, Newcastle University

Agriculture will face new challenges now that the UK has left the European Union (EU). Brexit will also affect the source and price of our food. Under the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), British farmers benefitted from generous subsidies. Is Brexit a blessing or a curse? This lecture provides insights into some of the issues, focussing on how CAP has shaped UK agriculture over the past half-century and the changes that are likely to ensue as a result of Brexit.

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**KEY:** The INSIGHTS programme is designed around the University's world-leading research and the five key areas of strength identified by our Vision and Strategy. To find out more please visit: [www.ncl.ac.uk/who-we-are/strengths](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/who-we-are/strengths)

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## ■ Tuesday 11 May

### **From All Writers Matter to Zadie Smith (via Badgers) – a speedy A to Z of being a Black British children's writer in a publishing industry still working on diversity**



Patrice Lawrence, Writer and Journalist

In 2019, Elizabeth Acevedo became the first writer of colour to win the UK's CILIP Carnegie Medal in its 83-year history. When we walk into the children's section of bookshops, we can easily spot books by Angie Thomas, Nic Stone, Jason Reynolds and Kalynn Bayron. So, what's so tough about being a black writer? Let's talk...

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## ■ Thursday 13 May

Jacobson Lecture



### **Long-Covid: What will be the legacy from the pandemic?**

Professor Chris Brightling, University of Leicester

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all our lives. As the world picks itself up with implementation of vaccines and new treatments, many will have lost loved ones, and some will still be suffering from the consequence of Covid-19. What is Long-Covid? Is it important and will this leave an indelible mark of the pandemic for years to come?

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## ■ Thursday 20 May

Inaugural Barbara Strang Lecture



### **Accent prejudice: #us an' all?**

Professor Joan Beal, University of Sheffield

In October 2020, a student from Gateshead hit the headlines with her report on the treatment of students from working-class backgrounds at an elite university. *The Guardian* reported other students coming forward with accounts of how mockery of their accents and backgrounds had undermined their confidence. Professor Joan Beal outlines the history of accent prejudice in Britain and discusses why it is still a problem in the 21st century.

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For Data For One Planet For Cities and Place

For Ageing and Health For Culture and Creative Arts

**From Newcastle. For the world.**

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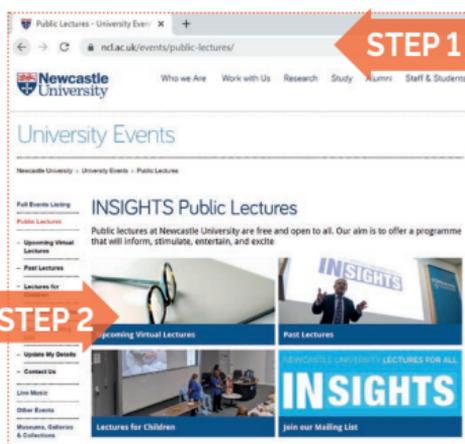
At Newcastle University, we are committed to the health and safety of our students, colleagues and supporters. Due to ongoing concerns around Covid-19 we have chosen to offer a fully virtual lecture series in Spring 2021.

INSIGHTS Virtual Lectures cover a wide range of topics delivered by leading public figures and eminent scholars and are available to watch on our YouTube channel. Unless otherwise stated, lectures will begin at 5.30pm and last for approximately 30 minutes, plus time for questions. See the panel below for information about how to access virtual lectures.

Information and links to upcoming events can be found at [www.ncl.ac.uk/events/public-lectures](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/events/public-lectures). Additions or changes to the programme will also be published on our website.

## How to watch an **INSIGHTS Virtual Lecture**

You can watch a virtual lecture using a computer, tablet or smart phone.



### STEP 1

Open a web browser (eg Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox) and type the following into the address bar:

[www.ncl.ac.uk/events/public-lectures](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/events/public-lectures)

### STEP 2

Click on 'Upcoming Virtual Lectures' and choose the lecture you want to watch



### STEP 3

Click on the red 'watch' button

Lectures will be available to watch from the time and date shown in this programme card.

If you experience any problems, please contact the Public Lectures Office for assistance.

**Stay connected:** Website: [www.ncl.ac.uk/events/public-lectures](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/events/public-lectures)  
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