

Call for Papers

Decolonisation and the Law School: A one-day workshop

Submissions are open for a workshop on Decolonisation and the Law School, to be held on 13 September 2019 at the University of Bristol Law School.

The conversation about decolonisation of the university and curricula continues to raise questions for knowledge production and transmission in educational institutions. Decolonisation also raises questions about the impact of the preceding issues on people within and outside these educational institutions. As legal academics, we should explore what the decolonisation debate means for us and what the possibility of decolonised law means for the relationship between law and society.

How do we become more aware of, and directly mention, how the law came to be and how that 'coming-to-be' has influenced how law is taught, what law is taught, and what law is now? How do we teach law as the study of social order, and elucidate how racial stratifications in the social are formed and maintained? How do we examine how legal subjectivities are related to other issues, such as the attainment gap and proportionally lower representation of non-white staff in universities? All this is most important if we believe that the law should function as a tool of positive social change and justice.

The decolonisation debate is an opportunity for us as legal academics to reflect on the origins of our own individual academic practices as well as the content of our curriculum.

Law's uses – historic and contemporary – have sometimes subverted its functions of justice and equality. Socio-legal theory suggests that law has, at the very least, been complicit in entrenching race as a social construct, in embedding the inequality that arises from racialisation. Thus, decolonisation as an approach within the law school must have substance and not be about cosmetic changes.

As Bhambra et al state in their book, 'Decolonising the University' [2018], decolonization "*is a way of thinking about the world that takes colonialism, empire and racism as its empirical and discursive objects of study; it resituates these phenomena as key shaping forces of the contemporary world, in a context where their role has been systematically effaced from view... to offer alternative ways of thinking about the world and alternative forms of political praxis*".

This workshop intends to examine the preceding issues as they relate to academic practice in UK law schools. How do we achieve our decolonial theoretical and practical aims in our teaching of law? What are the limitations and possible challenges? How do we overcome them?

We welcome topics around decolonising the law school, including, but not limited to:

- What does decolonisation mean for law schools in the UK?
- How do we decolonise the law curriculum?
- What practices have been tried that enable decolonisation?
- What external forces impact the content of the curriculum?
- What would a decolonised law curriculum look like?
- What would a decolonised law school look like?
- What practices are necessary for a decolonial law teacher?

Special Issue of *The Law Teacher*

As an output from the conference we aim to curate, for a special issue of *The Law Teacher*, a collection of essays focused on issues centred on decolonising and the law school.

Timeline

Please submit the following to foluke.adebisi@bristol.ac.uk by **31 March 2019**: -

- Paper title
- Extended abstract (800 words)
- Author bio (200 words)
- Indicate whether you want your abstract to be consider for either the journal or the conference or both
- Full papers (optional at this stage) – papers should be no more than 8,000 words in length, using the following Author Guidelines available online: [Instructions for Authors](#)

For inclusion in the journal, we will expect full length papers to be ready for submission by the end **September 2019**.

If you are unable to attend the conference, you are welcome to submit an abstract for consideration for the special issue.

If you have any questions please contact Dr Foluke Adebisi foluke.adebisi@bristol.ac.uk.