

Centre for Cultures of Reproduction, Technologies and Health



Annual Report

2020





stablished in 2014, our centre provides an intellectual space for intensive research, critical thinking and the development of an interdisciplinary body of scholarship on reproductive and health cultures. Framed by a specific interest in the processes of power and addressing health inequities, we promote research on the social, medical, public health, legal, and moral lenses through which reproductive health is perceived, produced, concretised and articulated (for instance, through new policies, engagement with new technologies, or new forms of social relations in reproduction).

With our unique focus on cultural ethnographic perspectives, our centre facilitates knowledge transfer partnerships between anthropologists, social and human scientists, health researchers, medical professionals, practitioners, legal activists and policy makers working internationally on critical issues in global maternal, sexual reproductive health (SRH), emerging technologies and health and human rights. A specific aim is to facilitate international dialogue on 'Southern' analytic models and practices. CORTH fosters a strong research environment for its international and home doctoral or postdoctoral students and

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through hosting visiting researchers and fellows, we seek to develop collaborative projects, produce quality research outputs and connect Sussex faculty and graduate students to key thinkers and policy makers in the field of SRH research.

The CORTH team

We have 204 members, including 51 Sussex faculty, 40 international senior research associates and advisors, 54 external members and visitors, and 59 internal and external graduate members. Based in the School of Global Studies at Sussex, CORTH works closely with other Schools on campus: the School of Law, Politics and Sociology (LPS), the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), the School of Education and Social Work (ESW) and the Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS). CORTH is directed by Maya Unnithan, Professor of Social and Medical Anthropology in the School of Global Studies. Maya leads CORTH with her fellow co-directors, Hayley MacGregor, Research Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies. Maria Federica Moscati, Senior Lecturer in Family Law (School of Law, Politics and Sociology) and Chi Eziefula, Clinical Senior Lecturer in Global Health and Infection (Brighton and Sussex Medical School).

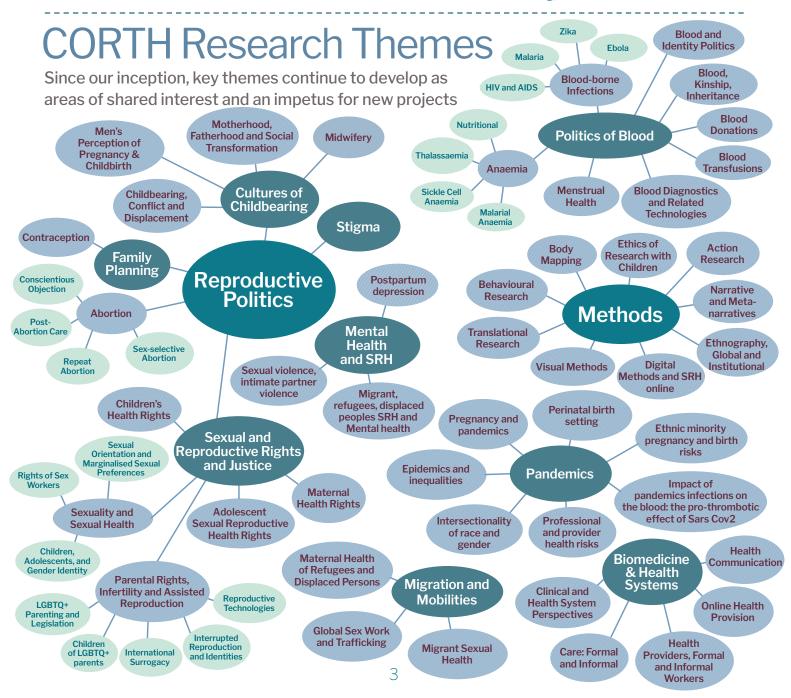
Aims and Objectives

- To bring culture, political economy and discursive power frameworks to the heart of maternal, sexual and reproductive healthcare scholarship, practice, policy making and implementation.
- To bring researchers and non-academic partners to address and have policy impact in the critical domains of reproductive, sexual and maternal health, especially with reference to health inequalities, technology regulation and population policies.
- To bring together stakeholders in reproductive health research, practice and policy globally, i.e., across northern and southern nations, through forging connections across a number of networks within each context, including: state and civil society actors, with a specific aim of engendering South-South exchange; to design collaborative research and policy impact projects with the partners identified in these networks; and to promote the work of researchers in civil society organisations.
- To translate and communicate ethnographic research methods for the understanding and use of health providers, public health practitioners and policy makers; to hold training workshops in ethnographic methods for health researchers; to bridge the methodological gap between healthcare policy, quantitative health research and ethnography. To actively engage with the media to influence public debates on SRH related issues, the CORTH Blog is one outlet to achieve this aim.
 - To gain large programme and centre funding to house active researchers and visitors, sustain international networks, and establish Sussex as a global hub for research and dissemination on sexual reproductive health, maternal health and health rights. To bring together a cross-section of Sussex academics working on SRH issues across the university network to further enable international links.

Our values: interdisciplinary, critical thinking, collaborative research

Black Lives Matter

CORTH members stand in solidarity with Black Lives Matter. We are against institutional racism, repressive violence and discrimination and we are committed to pursuing reproductive justice for all.



CORTH News

Welcome

 A very warm welcome to our new CORTH co-director Dr Chi Eziefula; Senior Lecturer in Infection at Brighton & Sussex Medical School and an Honorary Consultant in Infectious Diseases and Microbiology at Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust. Chi combines clinical expertise in infection, tropical medicine and medical microbiology with academic



global health research. Her research background is in malaria epidemiology, clinical trials, and infectious diseases, with wider interests in migrant health and global women's health.

- Welcome to our new Research Centre Administrator Sophie Hurford who has continued working within the School of Global Studies after completing her masters in the Anthropology of Development and Social Transformation at the University of Sussex.
- Welcome to our new Sussex faculty advisory board members Dr Collins Iwuji and Dr Mei Trueba from the Brighton and Sussex Medical School, Dr Paul Boyce and Dr Beth Mills from the Department of Anthropology, School of Global Studies.

Hearty felicitations to:

 Po-Han Lee (former CORTH doctoral member) for his new position as Assistant Professor at the Global Health program, College of Public Health, National Taiwan University. He will be teaching on health and human rights, global health politics and global health law.



- Rosie Wigmore for her new position as a Research Analyst at Development Reimagined, a Kenyan-owned, Beijing-based international development consultancy that specialises in Africa-China relations.
- Miranda Marks for completing her Masters degree from the University of Leipzig, Germany with commendation for thesis titled "Negotiating Control, Trust, and Choice: Feminist Narratives on Contraceptive Decision-Making and the Intrauterine Device in the United States". Miranda spent a term at CORTH as an Erasmus research fellow in the Spring of 2018.
- CORTH co-director Hayley MacGregor for the Wellcome Trust/ DFID discretional grant for the Social Science in Humanitarian Action Platform, hosted at IDS led by Melissa Leach, Annie Wilkinson and Hayley MacGregor. The Platform has been very involved in the COVID-19 response and Melissa Leach and Hayley MacGregor are on the WHO social science expert group for COVID-19.
- Congratulations to Maria Moscati co-director of CORTH, who has made it to the second stage of the Law Teacher of the Year Award 2020.

"When I was at CORTH, I was in the midst of analyzing my first round of research... It was an invaluable experience for which I'm very thankful!" Miranda Marks

June 2020 (University of Leipzig, Germany)

Visitors

In our new academic year, we look forward to welcoming...

- Dr Daniela Alaattinoğlu, who has won an award from The Icelandic Research Fund for her project on intersex people's rights and mobilisation in the Nordic countries. The project is due to start in September this year and Daniela will be based at CORTH as a visiting fellow for part of this project.
- Gloria Abena Ampim, Visiting PhD researcher, University of Bergen, Department of Health Promotion and Development.
 She is conducting a qualitative study titled "Transforming gender relations? Male involvement in maternal and infant health care in Ghana." Gloria will be based at CORTH for a term.
- Professor Astrid Blystad, Professor in medical anthropology, University of Bergen, Norway with particular research interest in maternal health with an empirical focus on fertility, infertility, mother to child transmission of HIV, obstetric fistula, female genital cutting, incontinence and prolapse.
- Professor Karen Marie Moland, Professor at the Centre for International Health, University of Bergen Norway with a particular focus on health policy in local contexts, health services utilisation and provision, culture and maternal health, adolescent reproductive health and rights and HIV.

Welcome to New Members

External Members: Rebecca Blaylock (Researcher, British Pregnancy Advisory Service, UK), Dr Nadine Beckman (Department of Life Sciences, University of Roehampton, UK), Karin Bage (Education Officer, Department of Public Health Sciences, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden), Dr Rebecca French (Associate Professor of Sexual and Reproductive Health London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK), Dr Swati Gola (Lecturer in Law, Exeter University, UK), Dr Sreeparna Chattopadhyay (Consultant, Public Health Foundation of India), Danny Harvey (Executive Director, Concern Worldwide), Sujit Ghosh (Global Health Consultant and Founder Kushal India Project, UK), Professor Saraswathi Vedam (Professor of Midwifery and Lead Investigator of the Birth Place Lab, University of British Columbia), Katie Conway (Doctor at Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals, UK), S. Ramanathan (Co-founder at Development Solutions, India).

Faculty Members: Dr Anke Schwittay (Senior Lecturer In Anthropology & International Development), Dr Dimitra Petrakaki (Deputy Head Of Department Of Management, University of Sussex Business School), Dr Ben Hunter (Lecturer In International Development), Dr Gitau Mburu (Honorary Research Fellow, School of Global Studies), Dr Daniel Michelson (Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology), Dr Collins Iwuji (Senior Lecturer in Sexual Health & HIV Medicine, BSMS), Dr Mei Trueba (Lecturer in Global Health, BSMS).

Doctoral Students: Neemah Ahamed (Research Student, School of Law, Politics and Sociology), Annabelle Inman (Doctoral student in Anthropology), Eleanor Kashouris (Doctoral student in Sociology) Laura Del Duca (Masters Student at IDS), Patti Gonsalves (Research student in School of Psychology), Sophie Collins (Doctoral Student IDS& Global Studies).

New Member Focus

Welcome to Neemah Ahamed, a doctoral student in the School of Law at the University of Sussex. She is the co-founder of an initiative called 'Panties with Purpose' which aims to raise awareness of the



multiple challenges of period poverty. The initiative helps girls in Kenya to access menstrual products as well as educating them about reproductive health and menstrual hygiene management. Since the initiative was set up in 2011, it has distributed over 40,000 pairs of underwear and menstrual hygiene products and helped over 12,000 girls in over 100 locations in Kenya including orphanages, prisons and hospitals.

Welcome to **Dr. Sreeparna Chattopadhyay** who trained as a medical anthropologist and is currently an independent researcher based in The Netherlands. Sreeparna's most recent project involved designing an on-line course on Gender, Intersectionality and Health Systems commissioned by the World Health Organization. Her research interests include



gender-based violence, maternal health and family studies. She has emerging interests in the anthropology of childhood and parenting. In the past year, her research has been published by the journals Economic and Political Weekly and the Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma. In an effort to make her research more accessible, Sreeparna has written for Indian news magazines such as The Wire and Article24 as well as international outlets like the BBC. Her blog 'A Crisis of (Feminist) Faith Through An Encounter In A Clinical Setting' can be found on our CORTH website http://www.sussex.ac.uk/corth/publications/blog/2020-06-02

Welcome to **Dr. Ulla McKnight** a Research Fellow (Sociology) in the School of Law, Politics and Sociology, University of Sussex. Ulla finished her PhD in the Sociology Department at Goldsmiths, University of London with a thesis entitled 'The challenge of HIV within an HIV specialist antenatal clinic in London: providing and receiving care within an HIV diaspora'. Her research



to date has shown that technologies used in the management of HIV filter and subsequently reflect and reaffirm, on the level

of the body, global issues related to unequal access to advanced biomedical technologies and care. The research foregrounds the significance of the imagination, the unspoken and temporality as undervalued components of HIV antenatal care from the perspective of both practitioner and patient.

Dr. Collins Iwuji Clinical Senior Lecturer in Sexual Health and HIV Medicine and an Honorary Consultant Physician at the Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals (BSUH) joins our CORTH Advisory board. Collins obtained his medical degree from the Faculty of Medicine, Abia State University, Nigeria, followed by training in general internal in Birmingham. He completed his specialist training in Sexual



Health and HIV Medicine at BSUH, NHS Trust in 2011. Collins has an MSc in Epidemiology from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London. During his doctoral research at the University College of London, Collins investigated whether earlier treatment of HIV in rural South Africa will lead to drug resistance of the prevalence and form likely to make HIV elimination difficult. He is particularly interested in the use of ART for the prevention of sexual transmission of HIV having undertaken the first population-based clinical trial in the world evaluating the impact of ART on HIV incidence in rural South Africa. Currently active areas of research include ART adherence, HIV cascade of care, HIV drug resistance and the relationship between climate change and health in the context of achieving sustainable development goals.

Jayna Kothari, Senior Advocate at Supreme Court of India and Executive Director at the Center for Law and Policy Research, Bangalore. Jayna's research and practice interests include constitutional law, gender and sexuality law, disability rights, and discrimination law. She had argued the Independent Thought case in the Supreme Court where the Court recognized child marital rape as a criminal offense in India and the



sexual and reproductive health rights of girls was recognised as a part of their right to life. Her work on gender and reproductive rights include legal and policy reform in the areas of child marriage, abortion rights and law reform in these fields. She is also a member of the Sub-Committee to a Government of India Task Force set up recently to review the age of motherhood and maternal mortality.

CORTH Social Media and Website



CORTH Twitter continues to have a highly active presence at the University of Sussex. Our Twitter handle has a regular engagement which involves daily tweets, live tweeting of events and the publicising of our members' research work with an average of 8000+ tweet impressions monthly. We gained 42 new followers in the past 9 months

and currently have over 500 followers in total. Our Twitter handle is managed by Sophie Hurford, our centre administrator and Devanik Saha, a PhD researcher based at the Institute of Development Studies and the School of Global Studies at Sussex.

Top Tweet earned 982 impressions

PhD researcher @rebexashley presenting her work on midwives in Iceland. pic.twitter.com/w11IxXe3GZ



CORTH website as model for Transform Schools, People for Action

Transform Schools an NGO in India has been directly impacted by CORTH's website and social media channels. Here is what they wrote about us:

"The seamless integration between social media channels and the Centre's website was what appealed to us immediately, besides a clear representation and communication of the wonderful work they are doing."

https://www.transformschools.in/

Making a Difference: Impact and Engagement

This past year saw CORTH members undertake a wide range of public engagement activities as detailed below (also available on our website at www.sussex.ac.uk/corth/research/impact).

CORTH COVID-19 RESPONSES CORTH directors and members have joined and led several domestic and international initiatives concerning the impact of COVID-19 on health and reproduction and pandemic preparedness and response, from

submission of evidence to UK parliamentary groups to media appearances and membership of global taskforce groups.

Parliamentary Submission of Research Evidence on Inquiry into Access to Contraception

Submitted to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sexual and Reproductive Health in the UK. 22 June 2020

This submission provides key information about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on access to contraception over recent months. It mainly explores the impact of changes to services, issues and inequalities around access to contraception, examples of good practice and challenges to the restoration of contraception services.

Submission lead: CORTH member Dr Paula Baraitser (Director SRH:24; King's College Global Health)

"Just before the break, I was lucky enough to visit two research groups which exemplify the very best of Sussex. Both the Centre for Cultures of Reproduction, Technologies and Health and the Centre for Migration Studies are multi-disciplinary, intellectually exciting and engaged in important ways in shaping practice. What I particularly cherish is that both groups work with partners around the world in a spirit of real collaboration and joint learning rather than – as is too common in many western universities – thinking that they have the answers."

Vice Chancellor University of Sussex Jan 2020

Parliamentary Submission of Research Evidence on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and COVID-19: Unequal Impact

Submitted to the Women and Equalities Committee Inquiry into 'Unequal Impact: Coronavirus and the impact on people with protected characteristics'

The ongoing Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic has above all exposed systemic inequalities in healthcare and the powerlessness and vulnerability of individuals and groups to access safe and high quality Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) services and care. This submission highlights the importance of framing sexual and reproductive health matters through human rights standards and a reproductive justice framework (especially during pandemics when they can be most easily overlooked). This submission draws on experiences from within the UK as well as India, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Belgium and Estonia.

To view the above submissions please visit the website: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/corth/research/impact

CORTH Blog Highlights

Our blog site continues to be a space for the critical exchange of knowledge and discussion from around the globe. This year our blogs have been mainly about COVID-19 issues. Our recent blog posts include:

Erasing hard-won gains: how pandemic response is undermining maternal safety in India

22 JUNE 2020

Written by Senior CORTH advisor Jashodhara Dasgupta, this blog examines how the instant cessation of movement during lockdown in India prevented many pregnant women from accessing facility-based care. Dasgupta

draws on the shocking reports of pregnant women being turned away from hospitals sometimes costing them their lives. When the lockdown was suddenly announced and then extended the state appeared to have forgotten those millions of women expected to give birth. The government issued a set of guidelines a month after lockdown started, but there



was great confusion about emergency admissions. Pregnant women who needed critical care had to face enormous hurdles to obtain treatment at an appropriate hospital. The pandemic has amplified many inequalities and shows up sharply the state's abdication of responsibility for prevention of lives lost, putting the entire responsibility of health protection on the individual

citizen. Dasgupta argues that in order to win back the trust of pregnant women, the state will have to account publicly for how the millions of deliveries actually took place and how abortions, miscarriages and childbirth complications were handled.

Link: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/corth/ publications/blog/2020-06-22



Sexual and Reproductive Rights in time of the COVID-19 Pandemic: reflections and notes

APRIL 2020

This blog was written by Liri Oja, a former visiting researcher at CORTH. It examines how sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) have been affected by the current pandemic: birth partners are not allowed into hospitals to support those

CORTH Co-Director Dr Chi Eziefula interviewed for a Channel 4 news special documentary about COVID-19



CORTH co-director Dr Chi Eziefula (expert in Infectious Disease and Global Health) was interviewed for a Channel 4 news special documentary about COVID-19. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBOwFBu05c8

Chi has also recorded a podcast with Q&A about COVID-19 hosted by University of Brighton: https://open.spotify.com/

Research on Thrombotic risk in COVID-19

A study by Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS) has supported the use of blood thinners to treat some COVID-19 patients (see list of publications at the end of this report). The disease is associated with a high incidence of venous thromboembolism, blood clots in the venous circulation, according to the research. Co-author, Dr Chi Eziefula (CORTH co-director) said: "Identifying which patients have a risk of, and clinical evidence of, a venous thromboembolism in COVID-19 is highly important for two reasons. Firstly, because venous thromboembolism is linked to a risk of death and secondly because it is treatable with anticoagulant medications."

Global perinatal task force on birth setting

This global taskforce led by Professor Saraswathi Veddam at the University of British Columbia is composed of over 200 perinatal experts from around the world. It is developing a virtual resource for use by birth professionals and provides templates, best practice guidelines for managing safe,



evidence-based, rightsprotected maternal care when health systems are strained by COVID. The taskforce has curated a Repository of over



250 documents, videos, and other resources, for diverse health settings. Maya Unnithan CORTH director is on the Research and Evaluation committee. The resource is being technologically enabled by the Firelight organisation through a layered GIS mapping platform for ease of access across low-, med- and high-connectivity countries/regions. CORTH member and Sussex PhD, Rachel Olsen is co-Director of the Canadian Firelight Organisation providing the interactive digital mapping tool.

Social Science in Humanitarian Action Platform co-led by Hayley MacGregor, CORTH co-director

The Wellcome-DFID funding Social Science in Humanitarian Action Platform (SSHAP https://www.socialscienceinaction.org/) which is co-led at IDS by Melissa Leach, Annie Wilkinson and Hayley MacGregor, is contributing anthropological and broader social science perspectives to understandings of the COVID-19 pandemic. SSHAP produces briefs to provide insights to guide operational questions related to health emergencies and produced briefs on aspects such as considerations for informal settlements, home care for COVID-19, 'Shielding' or protection of people deemed vulnerable to disease, and understandings of physical and social distancing. Hayley MacGregor has been a member of the WHO Roadmap social science expert group on COVID-19. One of the themes considered by this group relates to sexual and reproductive health services and COVID-19, particularly with respect to secondary health impacts and disruption of services as a result of coronavirus outbreaks in different contexts, or of the public health measures to contain spread of the virus.

giving birth, supply chains of contraception medicine are broken, access to safe and legal abortion limited. Liri examines how the decisions that have led to a restriction or a cancellation of services are rooted in old narratives. The same old narratives that have continuously supported systematic disregard for framing sexual and reproductive health issues as human rights issues with concrete international standards and accountability. Although the pandemic has created an illusion of newness, problems with sexual and reproductive rights did not start with the COVID-19-fuelled restrictions, we are just seeing long-existing injustices and inequalities.

Link: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/corth/ publications/blog/2020-04-16

Other COVID-related blog posts:

External member Christina Weis has sent us the Centre for Reproduction Research COVID blog series:

https://centreforreproductionresearch 962893217.wordpress.com/2020/04/16/ covid 19-and-reproduction-digest/

UNFPA State of World Population Report 2020

JULY 2020

Maya Unnithan, director of CORTH was invited as one of four panellists to comment on the UNFPA State of World Population Report 2020, UK launch event, organised by Matt Jackson (UNFPA UK director) on 30 June. She posted a blog on her comments.

The report, Against My Will: Defying the Practices that Harm Women and Girls and Undermine Equality focuses on the scale, prevalence and redressal of three silent, endemic practices of gender discrimination and stereotyping: genderbiased sex selection, female genital cutting and child marriage. The report explores why such harmful practices persist around the world and what can be done to defy them. Two pioneering contributions of the report are first, its deep understanding of harm as embedded within systemic processes of discrimination and gender stereotyping. And, second, demonstrating how such harms are intrinsically connected to human rights violations. A focus on rights, though important, is not enough to

challenge gender-based discrimination. We need to think beyond rights about delivering justice. Ideas, moralities, perceptions and practices that uphold gender discrimination in everyday contexts must be challenged within households, schools, health-centres, planning and policy offices and academia. It is important as the report highlights for men as husbands, fathers, policymakers, and healthcare providers to use their privilege to redress gender discrimination for greater social justice.

Link: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/corth/publications/blog/2020-07-03



Other Impact



ICPD+25 Conference

The International Conference on Population and Development. ICPD+25 took place in Nairobi Kenya from the 12th to 14th of November 2019. The ICPD conference is an important global meeting of governments, SRH practitioners, policy makers, state and non-state organisations working to realise global rights to Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) services. The 1994 ICPD conference in Cairo was historic as it set the global agenda on Reproductive and Sexual Health as a right which in turn influenced global policy on the delivery of SRH services. The 2019 conference in Nairobi brought together key stakeholders in SRH services from across 188 countries, heads of state, ministers, parliamentarians, technical experts, NGOs, faith based organisations, business and community leaders, indigenous peoples, international financial organisations to evaluate the achievements and set new goals 25 years on from the 1994 conference in the light of the current Sustainability Development Goals and climate crisis.

CORTH member Dr Emilomo Ogbe (Postpartum Support Network Africa/Ghent University Belgium), Dr Rafael Van den Bergh (Medicines sans Frontiers Belgium), Ms Marevic Parcon (WGNRR Philippines) and Professor Maya Unnithan (CORTH, Sussex University) co-facilitated a workshop focused on integrating mental health care into sexual and reproductive health service provision in humanitarian contexts. The interactive session

Workshop organisers with the ICPD conference logo

involved the presentation of 'case studies', comprising of lessons learned in integrating medical, mental health, social and legal support in fragile and conflict affected settings and drew on inputs from the audience of policymakers and diverse international NGO members.

CLOCK (Community Legal Companion Scheme)

cLOCK is a legal companion project based at the Sussex Law School which is now working with CORTH to investigate ways of training students to enable them to offer support on sexual reproductive health and rights. CLOCK is led by Maria Moscati (CORTH co-director), Jeanette Ashton, and Alex Newbury from University of Brighton.

What is CLOCK?

FOR JUSTICE

CLOCK was first launched in 2012 by the School of Law at Keele University and is now implemented in several universities in the UK. The project trains students to assist litigants in person who do not have access to legal aid in the Family and County Court in Brighton and online.

Students help litigants in person to:

- Complete court forms
- Signpost to CLOCK partners (among others law firms, mediation providers, Citizens Advice, CAFCASS, RISE)
- Assist during the hearings by taking notes and with the preparation of legal bundles

The project has significant impact on students; litigants; and courts and has a place on the Sussex Family Law Justice Board. The project has received several public endorsements including by the President of the Family Division.

Areeb Mushtaq Ahmad, Law (LLB) with International Relations student who is entering his final year in September reflects on his contribution to the CLOCK project:

"Working for CLOCK in partnership with the <u>Sussex</u> <u>Legal Clinic</u> has been a very practical experience. This was a great chance to change possibilities into opportunities, as unlike many commercial organizations, this was a fully committed pro-bono project. This gave me a great sense of social consciousness and cause. I am proud to have

been a part of a great team where socio-economically marginalized litigants were assisted in times of absolute distress."

Areeb Mushtaq Ahmad CLOCK legal companion



Engagement with Voices in Exile

Over the Christmas period Dr Caroline Ackley and other CORTH members in the Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS) teamed up to collect donations for Voices in Exile, a brilliant Brighton-based charity working to support refugees, asylum seekers and those with no recourse to public funds. https://www.voicesinexile.org/

Due to the incredible amount of support for this project, CORTH and BSMS along with CORTH administrator Sophie Hurford will continue the donations to the project for the coming year with the donation box hosted in the School of Global Studies.



CORTH and the Department of Global Health and Infection have joined efforts to collect donations for Voices in Exile (VIE) with the support of Beauty Banks.

Voices in Exile works with refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants with no recourse to public funds. They offer practical and legal support, accompany and enable people to access services, and hold a weekly food and tolletries bank.

Each month we will be focusing on specific items that are most in demand at Voices in Exile. This month it's toiletries!

Toilet paper



SOPHIE HURFORD

Toothpaste and toothbrushes Body wash Hand wash Tissues

S brighton and sussex medical school

Shampoo and conditioner

Research Highlights and Updates

ZIKA Research Network Update

The Newton Institutional Links grant between IDS, Global Studies and the Federal University of Pernambuco ended officially in April 2019 but engagement activities have continued in Brazil. Five mothers in Recife whose lives have been completely changed as a result of the impact of the Zika virus on their children share their stories of strength, survival and love in a series of short films they have written, co-produced and co-directed from the University of Pernambuco. https://www.ids.ac.uk/news/five-years-on-from-zika-mothers-share-their-stories-about-the-long-term-impacts/

In March, Isabele Bachtold (IDS), discussed the findings from the Zika study in a webinar on Epidemics and Inequalities that IDS organised with Cebrap in São Paulo. The webinar brought together perspectives from anthropology, political science, economics and health systems research, combining insights from IDS (Isabele Bachtold), Cebrap (Vera Schattan Coelho), Fiocruz (Rômulo Paes de Sousa) and the health policy think-tank IEPS (Rudi Rocha). It was held in Portuguese, and included a high level of online interaction with participants via Zoom connections and a YouTube livestream. There is an English-language video summary where IDS Director Melissa Leach and the members of the webinar panel reflect on key lessons for the COVID-19 response and the importance of drawing on social science research to inform this response. https://www.ids.ac.uk/opinions/lessons-from-brazil-for-the-global-response-to-covid-19/

Inherited Blood Disorders, Globalisation and the Promise of Genomics – an Indian Case Study

This ESRC funded project led by Dr Sangeeta Chhattoo on policy making to do with thalassemia and sickle cell disease in India has been a very fruitful collaboration between the University of York,



John Hopkins University and the University of Sussex. Karl Atkin, Veena Das and CORTH members Maya Unnithan and Chhaya Pachauli among others have been involved in this exciting project since its inception in 2016. Sangeeta has sent us this report: 'It is now drawing

to a close. Due to the disruptions to international travel caused by the current COVID pandemic, we have had to postpone the conference scheduled for June at the University of Sussex, and a couple of final dissemination events until December 2020. However, one of the community events was held successfully in Maharashtra in November (pictured), providing an opportunity for sharing the findings and draft recommendations with the families and local healthcare practitioners. We are now in the process of writing the final policy and practice recommendations, whilst drafting the academic papers and rescheduling the conference, to be advertised closer to the date. We hope that some of us will continue to work together in the near future. As the fault lines of the Indian healthcare system are exposed in the everyday stories of poverty, deprivation and discrimination against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, our work teaches us to appreciate the commitment and sheer perseverance of parents, patients and dedicated healthcare practitioners at caring and making things work against all odds - what in the local parlance in Marathi and Hindi is called juggad'.

You can also follow updates by visiting: https://www.york.ac.uk/sociology/research/current-research/inherited-blood-disorders/

International Narrating Blood Network Update

In August 2019, our network partners Daniel Amoako-Sakyi (School of Health Sciences), Simon Mariwah (Dept. of Geography), and Alice Charwudzi (Dept. of Haematology) from the University of Cape Coast hosted Maya Unnithan for meetings with key stakeholders, field visits to draft forward research plans. The visit also included meetings at the University of Ghana in Legon at the School of Public Health. The visit was followed up by a collaborative workshop to develop a grant proposal held at the University of Sussex in October 2019. Over two weeks researchers from Ghana, India and Bangladesh discussed the complexities of anaemia and issues around methodologies and interventions. Meetings were held with different Sussex faculty Kwame Akyeompong (education), Heike Rabe (neonatologist), Tim Chevassut (haematologist) and UK partners to explore the connections with their existing research. The deliberations resulted in a draft proposal currently in the process of being submitted to funders.

See further information via the website: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/corth/research/ narrating_blood

We asked our partners what being part of the international narrating blood network has meant to them:

"I come from a gender and education background and it's been fascinating to understand the intersections of health and education in different country contexts and the network has provided a co-learning platform."

Shobhita Rajagopal

Gender and education specialist, IDS, Jaipur, India

"For me this has been transdisciplinarity in action, it came to life not only as a term but through getting to work with people from different disciplines. As a biomedical scientist I'm used to quantitative methods. Learning from other qualitative methods about the same issues has been insightful and has opened my eyes not just for this project but in all my research. Working with wonderful people and the interpersonal relations we formed has really brought the network to life."

Daniel Amoako-Sakyi



The Narrating Blood network is a

potential launchpad for expanding the public health expertise and knowledge of blood diseases/conditions in Bangladesh. We face a considerable lack of ethnographic or qualitative insight into community understandings of blood health. Simply put, we do not pay attention to how people talk about suffering from severe anaemia or as an adolescent girl managing her periods/menstruation in an urban slum in Dhaka. This network provides the opportunities we need to build research capacity and create linkages across countries

Ishrat Jahand

Researcher J.P. Grant School of Public Health, Dhaka, Bangladesh

for sharing knowledge and expertise.

ANNA CHRISTIN

Research Highlights and Updates continued

Mental Health and Sexual Reproductive Health – A new CORTH network

CORTH is developing a new network of experts on the mental health aspects of Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) services, an area which is especially under-researched as WHO guidelines suggest. Along with mental health experts psychologists, clinicians and medical anthropologists at the University of Sussex and mental health NGOs in India, Kenya, Nigeria and Belgium/EU CORTH seeks to promote universal access to SRH services for mental well-being. The panel coorganised at the International Conference on Population and Development ICPD +25 in Nairobi, Kenya in November 2019, reported above has been one step in this direction. In the coming term, new CORTH members Dr Daniel Michelson (Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology) and Patti Gonsalves (Research student in School of Psychology) will be presenting their research on a smartphone game-based intervention to improve adolescent mental health in India and other low-resource settings. The proposed network will have the opportunity of pioneering a set of contextually relevant strategies to enhance care in this area.



The Oxford Human Rights Hub (OHRH) and CORTH

The Oxford Human Rights Hub, based at the University of Oxford and led by Professor Sandra Fredman brings together academics, practitioners, and policymakers from across the globe to advance the understanding and protection of human rights and equality. CORTH member Maya Unnithan has been collaborating with them on The Shaping the Future project. The project is a collaboration with the WHO and is also funded by GCRF. It consists of a series of films that explore issues around sexual and reproductive rights. The films are designed for activists and advocates of SRHR around the world. and feature stories from over fifteen countries. The topics include comprehensive sexuality education, access to contraception, maternal mortality, abortion, and others. Suzy Heard who is producing the films has included Maya's work in Rajasthan, India, in her films on UHC, Abortion, Maternal Mortality, and SRHR at Work'.

CORTH Conversations, Seminars and Workshops

We have had a very active year with stimulating conversations and seminars from visiting speakers

CORTH Meet and Greet Research Forum

At the start of our new academic term we gathered in a packed room for our first meeting. We heard from a selection of senior and junior researchers about their work.

21 OCTOBER 2019

Neemah Ahamed gave an overview of an initiative addressing period poverty called 'Panties with Purpose', which she co-founded with her sisters in Kenya in 2011. Her research will focus on 'How and whether the Me Too Movement is influencing employment policies and practices in firms across the UK'. Gitau Mburu uses intersectionality to investigate HIV stigma as it affects people living with HIV in Uganda with a focus on masculinity. Dr Shadreck Mwale's postdoctoral fellow working with Professor Bobbie Farsides at Brighton and Sussex Medical School. His main area of expertise is in ethics and human involvement in clinical trials. Ishrat Jahan, a visiting researcher from BRAC Bangladesh gave an overview of the research she was carrying out with Professor Maya Unnithan in connection with the Narrating Blood Network. Dr Ben Hunter, a lecturer in International Development at Sussex, works at the intersection of health and development. Rebecca Ashley's doctoral research examines the politics of midwifery work in the Nordic region. Dr Gillian Love, who finished her Phd and was a teaching fellow in the Department of Sociology gave a summary of her research which related to abortion in the UK with a focus on the intersection of class and gender.

CORTH Conversations 2019–2020

The CORTH CONVERSATION series, first introduced two years ago, has expanded to host a range of international experts invited by the Centre.

29 OCTOBER 2019

Critical Digital Sexual Health

Carrie Llewellyn (Professor of Behavioural Medicine at Sussex) hosted our first conversation of the academic year with

Dr Paula Baraitser (Consultant in Sexual Health at King's College Hospital and Senior lecturer in Global health at King's College London)

Dr Paula Baraitser gave a presentation on 5 years of online sexual health system innovation including research findings on the Sexual Health Delivery System provided by the NHS, STD self-testing kits, and other forms of online sexual and reproductive information. Drawing on this research she explored the following main issues around implementing digital health systems. 1) The changing responsibilities for clinicians and users in terms of gains and costs 2) the blurred boundaries between human and technologies 3) the tension between private and public goods 4) regulation and governance of complex and unpredictable systems 5) the construction of meaning and emotion in clinical interactions negotiated online.



Biographies of Antibiotics: Experiences from Bangladesh

Hayley MacGregor in Conversation with Dr Papreen Nahar (Medical Anthropologist, Senior Research Fellow, Department of Global Health and Infection, Brighton and Sussex Medical School)

20 NOVEMBER 2019

The WHO has declared AMR a major health problem because many countries do not have a plan to combat this. Dr Nahar's research applied the theoretical concept of 'Social Lives of Medicines' to understand the household decision-making process on health-seeking and antibiotic use in Bangladesh. It explores the pathways of dispensing antibiotics by the formal and informal providers and how to translate this into policy development and implementation. It was

conducted through 46 in-depth interviews, 13 key-informant interviews, ethnographic observation, 50 free listing and a stakeholder workshop. The outcomes of the research demonstrated the plurality of the biography of antibiotics and how it is interrupted by various local, social, cultural, political and economic forces.

Corporatisation, re-stratification and the new imperatives in healthcare: a case study from India

Maya Unnithan in conversation with Dr Ben Hunter (University of Sussex, Department of International Development) 29 JANUARY 2020

In India the healthcare sector has undergone a corporatisation process characterised by the emergence of large for-profit hospitals. The research investigated regulation and corporatisation in the private healthcare system in Maharashtra to consider the changes and their implications for the sector. Employment and practices are being reshaped by the interests of investors, and new imperatives are varyingly competing and intersecting, shifting the locus of regulation beyond the purview of the state. § This has led to deep cultural shifts in the management and provision of healthcare as the growth of business management is now seen as part of the field of healthcare.

CORTH Seminar

Reimagining Reproductive Rights in India: The Role of Equality and Non-Discrimination

Data was used from a mixed method study

carried out in Pune and Mumbai.

We started our Spring term seminar series with an excellent presentation by Gauri Pillai (Dphil Law, University of Oxford) chaired by Maria Moscati.

12 FEBRUARY 2020

Gauri discussed a key chapter in her doctoral thesis which examines how constitutional provisions on equality and non-discrimination could be used to reimagine the constitutional and statutory

framework on reproductive rights in India. Courts in India currently use the right to life and liberty as the constitutional foundation for reproductive rights. Gauri's thesis argues why these rights present an inadequate constitutional basis for reproductive rights, and on the need to conceptualise reproductive rights as invoking not just a woman's right to life and liberty, but also her right to equality and non-discrimination.



CORTH Webinar

Our first CORTH webinar By Dr Ulla McKnight was held on 20th May during the lockdown period. It was a great success with 28 attendees and an engaging Q&A session. We hope to continue CORTH webinars on a more regular basis to make our events accessible to our international network of members.

Caring for transnational migrant women within an HIV diaspora

Dr Ulla McKnight (Dept. of Global Health an Infectious Disease, University of Sussex) 20 MAY 2020

Dr McKnight presented her research on care in an acute NHS HIV specialist antenatal clinic in London that caters



mainly to transnational migrant women. The research examines how these women are threatened by the effects of an HIV diaspora. Dr McKnight argues that the patient's diasporic positionality cuts across place and time. Therefore, their lack of access to care is not an event that



remains in the past, but it (re)materialises constantly within the clinic. We had an excellent Q&A session discussing the concept of the diaspora in relation to health conditions and how UK immigration status can effect access to, and behaviours toward HIV health care.

CORTH Seminar

Biopedagogies of healthy eating. Obesity management and the silencing of socioeconomic factors in the UK

Lavinia Bertini (Final year PhD, Department of Anthropology, University of Sussex).

2 JUNE 2020

Lavinia Bertini gave a talk at IDS on her doctoral work. Drawing on data collected through fifteen months of multisited fieldwork, Lavinia showed how in spite of this complexity, obesity management in the UK is based on the normative



idea of 'healthy lifestyle', which focuses on personal responsibility and caloric imbalance as privileged sites of intervention. She argued that by explaining and managing obesity through nutrition and behavioural change, this approach silences the relevance of socioeconomic factors for obesity. Lavinia used the concept of 'biopedagogies of healthy eating' to describe and explore this authoritative approach to food, weight and health that governs obesity-management interventions. She reflected on the contested meanings and tensions raised by the silencing of socioeconomic factors and how this is linked to the reproduction of stigma in managing obesity.

Opnic unbecom

CORTH Publication Highlights

Here we provide a selection of recent publications from CORTH members

Bachtold, I.V. (2020) After Emergency: Social Protection Responses to Zika Virus in Brazil, IDS Working Paper 538, Brighton: IDS

Boyce, Paul, E,J.Gnazalez-Polledo, Silvia Posocco eds. (2019). Queering Knowledge: Analytics, Devices and Investments after Marilyn Strathern. Routledge

Brunson, J. and Suh, S. eds. 2020. Behind the Measures of Maternal and Reproductive Health: Ethnographic Accounts of Inventory and Intervention. *Social Science and Medicine*.

Chattopadhyay, S. (2019) The Responses of Health Systems to Marital Sexual Violence – A Perspective from Southern India. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma*.

Haaland, Maarte, Haldis Haukanes, Joseph Mumba Zulu, Karen Marie Moland, Astrid Blystad (2020) Silent politics and unknown numbers: Rural health bureaucrats and Zambian abortion policy. *Social Science & Medicine*.

Jacob, S and **Chattopadhyay, S** (2019) "Speaking of Abuse: The Pyramid of Reporting Domestic Violence in India". *Economic and Political Weekly*.

Kasstan, Ben and **Maya Unnithan** (2020) Arbitrating Abortion: Sex-selection and Care Work among Abortion Providers in England. *Medical Anthropology*.

Moscati, Maria (2019) CLOCK: A Transformative Experience. *Amicus Curiae*

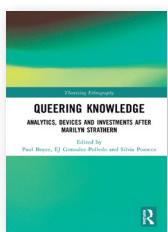
Moscati, Maria (2020) "We have method but still there is so much to do: mediation for gender and sexually diverse relationships", in Roberts and Moscati (eds) *Family Mediation: Contemporary Issues*, Bloomsbury.

Tanser F, Kim H-Y, Vandormael A, **Iwuji C**, Bärnighausen T (2020) Opportunities and Challenges in HIV Treatment as Prevention Research: Results from the ANRS 12249 Cluster-Randomized Trial and Associated Population Cohort. Current HIV/AIDS Reports 17, 97–108.

Wigmore, Rosie (2020) From Ebola to COVID-19: 4 Lessons China Can Apply to its Response in Africa. Development Reimagined.

Zabiliute, Emilija (2020) Ethics of Neighborly Intimacy among Community Health Activists in Delhi. Centre for Medical Anthropology, Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh.





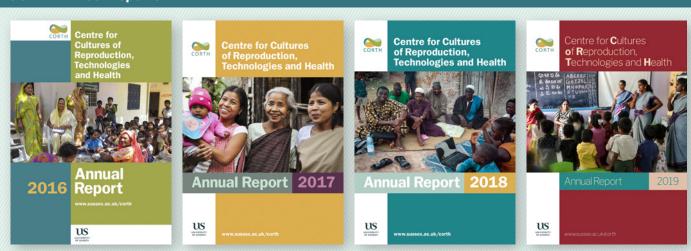




Stoneham SM, Milne KM, Nuttal E, Frew GH, Sturrock BR, Sivaloganathan H, Ladikou EE, Drage S, Phillips B, Chevassut TJT, **Eziefula AC** (2020) *Thrombotic risk in COVID-19: a case series and case–control study.* Clinical Medicine. https://www.rcpjournals.org/content/clinmedicine/early/2020/05/18/clinmed.2020-0228

Surtees, N. & **Bremner, P.** (2019). Gay and lesbian collaborative co-parenting in New Zealand and the United Kingdom: "The law doesn't protect the third parent". *Social & Legal Studies*.

CORTH Annual Reports



Please view previous CORTH annual reports via the website: www.sussex.ac.uk/corth/publications/documents

Connections

International Connections

- Centre for Law and Policy Research, Bangalore, India
- University of Barcelona, Spain
- School of humanities, Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad
- Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam (Women's University),Tirupati, India
- Centre for Social Research in Health, UNSW, Australia
- JP Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, Bangladesh
- FAGES, Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Brazil
- University of Brasilia, Brazil
- NEW Dept. of Midwifery, The University of British Columbia
- Department of Anthropology, Simon Fraser University, Canada
- Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic
- University of Cape Coast, Ghana
- University of Ghana, Legon
- NEW Concern Worldwide, UK
- Anthropos India Foundation
- Centre for Health and Social Justice, New Delhi, India
- SAHAYOG Lucknow, India
- PRAYAS, Chittorgarh, India
- Public Health Foundation India
- Action Research and Training in Health, Udaipur, India
- Copasah, Centre for Health and Social Justice, Delhi, India
- Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur, India
- Centre for Community Medicine, Jawahar Lal University, Delhi, India
- Department of Sociology, University of Delhi, India
- Global Health Anthropology, University of Bergen, Norway
- African Centre for Migration & Society, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa
- Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland
- Mahidol University, Thailand
- Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Mount Holyoke College, USA
- Department of Medical Anthropology, University of Arizona, USA

- FXB Centre for Health and Human Rights, Harvard, USA
- NEW Kushal India, Andhra Pradesh, India.
- NEW Development Solutions Inc, New Delhi, India

UK Connections

- Kings College, School of Global Affairs, London
- NEW Oxford Human Rights hub
- Www.United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UK
- Institute for International Health and Development, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh
- Grand Network, Global Health Public Policy, School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh
- NEW Department of Law, University of Exeter
- Women's Health, Kings College London
- NEW Global Health, Kings College, UK
- South Asia Institute, SOAS
- Department of Anthropology, University of Manchester
- Centre for Law and Human Rights, University of Essex
- Department of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge
- Gender and Health Group, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine
- Oxford Fertility, Reproduction and Sexuality Research Group, University of Oxford
- Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford
- Centre for Intimate and Sexual Citizenship (CISC), Department of Sociology, University of Essex
- NEW Sexual Health 24 (SH:24), UK
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- Department of Health Sciences, University of York
- Department of Health Services Research and Policy, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
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- NEW Coastal Creative, Brighton UK



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- NEW Ms Eleanor Kashouris (Doctoral student in Sociology)
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- Ms. Elaney Youssef (BSMS)

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- Thea de Gruchy (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)
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Acknowledgements



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Medeni Fordham (Our research and impact officer)



Susan Chater (Our Anthropology department coordinator)

Centre for Cultures of Reproduction, Technologies and Health

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Please visit: www.sussex.ac.uk/corth

We regularly update our website with our latest events, research and members' activities.

We tweet and welcome you to follow us on Twitter: @CORTHSussex

The Centre for Cultures of Reproduction, Technologies and Health is part of the School of Global Studies, which is based in Arts C on the University of Sussex campus. The university is located at Falmer on the outskirts of Brighton, within easy reach of London and major international airports at Gatwick and Heathrow.

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