



Research seminar speakers at Northumbria Law School

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Northumbria hosts international research seminar on criminal justice

Examining laws designed to protect vulnerable people from exploitation and grooming was the focus of a special international research event led by leading academics and practitioners at Northumbria University.

Organised by Northumbria Law School, the event sought to examine criminal justice and socio-legal issues connected to existing and potential new safeguards for victims of controlling or exploitative behaviour.

The one-day session, titled: “Power Imbalance: Adult Victims in the Criminal Justice System”, brought together academics from Northumbria Law School with experts from across the UK and Australia.

It was funded by the Society of Legal Scholars following a successful bid by Dr Nicola Wake, Associate Professor of Law, Professor Alan Reed, Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation for the Faculty of Business and Law, and PhD student Sean Mennim.

Key research themes explored included preventing the criminalisation of children who have been victims of exploitation and grooming, coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate relationships, and criminalising revenge pornography.

Human trafficking, vulnerability and the State and legal approaches to protecting vulnerable victims of domestic abuse in England, Wales and Russia were also debated.

Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner Dame Vera Baird, an Honorary Doctor of Civil Law at Northumbria University, attended the session, she said: “This has been a great event funded by the Society of Legal Scholars at my old University of Northumbria where we looked in depth at vulnerable victims in the criminal justice system and what better mechanisms we can use to support them. This has given rise to a number of ideas for further research projects and collaborative work.”

Explaining the significance of the research seminar, Dr Nicola Wake, said: “The purpose of the event has been to bring about real change that will help disadvantaged victims, particularly adult victims, in the criminal justice system.

“The session also formed the basis of an important special edition of The Journal of Criminal Law with Sage Publishing, which focuses on these topical issues and will help to raise awareness and advocate change to the law.

“Through international collaboration, perspectives and research between academics and law practitioners, we can help to shape this area of criminal law for the benefit of the vulnerable in our society.

“We are extremely grateful to the Society of Legal Scholars for recognising the importance of more study around this aspect of the law and for their £3,000 charitable grant which enabled us to deliver the event.”

The President of the Society of Legal Scholars, Professor Richard Taylor, said: “The Society is delighted to have been able to provide support for this very well thought out event which examines a set of increasingly serious problems for vulnerable people in society and which will help in identifying effective mechanisms for their protection and safeguarding.

“The potential for academic research to improve the situation on the ground for victims and the disadvantaged is a powerful incentive for all legal scholars and the Society of Legal Scholars is grateful to the Northumbria Law School for organising this very timely event.”

Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation in Business and Law, Professor Alan Reed added: “This international seminar, with contributions from world-leading academics, presented new insights and impactful, optimal reform options to assist the vulnerable within the criminal justice system, and to challenge the conceptualisation and parameters of coercive and controlling behaviour across different legal systems and jurisdictions.”

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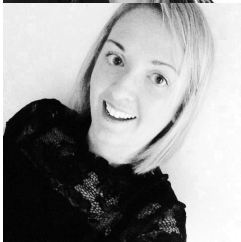


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