UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH

2019/20 ISSUE 01

BUSINESS TALK

Faculty of Business and Law
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DO WE REALLY GET THE LEADERS WE DESERVE?

IS DYNAMIC PRICING THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS?

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NATURE IN THE BANK

Developing nations are taking the lead in building environmental economies

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EDITORIAL

In recent years the business world has experienced a number of shocks that continue to rock the foundations of global and local commerce. Whether it is the after effects of the financial crisis of 2008 or impending political uncertainty in Europe and the Americas, we certainly live in interesting and challenging times. At the same time the increasingly digital nature of business is putting the individual at the heart of global commercial activity and its drivers. At the Faculty of Business and Law, teaching, research and business collaboration projects delve deep into the detail of business and societal issues, developing advanced thinking, leadership and practical on-the-ground solutions.

Our researchers in the Portsmouth Law School work continuously on the implications of international law on people, on nature and the environment and on global commerce. At Portsmouth Business School our economists and our marketing specialists are investigating many of the key questions being posed by the digital age, such as how will dynamic pricing progress and impact business, and will the global financial crisis ultimately create positive market disruption. This is exemplified by a feature article in this magazine that looks at societal issues around ecology, economics and how these parameters need to partner-up for a better future. Another article looks at how topical, and apt, is the critical examination of the value of leadership and MBA training, and asks: "Do we really get the leaders we deserve?"

While disciplined research underpins everything we do, this is not the whole story. Excellent teaching and business collaborations that stem from research activities are evident in all of the Faculty's outputs.

For the business community, applied research and student interaction has never been more important and I hope that you will enjoy reading about and indeed be motivated by some of our recent collaborations with the business community – from in-company research, through to business projects and law clinics.

We are a Business School and Law School steeped in research and practical application of this research. We are constantly looking for the next challenge and the next body of new knowledge. I hope you enjoy learning about some of our proudest stories and look forward to Issue 2 in 2020.

Professor Gioia Pescetto
EXECUTIVE DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND LAW

COVER STORY

FEATURES

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88%
STUDENT SATISFACTION
NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2018

TOP 25
UNIVERSITY IN THE UK
GUARDIAN UNIVERSITY GUIDE 2019

Legal clinics – a civic university with global knowledge delivering practical application

2018/19 was another great year for the Portsmouth Law School's legal clinics. Students from the School's courses, working under the supervision of academics and a practising solicitor, saw clients from across the city and prepared legal advice that was delivered back to the client. This project is a double win for the School, with local people receiving free legal advice while law students sharpen their interpersonal and practice skills, and prepare themselves for a career in the modern world. The clinic is open to all – students, staff members, local residents, friends and families. The client base is diverse and students are used to assisting with a wide range of issues. For further information, advice and appointments, please use the following contact details:

Call: 023 9284 4114
Email: advice@port.ac.uk
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97.5%
OF GRADUATES WORKING OR IN FURTHER STUDY
DLHE 2017

Global leader SAP launches Next Generation Lab at the University

Businesses and students are now able to access the SAP Next Generation Lab at Portsmouth Business School. SAP is the market leader globally in enterprise application software, helping companies of all sizes and in all industries run at their best. Recent analysis has shown that 77 per cent of the world's transaction revenue touches an SAP system. Led by Dr David Starkey, this project sees a team of academics from our Operations Systems Management group travel to SAP headquarters on a regular basis to receive training and updates on the latest version of the software, which is used by global companies to manage marketing, HR, logistics, procurement and finance, to name a few.

The University runs regular events on SAP and provides bespoke training to businesses.
To find out more search 'SAP Portsmouth' or email next-gen@port.ac.uk

Professors of Small Business and Enterprise trailblaze entrepreneurship for business

As part of Portsmouth Business School's continuing commitment to deliver frontline thinking, training and advice to the business world, both at home in the UK and with our international partners, the School has recently appointed two world-class professors of Small Business and Enterprise Development. Their role is to help the organisation trailblaze the use of entrepreneurship and innovation in the vital supply chain businesses that the University works with as part of global networks.

Professor David Pickernell is an established enterprise thinker, having previously been Professor of Economic Development Policy and Director of the Centre for Enterprise at the University of South Wales. His current research interests revolve around enterprise, entrepreneurship, economic clustering and the role of universities in innovation and enterprise. He has over 80 articles published in refereed journals, and has undertaken research and consultancy for a range of organisations, including the OECD, EU, Welsh Assembly Government, Queensland and Victorian Governments (Australia), Council of Mortgage Lenders, Associated British Ports and Enterprise Educators UK, to name a few.

Professor Martina Batista is a researcher with a keen interest in small business management and entrepreneurship. She previously led the New Zealand Centre for SME Research at Massey University, and she is currently Visiting Professor at Innsbruck University.

Martina has undertaken commissioned research and consultancy for government agencies around the globe, including in Austria, New Zealand and the OECD. From 2007 to 2011, she led the first longitudinal survey of SMEs in New Zealand, which created a body of knowledge with implications for policy and practice. Martina is currently Co-Editor of the International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research.

NO.1
IN THE UK FOR BOOSTING GRADUATE SALARIES
THE ECONOMIST 2017

ILLUSTRATION: 123RF.COM

Mummy saves the elephants

PHOTO: PAWAN SHARMA/UNSPLASH

CAROLINE COX MADE A CAREER CHANGE FROM SOLICITOR TO RESEARCHER AND SINCE THEN SHE HAS PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN CHANGING UK LAW - SPECIFICALLY, SHE HAS BEEN TAKING ON THE IVORY TRADE, FROM THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ALL THE WAY TO THE BOTSWANA BUSH.

It's been quite a journey for Caroline Cox. She used to be a solicitor specialising in trusts and probate tax – or, as she calls it, "making rich people richer".

Today she is a Senior Lecturer in Law at the University of Portsmouth where, in the words of her young daughter, "Mummy saves the elephants!"

Caroline leads a team of academics collectively known as the 'Ivory Project'. They've been working with the UK government and police forces to ban the sale of ivory nationwide.

It is already illegal to sell ivory in the UK and Europe, but there exists what's known in legal terms as a 'derogation' – put simply, an exception. And it creates a loophole.

The sale of ivory is permitted if it came from an elephant that died before 1 June 1947 – when the law came into effect – and if the piece was carved into its current form before that date. Of course, for the law to work, proof must be demanded, but that's not always done.

Caroline and her colleagues' mission is to close such loopholes and explore where barriers are needed to prevent people getting around the law.

It all began when Caroline's husband, who values antiques for a living, told her about a successful case that had been brought against a UK auction house for selling illegal ivory.

Somebody had brought a piece of ivory to the auction house for valuation. It had been carved into a train of elephants using their trunks to hold on to each other's tails. A quaint image, with no connotations of armed poachers stalking through Botswana bushland to shoot and kill such an elephant and cut off its tusks.

The person valuing it believed it looked like it could have been carved before 1947, so the auction house agreed to sell it. As it happened, the Metropolitan Police were doing a sweep and, when they saw the piece, they disagreed. No proof of provenance could be provided, so it was confiscated and sent for DNA testing.

The tests revealed the elephant whose tusks had been used died in the 1980s – more than three decades after the ban.

Caroline Cox, Senior Lecturer in Law at the University of Portsmouth.

Every time a piece is sold, it directly feeds into the demand for more ivory, which is particularly strong in the Far East. It hurts elephants today.

– Caroline Cox

However, as DNA testing costs approximately £500 and the police have limited manpower to monitor ivory sales, it's easy for such items to slip through the net.

Why does this matter? Caroline explains:

"Every time a piece is sold, it directly feeds into the demand for more ivory, which is particularly strong in the Far East. It hurts elephants today.

"Today, you can go to a car boot sale or antiques fair anywhere in the UK and see rows and rows of new ivory being passed off as old. That's where the problem lies.

"Legislation has to be made for the worst of us, not the best of us. You have to have a line in the sand. That's what this new legislation will be."

Fire in the House of Commons

Caroline is a great animal lover. She is also a meticulously even-handed researcher, and she began her work on the Ivory Project with an open mind.

"When we started work, the antiques press was just picking the issue up as a story. The tone was very much, 'Poor us, we're being persecuted.'

"So I thought, okay, let's look at this from their perspective. If they feel persecuted, what's the story behind that? I wanted to understand why."

An initial six-month project turned into a year's worth of work talking to the antiques trade, law enforcement and conservation groups. To encourage support for her project, Caroline enlisted the help of her local MP to chair a meeting at the House of Commons.

"In November 2015 we got the chairmen of the three major antiques trade associations in a room with officers from the national Wildlife Crime Unit, a representative from Stop Ivory, a representative from the Musicians Union, economists, a lawyer and criminologists.

"It was the first time that opposing factions from within the ivory debate had been in a room together, and I was shocked by how fiery it became.

"But, my gosh, so much came out of that. We went away and drafted questionnaires, which we sent to members of the antiques trade.

"I interviewed anyone who would talk to me and we were able to publish a report on how ivory is traded. This was used by Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in the impact assessment for the new Ivory Bill."

Caroline's conversations with the trade were especially fascinating:

"I asked every interviewee if they had ever knowingly sold illegal ivory. Interestingly, they all said no, never – but they all knew someone who had. It was known within the antiques trade that illegal ivory was being sold by members of the trade.

"Some people I spoke to were very open but others were quite hostile about why I wanted to ask questions. They were concerned about what was going to happen to their businesses if legislation changed."

A world of change

Caroline recognised that it would be possible to close the 1947 loophole while still leaving some justifiable derogations in the law.

There are now certain categories of ivory that are legal to sell, but instead of the restrictions focusing solely on dates, they are now stricter and more specific.

"The new ivory law will introduce a percentage requirement. If the object you are selling contains ivory from before 1947 and it makes up less than 10 per cent of the total object, you can sell it. But only in four defined scenarios. This might be a musical instrument such as a violin, or a portrait miniature, which is a tiny painting on a paper-thin amount of ivory, used during the Napoleonic wars for people to keep an image of a loved one with them.

"There are also exemptions for sales of serious, high-quality objects from museum to museum. The final exemption is objects of genuine artistic, historic or cultural importance," Caroline explains.

"To sell ivory under the new legislation, it will have to be certified by the government to say it falls within one of those categories."

Caroline's research should make waves beyond the UK. When visiting Australia to present a conference paper on an aspect of the Ivory Project, she got in touch with an Australian senator who is sitting on a new enquiry committee looking into the sale of ivory products, which is more relaxed in Australia than in the UK.

Within Australia, it's legal to sell any ivory if it dates from 1975. The Ivory Project report *The Elephant in the Sale Room* will now form part of the impact case study for the Australian enquiry – potentially influencing new laws half the world away.

Caroline also keeps an eye on the Far East market. China, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam are major destinations for ivory. They have started to talk about closing their ivory manufacturing capabilities, but will this simply drive up imports of ready-made ivory products?

Online and off-grid

The team members Caroline recruited for the Ivory Project certainly have formidable credentials when it comes to tackling the challenges that surround the illegal ivory trade. Caroline details the key personnel:

"From the University of Portsmouth, Dr Paul Smith is a forensic scientist, so we've been looking at taking fingerprint data from tusks and ivory objects that have been seized.

"Dr Nick Pamment is a criminologist who looks at the sociology of poaching and trading in illegal wildlife goods.

"Dr Dave Roberts is a botanist from the University of Kent. With him and his team, we've developed a computer programme to track ivory trade online."

Caroline is clear that online sales platforms, such as auction sites, are the next frontier in the illegal trade.

THE IVORY TRADE BY NUMBERS

The international trade in illegal ivory is worth an estimated

£17bn

each year.

On average, one African elephant is killed by poachers every

15mins.

The overall African elephant population plummeted by more than

20%

between 2006 and 2015, falling to an estimated

415,000.

Between 1979 and 1989,

HALF

of Africa's elephants were lost to the ivory trade.

Botswana is home to about two out of every five elephants in Africa. In 2016 it held

37%

of the world's elephant population.

SOURCES: STATISTA, WWF, SAVE THE ELEPHANTS, THE INDEPENDENT

The USA offers a sobering example. One of the last things President Obama did before leaving office was to sign an executive order to clamp down on the sale of ivory at a federal level. Several states followed with a ban. They found that, as a result, more and more sales moved to online platforms.

"There is a major auction site which banned the sale of ivory altogether back in 2009. But if you search for 'antique bovine bone' on that site today, you'll be amazed by how much 'bone' goes for," Caroline says.

"They have not developed tools to police their ivory ban properly, so I'm currently looking at sales of ivory through online platforms. We followed one platform for three months in the lead-up to the new UK legislation being announced, tracking three of the most well-known euphemisms for ivory to see what was actually sold. Even though that period included Chinese New Year, an important time for gift giving, the big spike [came] in the last weeks before the ban was announced.

"So I think the American experience is right – it goes off the 'shelves' and online. So online platforms need to get their acts together and have a much more rigorous process of monitoring what goes on."

PHOTO: US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

Shoot to kill

A new strand of Caroline's research is set to take her to Botswana. It's not just a change of country but also a change of focus – from the ivory consumer to the poacher.

The country has introduced a unique law – a shoot-to-kill policy against poachers. Caroline is working with academics at the University of Botswana to look at the impact of this law.

"More than 400 rangers have been shot and killed by poachers in the last year. Shocking. It will be interesting to investigate what difference, if any, the shoot-to-kill policy has on ranger deaths. Has it made poachers more careful, or has it meant they will shoot first?"

As Caroline points out, poachers are not at the top of the food chain when it comes to the illegal ivory trade. In fact, they're near the bottom:

"The kingpins are the ones who make money. I asked an ex-poacher how he justified it. He said his grandmother was starving to death, the crops had failed for three years in a row, the animals had died, he couldn't get work, and somebody came along and offered him money to poach. He was not a criminal mastermind.

"Solving the ivory poaching crisis is about more than legislation – it has to go much deeper. It's as much about poverty, infrastructure [and] education as it is about legislation. That's why it's important to work in an interdisciplinary way – we need to draw on as many resources as we can."

"More than 400 rangers have been shot and killed by poachers in the last year. Shocking. It will be interesting to investigate what difference, if any, the shoot-to-kill policy has on ranger deaths. Has it made poachers more careful, or has it meant they will shoot first?"

– Caroline Cox

Closer to home

Caroline hopes her research will bring about change, not just to the law, but to public attitudes as well.

"There's a macro and micro level to the change needed. For individuals – be more aware of what is sitting in your cabinets, where it came from and what the consequences are. An elephant is killed for its tusks every 15 minutes – what a statistic!

"On a wider level, I'd like people to think more about wildlife crime generally. We have focused on ivory because of policy and legislation, and what was going on at the time.

"But we have a really 'bad' reputation in the UK for successfully prosecuting wildlife crime – it's not seen as something that's in the public interest.

"I'm talking about badger baiting, the persecution of raptors and all types of wildlife trade. So I would really like the British people to think about their wildlife, embrace it and protect it, because it needs our protection."

Having closed the loopholes around illegal ivory in the UK, Caroline is keen to put up more barriers to practices that harm wildlife. She sees Portsmouth as the perfect place from which to do it. After all, it's where she made her switch from practising solicitor to researcher-on-a-mission.

"Whenever I've come up against a hurdle, the attitude at Portsmouth has been 'just go through it'. There's been nothing but positivity. Who could ask for more than that?"

▶ CAROLINE COX is a Senior Lecturer in the Portsmouth Law School.
To find out more about her work visit port.ac.uk
or email the *BusinessTalk* team pete.hooley@port.ac.uk.

Is dynamic pricing the future of business?

STORY BY **Dr Giampaolo Viglia**

Dr Giampaolo Viglia, Research Lead and Reader, Department of Marketing and Sales, University of Portsmouth.

Dynamic pricing is any pricing scheme in which prices change in real time as a result of decision criteria, mostly based on market demand. In these circumstances prices are not pre-decided or predetermined, such as a Monday offer or an established pattern of discounts for one season or a segment of customers.

Examples of dynamic pricing systems in global enterprises range from purchasing Champions League tickets through to the pricing of one-to-one services such as airlines or companies like Uber.

In dynamic pricing there is a strong link to market demand and market choice. Another example is hotel booking sites, where the price of a hotel is a function of the booking popularity within a set time frame, as well as the availability of rooms in competitor establishments.

Benefits

There are some distinct benefits to dynamic pricing. It ensures revenue maximisation as a function of market demand. This is due to a beneficial effect both in price contributions and in sold units. Specifically, the technique generates – on average – higher individual price contributions and maximises the use of perishable goods, ensuring they are used up for profit, rather than wasted. Dynamic pricing is important both for strategic and tactical purposes. Apart from strategic price positioning goals, it can provide a solid tactical approach to pricing, if you are looking to dominate market demand.

Downsides

While the mechanism is cutting edge, you only need to pay attention to global news around companies using dynamic pricing to get a glimpse of some of the potential downsides. While dynamic pricing can help a company to maximise its revenue, there is an associated downside that you might minimise profitability.

Also, technological and infrastructure costs can be higher and, on the broader business agenda, there are concerns around the fairness of the technique, be it from a monopoly perspective through the potential creation of price fixing or cartel behaviour, or a simple race to the bottom (low demand) or top (high demand).

Finally, there might be image concerns for brands due to possible consumer perceptions that companies are maximising their own utility more than focusing on product value for customers.

What does the research show?

Like the technology, the research is in varied states of development, with recent University of Portsmouth publications looking at the extent to which dynamic pricing is important and researching specific models, such as online auctions. On the whole we can say the following:

- It is important to decide on the range of price you are prepared to accept for a product.
- It is important to understand consumer and market pressures.
- Brand/image issues can arise if time-predictable variables are not taken into account, such as a huge last-minute price drop or the failure to deliver the sold product (over-booking).
- Terrorism can have a significant impact on business profitability in a dynamic pricing model by artificially stimulating or reducing demand.
- Understanding the psychology of your customer base becomes more important. Are your consumers particularly risk-averse towards any price change for the same product over time or consumption occasion?

What's next?

Changing prices dynamically is also becoming easy and affordable for small businesses, thanks to recent cheap technological solutions. The future of dynamic pricing lies in the area of personalised prices, where pricing decisions will not only be dynamic but also based on specific consumer profiling. We are beginning to see the emergence of personalised dynamic pricing models in big retailers such as Amazon.

DR GIAMPAOLO VIGLIA is a researcher with interests in the areas of pricing, consumer decision-making, and online reputation.
To find out more about his work visit port.ac.uk or email the *BusinessTalk* team pete.hooley@port.ac.uk.

ISLAND ECONOMICS a 'gift' from the GFC

DR ADAM COX WAS WORKING IN CANARY WHARF WHEN THE FINANCIAL CRISIS BEGAN. SINCE THEN HE HAS EXPLORED HOW ECONOMICS CAN, CONVERSELY, CHANGE LIVES FOR THE BETTER.

It began with a crash

At the Bank of New York in Canary Wharf, things were going great for Adam Cox. A University of Portsmouth economics student, his placement at the world's largest custodian bank and asset servicing company was exceeding expectations.

Having started as a securities lending clerk, he impressed his bosses enough to secure a pay rise and a team of his own to run.

"We were looking really nice," Adam says.

But then Moody's Investors Service – one of the leading credit rating agencies – downgraded Fannie Mae (Federal National Mortgage Association) and Freddie Mac (Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation), both of which held large amounts of mortgage debt from the US market.

From there everything changed. Adam recalls: "All of a sudden, it cost us hours of work. What's going on? And then it tumbled the next day, and again. The price of these things started to fall. We were holding collateral against our customers' loans, that we were loaning to other institutions, and so the collateral that we were holding was decreasing in value.

"The market risk we were exposed to was phenomenal – we're talking millions. Panic."

Adam was experiencing the beginnings of the global financial crisis (GFC). At the time, there was such chaos and confusion it was impossible to realise the full scope of what was going on. The challenge of tackling each immediate problem was all consuming. But like the first rocks in a landslide, the momentum became unstoppable and turned into a crash from which the world has yet to fully recover.

The experience also brought Adam to realise he didn't want to spend 14 hours behind a desk every day for the rest of his career. "I realised, though, that I did want to work in economics. And that I'd need a master's degree."

Fast-forward a decade and Dr Adam Cox is Principal Lecturer in Economics and Finance at the University of Portsmouth.

During his master's studies, Adam saw that businesses use information produced by University researchers to make decisions: "That was the hook. I realised that well-presented research could have a real impact on the day-to-day running of businesses."

He says that has been the line running through all the research that has interested him since.

Working in the Bank of New York, Adam saw the world change for the worse. His peers at Lehman Brothers had to pack their office belongings into boxes and walk out into a fast-shrinking jobs market – captured starkly in news footage from those chaotic days.

Today, Adam's determination is to deliver economics-based research that helps to change businesses and lives for the better. It has meant challenging government policy with creative thinking.

Bridge-building to economic islands

Just across the Solent from the University of Portsmouth lies the Isle of Wight, which, despite being located in one of the most prosperous areas of England and close to the growing economies of Portsmouth and Southampton, has struggled since the GFC. Government funding to local authorities was significantly stripped back as part of efforts to reduce the national debt, which ballooned following the 2008 crash.

Central Government policy has been to enable councils to offset reduced funding by retaining more of the business rates they collect. But that's not particularly helpful to the island because its economy is largely tourism-based, and tourist businesses tend to pay lower rates.

It's not easy to attract high rate-paying businesses to the island due to a lack of offices, warehouses and other commerce-friendly infrastructure.

Dr Adam Cox, Principal Lecturer in Economics and Finance, University of Portsmouth.

PHOTO: 123RF

Hoping to make a case for change, the Isle of Wight Council asked the University to help it answer an intriguing question: 'What is the economic impact of being an island?'

Adam led a team to consider what the island's economy might look like if it was attached to the mainland. It's a creative idea, but its execution was rigorous and data-driven.

"We wanted to see what impact the Solent has on how the Isle of Wight Council funds local public expenditure, local services, healthcare, facilities, bin collections – all the things it has to spend money on," he explains.

"So we developed an economic model to test a hypothetical situation where we replaced the water with land. If it didn't take anybody the time and cost to cross the water, that it was the same time and cost as if it was land, what would you save?

"We found that it was at least £6 million a year. In fact, we've since added some data and treated a few factors differently, and it seems the figure could be even higher than that."

The Isle of Wight's MP took the team's report to Parliament on several occasions and Adam and his colleagues met with analysts from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

They talked in more detail about the report. They discussed what the economic impact of being an island might suggest about the Central Government mechanism for funding local authorities – and how those funding calculations should perhaps be considered differently.

Following these conversations, it seems likely that things will soon look very different for the Isle of Wight in terms of its funding. And it most likely will not be the only local economy that benefits.

The scope of the changes now being explored by the Ministry means areas nationwide that struggle economically due to transport links – including not just islands but also rural areas – could see an increase in funding for vital public services.

The scope of the changes now being explored by the Ministry mean that areas nationwide that struggle economically due to transport links – including not just islands but also rural areas – could see an increase in funding for vital public services.

"We're potentially going to end up influencing national policy, which will be exciting. It will have an impact on citizens across the UK," Adam says.

He notes that more funding for the Isle of Wight and areas like it would create a positive ripple effect:

"There will be an impact on the immediate surrounding areas. If there are more services provided on the Isle of Wight, citizens will be better off, and that will have a knock-on effect to businesses and to surrounding areas."

The next step for Adam and his colleagues is to apply the same innovative modelling methodology to look at Scottish islands. These actually do receive extra funding from the Scottish Government, in recognition of the economic challenges brought about by their island status. The question is, will the modelling show that this funding is enough?

The impacts of Adam's research may not end at the borders of the UK. He and the team are also applying their model to islands in Italy – which won't be the first time Adam's research has helped some of the EU's most challenged communities.

"What has the EU done for us?"

Adam is a key player in the University of Portsmouth's contribution to the EU's PERCEIVE project. The University is the UK partner for this EU-wide initiative.

EU funding is allocated to regions around Europe in various programmes, one of which is known as 'cohesion policy'. The principle is to close the gap between regions that are thriving economically and those that are struggling. For example, within the UK, London and the south-east benefit from a wealthy, fast-growing economy, while parts of Wales and the north of England are growing at a much slower rate.

EU funding can be used to stimulate growth in struggling areas to bring regions closer together – hence the term 'cohesion'. Areas that secure funding can use it for numerous purposes, from transport infrastructure to regenerating cities.

But there's a well-known stumbling block. Some parts of Europe don't relate to the EU positively, if at all. And those areas are often the very ones that would benefit most from regional and cohesion funding.

There's no starker example of this than the UK's vote to leave the EU. Areas that receive the most funding also tended to deliver the strongest 'leave' vote.

The PERCEIVE project pre-dates Brexit, but it aims to untangle some of the factors that might lead to such a vote in the future – albeit perhaps too late for the UK's membership of the Union.

PERCEIVE focuses on the perception and evaluation of regional and cohesion policies by European citizens, and their identification with the values of Europe. In simple terms, there are three key questions:

- ▶ Are you a European citizen?
- ▶ Do you feel European?
- ▶ What makes you European?

The project aims to understand what influences the perceptions of the citizens of Europe, in relation to EU funding. Adam explains his team's role:

"Through the UK's Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, we organise regular focus groups and workshops with key stakeholders – those that manage EU funds and, more widely, representatives of local enterprise partnerships and chambers of commerce.

"We take data not just from across the UK, but also every region in Europe. So we're looking at three levels of data – EU regions, UK regions and our UK case study region, which is Essex, where we do the most detailed work."

Adam and his colleagues have collected a lot of interview and focus group data. His findings so far demonstrate a clear irony:

"When you start to explain to some citizens that all these projects that have happened over this period of time cost this much money, and all this money came from the European Commission, there's a sort of disbelief. What is being funded does not match the perception on the ground."

The challenge is to find a way to change that, so Adam will contribute to recommendations for changing EU policy.

Adam believes 'co-creation' will be key to the project's success. In other words, he wants to make sure the people who benefit from the funding (whether they realise it or not) can help to shape the policy recommendations he and his colleagues will make. He wants to ensure those voices are heard and can influence change.

> **There are two things we're trying to influence at the European Commission. One is how the money is allocated and how it is spent. We've identified patterns in areas where the funding has worked really well, and others where it has been less effective. The other area we, and others, want to influence is how the funding is communicated to communities.**
>
> *– Dr Adam Cox*

"There are two things we're trying to influence at the European Commission. One is how the money is allocated and how it is spent. We've identified patterns in areas where the funding has worked really well, and others where it has been less effective.

"The other area we, and others, want to influence is how the funding is communicated to communities."

It may prove too late for the UK to benefit from any such change, but Adam believes, even as a 'third country' outside the Union, the UK would feel positive effects.

"If other countries around Europe are doing better than they were before, then that is a benefit to the UK because of tourism, migration and trade. If their economies are stronger, ours will be, too – so it will have an indirect impact, as opposed to a direct one."

Regardless of the UK's destiny in relation to the EU, Adam is determined to deliver high-quality research that makes a real difference.

'No' to cut corners or limits to inspiration

Having worked at the heart of global finance during the 2008 crash, Adam is no fan of corner cutting. In 2018, he published a highly regarded paper about research malpractice in economics. He explains:

"Academics can feel a pressure to publish or perish. Sometimes the corners get cut – for example, in the scientific route they take to reach their conclusions.

Adam hopes this work will have a real impact on the quality and robustness of economics research. Given the demonstrable potential of economics research to influence national policies, major business decisions and huge spending choices, an exploration of bad practice is a vital line of enquiry.

As for Adam's own research career? He relishes the scope Portsmouth offers for pursuing his interests:

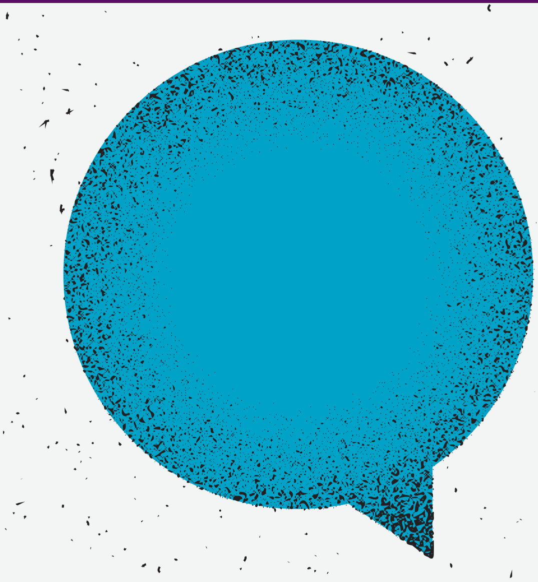
"There's fantastic support for attracting interesting, funded research projects. I enjoy working with local organisations on small projects as well as those that are European-wide.

"Interesting opportunities keep coming here. I've never felt constrained or stuck."

Adam is still in touch with friends from his Bank of New York days. These days, he says, some of them are wealthier than he can imagine. But he has got no regrets about the path he chose to follow:

"I must admit I've never considered a field other than applied economics. I get to solve problems that might end up having an impact on people's lives."

▶ DR ADAM COX is a Principal Lecturer in Economics and Finance. To find out more about his work visit port.ac.uk or email the *BusinessTalk* team pete.hooley@port.ac.uk.



IS FAILURE THE KEY TO SUCCESS?

The University's flagship Entrepreneur in Residence (EiR) programme ensures the commercial acumen that drives every successful business is at the heart of what our student and academic community does. In place since 2015, the programme allows 14 entrepreneurs the opportunity to ensure that Portsmouth Business School maintains its advanced knowledge through engaging with the global business community. Together with our academics they ensure our academic work, including our teaching, is informed by the successes and failures of the business world, and arms our students and partners with the knowledge to break into new markets, develop new products and chart a successful business journey.

Sandra Sassow

Q What made you want to become an Entrepreneur in Residence?

As an entrepreneur, it is important to have experienced mentors that can bring their own knowledge and expertise to the table, and by acting as an EiR I would be able to help people avoid the pitfalls that I have experienced and increase their probability of success. I enjoy interacting with like-minded individuals who have dreams and ideas that could make a difference in the world, and the University of Portsmouth seems to be a place looking to grow its entrepreneurial community and improve access to experienced business leaders for their student body.

Q Why is it important for you to be an Entrepreneur in Residence?

There are very few female entrepreneurs, especially in STEM, so I think it is important for me as a role model to share my experiences in the sector with aspiring businesspeople. It's also a lot easier to build a business when you have experience you can draw from, whether that be your own experience or someone else's, and I can help act as a mentor for those looking to do business globally because of my own start-up experience. I also see this as a huge opportunity for learning and personal growth that could help me in my own business ventures by expanding my network and being exposed to new ideas.

Q What impact do you hope to have in the position?

I want to be able to share my network, giving access to individuals within that network who might help the entrepreneurs leapfrog issues as they try to grow and turn their ideas into a real business. I hope to add a unique viewpoint to their group of mentors and role models through my international background and global business experience, as well as improve their understanding of both government and private sector contract negotiation. It is also important to me that I help the students improve key skill sets required for the building of scalable sales organisations, for example public speaking, as these are essential skills for the success of their businesses.

Lynda Harding

Q What made you want to become an Entrepreneur in Residence?

I wanted to give something back to the city and community where my businesses were born. The flexibility of the role suits my lifestyle and current business commitments, meaning I can handpick projects that I feel I can add maximum value to. It's really hard to get a business started from scratch, so people need a lot of encouragement to get going and to stay focused – I feel I can deliver this in a positive and constructive way.

Q Why is it important for you to be an Entrepreneur in Residence?

Even though I have no formal business qualifications, I think it's important to provide a relevant link to 'the real world' for academics and students alike. I have a local connection and willingness to support others in turning their business dreams into reality – being an EiR provides an ideal opportunity for me to really help make a difference. I'm excited by this prospect and the fact that I can help others along their entrepreneurial journey.

Q What impact do you hope to have in the position?

I aim to bring my 30 years' experience in business to the table and hope to pass on this knowledge to those with little or no hands-on experience to relate to. I also welcome the opportunity to share advice on issues that are familiar to entrepreneurs across a wide range of different businesses, in a bid to inspire a confident and positive mindset. By sharing my infectious enthusiasm for entrepreneurship, I aim to motivate and encourage others to achieve their business goals.

Nick Austin

Q What made you want to become an Entrepreneur in Residence?

Well, as an alumnus of the Portsmouth Business School and having enjoyed an entrepreneurial career spanning 30-plus years, I felt I had knowledge and experience that may be useful to the next generation of students.

Q Why is it important for you to be an Entrepreneur in Residence?

Because I fervently believe the next generation of entrepreneurs can learn from and be inspired by people like me. When I graduated 38 years ago I never expected to end up starting my own businesses, but it can be done and it is an amazingly exciting and rewarding way to live your working life.

Q What impact do you hope to have in the position?

If I can inspire just one student to think about ideas, opportunities and first steps for a start-up business then it will have been a very worthwhile use of my time. Branson, Dyson and co had to start with a blank piece of paper one day, so anything is possible.

▶ PAT SMITH is the Small Business Manager at the University of Portsmouth and leads our Entrepreneur in Residence programme.
To find out more about her work visit port.ac.uk
or email the *BusinessTalk* team pete.hooley@port.ac.uk.

GLOBAL LAW - just who does it serve?

Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, who have fled to Bangladesh following state persecution.

PHOTO: DFID

Cross-legged, they come across the water. Upwards of 80 men, women and children, grim-faced, gazing only forward.

Their makeshift raft comprises bright yellow plastic containers, roped together. They row with planks of wood. So many people are crammed aboard that their legs often sink below the waterline. But the raft holds and they make it to dry land.

At Saplapur beach in Bangladesh, they form a ragged parade. Trudging along the sand they carry all their worldly goods in bags slung across their shoulders or balanced on their heads. This, right now, is all they have.

Across the water, in Myanmar, their homes smoulder – their villages burned to ash by government forces. They have been evicted from the land that bore them.

The people are the Rohingyas. In 2015, more than one million lived in Myanmar. By 2018, following state persecution, around 900,000 had fled to refugee camps in neighbouring Bangladesh. There is an irony in this; the Rohingyas say they can trace their lineage in Myanmar to the eighth century, but successive governments have insisted they are illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.

Since 1982, a national law in Myanmar has denied the Rohingyas citizenship. Even before military ‘clearance operations’ began in 2016 and forced them to flee their homeland, they were stateless.

Today, they rely on the kindness of other nations to give them shelter.

In the eyes of Leïla Choukroune, Professor of International Law at the University of Portsmouth, the plight of the Rohingyas – and the migration crises around the world – illustrate the tensions between national identity and globalisation.

Laws – national and international – are the battlegrounds on which long, slow conflicts are being waged between competing rights and ideals.

Leïla explains: “I’m fascinated by the interactions between international economic law – issues like investment, trade and development – and human rights.

“For instance, you have a number of treaties between countries on international investments – we call them bilateral investment treaties. Some aspects are hyper-technical, like investor–state dispute settlements. But other provisions relate to the environment, corporate social responsibility, labour and human rights. So this is technical and conceptual but also grounded in the reality of our lives.

“For example, I have written about companies extracting oil in Indonesia. I looked at the impact on the population, including displacement of people, violations of human rights and labour law.”

For their survival, the Rohingyas rely on a broad consensus among what Leïla terms “the so-called international community” that people fleeing conflict should be helped.

But as Leïla explains, even when written into law, such agreements and the responsibility of states to protect can bend to a surprising degree – and they may actually break.

Have human rights failed?

Leïla‘s research demonstrates the limits of international law and the international community:

“International law is based on a paradoxical thing – the sovereignty of the state. Because you’re sovereign, you are free to become a party to a variety of treaties. At the same time, this sovereignty limits the action of international law. If a state doesn’t want to become a party to a treaty, the only alternative could be to intervene in its national affairs. This breach of sovereignty is an absolute ‘no go’ in international law unless one supports the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention.

“Also, what we call the international community is made of states, so it is limited. There are pros and cons, however. Because you are a state, you have powers to do certain things to protect yourself and your population. But the problem with the so-called international community being made up of states is that some states may not be willing to do what others would like them to do.”

In other words, the world is increasingly globalised and trade is governed by widely adopted international agreements. But states still have the power to say no.

And when they do, the coalition of nations that may disagree has less unity of purpose than may be suggested by the number of principles they share.

“Another paradox,” Leïla says, “is that human rights are territorialised, so you have certain rights depending on the legislation which is valid in a given country. But at the same time, we believe that in international law there are a number of universal principles we call *jus cogens* (binding law for all in all contexts). The problem is to prove that and have these principles implemented.

“For example, the bans on slavery and torture are supposed to be universally accepted. Let’s say you are a citizen of Zimbabwe working in Saudi Arabia. Because of the universal character of the ban, you are not supposed to be reduced to slavery or tortured.

”

You have many fragmented legal regimes – for labour, human rights, investment, trade – but actually all these things go together and you should have just one international law. Yet for many reasons, including politics, states have a tendency to fragment regimes so that they don’t necessarily intersect – sometimes for the benefit of companies or states themselves. They can turn a blind eye on certain realities.

– Professor Leïla Choukroune

But Saudi legislation might not be as protective as you would expect. This creates multiple grey areas where rights are difficult to enforce. This also gives rise to outrageous violations of human rights and horrific practices such as human trafficking.

"You have a large amount of interpretation in international human rights. Something that is quite problematic is what we call 'reservation' to treaties. For example, India has a reservation on a number of international texts around children working below the age of 14. In India, it's permitted if children work with their parents or in the entertainment industry, for example. It's like a footnote, which makes it the same treaty others are signed up to, but without being the same for all. It is flexible, and so more consensual, yet very problematic."

Put simply: "Most human rights are essentially universal, but that's an objective rather than a reality."

Leïla explains there is a very important debate in international law, about what is called 'fragmentation':

"You have many fragmented legal regimes – for labour, human rights, investment, trade – but actually all these things go together and you should have just one international law. Yet for many reasons, including politics, states have a tendency to fragment regimes so that they don't necessarily intersect – sometimes for the benefit of companies or states themselves. They can turn a blind eye on certain realities.

"In the last 10 years we've tended to see more integration of human rights into business and trade treaties – but at a fairly superficial level."

As a result of fragmentation, the rights of businesses to trade can be given primacy over the human rights of the general population.

What does it mean to belong?

"I focus on emerging and developing economies," says Leïla. "But, globalisation being what it is, it's difficult in any case not to research Western countries as well.

"For example, if you look at multinational companies operating in Indonesia, they are often so-called Western companies originating in the US, UK or France – but actually they operate around the world, so you have this interaction between East and West. That makes it very relevant to our lives."

Leïla's research reveals a range of legal concepts that have emerged to ease big companies' passage through the intricate channels of global trade.

First, there is 'treaty shopping'. This involves companies browsing the various treaties adopted by different nations, to find the ones that are most advantageous to their needs.

"Many companies are incorporated in the Netherlands. Why? Because taxation is very nice for companies there, and their bilateral investment treaty is very protective of foreign investors. So they act as if they are a Dutch company – there are all sorts of legal ways of doing that – and choose the Netherlands to benefit from the protection of its treaties."

International law is based on a paradoxical thing – the sovereignty of the state. Because you're sovereign, you are free to become a party to a variety of treaties. At the same time, this sovereignty limits the action of international law. If a state doesn't want to become a party to a treaty, the only alternative could be to intervene in its national affairs. This breach of sovereignty is an absolute 'no go' in international law unless one supports the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention.

– Professor Leïla Choukroune

Related to treaty shopping is 'diplomatic protection'. Leïla explains: "To benefit from protection by a given state, you have to be a citizen of that state. Companies try to play with this. Barcelona Traction, Light and Power Company (Belgium v. Spain) is probably the most famous case in international investment law. You had a dispute between a company that was officially Canadian but actually operating in Spain, and the majority of its shareholders were Belgian, holding bonds issued mostly in sterling. So who could protect who?"

When a Spanish court ruled in favour of utility company Barcelona Traction in the dispute over asset ownership, the Belgian government took Spain to the International Court of Justice on behalf of its shareholder citizens.

The International Court of Justice rejected the Belgian claim on the basis that Belgium had no standing to exercise diplomatic protection of the shareholders in a Canadian company, in respect of measures taken against this company in Spain. In fact, the complex question of the "responsibility of states" was at stake here, explains Leïla.

The third core concept in understanding how international businesses intersect with international law is 'economic citizenship'.

"Business is so globalised that companies can be completely de-territorialised. They don't belong to a given territory because they operate everywhere and play around with all the benefits they can get. But at the same time, it does still matter to get the nationality of somewhere.

"So a number of small islands, typically in the Caribbean, advertise what they call economic citizenship in return for payment. This can be quite handy for companies and wealthy people, perhaps from undemocratic regimes. They might want another citizenship for a number of reasons.

Leïla Choukroune, Professor of International Law at the University of Portsmouth.

Kutupalong refugee camp, Bangladesh. More than 623,000 Rohingyas have arrived at the camp since 25 August 2017, creating one of the largest humanitarian crises in the world.

PHOTO: RUSSELL WATKINS/DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/UKAID

"It poses many problems because there is no reality in the link between the person and the country – it's just financial, they bought it. Belonging matters for simple reasons. We're not talking necessarily about international economic law, but if you think about refugees, war and displacement of people – it matters for people to belong to a state."

Which brings us back to the Rohingyas. Regardless of birthplace, they are officially stateless while businesses can buy citizenship at a price.

Across Europe, and closer to the University of Portsmouth, contentious debate is raging about refugees from places such as Syria. In nations as diverse as the UK, Italy and Hungary, the very concept of migration has become toxifying.

Leïla unravels the implications, saying, "Yes, we live in a globalised world. But if the idea of a state, nationality and citizenship disappears … we see this with the debate around post-Brexit challenges … who is going to be given rights in terms of labour, or to simply stay here?"

Will we turn the tide?

From her research, Leïla is clear that this is one of the biggest challenges of our time and it will not be going away any time soon, or even at all, without real effort to find new approaches.

"The issue of migration – let's call it that rather than refugees – is going to be here for a long time," she says. "Countries are opening up and changing at the same time. China, India, Indonesia and some African countries have these massive populations facing major challenges, including climate change or lack of food. So we'll have migrants no matter what we do."

Technology is at the heart of these changes, and it is driving migration.

"We are going to continue making progress in terms of transportation, and information flow and access. You travel more easily and have access to more information online. A farmer in the middle of India has a mobile phone on which some basic services, like access to health[care], are delivered. Even if you're illiterate you can see the world online, and it's then likely you'll want to travel to this world," Leïla says.

"This is going to be something to manage, and it's going to be very complicated. We'll have to find more creative ways of managing the movement of people between countries in a democratic, legitimate and humane manner."

Ideas of citizenship and belonging – notions that have been commoditised, manipulated and even removed by law in nations around the world – must be re-addressed.

"What we have failed to take into account, and Brexit shows, is the identity crisis of populations. This crisis is quite understandable, to some extent. If globalisation wipes out identities and cultures, it won't work," Leïla says.

"So we have to find a balance between the ability to open up to the world – moving, and accepting others – and at the same time, we should stop looking down on identities and cultures as they are extremely deeply felt."

She is clear that she and other academics at the University have a vital role to play.

"Solving these things will be very difficult, but that's where research can help. You can have genuine discussions without preconceived ideas, because researchers look through a different lens."

How can we find the answers?

Throughout her career, Leïla has recognised the power of research to understand and influence laws.

"As a teenager I thought about going into politics, but I think if you have a critical mind like I do, in the sense of questioning things and not accepting reality as it is presented, academia and the law are a better fit."

As Director of a University Research and Innovation Thematic Area, Democratic Citizenship, Leïla is at the vanguard of research to explore burning questions of national and global relevance – from rights and justice, to geographies and borders, and from inclusive education through to gender, identity and diversity.

"Questions of democracy and citizenship are very current today, all over the world," she says. "We see there is always a fight for democratic regimes which are truly democratic. We want to make these into flagship programmes at the University, things it can be internationally known for."

Although it may be a difficult road, it is not impossible. Over in Bangladesh, a young Rohingya child staggers from her raft, leaving tiny, damp footprints in the sand on Saplapur beach. Today, she is without a home, without a state and without rights. But as long as critically minded research engages with the global challenges that underpin her predicament, her future in our changing world may not be without hope.

Most human rights are essentially universal, but that's an objective rather than a reality.

– Professor Leïla Choukroune

LEÏLA CHOUKROUNE is Professor of International Law and Director of the University of Portsmouth Research and Innovation Thematic Area in Democratic Citizenship. To find out more about her work visit port.ac.uk or email the *BusinessTalk* team pete.hooley@port.ac.uk.

Healthy ecology,

IT BEGAN WITH CURIOSITY: WHY ARE SOME COUNTRIES MORE DEVELOPED THAN OTHERS? FOR **PROFESSOR PIERRE FAILLER**, THAT QUESTION LED TO A GLOBETROTTING CAREER PROVIDING SOLUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES THAT ALSO ENCOMPASS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. AS A CONSEQUENCE, SOME DEVELOPING COUNTRIES MAY SOON BE SHOWING DEVELOPED NATIONS THE WAY FORWARD.

COVER STORY

Picture a man in a suit, standing up to his neck in rising seawater. Fragments of a torn-up mangrove tree float past. Scrappy remains of a fishing net have caught on his collar in the drift. Overhead, the sun beats down mercilessly. He has never felt so hot.

The man would like to rub the sweat from his brow. He'd love to loosen his expensive tie. He'd kill to untangle the fishing net from around his neck, where it's beginning to tighten. He really ought to swim for safety, because the salty water has reached his lips.

But he won't, because he is using his arms for something he believes is more vital. He is clutching, as high above his head as he can, a wad of money … knowing full well that he can't hold on forever, and that when he goes under so too will his money.

Turning the tide

For decades now it's become apparent that a certain view of 'the economy' – a focus on exploiting all useful resources to maximise the creation of wealth at a national, regional and individual level – has often been in conflict with the need to protect our natural environment.

As policy across developed nations fails to keep pace with the changing climate, it can feel as if humanity's legacy is going to resemble the ruins of Pompeii, or the fabled city of Atlantis – glittering, spectacular achievements buried by the overwhelming force of nature.

But there may be a way to avert calamity. As the seas rise literally, the tide has metaphorically begun to turn. Drowning might not be inevitable.

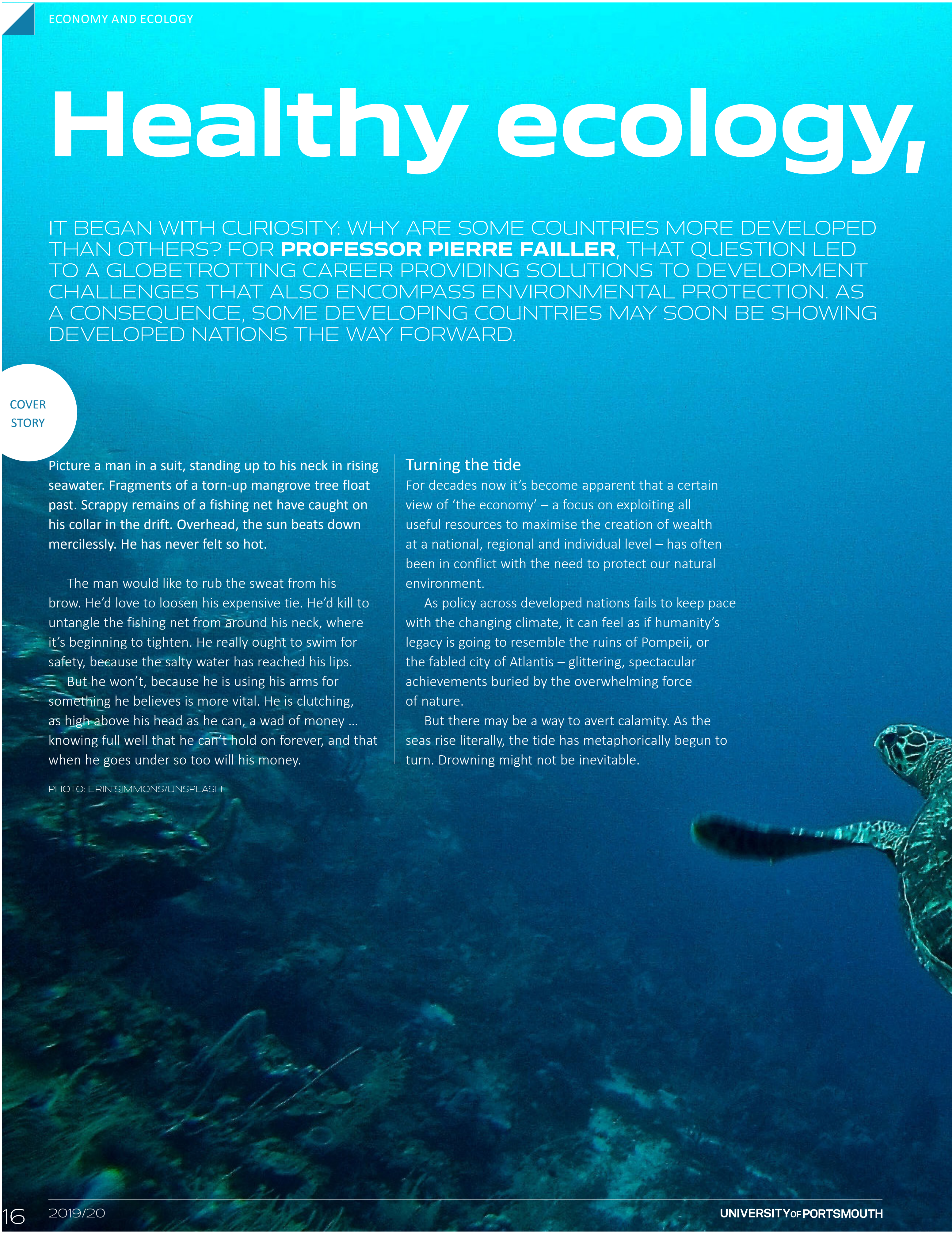


PHOTO: ERIN SIMMONS/UNSPLASH

healthy economy

Professor Pierre Failler,
Department of Economics and Finance,
University of Portsmouth.

The University of Portsmouth's Professor Pierre Failler has spent more than 20 years working to achieve this direction change and step-by-step he has helped governments chart a different course.

Pierre is a specialist in development economics. His research focuses on environmental (or ecological) economics. It is highly practical in nature. He explains: "It's mainly about the interfaces between the use of natural resources and a country's development. In a concrete sense, it's how to help countries to be better developed.

"For instance, I'm helping many regional organisations to develop their strategy for the use of oceans and the coast. It's environmental economics that leads to policy formulation.

"Banking is part of this. For instance, there's a lot of development now using green banking and green funds to help countries to adapt themselves to climate change and develop mitigation measures."

Within this, a major area of focus for Pierre is the 'blue economy' – the sustainable use of ocean resources.

The aim is not only to improve the health of ecosystems, such as the mangrove swamps that grow in coastal regions in tropical and subtropical countries, but to use this sustainability drive to also improve economic growth, employment and livelihoods in these regions.

Pierre's work in this field has focused on a wide range of outcomes.

"When you talk about the blue economy, people just think about making money from the ocean, out of the mangroves. I help them to realise that the protection of environments can have more monetary value."

He offers some examples: "You can be rewarded by green funds for protecting your mangroves, because they absorb a lot of carbon. So the mangrove is more valuable than cutting it down and putting shrimp farms in its place.

"The same with sharks. You can make more money developing scuba diving among sharks than by having a dead shark and just selling the fin."

Put simply, a nation may make a lot of money from exploiting its natural resources, but if it doesn't protect them, these resources will run out.

Conversely, if natural resources are managed as a long-term investment, a country can build something environmentally and economically sustainable.

It's a different way of thinking; changing environmental policy with a balance sheet perspective.

"To convince people, you need to show that the country will gain an economic advantage from better environmental management. That's a challenge," Pierre says.

"Strengthening institutions is the key to development. This is what I'm trying to do."

– Professor Pierre Failler

Pierre Failler has a PhD in Economics and is a Professor of Economics at the University of Portsmouth. He has coordinated approximately 20 research projects in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Caribbean covering issues such as fisheries, ocean and coastal zone policy, and coastal biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Waves of change

Pierre's research is based on practicalities and he is often invited by governments or United Nations agencies to explore specific national or regional challenges.

He leads and coordinates projects that are collaborative and interdisciplinary, assembling teams of economists, geographers, ecologists and sociologists from universities around the world, including Portsmouth, and sometimes including postgraduate students.

When delivering an economic evaluation, the research team typically collaborates with one institute in-country. Collaborators undertake fieldwork and data analysis, and write reports together.

The consequences of this research can be far-reaching, such as a recent project to assess the value of coastal and marine ecosystems in Overseas France, including Martinique, Guadeloupe, Mayotte and Réunion. This involved evaluating the monetary value of coral reefs and mangroves.

There were three strands to evaluate. First, the direct uses, including tourism and fisheries. Second, the 'non-uses', which include the cultural and other non-monetary values people place on beaches and mangroves.

"But the biggest one," Pierre says, "is what we call the indirect uses. This mainly means services provided by the ecosystems and for which there is no market at the moment.

"For instance, the reef protects the coast, but nobody pays for it. Yet if you remove the reef, the coast will be washed away very, very quickly. There would be a cost to replace it, so we take that cost into account.

"The mangroves eliminate a lot of pollution, so they have a water treatment function which has value. Also, they produce biomass. If you remove the mangroves you won't have any more shrimp.

"These indirect uses deliver the biggest values yet there is no market, so nobody realised the economic importance. We showed that the value of these services is much the same as the agricultural or transportation sectors in the area."

The findings Pierre's team presented led politicians to make changes. They are now implementing strategies to protect the coast and increase the islands' attractiveness to tourists.

A number of policies around pollution, both domestic and agricultural, have also been strengthened, because Pierre's team demonstrated the higher value tourists place on environmental protections, compared to local people.

▶ PIERRE FALLIER is Professor of Economics. To find out more about his work visit port.ac.uk or email the *BusinessTalk* team pete.hooley@port.ac.uk.

As such waves of change cross the oceans, we could find ourselves living in a rather different, more hopeful and more prosperous world.

Going deeper

Pierre believes today's developed countries may soon take their cues on environmental economics from developing nations.

"It's they that will be in a position to show what can be done," he says.

He cites numerous examples of this – from Kenya's pioneering use of mobile apps and drones to fight malaria, to the Seychelles' innovative deal to erase national debt in return for investing in environmental assets for coastal protection.

He has found that the biggest challenge to making change happen is coordination between individuals, agencies and government departments.

"For sustainable development, you need to develop synergies. It seems simple – just talk to your neighbour – but people think in silos.

"When it's time to define a strategy, they realise, for example, that they don't know how to make aquaculture development fit with tourism.

"It takes a lot of time, a lot of round tables to organise. You need to have a framework and it has to come from the highest level, otherwise it doesn't work."

What Pierre calls "making a switch in the minds of people" takes time, and so do the results of the changes.

"In Mauritania, we made recommendations about the efficiency of fisheries. Many distant water fleets were not appropriate. They readily implemented many of our recommendations, but it can take 10 years to see results."

But when such results may include a fisherman doubling his income, while working in new ways that protect and preserve fish stocks, they are worth the wait.

Voyaging but anchored in Portsmouth

So while change takes time, information today travels faster than ever. Once-isolated governments are more aware of what's happening elsewhere and they are more aware of institutional shortcomings.

"I have always been interested in why some countries are well developed and others just not developed at all. When you travel, it becomes evident that it is about the weakness of institutions. When you don't have strong institutions, you don't have good development, or the development will benefit only a few people, not the whole country," Pierre says.

"So strengthening institutions is the key to development. This is what I'm trying to do."

And while Pierre's research takes him around the world, he says Portsmouth is the perfect base.

"The work environment at the University of Portsmouth is fantastic because it's based on trust. You have a lot of freedom in your research, and research is the University's engine.

"We have the capacity, particularly, to develop very strong ocean research. We live by the sea. And we have very good people."

IT to bridge gender taboos for India breast cancer fight

For Judith Fletcher-Brown, beating breast cancer was the beginning of a journey of discovery. A celebratory holiday in India turned into the catalyst for an extraordinary personal and academic quest, leading to her use of social marketing and IT to save the lives of the Indian women who would die rather than discuss their disease.

A breast cancer diagnosis can be life changing. That's rarely been truer than in the case of Judith Fletcher-Brown, Senior Lecturer in Marketing and Sales at the University of Portsmouth.

Judith's diagnosis came in 2010 and, following a mastectomy, Judith's sister took her on holiday to India.

"It was a sort of recuperation, but as a reward, something to look forward to," she says.

In India, Judith asked herself a question that has set in motion a chain of events that could save thousands of lives every year.

"India is such a complex country," Judith explains. "It's got everything – wealth, extreme poverty, amazing high-rise buildings and people living in shacks in the middle of motorways.

"But it struck me, because of what I had been through, what happens to that woman going into that office block, what happens to that woman out in that field, if she gets breast cancer?"

The answer was chilling. Judith learned the survival rate for Indian women is only about 50 per cent – and India has the fastest growing rate of breast cancer in the world. By 2020, it is forecast that 76,000 women in India could die from breast cancer every year.

This rising rate is linked to India's rapid economic development. As the economy booms, more women pursue careers. This leads to what Judith terms their "Westernisation".

Urban Indian women who work typically start having sex later, have fewer children and breastfeed less than their rural counterparts. They also tend to eat a more Western diet. All of these factors increase the risk of breast cancer.

But while this can explain the rise in the incidence of cancer, it doesn't explain the mortality rate. As Judith says: "I'm a living example that if it's caught early enough, nobody needs to die. So I delved a little deeper and found a whole host of reasons."

Marketing the message

You might expect a booming economy to go hand-in-hand with longer life expectancy.

"India is outstripping China. It's going to be the number one economy in 2020," Judith notes. "But not a lot of the money being injected into India's economy is finding its way into the health service and there is no focus at all on women's healthcare."

But there's an even bigger challenge: "The biggest problem is cultural. Breast cancer is still a taboo. There is a huge lack of awareness. Women don't know the signs; they don't know how to self-examine."

Judith believes social marketing could be part of the answer. "Social marketing is all about intervention messages. It's moving someone from a negative type of behaviour into a more positive behaviour. It aligns very well with health and wellbeing – stopping someone smoking, or driving too fast. For example, if we can stop people in the UK having too much sugar, our type 2 diabetes rate, which costs the NHS billions, goes down. So social marketing is important."

The crux of social marketing is understanding why people behave in a certain way. Then you can work out how to influence their thinking and behaviour.

"You have to understand the people and have the right messages."

> **The biggest problem is cultural. Breast cancer is still a taboo. There is a huge lack of awareness. Women don't know the signs; they don't know how to self-examine.**
>
> *– Judith Fletcher-Brown*

This is where social marketing in India poses particular challenges.

"Think about it in terms of the UK," Judith says. "If the government wants to stop people smoking, they can do a massive campaign that looks the same to everybody.

"But in India there are over a billion people in 29 states, and they're all different. It's too costly to have different campaigns in different dialects. Plus you're talking about the female body, which is taboo."

But Judith's research made the challenge clear: "We needed a sustainable strategy that makes breast examination normal … normal for wives and husbands, mothers and sons, boyfriends and girlfriends to talk about it. And we needed buy-in at every level. Hospitals, schools, universities and the government – they should all be normalising the message. And obviously it also needs to be done at the micro level, the individual."

So where to start?

Culture challenge

Back in India, at a conference, Judith was about to find out first-hand just how complex the challenge of breaking down barriers could be.

"Some Indian women who fitted the demographic agreed to come and talk to me about breast cancer and what it's like being a woman in India. I'd told them that I had experienced it myself, so they knew where I was coming from.

"I set up a room and got everything ready … and nobody turned up. Not one woman. None. I thought, 'My God, what am I going to do now?'"

On returning to the UK, Judith emailed the women individually and asked what had happened. Their responses were illuminating.

Judith Fletcher-Brown, Senior Lecturer in Marketing and Sales, University of Portsmouth.

Judith Fletcher-Brown is the epitome of a University of Portsmouth researcher: she's driven to make a difference, open to the wider world and she has a personal passion for what she does.

"They wanted to come, but they didn't want to talk about such a sensitive thing with a stranger. Others said they had thought about it and decided their husband wouldn't want them to come.

"So I suggested we just have a dialogue by email and they did open up, to a degree. Not a lot, but enough to establish that they might talk to their mother or mother-in-law, but not their husband or son.

"You can see why there is such a lack of awareness."

However, speaking to medical professionals at an Indian hospital, Judith had a breakthrough. She realised that there was a small group of women who could change everything. In fact, these women are already making big changes in Indian healthcare.

Breaking through barriers

Judith witnessed families coming to a hospital as a group – mum and dad and kids, all together. They were on their way to innovative clinics with a focus on family wellness. It showed there were people starting to think, 'actually, it's okay to go and get checked out together'. So a door to breaking down gender-oriented taboos is being eased ajar and, through this crack, Judith could see the women responsible.

They are known as ASHAs (Accredited Social Health Activists) and they run the family clinics. They are, essentially, community nurses.

"They go out into people's homes and they're almost like the frontline of medicine and healthcare. They've got a big remit and part of it is about prevention. We learned that the ASHAs have the trust of families, of the menfolk," Judith says.

Having established this as a potential breakthrough, Judith began exploring the next steps.

The way forward, which would open up a whole new avenue of research and innovation, presented itself over a casual coffee.

IT pathway

Thinking about India's strengths, Judith noted its massive investment and broad skills base in IT.

Of particular importance is that most families have a mobile phone. This led her to 'mHealth'.

"We've moved from eHealth, which is all about disseminating information via a website. Now it's mobile health using apps, so the message can get a lot closer. Also, mHealth is being promoted by the World Health Organization."

Back in Portsmouth, Judith was having coffee with her friend Diane Carter, Academic Skills Tutor in the University's Faculty of Cultural and Creative Industries. Diane agreed to join the project.

"I needed someone who would know all about the capabilities and possibilities, and what can be constructed."

This interdisciplinary collaboration was a game-changer for Judith's research.

Judith and Diane came up with a conceptual model for an mHealth solution to India's breast cancer crisis. The idea is to equip ASHAs with a digital device, probably a tablet, enhanced with computer gaming technology.

"On the device, we'll produce something which enables them to go out with all the information about self-examination. It might even have more biological information, maybe 3D effects, so they can show what's happening in the breast and signs to look out for.

"We want the ASHAs to be the first contact, so they need to be in at the creation of the app. We have the concept. The next thing is to get direct feedback from the ASHAs and the women they support."

Judith is clear about the potential of this concept. "It will empower women. They'll know what to do, how to do it and where to go for help."

Global reach

Judith has big ambitions for her research: "If the model works, I'd like it to be transferred to other similar hotspots … Brazil and South America, generally. It seems to be the pattern where economies develop too quickly for support infrastructure, such as healthcare, to cope."

Judith has huge drive and she believes this may be partly due to coming to research after having already built a career and a family.

"Portsmouth has given me this opportunity to start my research career and has been very open to the different angle I've brought to our marketing subject.

"We're starting an undergraduate module in social marketing, which will have research-led teaching. It's a really exciting development. The idea is to get students thinking about how marketing can be used in ways other than just selling and packaging products.

"Marketing can actually be really useful in society."

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Do we really get the

STORY BY **James McCalman**

Here's a short pop quiz. Apart from Theresa May, can you name three UK cabinet ministers? Sorry, Boris doesn't count! Struggling? I would argue that most of our leaders are invisible.

In the past decade they have been driven underground by fear and failure, and cannot emerge into the public eye because their PR gurus have neutered them.

It's not surprising really. There is a growing clamour for evidence of more ethical behaviour among leaders in both the public and private arenas. It follows that organisations will also need to display more responsibility, governance and promotion of ethics to illustrate that things have changed.

There appears to be an increasing need to seek solace in positive leadership.

Leadership comes from within and 'good leadership', if it is anything, is 'leadership for good'. That is to say, leaders need to surpass themselves and their organisations and see the ethical and societal responsibility they hold – leaders need something to stand for, something others can believe in.

Similarly, the best leaders are mentors; they understand their nurturing and development role. So, although leaders can be part of the solution, our current crop are seen as egoists and mired in their own self-importance. In that sense, they are the problem and it is not until we demand more from our leaders that we will really get the leaders we deserve.

Christopher Bones, the former Dean of Henley Business School, argues there is a legacy of a self-aggrandising leadership generation which has dominated business, politics and the media. In his book, *The Cult of the Leader*, he provides five compelling arguments:

1 The current leadership crop is a generation whose values were driven by a desire to be seen as successful. This inevitably meant embracing the trappings of success as self-promotion. This is what he terms the 'L'Oreal generation' – importance, self-esteem and, consequently, salary were all there because "they were worth it".

2 They were worth it because of a perception – the idea of leadership perfection and the shortage of 'leadership talent'. He argues that the perfection concept comes from the 'Mary Poppins School of Business', which argues that you can create leaders who are practically perfect in every way.

3 The 'war for talent', invented by McKinsey in the 1990s, argues that talent is limited and organisations compete for this by identifying and recruiting the very best and then paying them accordingly. This is apparent in banking and financial services, but the public sector also fell into this trap – and the trap is the narcissism it breeds.

4 Leaders have used these arguments to push for a greater share of the profits as the power of the owners of capital in business has declined.

5 Most leaders don't get rewarded excessively – they work hard and are conscientious. Bones argues in favour of a silent majority who believe their leaders should stop looking after themselves and start looking after their customers, their shareholders and their communities.

Manager or leader?

Managers have staff while leaders have followers. Managers expect staff to serve their interests and human resources are deployed in the pursuit of the objectives of the organisation. The expectations are that such submission is implicit and is further embedded within the control mechanisms that characterise the organisation. For managers, staff are there to 'serve' specific interests that are legitimised by organisational norms.

In contrast, leaders exist to serve their constituents. If we accept the proposition that to be a leader one requires followers and that followers appoint and dispose of leaders, then the choice of leader will be contingent on the needs of followers.

PHOTO: MICHAEL BECKWITH/UNSPLASH

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leaders we deserve?

Leaders are required to 'serve' their followers and they are granted authority to lead on the basis that they apply their leadership authority, rights and privileges in the interests of their followers (Gramsci, 1971).

However, the notion of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) is not unproblematic when we consider that, in most cases, cultural change will be driven by senior management and motivated by management interests.

Can you grow ethicality?

Authentic and ethical leadership often get mixed up and this leads to a number of problems compounded by the way both ideas are researched. Authentic leaders are seen as:

- self-aware
- balanced in how they process information
- transparent in their relationships
- having an internalised moral perspective.

However, there are problems with how these behaviours are identified. For example, the notion that an authentic leader should have a set of internal morality standards was gleaned from a content analysis of whom doctoral students thought were authentic leaders.

How might we nurture more ethical behaviour? Research tries to associate elements of an authentic leader with their ethical/moral behaviour. Indeed, a leader's moral and/or ethical codes are more or less explicitly seen as elements in leadership theories. Authentic leaders are assumed to consider the ethical consequences of their decisions and ethical leaders behave in socially responsible ways that reflect socialised power motivation.

However, these assumptions remain largely untested. We need to move away from authenticity and towards ethicality as the subject of study. The authentic leader behaving unethically doesn't appear to compute nor does the question of whose ethics we are propounding.

Eisenbeiss (2012, p.791) argues that, in the financial crisis, there were banks or investment institutions in which the norm – either explicit or implicit – prescribed short-term profit generation, even at the expense of sustainability or fair treatment of customers. Ethical leadership would mean breaking these norms.

Where to from here?

The 'big' questions of leadership are consciously and deliberately ignored by 'small' research. We have failed to investigate seriously what were the leadership causes of the economic crash. This failure to explore what went wrong in leadership terms encourages platitudes of change.

It is interesting to note that the approach needed to develop more ethical leaders is precisely the one most would immediately reject. Our most challenging social and environmental problems are really wicked problems (Grint, 2010) and as such are addressed by persuading others to take responsibility.

Our current tendency to discount the validity of shared interests and collective purpose, combined with framing problems as crises that warrant command decisions by 'Trumpian' leaders undermines attempts to address these wicked problems adequately. Crucially, to do so means an engagement with ordinary citizens and a rediscovery that individual wellbeing is contingent on the wellbeing of the whole. There would appear to be a strong case for examining whether ethical leadership behaviours by and among elites are displayed, and what forms these take.

Some recommendations:

First, if leadership matters, professionalise it. If it is suitable for the medical and legal professions surely it applies to leaders. Continuing professional development should be compulsory.

Second, make our leaders mentor and work more and more often with 'ordinary people'. Back-to-the-floor works by grounding you.

Third, make executive coaching compulsory. Tighten up on who can be an executive coach and provide leaders with the resources they need, yet deny.

Fourth, make power time-related. Leaders should not be allowed to stay on *ad infinitum*. How many stay too long and lose credibility accordingly?

Finally, inculcate stewardship. A leader is a person in a role. Understanding the significance of that role, the real responsibilities associated with it and the fact they steer organisations towards the future would go a long way in removing narcissism and engendering a more values-based future for leaders.

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WHERE THERE'S NO WILL, THERE'S NO WAY

FIRST QUESTION: HAVE YOU MADE A WILL? SECOND QUESTION: DO YOU KNOW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO EVERYTHING YOU OWN IN THE EVENT OF YOUR DEATH? IF YOU ANSWERED 'NO' TO QUESTION ONE, YOU MAY BE IN FOR A SHOCK. HERE'S WHY AND HOW, AND THE DIFFERENCE **JULIET BROOK**'S RESEARCH COULD MAKE TO YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES.

Juliet Brook, Principal Lecturer and Associate Head of Portsmouth Law School.

You didn't see it coming. You'd been running around town on a seemingly endless series of errands – picking up some Calpol for your partner's daughter's toothache, dropping in your partner's passport renewal documents in good time for the family holiday, picking out a special something for your partner's father's birthday – the things you do for love!

Your mobile started ringing. It was buried in your shopping bag. You had to get to it – what if little Sophie had started running a fever? But you knew the parking was about to run out. You heard the beeping of a green light, stepped onto the road, focused on fishing in your bag – and by the time you heard the squealing of brakes, it was too late.

Of course, we can't really know a person's final thought, and calling to mind in that instant your probate status is not likely, but let's assume you had done the right thing and prepared a will, but had overlooked one small detail – getting it signed by two witnesses at the same time. You hadn't read the notes and in the aftermath of your tragic death, the court has no choice but to rule it invalid. So all your worldly goods and savings – even your house – go to your nephew, as the next in your bloodline, but who you might not have seen for 30 years.

So while he inherits enough to pay off his mortgage and take his kids to Disneyland, the family you built – but never legally formalised through marriage – has to start all over again without you. You may not have seen it coming, but it is the law and it is intractable.

Millions of people entitled to nothing

In England and Wales, the law around wills dates back to Victorian times. To make a valid will, you need to jump through some very rigid hoops.

Your will must be in writing and signed in the presence of two witnesses, who must also sign it. If you make a mistake – for example, if your witnesses are not both present to sign at the same time – then your will is not valid.

If you have no valid will, the laws of intestacy apply. These decide where your property goes, but they are based on Victorian values and family structures.

If you are married or in a civil partnership and die without a will, your property will pass either to your spouse or your spouse and children, depending on the value of your estate.

If your spouse dies before you, it would pass to the next of kin, in a particular order: your children, parents, brothers and sisters and so on, down to the nephew you haven't seen in decades.

If you are not married but do live with a partner, neither of you have rights under intestacy. So neither your partner nor any children he or she has are guaranteed anything in the event of your death – and vice versa.

Today in Britain, around one and a half million couples live in de facto relationships. Most have no idea they would have no rights under intestacy.

However, the Law Commission is now looking into the possibility of changing the law in England and Wales – and that's where Juliet Brook comes in.

Juliet is Principal Lecturer and Associate Head of Portsmouth Law School at the University. Before beginning her academic career, she was a practising solicitor.

"I have always looked at how the law matters to people," Juliet says. "When the Law Commission announced they were looking at this, I had to get involved in the conversation."

Juliet has researched how laws around inheritance differ in countries such as Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the USA. She is ideally placed to influence changes that, as she explains, will become increasingly more important in the future.

"There is increasing litigation in this area. Partly it's because older people have more wealth than ever before, and their children do not. The Institute for Fiscal Studies has done a lot of work on intergenerational unfairness, and in some ways we're on the edge of a bubble that continues to grow.

"There is a far greater likelihood now of second families, former spouses and cohabitation.

"And more and more people are getting their wills off the internet and doing them at home. They don't understand how rigid the rules are. By the time you discover a will is invalid, it's too late. The person who made it is dead."

Inheritance by text message

In Australia, courts have the power to award inheritance based on a document that sets out a deceased person's intention. If it's clear what the person wanted, the court can accept what English and Welsh courts would deem to be invalid wills.

This is called a 'dispensing power', and it's the sort of new power the Law Commission is considering. But Juliet urges caution.

"I think the powers are a good thing but what they should look like is not clear-cut. The aim is to give effect to someone's intention.

"The problem is, how do you establish someone's intention? If you tried to make a will that you downloaded but you messed up with the signatures, it's fairly easy to say that's meant to be a will.

"But you then get cases where someone calls a solicitor and asks them to draft a will, but doesn't ever go back to check, approve and sign it. Does it reflect their intentions? Why haven't they gone in to sign it? Did they change their mind?

"You could have a strange situation where there is a document that is deemed to be a will after someone's death, but they didn't intend it to be. So I like the powers as an idea but we need to look at how they've been used."

Juliet's research into Australian law has been particularly important in shaping her recommendations to the Law Commission.

The Commission wants this to be broad legislation that can cover any documents of record, including those without a signature – things like, for example, text messages.

Text messages?

"In Australia, there was a poor lad who was about to commit suicide and he typed out a text message, which clearly said 'will'. But he didn't send the text.

"On the one hand, people say that means he was still thinking. But the court said the reason he didn't send it was that he didn't want to alert his friends to the fact he was going to kill himself.

"The fact it was found by a friend of someone who was disinherited by the text strengthened the case, as it would have been in her interest to delete it. So that really helped the case on the evidence."

But the decisions are sometimes too hard to make.

To tackle this, the new legislation must be clear enough to give people confidence that less formal documents, which are admitted genuinely, reflect what the testator wanted to happen.

Proving intent is the most difficult aspect – yet it's the one on which the change in law would be fundamentally based.

What was said and what was meant

How should we deal with proving intent?

Juliet believes the history of an obscure type of will may provide an indication of what the courts would be looking for.

Today in Britain, around one and a half million couples live in de facto relationships. Most have no idea they would have no rights under intestacy.

"Serving members of the armed forces and mariners at sea can make what's called a 'privileged will'. These can be completely oral, because back in the day people would go to sea unable to read and write. We therefore have a whole load of case law on these statements by soldiers, sailors and airmen.

"There is a really fine line. In the First World War, a soldier said to his fiancée, 'If I stop a bullet, everything of mine will be yours.' That was considered a statement of what he wanted to happen, like a will.

"But then there was a bartender in the merchant navy, on a ship to Australia, who said in a casual conversation, 'If anything happens to me, my sister will get everything.' And they said that wasn't a statement of what he wanted to happen; it was a statement of what he believed would happen. So that wasn't a will.

"The same principles would go into dispensing powers – that difference between a statement you want someone to act upon, and a statement of what you believe is already the case."

Juliet believes the new powers should be flexible enough to catch accidents, but should have an emphasis on proving someone has put in effort to make a will.

There is the potential to catch all manner of electronic documents – but what if the person whose will is in question was hacked or the document forged?

And what about all the expertise they will miss out on when it comes to drafting the will they really want?

"Solicitors are expensive but there is a reason why people are encouraged to go and see one before making a will, and that is that they will ask important questions you won't have considered and make you aware of options you may not know about."

Ultimately, however, new dispensing powers should make a positive difference in supporting bereaved families and respecting the wishes of their loved ones.

Juliet paints a sobering picture of when the law could be used:

"I started this research shortly after the Grenfell Tower tragedy. People at the top of the tower were Skyping relatives. If we had dispensing powers, those Skype conversations would be considered documents of record.

"If people were saying 'I want you to be the guardian of my children' while the place where they lived was on fire, it obviously really mattered. The ability to say, okay, this is not a signed document but it clearly shows someone's intention, is great."

New hope for Joe Public and his long-term partner

So where can we expect to go from here? Juliet hopes her input will influence the structure of any new law. "I've met with the Law Commissioner for property, family and trust law and his wills team. They found the issues that my research highlights very interesting. We all agree that the scope of these powers needs to be carefully considered before they are introduced."

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Partnership drives global business

Q&A WITH **GOUTHAM VEERAKUMAR**, SUPPLY CHAIN ANALYST WITH ENTEC GLOBAL GROUP

In September 2015, Innovate UK awarded a knowledge transfer grant of £87,000 for Entec Global Group and the University of Portsmouth to support the company's big data project – maintenance, repair and operating systems (MRO) supply chain opportunity – which develops a unique multi-level MRO supply chain network. The partnership was established with major clients and suppliers as a data-mining project requiring access to usage, procurement, inventory, demand, asset lifecycle and production data. The analysis of this informed a proposal to reorganise MRO inventory within complex global markets.

Why did Entec undertake a knowledge transfer partnership (KTP)?

For some 25 years the Entec value proposition comprised procurement and supply chain optimisation to companies with manufacturing operations, at the end of some very challenging supply chains. Practically this involved mainly the purchasing, consolidation and global logistics of spare parts to meet customer demand on a transactional basis.

However, the data the company had provided an opportunity for Entec to consider a closer partnership with our customers. We believed, but could not evidence, that there was a disconnect between what was being ordered and what was being consumed; we also had data that showed parts needed urgently in one site were available as overstock in another.

What was the project brief?

The KTP project vision was to take Entec data and overlay it with that of our customers' consumption and wider procurement information, and so produce a series of evidence-based data sets that would help us visualise and calculate the true value (improved cost, return on capital and plant productivity) that a more formal and integrated partnership business model could deliver. Entec wanted to help our customers to better manage their spare parts. As a business, we needed to know how and where to hold inventory and how best to understand the demands of the customer. How could we take spares holding from a 'just in case' model to something closer to 'just in time'? That was the KTP objective.

What was your role within the KTP?

As a project manager for the KTP, I was leading the concept development because I could offer both a company and university perspective and bring the idea and expertise together.

What were the tangible results of the KTP?

The project helped the company grow faster. We have more than doubled in size since the KTP. I wouldn't say it's completely because of the KTP but it helped us change from being a supplier to a business partner, which helped us increase our sales while strengthening the customer relationship.

It sounds like it has transformed the whole company's outlook.

Definitely. It has changed the way we work with customers and is helping us to form stronger partnerships. In turn we are delivering greater value to the customers, which they are recognising. Entec is seen as a collaborative partner. It has completely changed our business model from a margin applied to goods sold, and we are now moving to a balance of margin and fee for services provided. A partnership means a larger volume of business with a wider, healthier profit level based on shared value add.

Were the company's targets exceeded?

I would say exceeded. A second KTP was started in September 2018 – the third for Entec and its second with the University of Portsmouth.

What were the challenges of the KTP?

It's a big management change for Entec and our customers. We have been fairly entrenched in our ways of working – customer purchasing teams don't usually share information with their supplier and Entec doesn't usually share our information with the customer, but to understand the size of the opportunity and set key performance indicators for value delivery, both sides need to share what had been seen as 'their' information.

How did the KTP benefit your career?

I have now started my doctorate and grown my career within the company. I've had multiple roles. Now I'm managing business development for South Asia, which is much bigger than anything I was doing as a KTP associate.

Do you feel a partnership has been established between the University and Entec?

Yes. Apart from the KTP, we now run multiple masters projects … some in the maths department, some in the Business School, and we have our second KTP looking at future industrial supply chains, like 3D printing.

What would you say to a prospective company looking to undertake a KTP?

All small companies have ideas boards; they have ideas sitting in the corner. Instead of leaving them there, we hand them to the University … [once the grant and planning is done] and then you have someone working on the idea for two or three years. So, if you've got ideas, use the KTP and make the ideas work.

AT A GLANCE

- **The Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) has supported three master's projects and two undergraduate projects during the course of the programme.**
- **The KTP presents a real-life challenge for the academic community by bringing a multi-discipline team together to tackle complex problems.**
- **KTP partners continue to build on this relationship through new collaborations.**
- **The KTP has helped companies become industry leaders by extending their value proposition, leading to increased sales and profit.**

COMMERCIAL AND SOCIETAL OUTCOME FOR ENTEC RESULTING FROM THE KTP

22% increase in export revenue in 2017 and **31%** in 2018.

US$20m new business contract from one existing customer.

US$17m from a multinational food, snacks and beverage corporation.

A new contract in the mining and mineral sector worth **US$18m** over the next two years.

11 new jobs.

Established Centre of Innovation in Portsmouth to continue future research and development.

▶ SANDRA JOHNSON is the Collaboration Manager for the Faculty of Business and Law and Applied Research Lead. To find out more about her work visit port.ac.uk or email the *BusinessTalk* team pete.hooley@port.ac.uk.

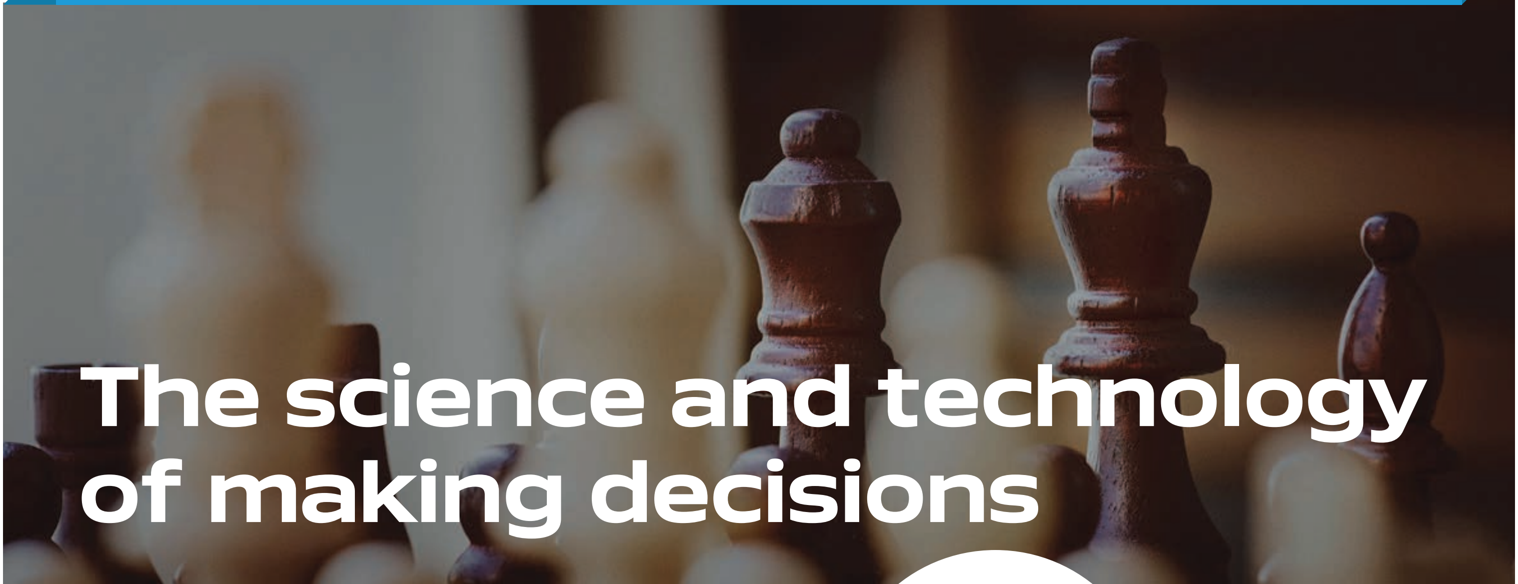

PHOTO: UNSPLASH

The science and technology of making decisions

Alessio Ishizaka, Professor of Decision Analysis and Deputy Director of CORL at the University of Portsmouth.

LIFE IS FULL OF DECISIONS. SOME, LIKE WHICH COFFEE TO BUY, WE'RE HAPPY TO MAKE CASUALLY. OTHERS, SUCH AS WHAT UNIVERSITY TO STUDY AT OR HOW TO INVEST AND GROW A BUSINESS, ARE MORE COMPLEX. WE WANT TO MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE, BUT HOW TO BE SURE? **PROFESSOR ALESSIO ISHIZAKA** HAS DEVELOPED A TOOL THAT TAKES THE ANGST OUT OF DECISION-MAKING.

Would I prefer the townhouse near the station, or the cottage in the country? Should I transport my goods by rail or lorry? Do I want a latte, flat white or espresso?

Life is full of decisions. They are incessant. Some, like our choice of coffee, we're happy to make viscerally. Others are more strategic and complicated, needing input and buy-in from others.

The thing about decision-making is it often causes indecision. We want to make the right choice but how can we be sure it's the right one?

So, is there a way to remove the risks involved or identify the best way forward? Are there ways to make the process more objective and clear-cut, with all the variables tagged and considered?

The answer is, yes. Professor Alessio Ishizaka says there's a science to decision-making and it can be readily applied.

Alessio is Professor in Decision Analysis at the University of Portsmouth. He's also Deputy Director of CORL (Centre for Operational Research and Logistics) at the University, which brings together multidisciplinary expertise on the sciences of data and decision-making from a range of faculties. Armed with a PhD in Information Systems and a Master's of Electronic-Physics, Alessio uses science and data to help people and organisations make better decisions. It's a richly varied world of research, spanning from helping a company choose which product to launch through to helping students choose the right university for them.

Software for hard choices

Decision-making involves a wide variety of factors – commercial, environmental, economic, physical, psychological and emotional, to name a few.

Despite this complexity, Alessio can create software and special ranking models that take all the different variables and criteria into account. He has the expertise to help solve difficult questions or issues, no matter how nuanced and specific the requirements.

Rather than having countless time-consuming meetings, toing and froing over the right course of action, Alessio's research and decision-making software can take the heat out of the process.

He can offer quicker, easier, more quantifiable ways to reach decisions that meet as many requirements as possible – and lessen boardroom battles on the way.

Alessio explains: "I help people, companies and, in turn, society, to make decisions – because it's difficult to make decisions.

"There's an element of education in this because often managers lack the training to make certain decisions. Decision-making is rarely taught because people generally assume they know how to do it."

Using various search methodologies and algorithms that filter data, Alessio's systems are designed to close the gap between a defined set of goals and the most desirable solution. It all depends on the criteria.

Building criteria

Before you can start to solve a problem, you need first to explore it from as many angles as possible. You should consider all the perspectives and scenarios so you can build the most appropriate model. The best model depends on detailed and high-quality criteria. The more criteria there are, the higher the chances of reaching the most useful decision.

Once you've absorbed diverse, different and often conflicting criteria, it's time to narrow things down. This is when you remove the smaller, least significant elements and retain the most pertinent aspects – getting you closer to the core of the choice.

Typically, Alessio reaches an understanding of an organisation's needs through detailed questionnaires. These enable him to gather and collate people's likes, dislikes, requirements and ambitions, and use these to create the model.

The software, taking all these criteria into account, can then deliver a desirable – or, at least, the most appropriate – solution.

"Often the results don't come as a surprise," Alessio says. "Sometimes people know and have a gut instinct for what they want or how to achieve something right from the beginning, but don't see why or how to get there. The criteria help them to see, understand and gain an objective point of view."

The psychology of decision-making

For a business, knowing what will appeal to customers is often central to making a decision. That's why Alessio has researched what attracts and encourages people to spend their money – whether purchasing a product or supporting a cause.

For example, on crowdfunding websites, Alessio examines the projects that receive the most interest and funding. His findings help him to identify the criteria behind their success. He uses this information to help other projects perform better.

This is what's called 'disaggregating' – when you look at an existing model to identify criteria for your own approach to a similar challenge. By contrast, 'aggregating' is when you use your own criteria to inform the design of a solution or model.

Often when you're trying to make an important decision, you have to accept that you can't have everything. Equally, getting what you want can involve contradictions.

For example, you can't produce or purchase a premium car if you won't consider a premium price tag. Compromises and trade-offs have to be made – such as those between quality and cost – and thresholds or limits must be adhered to.

Alessio develops techniques that handle these 'sticking points'. The software guides people towards a better decision by giving all the criteria the appropriate amount of influence – something we might not always be able to accomplish in the face of complex information and contradictory goals. Before building software, Alessio and his team devise experiments.

"In one experiment, we looked at how a group of Portsmouth undergraduates choose their coffee. We ran the experiment first without any modelled criteria, and then again with the criteria. We found the students were actually more satisfied with their choice of coffee using the criteria system.

"Why? Because the model helps them consider and weigh up their personal preferences in a methodical way, and therefore make the best personal choice."

While nobody wants somebody else to make all their decisions for them, sometimes the sheer amount of choice available can be head-spinning, making the whole process time-consuming, confusing and stressful.

A huge benefit of Alessio's work is that it takes the indecision and rumination out of making choices, and turns decision-making into a more measured activity where all relevant criteria are accounted for.

Working together for good

Decision analysis relies on interdisciplinary collaboration, particularly when Alessio and his team are asked to consult or work in a field in which they have no experience.

For example, teaming up with the University of Portsmouth's HR department, Alessio is working on a staff training model for an optic lens company in Taiwan. The goal is to help managers identify employees with particular talents, so they can nurture specific skills with the right kind of training.

Alessio says: "Helping employers find, identify and make the most of their talent creates a more efficient, more motivated and productive workforce."

Alessio also recently worked with social housing authorities in Torino, Italy. Once the authorities had sent in their bids for regeneration funding, it was Alessio's job to make sure the regeneration budget was allocated in the most effective ways.

In situations like this, the modelling provides evidence for a decision. It shows how the decision was taken, so everyone can see a fair, thorough, ethical process.

Alessio's software makes it much easier to sell-in, prove or justify a decision, idea or course of action to colleagues, stakeholders and management. It is the sort of functional research and development that he says is so well suited to the University of Portsmouth.

"Portsmouth is fantastic for operational research. It's also a deeply collaborative university with great support, where you have the freedom to knuckle down and make the kind of progress you want to make," says Alessio.

Using various search methodologies and algorithms that filter data, Alessio's systems are designed to close the gap between a defined set of goals and the most desirable solution.

▶ ALESSIO ISHIZAKA is Professor of Decision Analysis.
To find out more about his work visit port.ac.uk
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HEARTS AND MINDS ON THE FRONTLINE OF DRONE WARFARE

A Reaper MQ-9 Remotely Piloted Air System (RPAS) prepares for take-off in Afghanistan. Reaper drones are operated by RAF pilots and provide real-time video imagery to ground commanders. They also have the capability to attack ground targets.

PHOTO: CORPORAL E FOLLOWS RAF, © CROWN

Imagine – if you can – that the next time you sit at your desk to carry out your daily work, your computer screen shows a live, moving image of a man.

You have never met him but you know him well. He is 3000 miles away but you know his daily routine intimately. You know the walks he takes with his wife. You know where he plays football with his children. You'd recognise his friends and neighbours if you passed them in the street – although that will never happen.

You know all this because you've been watching him. For weeks. From a camera, at 20,000 feet in the sky.

You know all this because one day – perhaps today, maybe this time next week – you will need to pick the precise moment to end his life.

You'll choose carefully, because while you are at war with this man, you must use force proportionally. Your bomb or missile cannot harm a civilian. His family are not targets. He is the target. And when the time is right, you will not hesitate to do your job. It's hard to imagine, isn't it?

But for the three-person crews of military drones like the Royal Air Force (RAF) Reaper, this is their day-to-day reality.

Could you do it? If you did, what do you think would happen to you?

That is one of the questions at the heart of Dr Peter Lee's research. Peter is Director for Security and Risk at the University of Portsmouth. He explains:

"I try to understand the lives of the people who do these extraordinary things. They're sitting in the UK or USA and operating Reaper aircraft over Syria or Iraq. Bluntly, they are either watching or killing, and then going home to their families afterwards."

The human side

Peter's research has focused on military drone operators for more than half a decade.

During much of this time, he was working within the University of Portsmouth and based at the RAF College. He was the senior academic on a team delivering academic elements of RAF officer training and master's level courses to senior officers.

His interest in and commitment to this field of research is rooted in his background as a Chaplain in the RAF, from 2001 to 2008.

"Most of my work was non-religious. It was about the welfare of military personnel and their families. The human side is what motivates me. People are infinitely more complex than even the most advanced technology," Peter says.

"People often assume the word 'drone' means these aircraft are autonomous. But they're not. They are piloted remotely, just from a very long distance away.

"I'm interested in questions of who these people are individually and as a community, what motivates them to do what they do, how it affects them and what that means for the future."

Peter believes all of his academic work can be traced back to his experiences as Chaplain in a military hospital in Cyprus, during the Iraq war of 2003.

"My experience of war is not guns and bullets. It is wounded people, funerals and bereavement – the deeply painful, human side."

This has led him to devote many years of research into the ethics of what drone operators do, the extraordinary things they experience and the impact on their lives.

Not a game

Peter will tell you that one of the most significant events in the history of Reaper operations happened one ordinary day in 2011. A typical three-person drone crew were tracking two trucks, thousands of miles away in Afghanistan. Intelligence told them, accurately, that the trucks were being driven by members of the Taliban and the lead truck was full of homemade explosives.

So, at a moment when no civilians could be harmed, the crew dropped a 500-pound


Dr Peter Lee, Director for Security and Risk, University of Portsmouth.

I'm intrigued by people who can do this work for six or seven years continuously. My research touches on PTSD, but I think other mental traumas are much more widespread. I will work with a psychologist on a joint paper around this, using my research. I am convinced there is a traumatic effect from all the things Reaper crews do and see, with some people more affected than others. *– Dr Peter Lee*

bomb on it. The size of the explosion confirmed the presence of explosives in the truck, as expected. Instead of veering away, the second vehicle stopped. The crew got ready to fire again. They lined up on the target.

Then, through the smoke and dust from the first explosion, they spotted a child. Instantly, the crew aborted the mission. They watched as a whole family emerged from the truck and set about pulling dead women and children from the bombed vehicle. They bore witness as the bodies of a family were laid under a tarpaulin, thousands of miles away.

"You'll find many stories about Reaper technology and drone bombings," says Peter, "but little accurate insight into the people who operate them.

"There's an assumption that if you are physically detached by thousands of miles, you are also emotionally detached. But the Reaper cameras give a tremendously clear view of the person they are targeting and the impact of their weapons. There is a great sense of immediacy.

"Heart rates go through the roof, they get a sick feeling in their stomach – because they know they're about to kill someone. It's not a game.

"People I've interviewed say it's harder in a Reaper than in a conventional aircraft. In the air, you fire and fly away at great speed. But the Reaper is slower, and you stay and watch the aftermath."

Imagine again that man on your screen. Today is the day. You are authorised to fire.

After you kill him, you watch as the parts of his body that people can find are put in a wheelbarrow and delivered back to his wife. From your camera 20,000 feet in the air, you can see the grief – wives and children juddering in sorrow.

You have to watch. This is your job. These things must be recorded. Proper procedure must be evidenced. Intelligence must be gathered.

Peter has spoken to many people about how this feels: "It is deeply humanising."

Living with death

Peter once spoke with a drone crew member who had spent Saturday and Sunday on an outward-bound trip with children from the local school, where the crew member serves as a parent governor.

"Within hours of coming home, he was back at work watching someone being beheaded with a knife, utterly powerless to do anything about it."

Can you imagine that being your Monday morning?

Peter says, "I'm intrigued by people who can do this work for six or seven years continuously. My research touches on PTSD, but I think other mental traumas are much more widespread. I will work with a psychologist on a joint paper around this, using my research. I am convinced there is a traumatic effect from all the things Reaper crews do and see, with some people more affected than others."

Peter's research also tangles with questions of morality. "Just war morality says you should target combatants and use proportional force only. But comparative morality might say that if your actions shorten a war, you may save more lives. Take a historical example: did the firebombing of Dresden ultimately save more Jews from extermination than it killed German civilians? These are grotesque calculations and I think it is important to wrestle with them."

He has observed that the media often report drone stories as if the actions all occur within some kind of technical spectrum. But he insists, "Despite rapid advances in technology, the human dimension of war can never be taken away. Politicians and the media can be obsessed with the technological aspects, but that is a mistake. War is a deeply human activity. We shouldn't lose sight of the human factors and the human cost."

Peter will tell you the human factor can sometimes make all the difference.

He tells of a drone crew that were authorised to fire on a Taliban bomb maker. They had already been authorised six times during the course of a single day, but each time they held back because civilians were close by. This time, the seventh, they had seen him place a box on the back of his motorcycle and set out for home, several kilometres away. Just as they were about to act, a message came through from the operations room: hold fire.

One of the two supervisors, the Senior Mission Intelligence Coordinator (SMIC), in the ops room was certain there was a child on the back of the bike.

The crew looked closer, with maximum magnification. No child. But the SMIC was insistent, even though her peer couldn't see a child either. The ground controller called on a second surveillance aircraft to take a look. No child. But the SMIC insisted. They called in an Apache helicopter. No child. But still the SMIC insisted.

By now, the process had taken so long the man had arrived home. He dismounted, stepped to the rear ... and lifted a toddler from the back of his bike.

As Peter explains, "The Reaper pilot said if he'd been in a jet, he would have fired long before. But because so many people are involved in the drone strike decision chain, any doubt means you do not fire."

The human element – an innate ability to identify almost intangible body language – made all the difference. This is why, Peter believes, we must not make the mistake of considering drone operations as a fully automated process.

People understand the world in a different way to machines. Peter's research recognises that we owe it to the people we place in such extraordinary circumstances to take the time and effort to understand the impact of their actions on their own world. Theirs are the human hearts and minds on the frontline of modern, mechanised warfare.

▶ DR PETER LEE is Director of the Security and Risk Thematic Area.
To find out more about his work visit port.ac.uk
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Michael Cripps

"LEADERSHIP AND WHAT IT WAS TO BE A LEADER. THAT WAS REALLY POWERFUL IN TERMS OF DEVELOPING MY OWN SKILLS"

Michael Cripps, Fasset Limited

Q What was your career prior to undertaking the MBA?

I'm actually a qualified management accountant, but when doing my undergraduate degree [at the University of] Chester, I really wasn't sure what I was going to do. I had considered going into teaching, but I stumbled into accountancy and became a management accountant. I was fortunate to work for most of the big retailers in the area – Estée Lauder, B&Q and The Body Shop – then I moved to a small facility management company and was the finance controller there. So it was kind of a classic accountancy route.

It was a progressive career to the financial controller-type role, and then I started to move into a more operational role and blurred the finance with managing. In the company I work for we look after commercial properties. I took on sites in Havant, Teesside, Manchester and one in Kent. It was remote management with a lot of travel.

Q How did you hear about the MBA at Portsmouth?

I was always very aware of the MBA as a qualification. I had finished my accountancy qualifications in 2000 and then had a family. My career was doing OK and the MBA was something I thought would be quite a nice challenge, but it just wasn't right at the time. So while it was something I was aware of, I hadn't overly researched it.

Q What made you undertake the MBA?

Our business was challenged with regards to our main contract, which was amended, and that really changed the business model of our organisation.

[The reasons were] twofold. Firstly the owner was starting to coach me to take over his role and progress into his position and this [MBA] came along … partly to keep me there because at that time we had become a little unstable, and partly because of the breadth of the qualification that the MBA covers. So the MBA was to support the challenges our business was facing at the time.

Once I started to research it, it just fitted … both with my personal life and the business needs.

Q Did you have any reservations about undertaking the MBA?

The main reservation was that I'd been out of the academia front for a long time and I think the biggest challenge was coming back and writing in an academic style, finding my way back around that. Obviously the whole world had changed since I did my degree in 1994. If we had a reading list then we would run to the library and have a fight for the books. Now you don't need to go near a library, the whole world had changed in how you researched and accessed information.

Another big reservation was whether I was actually good enough. I painted this picture in my mind of all these master's-level postgraduates … would I be good enough? Would I fit in? Would I add anything to the group?

Q What was your company's view on you taking the MBA?

It was twofold. The business model was being challenged and the MBA was a way for us to look at ourselves internally and externally and understand the business model, and understand how we could recover from the hit we had taken as an organisation. And then there was the retention side and the owner's longer-term plans for me to step into his role.

Q It's a lot of trust put into you …

It was a lot of trust, but also pressure. Every time I came in here (the University) I felt like I was fighting with myself and [for] him to be the absolutely best, whether that was an essay or an assignment or just participating in a lecture. I'd seize every lecture moment and every assignment. I would regularly come in and sit with the lecturers and have a conversation about the assignments or stuff in the lectures, because I was actually using it live in the workplace as well.

There was one [assignment] we were doing with Gioia (Executive Dean of the Faculty of Business and Law) about company valuation and at the time [the company] was going through it. So we went through the [real] model rather than seeing it from a theoretical point of view.

Q It seems the course was very relevant, even though it has been around for a while.

I could absolutely apply it. The syllabus was wonderful. The first year was the practical support functions underneath a core business, you know, finance, marketing, all the core business areas. The next year was more about strategic leadership and innovation. It was totally relevant.

What was really positive was, being a part of a small company, I could really see the whole syllabus play out live. I'm an accountant, not a marketer, but the marketer was working with me. There were things we did here [in the MBA] that I just went straight back and used there and then.

Q You briefly touched on the first-year structure and the second year. How did the course take shape on a day-to-day basis?

As I put myself through it, it was day-to-day. We came in for lectures on a Friday and Saturday 9am–6pm every other week. The workload would peak and trough ... though I chose it to be full-on because I was using it live [back in the business]. The workload balance, though, was great. I felt it progressed nicely from ... the key support areas of the business to the deeper-thinking and strategic areas. There was stuff we did in year one that you felt, "Yeah I can pull upon that now," and then even more so in year two.

Q Lecturers' impact: what were you expecting from them?

I thought they went above and beyond, regularly. I was fortunate that I was local, so I could physically come in and see them. In some ways I think they enjoyed sparring with someone who had 20-odd years' experience in the workplace, over their models and what was going on in their lectures. How generous they were with their time was wonderful ... I threw everything at [the course] and they matched it for me.

Q What part of the course did you enjoy the most?

Year two ... leadership and what it is to be a leader. That was really powerful in terms of developing my own skills and the breadth of my own thinking and my effectiveness as a manager and a leader.

The unit we did on innovation was really powerful ... I work in quite a 'dry' facility management company and it still made me look at how we bring innovation into an established business model and sector.

I learnt a lot about myself. While I'm not an extreme introvert, I err on the side of introversion over extraversion and it allowed me, by being in the group and the cohort, to improve my communication and link those to the leadership skills and how to interact with others.

[I also enjoyed] understanding the dynamics of the other business areas – for example, what was going on in marketing? Why they were thinking, acting and behaving in a certain way?

Q Did the range of different people in your MBA class supply you with a different perspective?

Yes. It was kind of perfect symmetry. At the beginning there were seven males and seven females. If you look at the ratio of a lot of MBA courses [they are] dominated by a male cohort. And it was also pretty much 50:50 in terms of private and public sector.

That was one of the powerful parts of the course. There were a couple of people from the NHS and education. We had some quite healthy debates. They (the public sector) would deem us quite ruthless when we interpreted models or situations. I felt that [diverse backgrounds] were really useful in terms of the learning experience and deepening the learning experience.

Q What have been the benefits for your career from undertaking the MBA?

On a personal level, pride and satisfaction that I've done it – I got to the end. I achieved a distinction ... and I had had doubts that I was even good enough to be on the course. Once I got into it and started to get decent grades I became quite ruthless and demanding with myself. To watch my parents, my wife and son watch me on graduation day – after the sacrifices you have to make – that day was wonderful for them as much as it was for me!

On a work level, I now feel much more effective as an individual in the organisation, and I just feel there is a different depth and different breadth to my thinking, to the way I act and the way I go about things. There's much more balance in terms of understanding the many variables in the organisation.

Q Would you recommend the MBA to others?

Depending on where you are [in your career] and what you want to achieve, yes. I don't think you would gain as much from the learning experience until you have more experience [in the workplace]. It's a big commitment, so [you need to be] committed to yourself, your career and to the course. Some of the quality of lecturers we had here ... I just felt it was a privilege to be lectured by them.

Michael's career had progressed well but within the 'confines' of financial accounting where he displayed both intellect and insight. I wanted him to step outside of his comfort zone and broaden his horizons to the other key areas of 'operating a business'. It is too early to say how Michael's contribution to Fasset will change post-MBA. He has every opportunity to apply the skills from his course and make a difference. I will be there to both encourage and support. He has a bright future indeed.

– Gary Medlow, Managing Director, Fasset Limited

Big business opportunity for a small business price

In today's world of fast-paced sales and operations, how often do business leaders ever really get the time to consider their current operations and evaluate positive change? Portsmouth Business School students are helping global businesses to evaluate new or different options and strategies as part of their learning experience while also improving their own business skills and knowledge.

Landau UK is one of the South of England's leading marine retrofit specialists providing a comprehensive range of services and solutions, including waterside frontage, cranes, workshops and a showroom. The company specialises in delivering award-winning installations, retrofits, remodelling and restorations of equipment and systems to leisure and commercial marine vessels. Building on its work with global players such as the Ministry of Defence and Babcock Ltd, in 2018 Landau wanted to review sales activity around its recent entry into the highly competitive global leisure vessel refit market.

To achieve this Landau UK set a challenge for a Portsmouth Business School student team to engage in a project to assess the cost and effectiveness of current sales and marketing activity and set a strategy for the next five years.

The six-strong team undertook visits with the Chief Executive of the company Ben Metcalf over a three-month period, producing a consultancy report and presentation.

"It gave us resources to look at problems we did not have time to look at … creating, in effect, a big business opportunity for a small business price," says Ben.

The team undertook a penetrating analysis of the company's sales and marketing strategy delivering risk weighted options to the CEO on potential changes and improvements, several of which the company implemented.

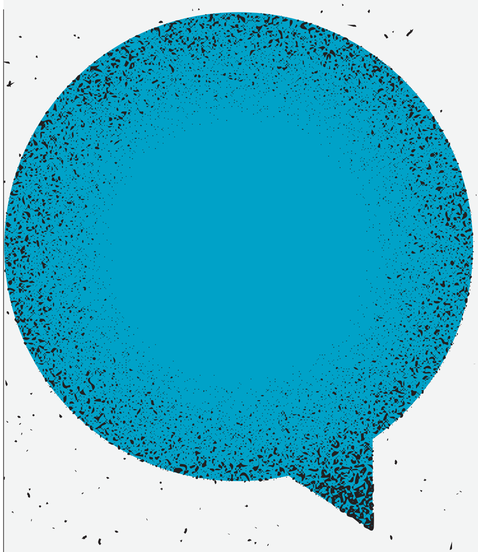
Every year, over 100 businesses are supported by a pool of students, many from other countries, who, supervised by experienced academics, are able to help these companies present fresh

PHOTO:REDCHARLIE/UNSPLASH

perspectives, energy and new ideas to their clients. And because of the students' global mix, they also bring valuable cultural knowledge and insights.

The impact of this approach is genuine differentiation and real-world consultancy experience for the students and meaningful business analysis for the global businesses with which they engage.

▶ To find out more about this visit port.ac.uk
or email the *BusinessTalk* team pete.hooley@port.ac.uk.
See the Landau case study here:
https://itnproductions.wistia.com/medias/bpsvw3xxt2



GLOBAL BRANDS DON'T MANAGE THEMSELVES

When TopCashback took on Savanna Stephenson as a placement student for a year of her degree, little did she know that it would lead to her managing accounts for top brands, developing new ideas, designing campaigns and implementing practical solutions to challenges and opportunities. Here's Savanna's story.

Q What was your placement role?

I was an account manager for over 200 brands onsite, ensuring each brand achieved their marketing goals with TopCashback. On a day-to-day basis I was keeping in contact with my brands through meetings, phone calls and emails. I was entrusted to set up my own meetings and attend corporate lunches with brand representatives. These activities enabled me to fulfil my objectives, which were to keep track on the exposure and performance of each brand and analyse the activity with a view to improving future campaigns.

Q What did you take from your university course to the role?

Many of the group activities I have undertaken on my course have been invaluable. They have helped me to manage differences and implement account management through scheduled contact. These skills and experiences have aided me greatly while on placement as I already valued the concept of working within a team. I also studied Business Innovation Development Project in my first year, which was based on creating an innovative service or product. This helped me brainstorm and come up with innovative exposure ideas for my brands.

Q How has spending time with a company helped with your development?

My creativity and confidence has been extended through being able to do something in the real world that benefited me and the business. Miss Selfridge was a brand I managed throughout my year at TopCashback. After successfully launching exposure packages which saw the brand's market share and year-on-year performance grow, the company reached out to me and proposed an additional budget in return for a creative onsite campaign. After seeking advice with the team and researching previous campaigns launched between brands and TopCashback, I came up with a crazy but innovative campaign which involved influencers, targeted emails and onsite exposure. Many meetings later this was signed off and saw the brand trending number one on the TopCashback site and Miss Selfridge revenue more than doubling.

Q Why are placement years important?

Undergoing a placement was the best decision to make. It's given me clarity as to where I want to take my career after I graduate and it even secured a job offer. It has also enabled me to help a company take a different perspective and implement ideas of mine which were new to them.

▶ If you are interested in recruiting a placement student and having them work in your business, our dedicated placements team can help.
To find out more visit port.ac.uk
or email the *BusinessTalk* team pete.hooley@port.ac.uk.

Savanna Stephenson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