Fair Employment of Autistic Researchers: Identifying and Addressing Barriers

London South Bank University

https://employmentautism.org.uk/news/conference-2023/

CADS conference

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvQfc1BSXFQ

Inaugural lecture by Professor Nicola Martin

https://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/people/people-finder/dr-nicola-martin

CADS

The Critical Autism and Disability Studies (CADS) research group at LSBU (amongst other things) seeks to understand and address barriers faced by autistic people in relation to gaining, keeping and progressing in employment in academic roles in our universities.

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

Influences

National strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026

Autistic involvement in this agenda?

Moving beyond tokenism…

Priorities:

health

education

employment

social care

criminal justice

community

Equality Act 2010

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

The Buckland Review

Announced 2nd April 2023

Autism Employment Review

The Disabled Student Commitment

Disabled Students' Commission

Collaborators

Milton et al (2019)

Stakeholder informed (involved-controlled)

Useful

Respectful

Ethical

# Emancipatory Research

The thorny issue of allyship

Milton (2017)

Participatory Research

- 'At the lowest end … forms of non-participation are used by powerful actors to impose their agendas… tokenism… participants hear about interventions… may say something about them, which power holders denote as 'input'… voices of participants will not have any effect on the intervention;… does not lead to change.

- At the higher end… participation is about citizens having more power to negotiate and change the status quo. Their voices are heard *and* responded to'.

- [Levels of Participation | Participatory Methods](#);Institute of Development Studies Accessed 08-09-22
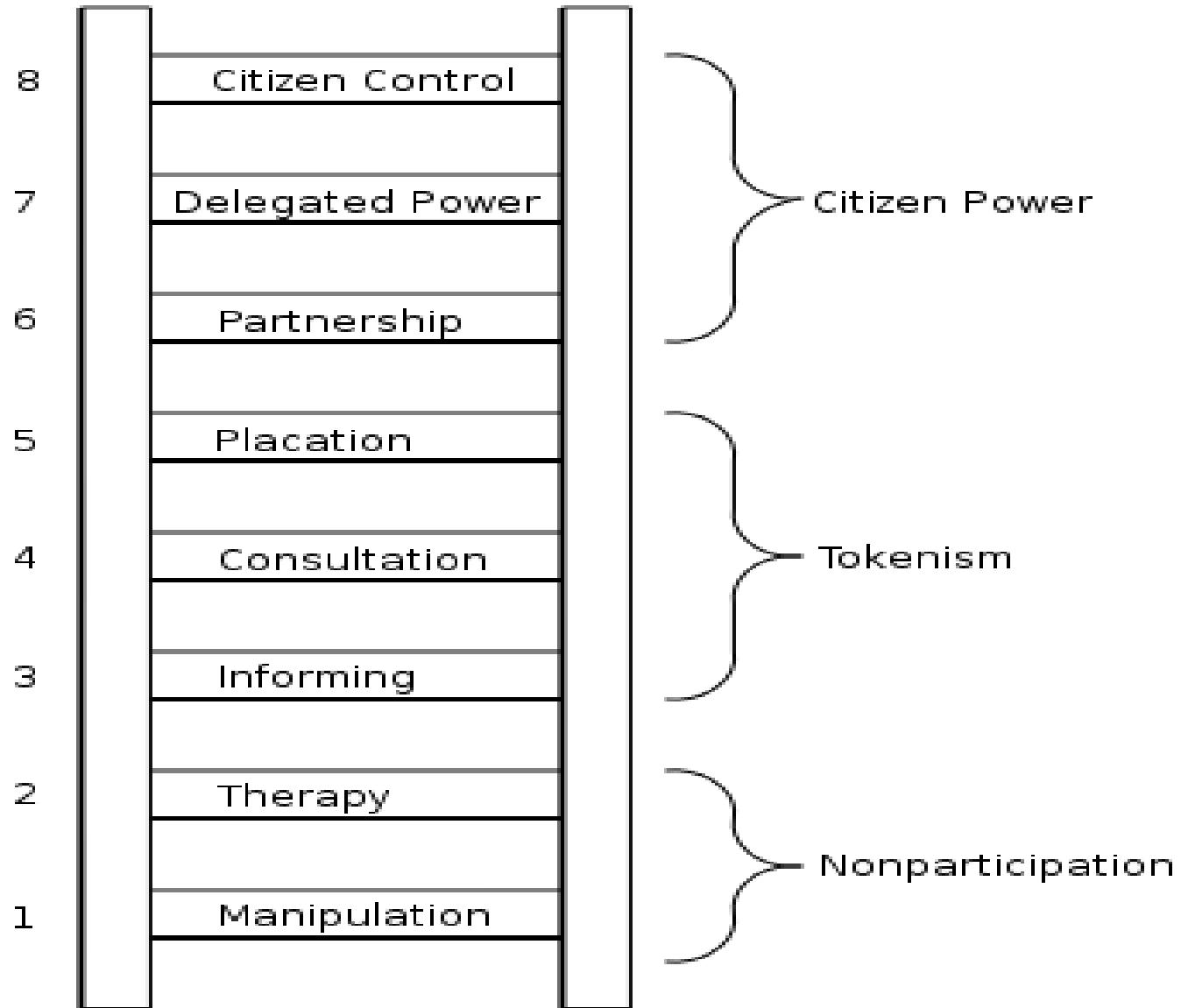
Interdisciplinary Collaborative Research

Themes

Inclusive:

- **Education**
- **Employment**
- **Health and Social Care**
- **Older age**
- **Mentoring**
- **Research**

Social Model thinking

Oliver (2013)

- **Monotropism** (Murray2018) - **In-depth interests**
- **Application /productivity**
- **Reliability /integrity**
- **Community building /mutual support /Empathy**
- **Energy /enthusiasm**

'*Beloved community is formed not by the eradication of difference but by its affirmation, by each of us claiming the identities and cultural legacies that shape who we are and how we live in the world'.*
bell hooks

CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

Autistic strengths

Autistic challenges

- **Access to diagnostic / post-diagnostic services /services which are behind a wall**

- **Educational exclusion /unemployment / underemployment /poverty**

- **Stereotyping /threats to autonomy /agency**

- **A treacle of bureaucracy /navigating chaos**

"Hell is other people"

Reasonable adjustments are often cheap and easy and benefit everyone

- **Embedding Universal Design (UD) reduces the requirement for reasonable adjustment**

- **UD is about planning for diversity rather than being surprised that there is no such person as 'Mythical Norm'**

- **Autistic people know what they need**

- **Nobody thrives in chaos**
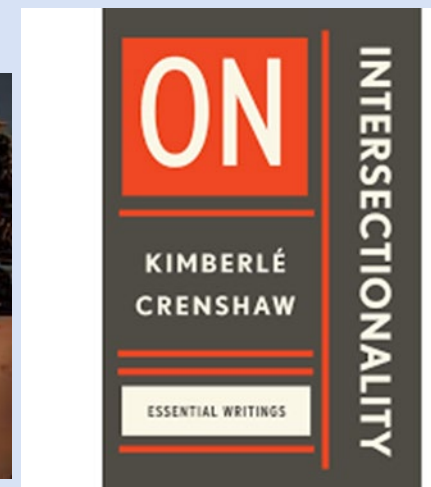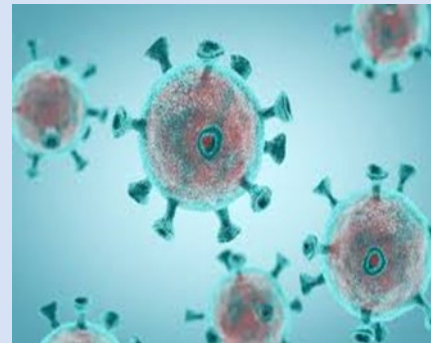
Reliable

Empathic

Anticipatory

Logical

People and systems need to **reliably** do what they say they are going to do

Planning needs to be built on **empathically**, looking at situations from various perspectives and enacting the **anticipatory** duties of the 2010 Equality Act by planning for diverse participation

Logical workable systems communicated clearly make life easier and more productive for everyone

UNIVERSAL D E S I G N

Universal Design for Learning

Services are often ineffective

Universities do not always have support in place for autistic students at the start of their course and services are not necessarily appropriate for doctoral candidates

Employment services such as Access to Work do not easily translate into useful support

The Disabled Student Commitment

Disabled Students' Commission

Access to Work
Making work possible

EA Employment Autism
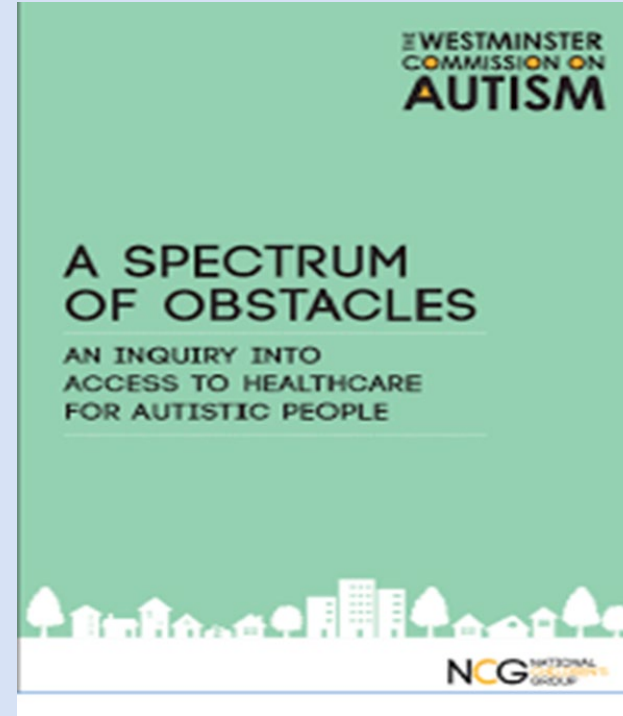opportunity in work | fulfilment in life

NHS England and NHS Improvement

THE JOHN AND LORNA WING FOUNDATION

supporting autism research

THE WESTMINSTER COMMISSION ON AUTISM

A SPECTRUM OF HARMFUL INTERVENTIONS FOR AUTISM:

A SHORT REPORT

north east autism society
The National Autistic Society
Ambitious about Autism
autism plus
ADDING VALUE TO LIVES
RESEARCH AUTISM
IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE
AUTISTICA
building brighter futures through autism research
autism west midlands

Diagnosis /post diagnostic support

SUPPORT SURROUNDING DIAGNOSIS

THE WESTMINSTER COMMISSION ON AUTISM

An Inquiry into Pre– and Post-Support for the Autism Diagnosis Pathway

Centre for Applied Autism Research (CAAR)
UNIVERSITY OF BATH

THE JOHN AND LORNA WING FOUNDATION
supporting autism research

THE WESTMINSTER COMMISSION ON AUTISM

A SPECTRUM OF OBSTACLES

AN INQUIRY INTO ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE FOR AUTISTIC PEOPLE

NCG NATIONAL GROUP

GP Health checks are not uniformly available & do not cover dentistry or mental health. Medical practitioners are not well informed about autism

Falling between learning disability& mental health services

AUTISTIC DOCTORS INTERNATIONAL (ADI)

Autistic people who do not use words and older family carers are often not heard

A way forward

- **Joined-up autism research would be useful as various funders fund similar projects**

- **Real participation of autistic people in research which is informed by the priorities of autistic people (Pellicano, et al 2014)**

- **Autistic researchers would benefit from stable employment contracts**

- **Support for organisations such as PARC**

Sample Publications (co-authored with autistic researchers and-or focussing on employment in academia)

- [Human Rights: The Right to Work in Academia](#)
  Birchall, D. and Martin, N. (2023). Human Rights: The Right to Work in Academia. *Journal of Inclusive Practice in Further and Higher Education.* 15 (1), pp. 75-101.

- [Healthcare Barriers, Health Outcomes, and Annual Health Checks for Autistic Adults: A Cross-Sectional Study of General Practitioners' Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices](#)
  Chown et al (2022). Healthcare Barriers, Health Outcomes, and Annual Health Checks for Autistic Adults: A Cross-Sectional Study of General Practitioners' Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices. *Canadian Journal of Educational and Social Studies.* 2 (4), pp. 179-199. https://doi.org/10.53103/cjess.v2i4.57

- [General Practitioner Autism Training and Mandatory Medical Training: A Cross-Sectional Study of GPs' Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices](#)
  Chown, N et al (2023). General Practitioner Autism Training and Mandatory Medical Training: A Cross-Sectional Study of GPs' Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices. *Canadian Journal of Educational and Social Studies.* 3 (1), pp. 1-16. https://doi.org/10.53103/cjess.v3i1.99

[A Practical Response to Ableism in Leadership in UK Higher Education](#)
Martin, N. (2019). A Practical Response to Ableism in Leadership in UK Higher Education. in: Brown, N. and Leigh, J. (ed.) Ableism in Academia UCL Press.

[University through the eyes of autistic students and staff](#)
Martin, N. (2020). University through the eyes of autistic students and staff. in: Milton, D. (ed.) Neurodiversity Reader

[Perspectives on UK university employment from autistic researchers and lecturers](#)
Martin, N. (2020). Perspectives on UK university employment from autistic researchers and lecturers. *Disability & Society.* 36 (9), pp. 1510-1531. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2020.1802579

[Practical Scholarship: Optimising Beneficial Research Collaborations Between Autistic Scholars, Professional Services Staff and 'Typical Academics' in UK Universities](#)
Martin, N. (2020). Practical Scholarship: Optimising Beneficial Research Collaborations Between Autistic Scholars, Professional Services Staff and 'Typical Academics' in UK Universities. in: Chown, N. (ed.) Neurodiversity: A New Critical Paradigm Routledge.

- [A critical reflection on the development of the Participatory Autism Research Collective (PARC)](#)
  Milton, D, Ridout, S, Kourti, M, Loomes, G and Martin, N (2019). A critical reflection on the development of the Participatory Autism Research Collective (PARC). *Tizard Learning Disability Review.* https://doi.org/10.1108/TLDR-09-2018-0029

- [Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Employment of Autistic Adults](#)
  Martin, N, Barnham, C and Krupa, J (2019). Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Employment of Autistic Adults. *Journal of Inclusive Practice in Further and Higher Education.* 10 (1), pp. 56-77.

- [Does 'mentoring' offer effective support to autistic adults?: a mixed methods pilot study](#)
  Martin, N, Milton, D, Sims, T, Dawkins, G, Baron-Cohen, S and Mills, R (2017). Does 'mentoring' offer effective support to autistic adults? a mixed methods pilot study. *Advances in Autism.* 3 (4). https://doi.org/10.1108/AIA-06-2017-0013

- Fertig, H., Martin, N. and Waltz, M. (2021) (Eds.) Autism and Employment. *Advances in Autism*, Vol. 7 No. 1 https://doi.org/10.1108/AIA-01-2021-0007

- Autism in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities: A Report on The First Autism Voice UK Symposium
  Kandeh, M.S., Kandeh, M.K., Martin, N. and Krupa, J. (2020). Autism in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communties: A Report on The First Autism Voice UK Symposium. *Advances in Autism.* 6 (2), pp. 165-175. https://doi.org/10.1108/AIA-12-2018-0051

- Encouraging disabled leaders in higher education: recognising hidden talents
  Martin, N (2017). *Encouraging disabled leaders in higher education: recognising hidden talents.* Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.

- Examining intellectual prowess, not social difference: Removing barriers from the doctoral viva for autistic candidates
  Chown, N, Beardon, L, Martin, N and Ellis, S (2016). Examining intellectual prowess, not social difference: Removing barriers from the doctoral viva for autistic candidates. *Journal of Inclusive Practice in Further and Higher Education.* 6 (1), pp. 22-38.

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