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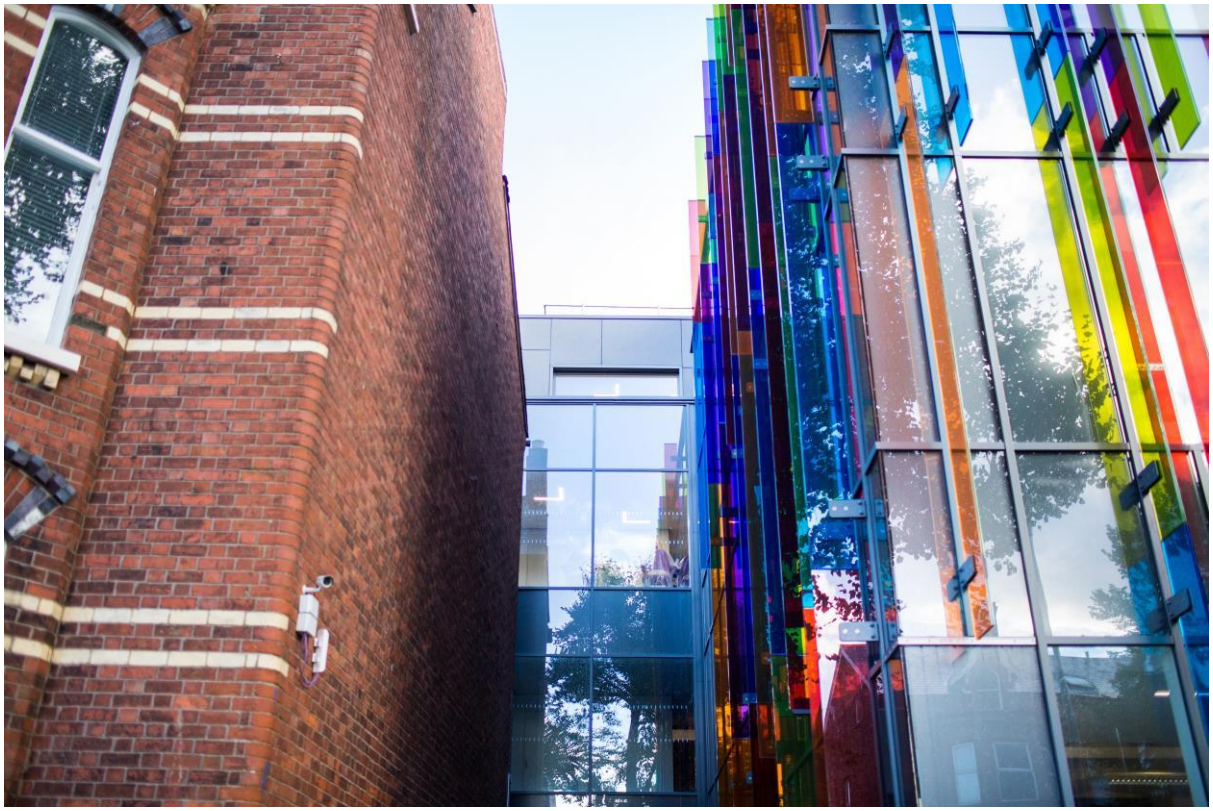
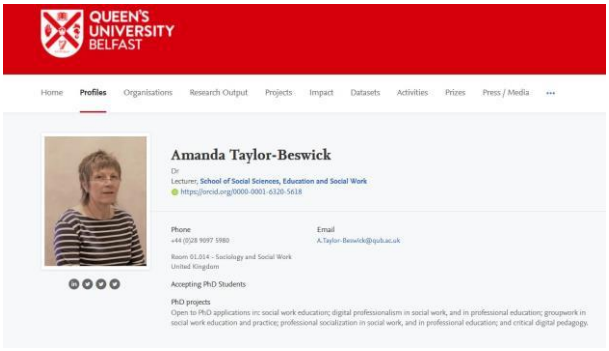
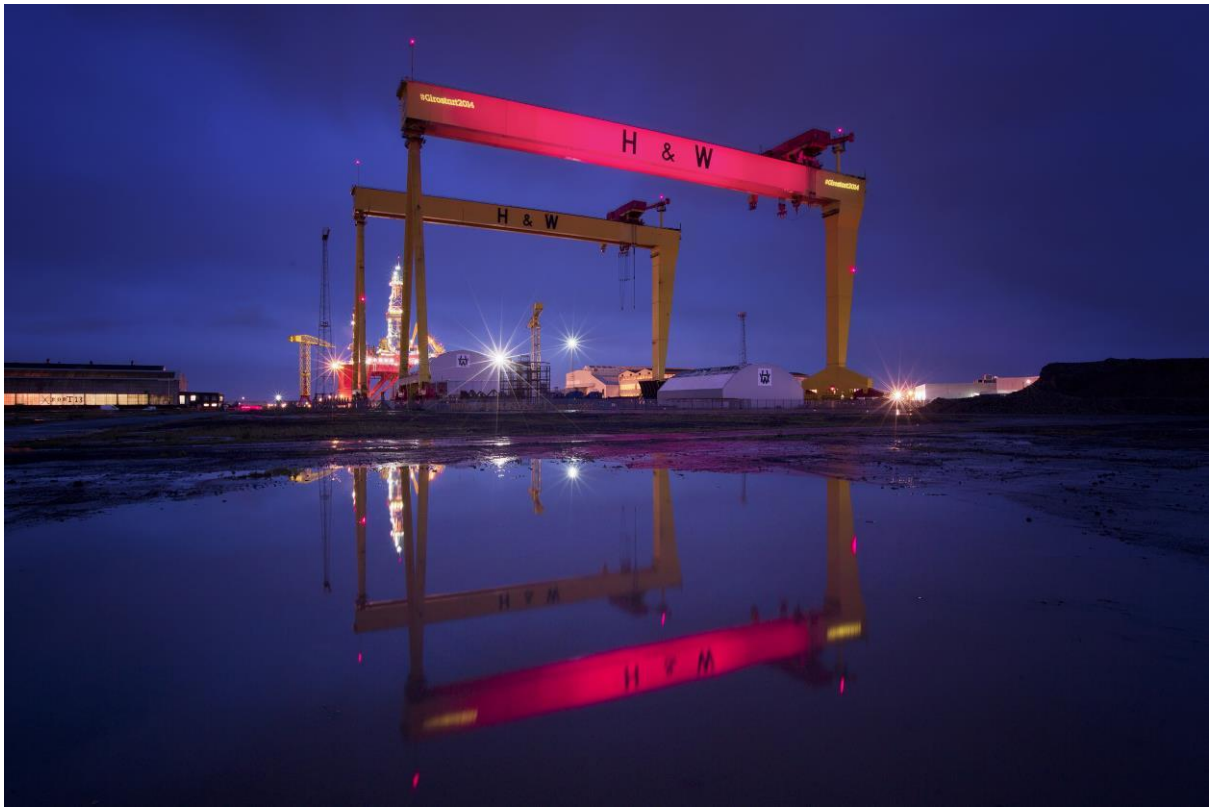


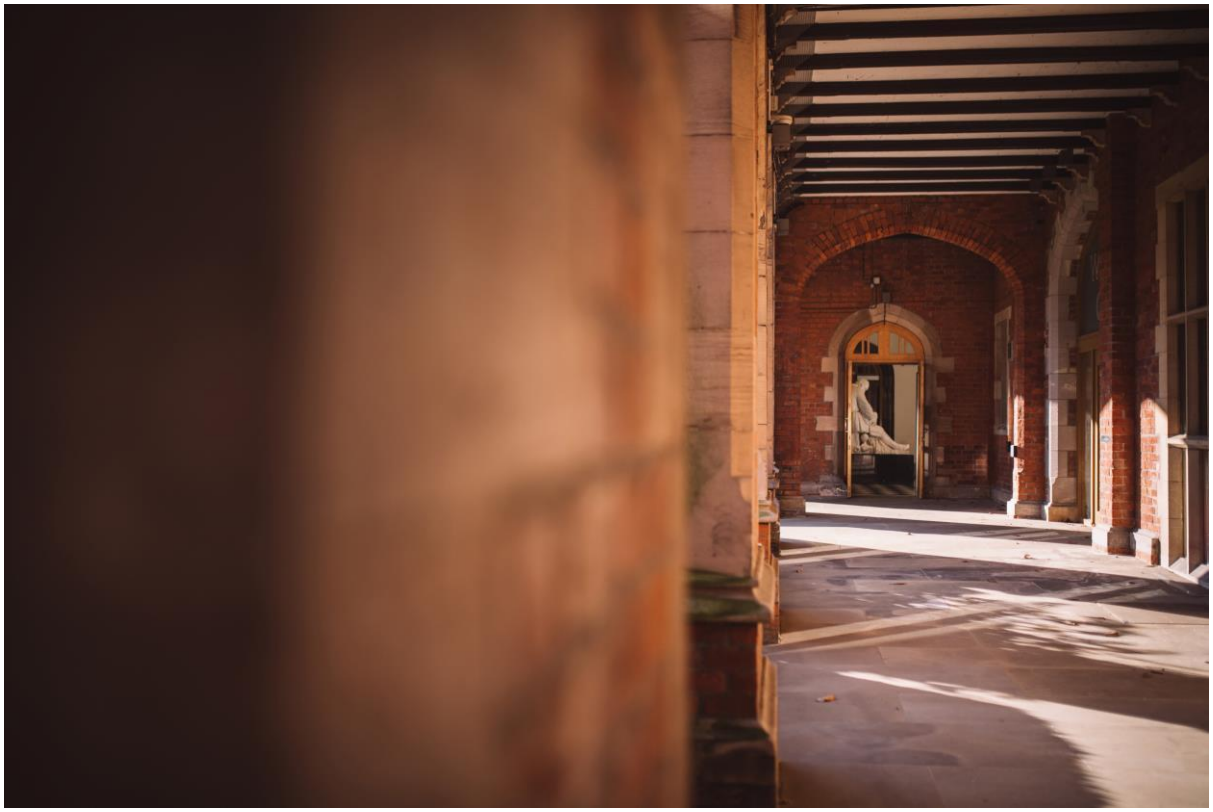
Post-pandemic Social Work Practice-Education; what will it look like, what will it feel like, who will decide?



If you have access, please use the chat function in MSTEAMS to:



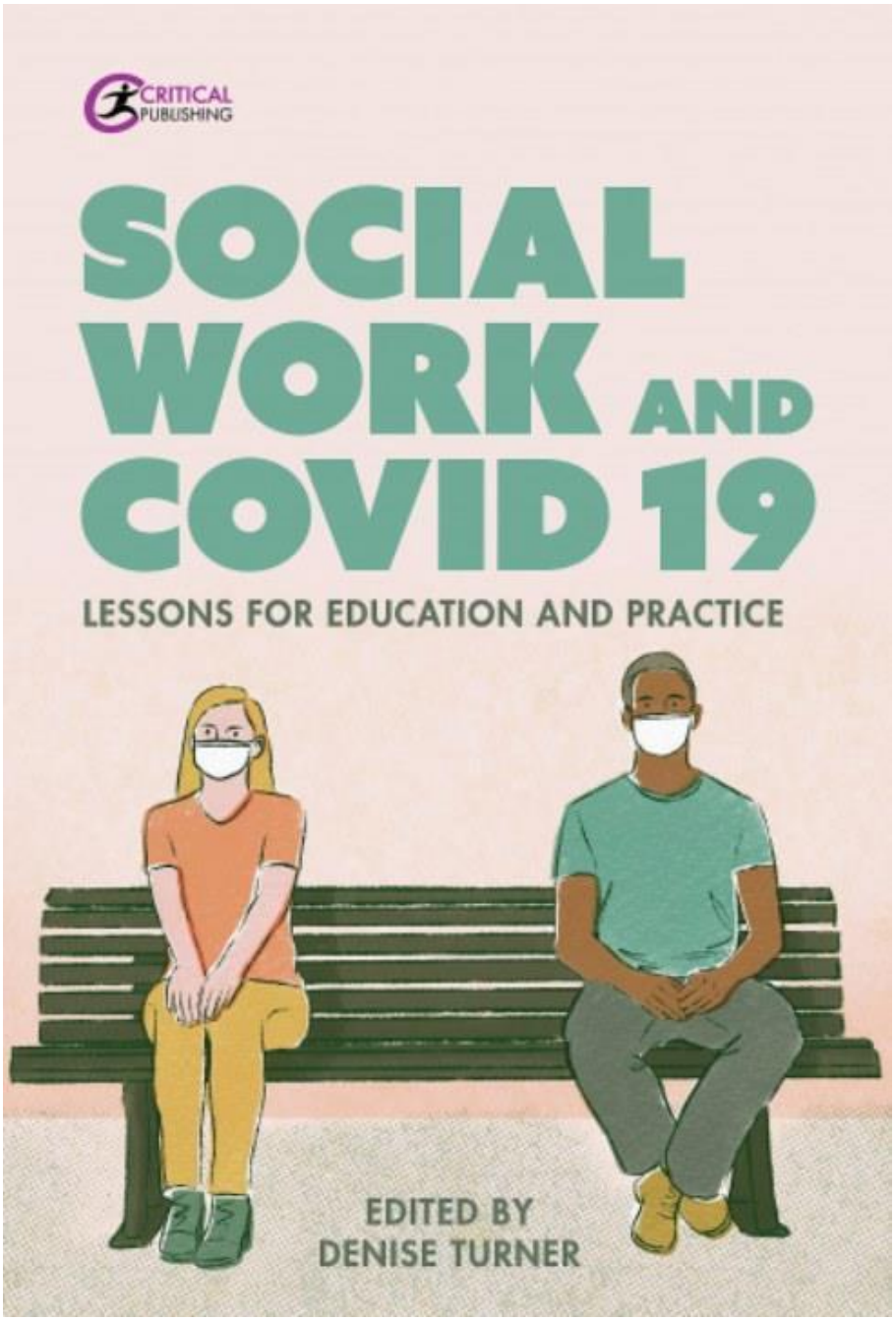
1. say HELLO; 2. let us know your practice background; 3. outline what you hope to get from today; 4. make a comment on the relationship between tech, practice education, and your role



Challenges of pandemic social work/practice education

Social Work, Technologies, Covid19 Open Access

chapter link: https://pure.qub.ac.uk/en/publications/social-work-technologies-covid-19-book-chapter



This short chapter employs a pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post pandemic frame to contextualise an aspect of social work's response to COVID19, a digitised response to the global crisis that continues to alter educational methods and approaches to practice in the field. It was the measures put in place to control the spread of the virus that forced social work to seek digital alternatives to face-to-face, in-person or proximal practices. In common with most human service professions, this pivot online

has not been without tension; gaps in digital knowledge and infrastructure, and the absence of digital leadership and funding are amongst the many difficulties the profession is experiencing.

Whilst there had been an obvious and pressing need for the profession to advance its digital practices, the current global crisis has further highlighted the consequences of the lack of digital advancement in social work. The urgency to respond to the pandemic has offered little opportunity for digital development, criticality or analysis. Technology adoption has therefore involved a wide range of commercial platforms, with notions of free and functional convenience often usurping privacy and ethics (Goldkind et al., 2020 Open Access: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15228835.2020.1757559#metrics-content). An acknowledgement of all of this in no way diminishes the extraordinary efforts within education and practice to address the significant challenges that COVID has presented.

In the wake of COVID19 it will be important to reflect upon the changes that have be made, both in education and practice, to think about the changes that were a crisis response and those that will have become established aspects of professional practice. Decisions will need to be made about the appropriateness of both digital and traditional methods going forward, with close attention paid to those that no longer serve us, or those that no longer assist us to serve. Furthermore, a position will need to be taken on tech-capitalism, surveillance, data rights and data exploitation.

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30 plus year tech in social work knowledge base

"As a means to going forward it is important to look back and, looking back here begins with a small and steadfast group of social work academics, who, since the late 70's, have paid close attention to and made significant comment on **'the exponential growth of technology… [how it has] reshaped our society…[and how] it will continue to be a dynamic force in future generations'** (Taylor-Beswick, 2019).

1 - RESOURCE: https://historyofsocialwork.org/eng/details.php?cps=29&canon_id=173

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*"**Convinced of the value of information technology for the future of human services',** despite the fact that 'the majority... still look on the field as rather esoteric and distanced from the true nature of the caring professions' they believed that it was the work of husITa **'to convince… [how] inaction would result in resources being placed elsewhere – and their ill-informed applications of IT would result in systems which do not model human service value systems'** (**1987**, in Ballantyne, 2017, p.3). In a publication following the conference they, urged social work to take the role of the master and not the slave to new and emerging technologies, in particular the **'human problems, human values, human ethics'** intersections*

*(LaMendola and Glastonbury, **1989**, p.4 in Taylor-Beswick, 2019).*

How much had their work shaped our educational and field practices?

The Professional Standards – Social Work England

The Professional Standards *are the threshold standards that social workers must meet to lawfully practice. The Digital Capabilities Statement can support social workers to meet* The Professional Standards *because it explains the benefits of using technology and the skills and CPD required to demonstrate these standards. The* Professional Standards *listed below state explicitly that social workers require digital capabilities to practice and they are also implicit in the other.*

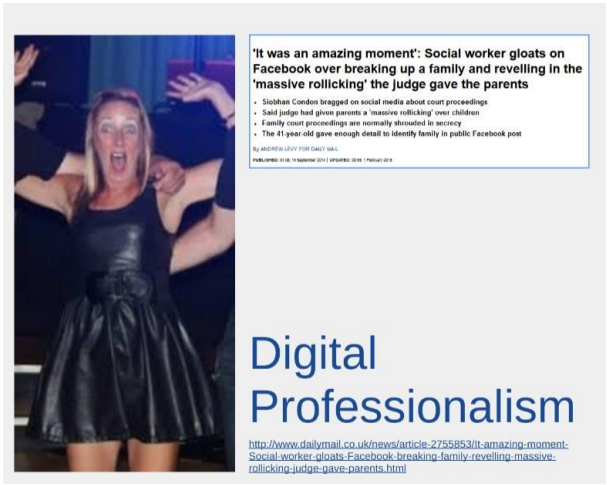
Standard 3: 10 – 'Establish and maintain skills in information and communication technology and adapt my practice to new ways of working, as appropriate' (SWE, 2019; p.8)

Standard 4 – This requires social workers to use research and evidence which include digital capabilities (e.g. skills in information-searching, retrieval, analysis and storage). This Standard also requires social workers to record their continuing professional development (CPD) activities online, and reflect on their values, which will include the ethics of digital technologies.

Standard 5.2 – 'Behave in a way that would bring into question my suitability to work as a social worker while at work, or outside of work' (SWE, 2019; p. 12). This refers to the inappropriate use of social media and digital technologies, among other behaviours.

Standard 5.6 – 'Use technology, social media or other forms of electronic communication unlawfully, unethically, or in a way that brings the profession into disrepute' (SWE, 2019; p. 12).

REF: https://www.basw.co.uk/purpose[1]



The social worker described children as "demonic" on Facebook (Image: Grimsby Live)

Tusla employee had more than 2,000 child porn images on home computer

Denis O'Donovan (34) who has now left Tusla claimed at first he was researching child porn as part of his work

Thu, May 9, 2019, 18:46

Barry Roche

A detective told the court the images were of the most serious Category 1 type.

A 34-year-old man was found with over 2,000 child porn images at his home in Cork city while he was working for the Child and Family Agency, Tusla, a court has heard.

Denis O'Donovan pleaded guilty to possessing child pornography at his home at Forest Ridge, Doughcloyne, Togher, on March 9th 2017, contrary to the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act when he appeared at Cork Circuit Criminal Court on Thursday.

[1] https://www.basw.co.uk/purpose

Social worker sacked for public Facebook posts calling children 'demonic' and mum 'moronic cow'

The social worker in North East Lincolnshire posted damning comments and sensitive case information online

SHARE COMMENTS By Connor Lynch & Katy Clifton NEWS

Joanne Thomas has been sacked (Image: Grimsby Live)

ADVERTISEMENT
Ad closed by Google

Social worker who sent indecent video of child in work group chat pleads guilty

19 August 2021 | *News, Sexual offences*

A former social worker who accidentally sent an indecent video of a child to colleagues in a WhatsApp group chat has pleaded guilty to charges against him.

Roy Reid, 58, who was employed at Croydon Children's Services sent the video in a group chat set up to arrange a leaving celebration for a colleague on 20 September 2019.

The victim has never been identified.

Reid's colleagues began to leave the group chat after the video was sent and he was reported to managers at his workplace and in turn to the police.

Reid was arrested later the same day. His phone was examined as part of the investigation and further indecent and extreme images were uncovered on the device.

Today (Thursday, 19 August 2021) at Croydon Crown Court Reid pleaded guilty to making indecent photographs of a child and possessing an extreme pornographic image. He had previously pleaded guilty to two counts of distributing an indecent photograph of a child when he appeared at Bromley Magistrates' Court.

Kate Shilton, from the CPS, said: "Roy Reid was a trusted employee within children's services and his interest in indecent images of children was both shocking and abhorrent.

"The prosecution case included statements from members of the WhatsApp group and a forensic analysis of Reid's phone which brought up further graphic and illegal images of concern.

"I would like to highlight the actions of many of those in the WhatsApp group who stood by their profession and reported Reid's crimes.

News › North East News › Durham County Council

Social worker who used dark web to view indecent images of children is struck off

Shaun Devlin admitted viewing vile images 'on a regular basis' over three years while employed as a social worker by Durham County Council

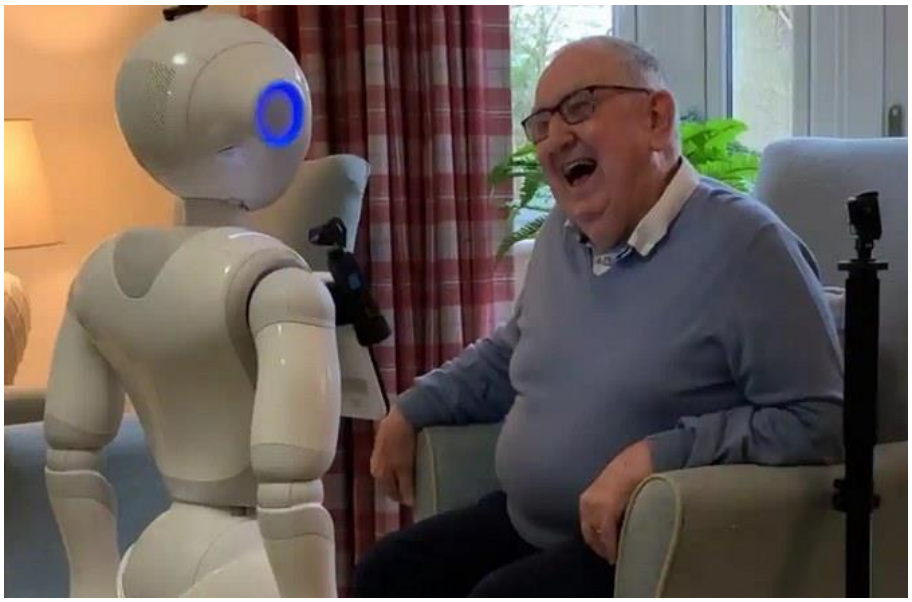
SHARE COMMENTS By Katie Dickinson Reporter NEWS

Enter your **postcode** for **local news** and **info** Enter your postcode Go In YourArea

(Image: PA)

“They ‘trust me.’
Dumb fucks.”
Mark Zuckerberg
co-founder of Facebook, born May 14, 1984

QUICK BYTES
ITSECURITY
WIRE



Tentacles that went right around the world

The story-line follows Daniel as he navigates a set of circumstances that lead to him being 'sanctioned' (Adler, 2016,p. 195; Taylor, 2017, np) and thus caught up in the tangled web that is the current benefits system. The occurrences that unfold drive Daniel into poverty. The stress

associated with this experience cause Daniel to collapse at an appeal hearing, which was set to determine his future benefit entitlement.

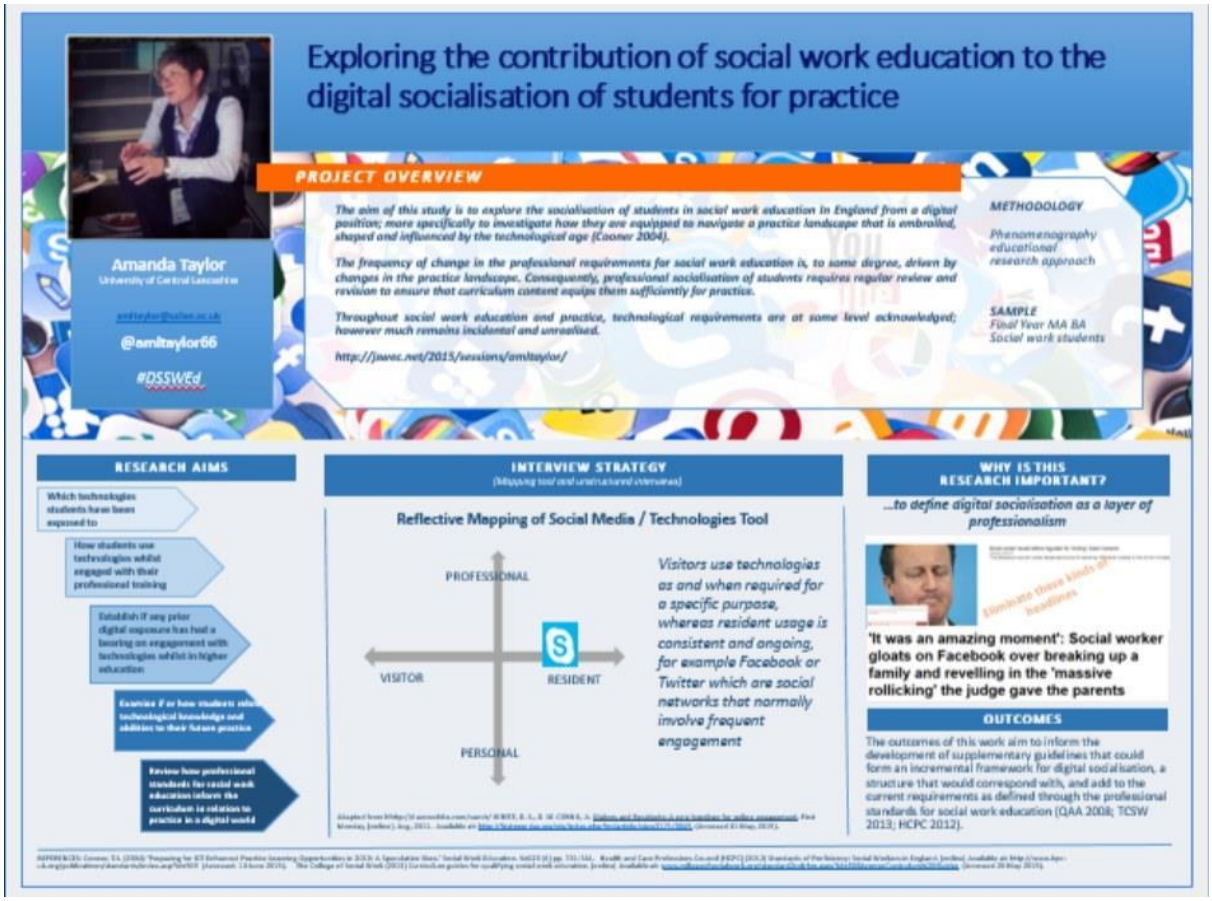
Daniel died...

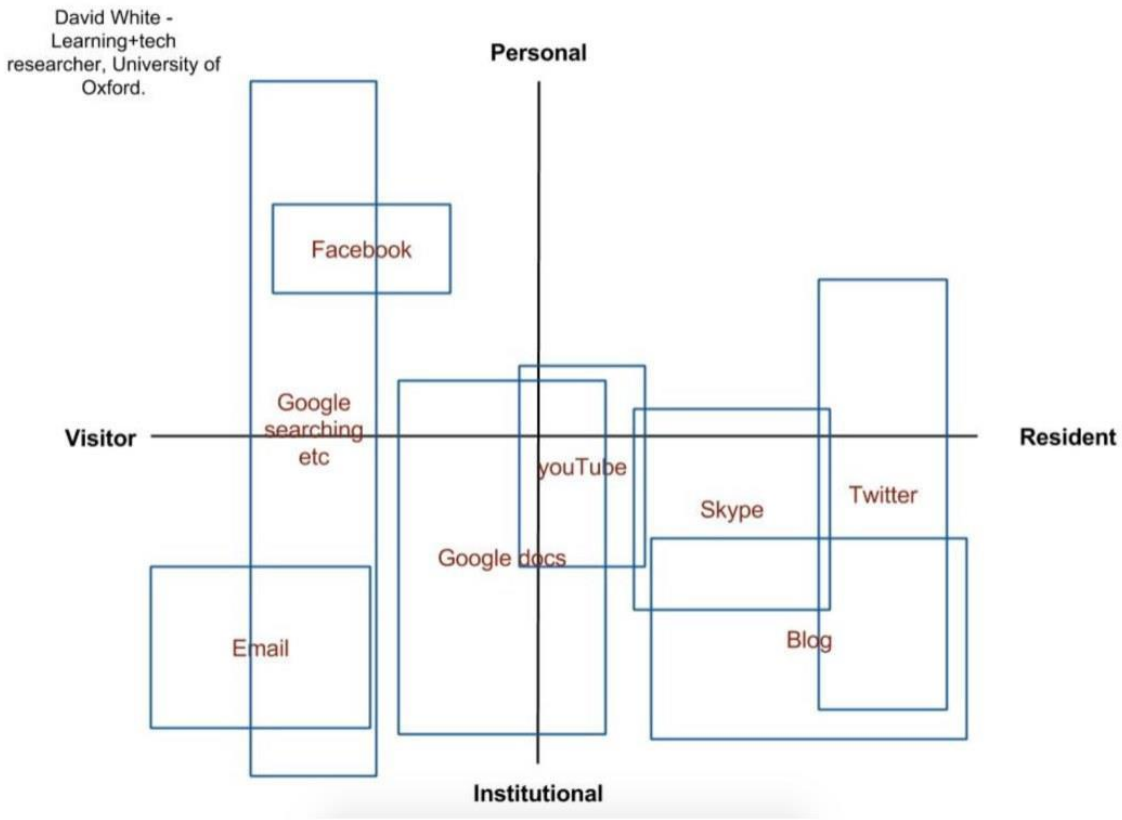
On the floor...

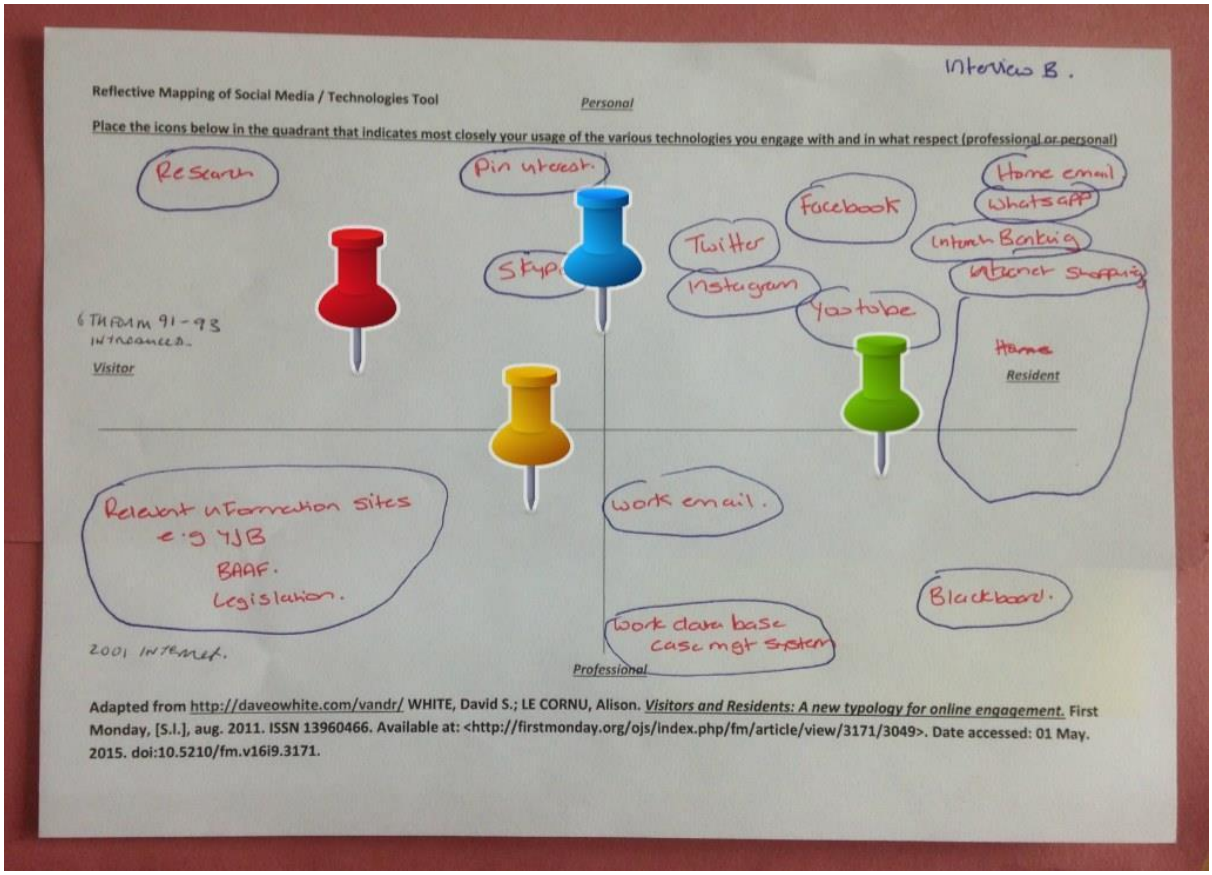
Of a public toilet...

In a Government building!

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02615479.2017.1361924?journalCode=cswe20







"When I came on this course no one told us much, if anything at all, about technologies. There was no formal training"

"There are far too many assumptions made about what we know [with reference to digital technologies] and what we can do with all this stuff"

"No, none at all [referring to formal teaching and instruction] and that meant you didn't really know how to use them [technologies] properly"

"You can ruin your career, it can go to pot if you're not careful"

"I'm still trying to learn for myself. I don't know enough and I see my peers getting it wrong all the time and I don't want to. I think I've just got risk on my mind a lot"

"I see my peers getting it wrong all the time"

"I notice others, like if they put something a bit dodgy"

"I have seen examples of where people have crossed the line"

"Amanda, the practitioners on placement don't know about this stuff"

How do we prepare students for practice in a world of technological potentialities and technological perils...

Including what we learnt from the COVID19 digital pivot

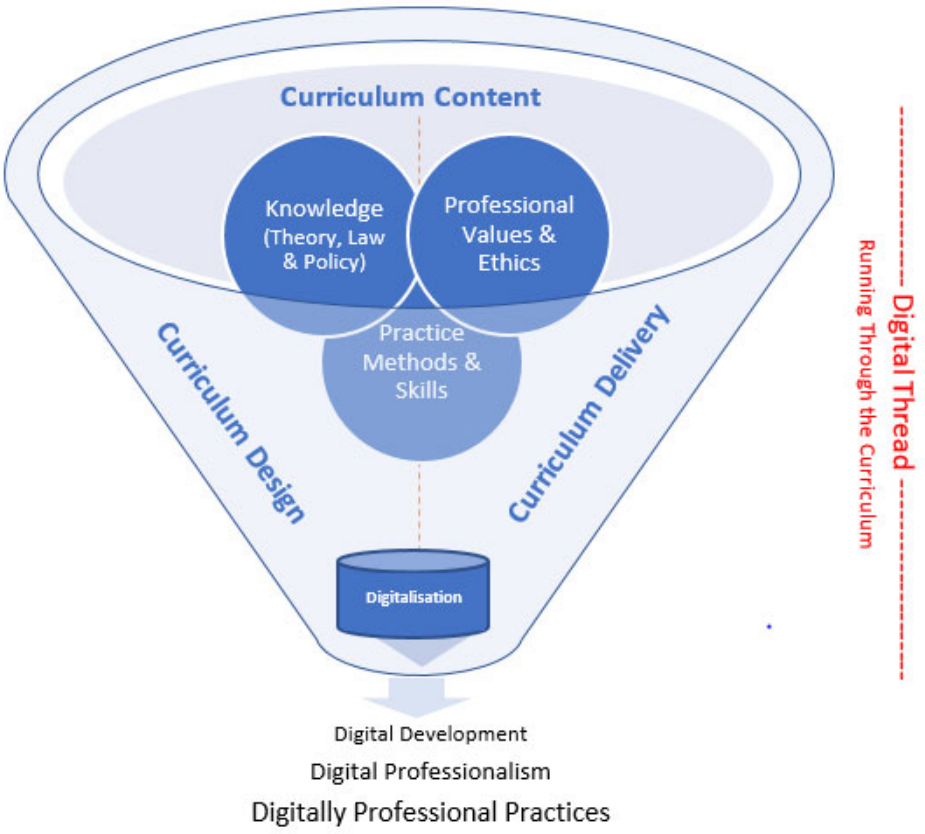
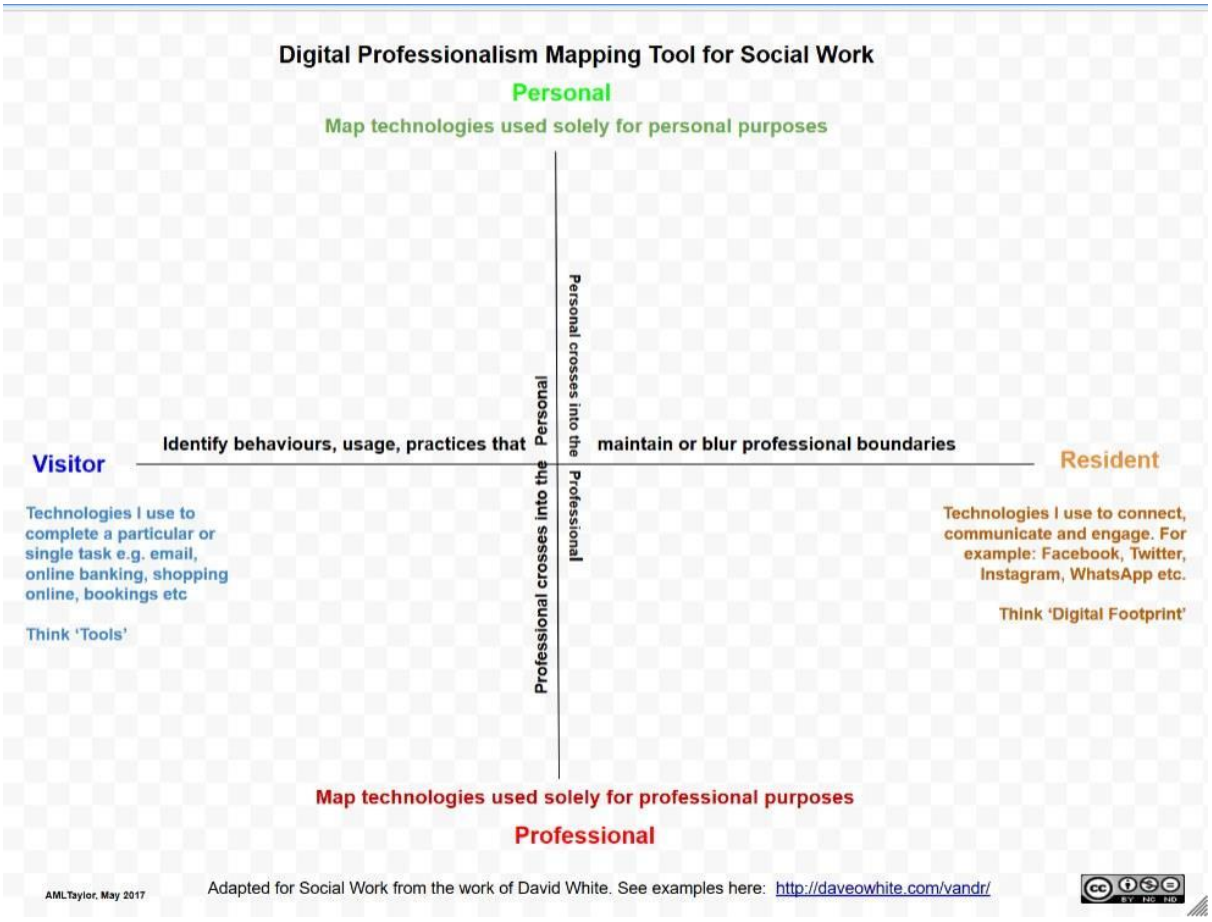


***Figure 3**. Digitising Social Work Education Framework*


Digital Professionalism Mapping Tool for Social Work
Personal
Map technologies used solely for personal purposes
Personal crosses into the Professional
Professional crosses into the Personal
Identify behaviours, usage, practices that maintain or blur professional boundaries
Visitor
Technologies I use to complete a particular or single task e.g. email, online banking, shopping online, bookings etc
Think 'Tools'
Resident
Technologies I use to connect, communicate and engage. For example: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp etc.
Think 'Digital Footprint'
Map technologies used solely for professional purposes
Professional
AMLTaylor, May 2017
Adapted for Social Work from the work of David White. See examples here: http://daveowhite.com/vandr/

Also in this section
Digital capabilities for social workers
Digital capabilities for social workers
A BASW/SCIE project to support social workers, employers, educators, leaders and experts by experience to develop skills and knowledge in the use of digital technology
Digital capabilities statement – summary
A quick summary of the statement and how you can use it to support practice, education and development
Digital capabilities statement
The full statement, including how it supports compliance with existing standards
Digital Capabilities for Social Workers: Ethical considerations
Issues for social workers and social care organisations to consider in relation to their ethical responsibilities when using digital technology

Summary: Digital Capabilities Statement for Social Workers

Published: March 2020

The Digital Capabilities Statement is a practice framework that outlines the knowledge, skills and values that social workers should have in order to use digital technology in practice with adults, children and families in England.

It provides a framework to:

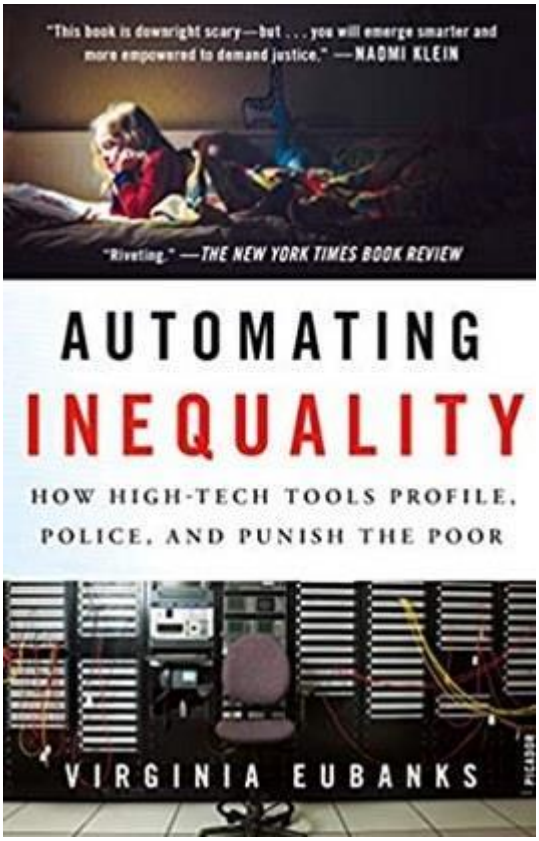
- assist social workers with practice judgements and decision-making
- support social workers to meet the needs of adults, children or families who use or could benefit from digital technology
- support trainers and educators to consider how to strengthen social workers' understanding of the role of digital technology in social work.

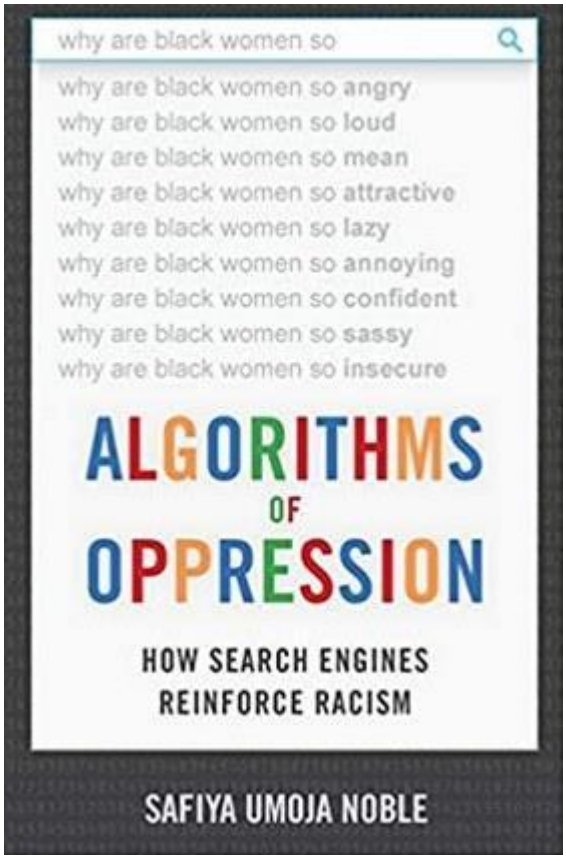
It supports social workers to meet and adhere to the regulatory standards – The Professional Standards – developed by Social Work England, and sector-wide agreed levels of ethics, knowledge and performance in the Professional Capabilities Framework and the Knowledge and Skills Statements for children and adult social work.

The statement has been developed by the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) and the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), with the support of a sector-wide advisory group, in consultation with key stakeholders, and funding from the Building the Digitally Ready Workforce Programme managed by Health Education England and supported by NHS Digital.

Overview of key messages

- Social workers want to engage with digital technology; however, they want it to enable relationship-based practice and improve the experiences of people who use services.
- Social workers can help to shape policy, practice, procurement and technology if they are digitally literate and actively engaged in decision making and planning locally and nationally.
- Managers should address training needs and ensure critical reflection on the ethics of digital technology in supervision.
- Senior managers should ensure that social workers have current and functioning equipment, reliable connectivity, and systems that enable rather than hinder practice and integration.
- Strategic leaders should ensure that social workers and experts by experience (EbE) are involved in the design, development, and procurement of digital technologies. These should be underpinned by principles of co-production.
- Educators should include digital capabilities in social work education programmes using the Health and Care Digital Capabilities Framework and the Professional Capabilities Framework.
- EbE want technology to improve outcomes for them, meet their distinct needs, and increase access to information and services. Use of digital technology should be rights-based – e.g. right to self-determination, consent, privacy and confidentiality.
- Technology developers and suppliers should meaningfully involve social workers and EbE to ensure efficacy, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- The sector should work together to ensures systems work across health, care and related services as social workers and services demand interoperability and integration.
- Policy makers should provide a conducive policy framework that promotes systems integration, coherent regulations on data governance and a digitally ready workforce.
- Sector leaders should ensure transparency around purpose, design and procurement of systems and the increasing use of AI and predictive analytics in social work.


"This book is downright scary—but . . . you will emerge smarter and more empowered to demand justice." —NAOMI KLEIN
"Riveting." —THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW
AUTOMATING
INEQUALITY
HOW HIGH-TECH TOOLS PROFILE, POLICE, AND PUNISH THE POOR
VIRGINIA EUBANKS


why are black women so
why are black women so angry
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why are black women so confident
why are black women so sassy
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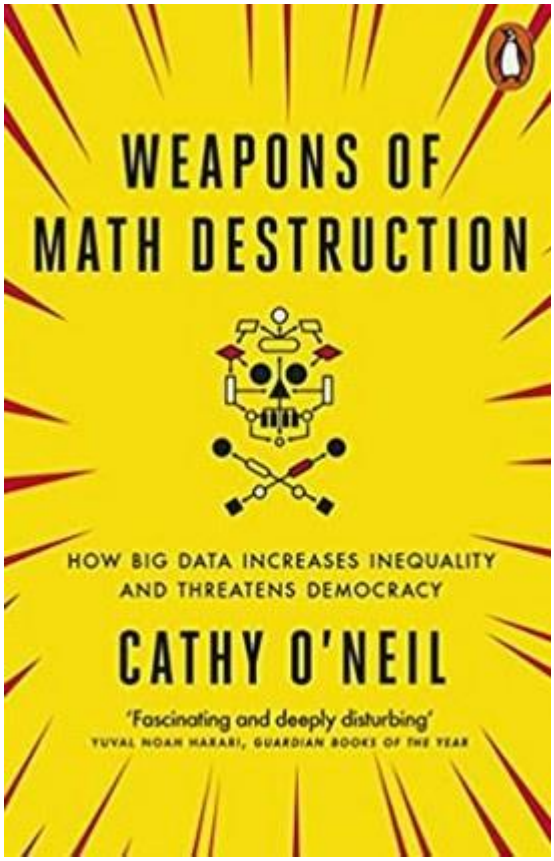
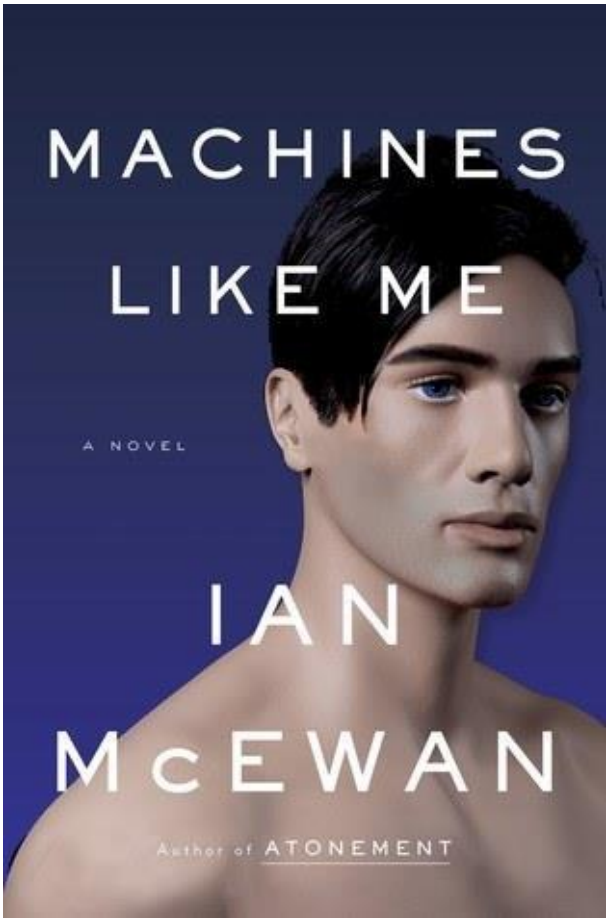
ALGORITHMS
OF
OPPRESSION
HOW SEARCH ENGINES REINFORCE RACISM
SAFIYA UMOJA NOBLE


WEAPONS OF
MATH DESTRUCTION
HOW BIG DATA INCREASES INEQUALITY
AND THREATENS DEMOCRACY
CATHY O'NEIL
'Fascinating and deeply disturbing'
YUVAL NOAH HARARI, GUARDIAN BOOKS OF THE YEAR

RUHA
BENJAMIN
RACE
AFTER
TECHNOLOGY


MACHINES
LIKE ME
A NOVEL
IAN
McEWAN
Author of ATONEMENT

*2 - **husITa 2018 30 year anniversary Dublin***

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