



Mark Carrigan PhD Sociology Student

Research: The Moral Psychology of Modern Life

I initially came to Warwick to study Continental Philosophy as a Masters student in 2006. I'd completed an undergraduate degree in Philosophy that I hadn't enjoyed but I still assumed I was interested in the subject and hoped that the broader range of topics on offer at Warwick would suit me more than those I had studied at UCL. When I arrived I was amazed to find how many options were available, including those in other departments. This is how I came to take a module based partly in the Sociology Department: Philosophy and Social Theory. This was with Margaret Archer, who was later my PhD supervisor and whom I've worked with since January at the Centre for Social Ontology that is based in the Sociology Department at Warwick.

For much of that year I still planned to start a PhD in Political Philosophy, even going so far as to agree a supervisor and begin planning an application for funding. However as the year went on, I realised that the two term Philosophy and Social Theory module was far and away the most intellectually enjoyable aspect of what I was studying at Warwick. After a number of staff in the Sociology Department were kind enough to spend time talking over my decision with me, I eventually revised my plan to undertake a PhD in Philosophy and instead enrolled in an MA in Social and Political Thought.

However, when I started this course the following year, I found the same thing happening again: the range of options available to me broadened my intellectual horizons and I realised I wanted to learn how to carry out empirical research. Whereas I suspect some institutions would have been discouraging in the face of my continual prevarication, I found staff in the Sociology Department incredibly supportive and helpful. I switched to an MA in Social Research, beginning the challenging but rewarding process of retraining as a Sociologist, ultimately leading to the part-time PhD in Sociology that I recently completed. When I consider the PhD I had originally planned to do, with its rather obscure questions about the history of political philosophy, I realise it would have been unlikely to hold my interest for long. Six years on, I'm in a great position which I owe to the intellectual culture of the department that encouraged me to pursue my interests, even when I wasn't entirely clear what they were.

This link will take you a video clip featuring Mark outlining his PhD in 60 seconds.

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/sociology/researchdegrees>