

DR SARAH BARTLEY

Job title

Senior Lecturer, Applied and Community Performance

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Social media

[Women/Theatre/Justice website](#)



COURSES

Drama, Applied Theatre and Education, BA
Applied Theatre, MA

PROFILE

I am a community theatre practitioner and scholar and I joined Central as Senior Lecturer in Applied and Community Performance in 2023. Prior to this role, I taught across theatre and performance programmes at University of Reading, Queen Mary University of London, and the University of Leeds. In my research, I explore the intersections of performance with social and economic policy, with a particular focus on the welfare state, justice systems, and grassroots collective action.

My monograph *Performing Welfare: Applied Theatre, Unemployment, and Participation* was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2020. This book examines the aggressive erosion of the UK welfare system and identifies the implications of such an erosion for applied performance. I have two forthcoming co-authored books *Living Newspapers and Crisis Theatre* (with Sarah Mullan) and *Clean Break Theatre Company: Origins and Practices* (with Caoimhe McAvinchey, Deborah Dean, and Anne-marie Greene) due to be published by Cambridge Elements. A new strand of my research, examines the resurgence of People's Theatre's during austerity in regional, national, and European contexts. This work explores ways in which people's theatres participate in a revisioning of community resources through practices including: solidarity economies, space sharing, re-purposing community sites, cooperative models of practice, voluntary and amateur labour and new kinds of public-voluntary partnership.

From 2019-2023, I was a Postdoctoral Researcher on the AHRC Funded project '[Clean Break: Women, Theatre, Organisation and the Criminal Justice System](#)'. The project was a collaboration between scholars from Performance and Business Studies and explores the 43-year history of the company. Since September 2022, I have been a Co-Investigator on [Transformative justice, women with convictions and uniting communities](#), a collaboration with the Ministry of Justice that is jointly funded by the British Academy and Nuffield Foundation. This project works across arts practice, criminology, health economy, and social work to explore the potential for communities to support the wellbeing of women with convictions and intervene in cycles of harm. I was awarded an AHRC Fellowship in 2023 for a two-year project exploring the history and interdisciplinary practices of UK based arts and criminal justice organisation [Rideout Creative Arts for Rehabilitation](#).

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Applied Theatre and Socially Engaged Performance
- Arts and the Criminal Justice System
- Performance and the Welfare State
- Austerity
- Justice and Collective Action
- Community Theatre
- Employment, Labour, and Participation
- Social and Cultural Policy
- Peoples Theatres and Civic Performance

PHD SUPERVISION

I have been on the supervisory teams of PhD projects exploring how performance intersects with contemporary feminisms, cultural politics, and social class. I am interested in supervising work in these areas and any of the topics outlined in my area of expertise.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

2022. What transformative justice looks like': Developing Young Companies and Training Emerging Practitioners in Prison Arts Practice', [Routledge Companion on Theatre and Youth](#), ed. by Kelly Freebody, Charlene Rajendran, and Selina Busby (London: Routledge).

2022. Green, AM, Dean, D., Bartley, S., and McAvinchey, C. '[Locked up and Down: Incarceration, Care and Art in a Pandemic](#)', *Gender, Work, and Organisation*, 29.4, 1346-1359.

2022. 'Peopling the Theatre', Crisis, [Representation and Resilience Perspectives on Contemporary British Theatre](#), ed. by Claire Wallace, Clara Escoda, Enric Moneforte, José Ramón Prado-Pérez (London: Methuen), 89-106.

2021. '[UK People's Theatres: Performing Civic Functions in a Time of Austerity](#)', *Research in Drama Education*, 26.1, 171-186. DOI: 10.1080/13569783.2020.1853516

2020. [Performing Welfare: Applied Theatre, Unemployment, and Participation](#). (London: Palgrave Macmillan).

2019. '[Gendering Welfare Onstage: Acts of Reproductive Labour in Applied Theatre](#)', *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 29.3, 305-319. DOI: 10.1080/10486801.2019.1615901

REGISTER OF INTEREST

Nothing to declare.

IMAGE GALLERY