

## Audio Transcript

### Nick Ellison - What areas of Social Policy excite and engage?

*Julia Waldman: So if you are talking about how students become engaged and excited in different aspects of social policy what particular areas excite you or engage you that you might want to tell us more about?*

*Nick Ellison: I've given some of the away already when I was talking about social justice and ideas of equality but if you asked me about one area of social policy which particularly engages me unquestionably I think it's to do with ideas of citizenship. Now that is quite difficult in some ways but strangely simple as well because you can say to people "Well what is a citizen?" or "Who is a citizen?" and it immediately starts asking questions about who has a right to vote in society, you know, who doesn't have a right to vote, who has a right to health care, medical care, who doesn't and looking around different societies, answers to those questions are very different. So immediately you are into an area of sort of belonging, who belongs, who doesn't, whose regarding as marginal in the USA they're called 'Aliens', you know, so it raises a whole series of issues straight away about societies treat the individuals who live in them, as it were. More specifically, I would be interested in the kind of politics of citizenship I suppose and the way in which different groups engage in the political process and I don't mean that narrowly speaking in terms of voting but how groups come together, form social movements, make particular demands; either get that demand met or not and the kind of rules, regulations both formal and informal that govern those kind of activities. Social Policy, of course, is a subject where you see citizenship discussed probably more than anywhere else actually, Political Science would be another example but I think Social Policy more so. Looking at the UK, you can almost chart post-war UK history in terms of how UK society is understood the idea of citizenship, of course, crucially it's changed. It's changed massively, whereas just after the war you would be thinking very much of a universal kind of sense of belonging, there had just been a war for heaven's sake so everybody was sort of pulling together. Right now, we're in a period where the nature of citizenship is very challenged, you don't get certain rights if you don't perform certain duties. You've got to look for a job nowadays, if you don't look for a job, your benefits may be taken away. So the idea of who a citizen is and what rights a citizen has changes all the time, and that for me is really interesting*