The presentation looks at the relation between the socio-symbolic denigration of marginalised populations and the challenges for practice and policy addressed to them. It is assumed that stigmatising practices legitimate and reinforce inequalities. This presentation will look at strategies to change professional attitudes. There will be a particular focus on the role of universities to inform and prepare the new generations of professionals to work with marginalised populations. The culture of positivism and instrumentalisation of education will be critically discussed to reflect upon the way universities should address a more radical agenda for inequalities to impact on research, teaching and practice.

Fernando is Senior Lecturer in Inequalities at the University of Dundee. He has a PhD in Geography from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. His research involves studies on urban marginality, stigmatization and social practices/strategies for human emancipation and socio-spatial development. His research focuses on the role of socio-symbolic marginality on the reproduction of socio-spatial inequalities. One of the aspects Fernando has been working on over the last few years is the correlation between violence (as a dimension of inequality) and stigma, looking at their impact on the urban experience of marginalised groups in Brazil. His research also looks at strategies marginalised groups develop to overcome the effects of stigma as a dimension of their lived experience particularly in relation to marginalised groups’ socio-symbolical condition in the urban environment. Fernando is interested in social activism and strategies to tackle inequalities and to promote human rights, with the understanding that Human Rights must be at the core of the inequality agenda.