

BSA Sociology of Rights Study Group

Annual Report for Year 2012

1. Established:

2007

2. Current Membership Figures:

Currently there are 188 members, with the study group continuing to attract members from around the world who want to make time amongst the daily pressures of teaching and administration to engage with human rights. The Sociology of Rights Study Group has expanded, particularly following the Law and Rights Stream held at the 2012 BSA Annual Conference in Leeds. Membership covers all five continents and includes academics at various stages of their careers and academics working within campaigning organisations. Membership allows for both UK focussed and international issues relating to the sociology of human rights to be encompassed into the group. Research interests of members include theories of rights, indigenous peoples, women's rights, social movements, transnational organisations, security and surveillance, development, conflict, migration and environmental rights.

3. Study Group Expenditure: 0

Study Group Income: 0

4. Aims of Study Group:

The Sociology of Rights Study Group was formed in 2007, aiming to:

- ensure a presence at BSA conferences through establishing a sociology of rights stream
- form an online community to share news on developments within the field of rights
- open up opportunities to promote the discipline of sociology and rights within universities that currently have a human rights focus
- create links with other disciplines working within the field of human rights
- keep the BSA regularly updated about the group

These aims continue to drive the study group forward with workshops, conferences and a growing publications record emerging.

5. Review of 2012

2012 saw the Study Group thrive, both in terms of publications and conferences. The Study Group also began to have an online presence, as outlined below:

Publications

Special Issue of *Sociology* on the Sociology of Human Rights

Following a Call for Papers that was circulated internationally, 83 submissions were received for a special issue of *Sociology* on the Sociology of Human Rights. This is the highest number of submissions ever received for a Special Issue of the journal and many of these submissions were of exceptional quality. It was particularly encouraging that leading authors who have previously written seminal papers on the sociology of rights submitted papers, as did several authors from around the world.

The level of interest, commitment and, above all, quality of submissions were high which bodes extremely well for the future of a sociology of human rights. Narrowing down the submissions was a difficult task but, finally, 12 contributions were selected which reflected the global and theoretical range that the sociology of human rights reaches. An invited book review essay on issues around migration and a further 4 book reviews completed the Special Issue.

This was published in October 2012 and launched in November 2012 in the School of Advanced Studies, University of London at Senate House. A welcome by the Chair, Dr Damien Short, and an introduction by Dr Matthew Waites was followed by short overviews of articles included by Dr Darren O'Byrne, Dr Virginia Morrow and Professor Chetan Bhatt.

Table of Contents for this special issue:

Editorial

- [Editorial Foreword](#), Patricia Hynes, Michele Lamb, Damien Short, Matthew Waites

Articles

- [Human Rights, Movements and Law: On Not Researching Legitimacy](#), Kate Nash
- [Human Rights and the Transformations of War](#), Chetan Bhatt
- [On the Sociology of Human Rights: Theorising the Language-structure of Rights](#), Darren O'Byrne
- [The Creation of New Rights by the Food Sovereignty Movement: The Challenge of Institutionalizing Subversion](#), Priscilla Claeys
- ['Putting Cruelty First': Interpreting War Crimes as Human Rights Atrocities in US Policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), Liliana Riga, James Kennedy
- [What One Sees and How One Files Seeing: Human Rights Reporting, Representation and Action](#), Claire Moon
- [Constructing Rights and Wrongs in Humanitarian Action: Contributions from a Sociology of Praxis](#), Dorethea Hilhorst, Bram J Jensen
- [Integrating Children's Human Rights and Child Poverty Debates: Examples from *Young Lives* in Ethiopia and India](#), Virginia Morrow, Kirrily Pells
- [Human Rights and Ethical Reasoning: Capabilities, Conventions and Spheres of Public Action](#), Noel Whiteside, Alice Mah
- [Religion, Sexual Orientation and the Equality Act 2010: Gay Bishops in the Church of England Negotiating Rights Against Discrimination](#), Rob Clucas
- [Privacy as a Human Right: A Sociological Theory](#), Katayoun Baghai
- [Asia, Enforceable Benevolence and the Future of Human Rights](#), Anthony Woodiwiss

Book Review Essays

- [Globalisation, Rights and the Non-Citizen](#), Nando Sigona

Book Reviews

- [Book Review: Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*](#), Michael Freeman
- [Book Review: Christopher Powell, *Barbaric Civilization: A Critical Sociology of Genocide*](#), Martin Shaw
- [Book Review: Judith Blau and Mark Frezzo \(eds\), *Sociology and Human Rights: A Bill of Rights for the Twenty-first Century*](#), Lydia Morris

- [Book Review: Thomas Cushman \(ed\), *Handbook of Human Rights*](#), Phillipa Roberson-Riek

Special Issue of *The International Journal of Human Rights*, Vol.16, Issue 8, 2012

A special issue entitled 'New Directions in the Sociology of Human Rights' was published in late 2012 and included the following papers:

- [Editorial Foreword](#), Patricia Hynes, Michele Lamb, Damien Short & Matthew Waites
- [Understanding torture: the strengths and the limits of social theory](#), Lydia Morris
- [Genocide and settler colonialism: can a Lemkin-inspired genocide perspective aid our understanding of the Palestinian situation?](#), Haifa Rashed & Damien Short
- ['In countries like that...' moral boundaries and implicatory denial in response to human rights appeals](#), Irene Bruna Seu
- [The soldier, human rights and the military covenant: a permissible state of exception?](#), Ross McGarry, Gabe Mythen & Sandra Walklate
- [Climate change and the human rights challenge: extending justice beyond the borders of the nation state](#), Tracey Skillington
- [Causes and consequences of international migration: sociological evidence for the right to mobility](#), Tanya Golash-Boza & Cecilia Menjivar
- [Corporate social responsibility: a duplicitous distraction?](#), Nicholas Connolly
- ['You have a right to be nourished and fed, but do I have a right to make sure you eat your food?': children's rights and food practices in residential care](#), Samantha Punch, Ian McIntosh & Ruth Emond

Conferences

BSA 2012 Annual Conference, University of Leeds (April 2012)

A 'Law, Crime and Rights' Stream at the BSA Annual Conference in 2012 attracted an extremely high level of submissions.

Online presence

The Study Group's 'wiki' website was launched in November 2012 is now online, set up by Dr Hannah Miller. It provides a collaborative platform where study group members can exchange details regarding past, current and forthcoming events, publications, research interests and funding opportunities. The wiki is accessible to all internet users, whilst study group members have various editing rights concerning its content.

Conclusion

It is clear from the quality and number of submissions for a special issue of Sociology on the sociology of human rights that this is an expanding area. UK and international scholars are increasingly recognising the sociology of rights as a sub-discipline of sociology.

If you wish to know more or join the Study Group please email Dr Hannah Miller at:
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