

**Thursday 7 April 2016**

**Books about the English Defence League and women's sporting roller skating win sociology prize**

Two researchers who wrote books on the English Defence League and women's sporting roller skating have won the prestigious Philip Abrams Memorial Prize for first books in sociology.

Dr Joel Busher and Dr Maddie Breeze shared the prize of £1,000 awarded by the British Sociological Association at its annual conference at Aston University, Birmingham, today (7 April).

Dr Busher, of Coventry University, wrote *The Making of Anti-Muslim Protest: Grassroots Activism in the English Defence League* (Routledge) based on 16 months of research with activists.

The book has won critical acclaim. Professor Nigel Copsey, of Teesside University, said: "The English Defence League has been labelled fascist, racist, and extremist; its foot-soldiers have been disparaged as mindless thugs.

"Joel Busher is no EDL-sympathizer, and yet confronts such glib generalizations in this lucid and penetrating book. Busher really gets up close to reveal the essential heterogeneity of those who took to the streets and marched under the EDL banner. This is a superlative study. Everyone with an interest in anti-Muslim activism should read it."

Dr Breeze, of the University of Edinburgh, wrote *Seriousness and Women's Roller Derby: Gender, Organization and Ambivalence* (Palgrave Macmillan).

As a new, women-led, self-organised and not-for-profit amateur sport, women's flat track roller derby initially represented an overt challenge to a broader sports culture. Drawing on in-depth ethnographic research with a UK league, this book explores skaters' concerns with being taken seriously without compromising the sport's founding principles. Presenting the prize at the BSA conference, BSA President Professor Lynn Jamieson said the book was "interesting and fantastic".

The BSA prize is for the best first and sole-authored book within sociology and was established in memory of Professor Philip Abrams, whose work contributed substantially to sociology and social policy research in Britain. He is remembered for the encouragement he gave to many sociologists at the start of their careers.

**Note**

The British Sociological Association's annual conference takes place Aston University from 6 to 8 April 2016. Around 600 research presentations are given. The British Sociological Association's charitable aim is to promote sociology. The BSA is a Company Limited by

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