

Sociology of Mental Health Study Group

Convenors: Lydia Lewis, University of Wolverhampton, Angela Cotton, University of Salford and Dina Poursanidou, University of Manchester

Annual Report 2013-14

The group's aims are to:

- Heighten the profile of study in the area of sociology of mental health;
- Provide a forum for the communication and discussion of work being carried out in the area;
- Facilitate networking and information-sharing between those working within or having an interest in the sociology of mental health;
- Provide a forum of support for those interested in studying mental health and distress from a sociological perspective;
- Provide a core of expertise in the area of sociology of mental health.

Membership and networking

The Group's membership currently stands at 259. This includes international members and a mixture of BSA members and non-members. The membership includes members of third sector mental health organisations, mental health practitioners, students, academics and unaffiliated people with an interest in the area. Some members' areas of interest and contact details are provided on the web site and this document serves a valued networking function for the Group.

Events

The Group held a one day symposium entitled '*What does Sociology need to contribute towards or against the well-being agenda?*' at the BSA meeting room in London on 10th June 2013. The event was well attended, lively and stimulating. Presentations are available on the web site.

A Study Group AGM was held at the BSA Medical Sociology Group conference in York on 12th September 2013. This gave an overview of the Group, its aims and activities, and provided an opportunity for new members to join, to review the Group's activities and to get involved in organising future events. It also encompassed a review of the convenorship; the Group was informed that a new additional co-convenor, Dina Poursanidou, had come forward and further nominations were invited (but none received). The meeting also included the launch of a book based on a past Mental Health Study Group seminar series, detailed below. A report of the AGM is available on the Group's web site.

Publishing

Ex Study Group co-convenor Patsy Staddon published her book, *Researching in Mental Health: Sociological and Survivor/Service User Perspectives*. The book is based on a seminar series which the Mental Health Study Group hosted in

partnership with the Survivor Researcher Network in 2009 and includes the seminar programme, report on the seminar series for the main funder, the Foundation for the Sociology of Health and Illness, and chapters based on presentations in the seminar series, along with other contributions..

Future activities

We are planning a symposium in June on the subject of '*The contributions of social movements to sociological knowledge on mental health*'. We are currently drawing up the programme for this event, which will take place at the University of Wolverhampton. Following up on a suggestion put forward at the AGM, LL is also collaborating with Study Group member Reidun Norvoll at the University of Oslo on the organisation of an international special event for Med Soc 2014, '*Sociological perspectives on the ambiguous and complex role of the family in mental health care*'. We are in the process of putting together a programme and abstract for this conference event.

Finances

<u>Balance</u> at the start of the year	£525.93
<u>Income</u> Event registration fees	£355
<u>Expenditure</u> Event Med Soc attendance and travel for AGM	£906.65 £227.97
<u>Balance at the end of the year</u>	-£253.69

Lydia Lewis, Angela Cotton, and Dina Poursanidou, Co-convenors, 2013-14
Study Group web site:

<http://www.britsoc.co.uk/medsoc/MedSocMentalHealth.aspx>