

BSA Leisure & Recreation (L&R) Study Group

Annual Report for Years 2012 and 2013

1. Established:

1970s; dormant/defunct in the 1990s, relaunched with joint co-ordinators Dr Emma Casey and Professor Alan Tomlinson, 2005.

2. Current Membership Figure:

BSA members: *circa* 45

3. Finances:

SG Expenditure: Nil

SG Income: Nil

Closing Balance: Not Applicable

4. Aims of Study Group:

The established, generic aims of the Leisure & Recreation Study Group are to:

- promote the sociological understanding of leisure & recreation;
- encourage publication of papers on the sociology of leisure and recreation;
- hold meetings with a view to encouraging critical discussion on leisure and recreation;
- consolidate international links with other sociological leisure & recreation groups;
- report annually to the BSA Executive Committee;
- work closely with other organisations interested in the sociology of leisure & recreation;
- promote membership of the BSA.

More particularly, over the next few years the Study Group will continue i) to act as a catalyst for research and scholarship in the sociology of leisure and recreation, exploring in particular the relationship between leisure and consumption practices; ii) to encourage L&R researchers to contribute to the annual conference of the BSA, and to support /organise sub-plenary sessions of an appropriate kind at the annual conference; iii) to sponsor partnerships and events with academic and research institutions and associations; and iv) to identify appropriate themes and foci for one or two regional Workshops per year, integrated into coherent series when appropriate.

5. Review of Year:

Study Group activity during 2012 and 2013 comprised:

- continuing support for and contributions to the series of Olympic-related sessions at the British Library, 'The Social Sciences and the Olympic Games: Beyond the Leisure Dome'. As the British Library put it in relation to the third event on 27th February 2012: 'We were delighted to hold this event in partnership with the BSA Sociology of Sport and Leisure and Recreation Study Groups';
- attendance of members at the BSA Annual Conferences, at Leeds (2012) and London School of Economics (2013) with numerous Study Group members presenting papers in the different streams;
- April 2012: organization (Annual Conference, Leeds) of the 'Olympic Follies' sub-plenary, designed to prompt debate on the claims and contradictions about the benefits of the Games, in the context of the London 2012 plans, and the wider issues of global recession and austerity policies. An informed focus on previous events such as Sydney 2000, Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008 was central to the planning of the session (see http://www.britsoc.co.uk/media/38909/Stream_Plenary_Sessions_LJv3_280312.pdf). A special issue of *Contemporary Social Science* (2014 publication date) has taken the themes further, and included worked-up versions of the sub-plenary presentations.
- June 2012: Study Group Workshop, 'Reviewing Leisure Theory' series - 'Reviewing Hegemony Theory: Remembering John Hargreaves', Friday June 8th 2012, hosted by the Centre for Sport Research, University of Brighton.
- January 2013: Study Group Workshop, 'Reviewing Leisure Theory' series - 'Leisure, Structure and Community Studies: Re-visiting Bramham, Clarke and Critcher', Friday January 25th 2013, hosted by the School of Sport, Carnegie Faculty, Leeds Metropolitan University. For a report, by Jonathan Long, see Leisure Studies Association (LSA) Newsletter No. 94, March 2013, p. 56.
- September 2013: Support for regional conference on 'Sport, Leisure and Social Justice', Thursday and Friday 19th and 20th September 2013, hosted by Sport and Leisure Cultures research group, School of Sport and Service Management, University of Brighton. For a report, see the BSA's magazine *Network*, Issue 115, Winter 2013, p. 13: "Academics, practitioners and activists from across the globe took part".

6. Key Activities (including dissemination and planning) during 2012 and 2013:

The events described above constitute the key activities over the reporting period. The group also co-operated with the Family Study Group to plan a meeting. The 'Reviewing Leisure Theory' (RLT) initiative will be continued in 2014, with plans for a regional workshop in the Autumn, and to propose a sub-plenary on feminist theory and leisure at the 2015 annual conference. This initiative is taking a look back at the strides that have been made in the increasingly sophisticated sociological theorisation of leisure in the last few decades - reviewing the contributions of core figures and thinkers in critical (Frankfurt School) theory, hegemony theory, Marxist theory, post-structuralist theory, feminist theory, queer theory, social constructionism, post-modernist theory, consumer theory, and leisure theory itself (in all of these cases of course we could say 'theories' in

the plural). All the regional workshops will be hosted by study group members, in their own institutions, or at the BSA London room. There will be no charge for attendance, and in appropriate circumstances, some study group funding support will be available for contributors/presenters, primarily for travel (see <http://www.britsoc.co.uk/study-groups/leisure-recreation.aspx>).

7. Concluding Remarks:

The Study Group is grateful to the BSA for continuing support from its administrative infrastructure, and the association's openness to the fostering of research and professional networks of scholars and researchers within the leisure and recreation field.

8. Convenors:

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END OF REPORT, AT/EC, February 17th 2014