

British Sociological Association Risk and Society Study Group Annual Report March 2014

Established

2001

Current membership figures

Income and expenditure

As at September 2013 we have a balance in our account of **£853.47**

The study group event in February 2014 produced a surplus of **£128.80**

Estimated current balance: **£982.27**

Aims

The concept of risk is now established as one of the 'unit ideas' of contemporary social science. The phenomenon of risk has come to occupy a central position in debates on the cultural character of modernity.

This study group aims to provide a forum in which the diverse range of academics working in the field of risk research might collaborate in mapping out the conceptual boundaries and empirical reality of our current 'risk society'. It is concerned with the development and promotion of a distinctively sociological perspective on risk. Its broad areas of interest include:

- Social theories of 'risk society'
- The politics of risk
- Risk perception
- Risk management
- Risk behaviour and lifestyle
- Risk in relation to social policy
- Risk in relation to health and social care practice

Review of the year

The group held a study group event at the BSA rooms in Imperial Wharf on 28th February 2014: *Risk in Health and Social Care: Politics, Theory and Practices*. Eight papers were presented on a wide range of topics within the overall themes. Due to the success of this event, participants agreed we should schedule another study day for autumn 2014 with a different focus and publicise the event more widely.

Future plans

A study day in Autumn 2014 will draw on the success of the February 2014 to look further at a core theme which emerged from the day: 'Risk across and between boundaries'

Co-convenor contact details:

Jo Warner – j.warner@kent.ac.uk

University of Kent
Cornwallis Building
Canterbury, Kent
CT2 7NF

Jacqueline Davies – j.p.davies@city.ac.uk

Christine McCourt -

Christine.McCourt.1@city.ac.uk

Mandie Scamell -

Mandie.Scamell.1@city.ac.uk

City University
School of Health Sciences
Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB

British Sociological Association Risk and Society Study Group Event Report
'Risk in Health and Social Care: Politics, Theory and Practices'
Friday 28 February 2014
BSA London Meeting Room, Imperial Wharf

Co-Convenors : J.Warner, J.Davies, C.McCourt, M.Scammell

Programme

Paper 1: J.Samples - Exploring the pregnancy experiences of women aged 40 years and over: The methodological approach.

Paper 2: N.Jenkins - Imaging Risk: The use of Image Theatre and visual vignettes to explore the collective experience of risk in early onset dementia.
(This paper was presented via the use of online video materials)

Paper 3: G.Mitchell - 'I don't think about what I do I just do it!' The role of informal practices when making decisions about risk in child and family social work.

Paper 4: J.Johns - Going the Extra Mile: The Impact of Gender and Class on the Conceptualisation of Risk by Social Workers.

Paper 5: Y.Hakak - "Girls at Risk" in Contemporary Jewish Israeli Enclave and the Unholy Union between Religion, Therapy and Social Services.

Paper 6: V.Grotti - Managing Risk on an Amazonian Frontier: Indigenous and Tribal People, Migration and Maternity Care in Suriname and French Guiana.

Paper 7: J.Rayment & C.McCourt - Changing perceptions of risk in the light of new evidence: A case study of the Birthplace in England Research Programme.

Paper 8: A.Gilbertson - Hunger and violence in a Kenyan informal settlement: reconsidering the usefulness of 'vulnerability' in studies of household food security.

Plenary

In the course of the plenary discussions it quickly became clear that, despite the very wide range of topics and theoretical positions reflected in the papers presented, there were several ways in which the papers intersected with each other and shared major conceptual themes. The interconnected themes of place, proximity, boundaries and borders – along, between and within which risk moved and was reconstituted - were particularly resonant. These included Israeli/Arab; Suriname/French Guiana; home/hospital; household/community; religion/state....

Future events

It was agreed we should schedule another event for the group in the autumn of 2014.

Possible themes for this event that were discussed were:

Risk: borders, boundaries and intersections

Risk and Cyberspace

Risk and methodology

Gender and Risk

Risk perception and decision-making

Ethics and accountability in risk research