

BSA Sociology of Alcohol Study Group Annual Report (2016/17)

Name: Sociology of Alcohol Study Group

Established: July 2011

Number of members: 123 study group members based on subscription to study group Jiscmail.

Income: Event income during 2015-16 amounted to £1465.00 which, after deducting costs of £970.38 meant a surplus of £494.62 was added the study group account leaving a balance of £2,101.69

Aims:

Key aims of the Sociology of Alcohol Study Group include:

- To support and promote the emergent subject field of sociology of alcohol and related fields
- To support researchers in the sociology of alcohol and related fields
- To support the aims of the BSA

Review of the year:

In 2016/17 the group focused on one large single-day event (see below) as well as having panels and papers represented at the BSA Annual Conference and BSA MedSoc Conference, held at Aston University in April and September 2016 respectively.

Highlights therefore include:

- A one day interdisciplinary symposium titled 'How do different disciplines talk about alcohol and how can we work better together?' was held in conjunction with Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP) on Friday 22 April 2016 at the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. Our speakers discussed alcohol research from the perspective of History (Dr James Nicholls, Alcohol Research UK), Sociology (Dr Thomas Thurnell-Read, Loughborough University), Nursing (Dr Aisha Holloway, University of Edinburgh), Epidemiology (Dr John Holmes, University of Sheffield), Public Health Medicine (Dr Vittal Katikireddi, University of Glasgow), Geography (Dr Niamh Shortt, University of Edinburgh) and Psychology (Dr Richard de Visser, University of Sussex). In closing, Director of SHAAP and co-organiser of the event Eric Carlin spoke of the importance of continued dialogue between academic disciplines in reducing the harms of alcohol misuse to individuals and society. The event demonstrated the value of BSA study groups linking with appropriate partners, given that SHAAP contributed the venue, catering, the speakers' dinner and the costs and printing of a professionally designed report. The event attracted over 60 participants and considerable social media interest, trending locally on Twitter. A social media summary of the day (via Storify) and the report produced by Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems can be found at the links below:

<https://storify.com/ecarol/interdisciplinary-alcohol-symposium>

<http://www.shaap.org.uk/images/bsa-report-proof10 - final.pdf>

- The *Drinking Dilemmas: Space, Culture and Identity* volume published in December 2015 and edited by Thomas Thurnell-Read was involved in the *Sociological Futures* book series launch event during the BSA Annual Conference at Aston University. The editor spoke to the audience about the book and commented how the edited volume had emerged out of the BSA Alcohol Study group conference of the same name held at Cardiff Metropolitan University in December 2013 and represented the work of many study group members.
- Planning of a one day event titled 'Drinking Bodies: Alcohol, Embodiment and Social Difference' to be hosted at University of Manchester on Monday 22nd May 2017. Professor Maria Piacentini of Lancaster University will be the key note.
- Provisional planning has begun for a multi-day conference to take place in 2018.
- Laura Fenton continues to improve the group's use of social media, with the Twitter account, in particular, being useful in promoting group activities (e.g. research activities of group members). We have raised our followers on Twitter to over 500, and tweets promoting our recent Drinking Bodies CFP received dozens of retweets. We are also looking into the possibility of assembling and circulating a regular email digest conveying recent alcohol-related news and opportunities of interest (e.g. CFPs, jobs) to our members.

Concluding remarks:

The Alcohol study group continues to maintain a steady membership and to plan and deliver events relevant to the group members interests. It is pleasing to see that, as in previous years, the coming events will include subsidised places for PhD students and Early Career Researchers.

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