

## **BSA Youth Study Group Annual Report**

The BSA Youth Study Group continues to build networks among sociologists from varied backgrounds and perspectives with an interest in youth research. Our goal is to facilitate spaces and opportunities for dialogue within the sociology of youth as well as youth researchers within the wider academic community and sister disciplines.

In 2016 we had a number of changes to the running of the group. Mark McCormack stepped down from his convenor role in September 2016, and Kirsty Finn (Lancaster) and Kim Allen (Leeds) became new study group convenors. Helene Snee (MMU) remains a convenor but has been on maternity leave since October, returning in May. In late 2016 we also recruited a fourth convenor, Katy McEwan (Teesside), with a specific role to represent our postgraduate community and help us to support new researchers within the field.

Members of the Youth Study Group continue to be well represented within Youth Studies and the wider sociological community, including acting as peer reviewers for the international *Journal of Youth Studies*; and presenting papers at the British Sociological Association conference in Birmingham (April 2016).

On 28<sup>th</sup> April, Helene hosted a Research Student and Early Career Researcher Development workshop at Manchester Metropolitan University. The purpose of the day was to provide a platform for researchers to present their work in a constructive and intellectually stimulating environment, supported by advice and guidance offered by established scholars in the field. The day was very well attended by junior colleagues and provided opportunities for them both to develop their research network and share their views on how the Study Group can better support them. Building on this event, our recent activities have focused on strengthening our links with the postgraduate community of youth researchers. This has included the appointment of Katy as a PGR convenor, and the creation of a private FaceBook group for members and PGRs in particular.

The Study Group mailing list remains active with 506 registered users and we have a growing Twitter community with 586 followers (up from 458 the previous year). A central activity for the Study Group this year is to continue to develop the Twitter feed as a key source of news and information for youth researchers. We also have plans to develop our presence on other social media platforms including YouTube.

We have a number of plans for 2017. The Study Group members will have a strong presence at the forthcoming BSA annual conference in Manchester (April 2017). The convenors are organising a social/ networking event for study group members during the conference. On June 8<sup>th</sup> 2017 we will be holding our next Study Group one-day conference at the University of Leeds entitled '*Researching youth in troubling times: Mess, method and ethical puzzles*'. The day is intended to facilitate reflection among youth researchers across the career stage on the ethical, methodological and emotional challenges of researching youth. Professor Tracy Shildrick will be a discussant.