

BSA Sociologists Outside Academia Special Interest Group

1. Membership

As at 18th March 2016, there are 271 registered members of the Group, an increase from 248 this time a year ago.

2. Convenors

Anika Baddeley stepped down as co-convenor on 1 October 2016 to pursue a PhD. After canvassing SOAG members, Marguerite Regan was appointed as co-convenor in January 2017. Nick Fox continues as the other convenor.

3. Representation

Nick represented SOAG at the April 2016 meeting of the Forum, however we were not represented at the October meeting. Nick continues to serve on the BSA Web Site Working Group.

4. Events

The main activity of the year was the half-day workshop meeting on the topic of '*Practical Sociology*' held on 17 October 2016 in London, which marks a major new initiative for the SOA Group. This meeting was financially supported by Sage Publishers Ltd and by *Sociological Imagination*, and attracted 40 participants.

Following an introduction that set out the case for a practical sociology that applied sociological concepts and theories to non-academic workplace situations, we heard from sociologists working in practical areas, including Jan Fritz, a prominent figure in US 'clinical sociology'. Three break-out groups then explored issues concerning a) models of working as a practical sociologist; b) skills and knowledge required by practical sociologists; and c) ethics and politics of practical sociology.

There will be follow-up initiatives on the theme of practical sociology in the coming year. We are currently testing the water among members for an Online and Social Media Training workshop.

4. SOAG and BSA Strategy

The SOAG proposal to the Trustees to develop a register of potential speakers on sociological careers for schools and colleges was approved in 2016, and this register is now extant.

The other new SOAG initiative is to proactively recruit amongst current third-year sociology undergraduates and new graduates. This chimes with a priority area for the BSA, as reflected in recent promotional materials for schools, and class memberships for current sociology students. The convenors are working with Alison Danforth and Claire Simmons on this project, developing the specifics of the SOAG offer to graduates, and social media recruitment strategies. Nick is also in contact with John Solomos of HAPS, and spoke to the HAPS meeting at BSA conference in April 2016 about SOAG's aspirations in this area.

SOAG's recruitment work with graduates, which will begin shortly, will potentially provide a half-way house into BSA membership for graduates not pursuing an academic career.

5. Communications

BSA website

The SOA pages on the new BSA website have been revised using the new microsite CMS.

Social Media

SOA has a presence on Facebook (1578 followers) and Twitter (250 followers). The Practical Sociology event was publicised extensively on these platforms, and on LinkedIn, *Sociological Imagination* and *LSE* blogs and Jiscmail fora.

Press

SOAG had articles in the Spring and Summer 2016 and Spring 2017 editions of *Network*, and an article in *Discover Society* (October 2016).

Nick J Fox and Marguerite Regan

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