

BSA study group annual report, March 2019
Work Employment and Economic Life

Name: WEEL

Established: 2004; relaunched 2010

Number of members:

336 subscribers to the Jiscmail list.

497 Twitter followers

Income: BSA office has updated income information.

Aims: Key aims of WEEL include:

- Exchange and develop ideas by attracting new and existing BSA members to the WEEL group and its activities.
- Encourage collaboration and lend support within a long tradition of British sociologists.
- Encourage research and publication around the sociology of work, employment and economic life.
- To become the ‘natural’ go-to forum for contacting other sociologists in the field, for advice, requests for information, and exchange of ideas, including regarding pedagogical issues.
- To develop a programme of events including building on the strength of the WEEL stream at the annual BSA conferences.
- To develop links with other BSA study groups and non-sociologists interested in the fields of work and employment.

Review of the year:

- Jill Timms has taken on the reading group formerly run by Maria Adamson
- The co-conveners met in November to discuss developing the group. We agreed to develop the WEEL page of the BSA website (with members’ input):
 - To add links relevant to members, including international connections, links to relevant research centres at universities, list of journals
 - To develop an area for pedagogical material
 - To explore the possibility of encouraging members to blog or to repost links to blogs/podcasts, including ‘public engagement’ blogs/podcasts about current research (particularly for PhD students and ECRs).

- We also agreed to invite applications for events, to be held under WEEL auspices
- The co-conveners are in regular contact including scheduled Skype “meetings”.
- The study group organised a stream plenary session at the BSA annual conference 2018. The theme of this session was: ‘Good work and alternative organisations: emancipatory or bubbles of privilege in a world of McJobs?’

The invited speakers were:

Marisol Sandoval, Department of Sociology at City, University of London
 Ruth Yeoman, Research Fellow at Kellogg College, University of Oxford
 Chris Land, Professor of Work and Organization at Anglia Ruskin University

We also convened the WEEL stream at this conference.

- The co-conveners hosted a well-attended members’ meeting during lunch at the WES conference in Belfast, September 2018, which led to an increase in members (of the Jiscmail and Twitter followers). The conference was taken as an opportunity to raise our profile among sociologists of work and employment, and we are working with WES organisers to develop mutually beneficial links.
- The co-conveners worked with WEEL members, who are expert in analysis of workplace and industrial relations, to write a response for the BSA on the USS Strike and were involved in lobbying within the BSA around an appropriate Society response. This included surveying BSA members about their attitudes to the strike. These survey data were presented at the WEEL stream at the BSA and at WES. This activity also led to a cooperation with the Social Policy Association and Development Studies Association and a joint WEEL/SPA/DSA workshop on pensions at City, University of London. All of these activities raised the profile of WEEL.

Concluding remarks:

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