

## **British Sociological Association Annual Conference 2017**

### **Recovering the Social: Personal Troubles and Public Issues**

**Manchester University, April 4-6 2017**

#### **Stream Plenary Speakers: Professor Jolyon Mitchell, Dr Abby Day & Dr Jasjit Singh**

Professor Jolyon Mitchell's research and teaching focuses on: Religion, Violence and Peacebuilding with particular reference to the arts (e.g. film, theatre, radio, visual arts as well as other new and old media). He has written and published extensively in these and related areas (e.g. the uses of different media arts in promoting peace and inciting violence; Communication Ethics; Theology & the Arts; Media, Religion and Culture; Memory, History and Religion). Jolyon has worked as a producer and journalist for BBC World Service and BBC Radio 4 before he was appointed to the University of Edinburgh.

Dr Abby Day is Reader in Race, Faith and Culture in the Department of Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London, where her teaching, research, writing and supervisions cover sociology of religion, media and religion, and critical criminology. Past Chair of the Sociology of Religion Study group in the British Sociological Association, her work focuses on gender, generation and improving the academic and public understanding of complex religious and non-religious identities.

Dr Jasjit Singh is a Research Fellow in Religious and Cultural Transmission based at the University of Leeds and a recognised expert on Sikhs in Britain. His research examines religious identity and processes of religious and cultural transmission among British South Asians with a focus on British Sikhs. His research interests include Religion and Youth, Religion and Media, Religious Identity, Sikh Studies and Religion in Diaspora.

#### **Call for Papers:**

The last few decades have seen the rise of a culture of hyper-individualism in the UK, USA and elsewhere, reversing a tentative trend towards greater social cohesion and solidarity that began to emerge in the first half of the 20th century. The current scenario has largely been

driven by a political and public discourse stressing that autonomous individuals and their families are solely responsible for their own destinies, life chances, fortunes and misfortunes, on an equal footing with their 'competitors', a standpoint that contrasts starkly with C. Wright Mills' famous aphorism that '(N)either the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both'.

Denigration of the role of the social and structural organisation in governing everyday lives and life chances has also been accompanied by a long sequence of public policy 'reforms', that seem tailored to increasingly favour individual greed, selfishness, discrimination and division over collective need, solidarity and empathy. Moreover, these developments have also been accompanied by the stigmatisation of various groups defined as 'other', reducing public sympathy for those least fortunate who have lost out in the Social Darwinist competition this credo has inspired. Amongst a range of regressive developments, this has supported the dismantling of social supports that were once considered essential to both individual security and social progress.

The broad theme of the BSA annual conference 2017, will consider how we might explore and challenge misrepresentations of the relationship between the personal and the public realm, while focusing upon the myriad ways in which social arrangements govern our lives, including the various ways in which inequitable social arrangements constrain the life chances of the marginalised, in terms of class, race, ethnicity, disability and gender. We are interested in papers that speak to the personal as well as the public, and those that link both

**Abstract Submission Deadline: 14 October 2016**

**Abstract submission link:** <https://www.britsoc.co.uk/events/key-bsa-events/bsa-annual-conference/submissions/>

**\*\*\* All submissions wishing to be considered within the Sociology of Religion stream must have SOCREL in capital letters at the top of your abstract \*\*\***

For further information contact the *Sociology of Religion* stream coordinator: Rachael Shillitoe. Email: [r.shillitoe@worc.ac.uk](mailto:r.shillitoe@worc.ac.uk) or the BSA events team [events@britsoc.org.uk](mailto:events@britsoc.org.uk)