

PLENARIES

Monday 22nd March at 17:30 in P/X001 in the Exhibition Centre

Sue Scott (University of Durham)

Sexuality, Anxiety and the Challenge to Sociology

It is widely assumed that late modern societies display a liberalising trajectory with regard to sexuality; although there are differing views as to whether this is a good thing. However, closer scrutiny suggests somewhat more uneven 'progress' giving rise to a number of antinomies and associated anxieties. For example, we live surrounded by explicit sexual imagery yet there is great anxiety about maintaining children's sexual ignorance and tolerance of pre marital sex and marital breakdown co exist with intolerance of teenage pregnancy and non monogamy. The starting point for this lecture is a question about the continued tendency to bracket off sex and sexuality as a special area of human life at the very edges of the social and cultural. It is my contention that we need a sociology of sexuality which further challenges this positioning and which engages with both popular and scientific debates about the 'nature' and meanings of sex in the 21st century. I will explore some of the issues raised for sociologists undertaking research into aspects of sex and sexuality before developing a discussion of some of key sexual antinomies drawing on recent work on Childhood and Sexuality and on Heterosexuality and my research on sex education and on parents as 'sex educators'. I will argue for the need to focus the sociological gaze more closely on both the institution of heterosexuality and on sexuality as everyday practice as well as for more serious engagement with the anxieties presented by the media, policy makers and the guardians of the public health.

Sue Scott is Postgraduate Dean and Professor of Sociology at the University of Durham. She was formally Professor in the Department of Applied Social Science and the University of Stirling and in earlier incarnations worked in the Universities of Manchester, Cambridge and Lancaster as well as for the Health Education Authority. Sue has been a member of the BSA since 1975 and has served on the Executive and on a number of other committees.

She has been engaged in debates within feminist sociology since the late 1970s and has written widely about gender, sexuality and risk especially in relation to children and young people. Her current research includes an ESRC funded project with Lydia Martens on Risk and Routine in Domestic Kitchen Practices and a book project with Stevi Jackson entitled 'Theorising Sexuality'. Some recent publications include: Scott, S. & Jackson, S. (1999) 'Risky Children and Risky Childhoods: Theorising Childhood and Sexuality' in Lupton, D *Theorising Risk and Culture* Cambridge, CUP. Scott, S. & Scott, S. 'Our Mother's Daughters: Autobiographical inheritance through stories of gender and class' in T. Cosslet, C. Lury & P. Summerfield (eds) *The Autobiographical Urge* London: Routledge. Scott, S. & Jackson, S. (2001) 'Putting the Body's Feet on the Ground' in K Backett-Milburn and L. Mckie eds *Gendering the Body* London: Macmillan. Jackson, S. and Scott, S. (2004) 'The personal *is* still political: heterosexuality, feminism and monogamy' in ***Feminism and Psychology*** Vol 14(1) Jackson, S. and Scott, S. 'Anxiety, Excess and Desire: Antimonies of sexuality in late modernity' ***Sexualities***, Forthcoming 2004. Martens, L. Southerton, D. and Scott, S. 'Bringing Children and Parents into the Sociology of Consumption: Towards a theoretical and empirical agenda' forthcoming ***Journal of Consumer Culture*** 2004.

Wednesday 24th March at 16.30 in P/X001 in the Exhibition Centre

Joan Busfield (University of Essex)

Pills, Power, People: Sociological Understandings of the Pharmaceutical Industry

This paper examines how sociology can contribute to an understanding of the work, power and impact of the pharmaceutical industry. It draws in particular on Latour's theoretical and empirical analysis of science, in conjunction with a more explicit consideration of power, to help to understand the position of the industry and the heavy reliance of many people in advanced industrial societies on the pills produced by the industry.

Joan Busfield is a Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Essex and is currently Dean of the Graduate School. She initially trained as a clinical psychologist at the Tavistock Clinic and then worked on a study of the social influences on family size published (with M Paddon) as *Thinking About Children: Sociology and Fertility in Post-War England* (CUP 1977). Since then her research has focussed on psychiatry, gender and mental disorder, the health services, and most recently on the pharmaceutical industry. Her publications include: *Managing Madness: Changing Ideas and Practice* (Hutchinson 1986), *Men, Women and Madness: Understanding Gender and Mental Disorder* (Macmillan 1996) and *Health and Health Care in Modern Britain* (OUP 2000). She also edited a special issue of *Sociology of Health and Illness* with the title *Rethinking the Sociology of Mental Health* (2000).