

**British Sociological Association's
Sociology of Religion Study Group (SocRel) Annual Report (2022/23)**

Name: SocRel (Sociology of Religion Study Group)

Established: 1975

Number of members: as of 9 May 2023, we have 214 members, of which 100 are BSA members, 53 are standard SocRel members, and 61 are PG/Low Income/Retired members.

Income: As of 31st December 2022, the account balance for the Sociology of Religion study group was £30, 532.81.

Aims: SocRel is the primary professional group for UK-based academics and postgraduate researchers in the social scientific study of religion. Whilst primarily sociological in orientation, the group also welcomes involvement from members from a range of academic disciplines who share an interest in the empirical study of religion and the analysis of religion in contemporary society.

The group aims both to provide a forum for the sharing of current work in the field, as well as shaping theoretical and methodological debates in the field through its meetings and related publications. It also seeks to support the development of emerging researchers in this field through its postgraduate study days and through the active support of postgraduate presenters at other study group events (both intellectually and through the provision of limited postgraduate bursaries).

The group also aims to provide support to women in academia, through its Mentoring Scheme.

Review of the year:

- Celine Benoit stepped down as Convenor of the group. We are very grateful for all her work and steady hand in transitioning the role to Dawn Llewellyn and Sonya Sharma who started as Co-Convenors of the Study Group in late 2022.
- In efforts to address equality, diversity and inclusion within the discipline, SocRel formed a new EDI Role that will be shared between Renasha Khan, Ruth Sheldon and Lois Lee. This role will involve organising related forums and events and reviewing the remit and management of the Mentoring Scheme.
- Gillian Chu will be stepping down as Postgraduate and Early Career Scholar Liaison Officer and Kim Harding as Internet Officer. We thank them for all their work and contribution to these roles. SocRel will be looking to appoint to these positions at the July AGM.
- The study group held its annual conference online via the Gather platform in July 2022. The theme was *Disruption, Crisis and Continuity in Religion*. The conference lasted three days, and included keynotes and panels from 62 delegates. Keynotes were given by Professors Nasar Meer, John Holmwood, Gladys Ganiel and Philip Jenkins. There was a special panel honouring the work of late Professor James A. Beckford, a longstanding member and contributor to the discipline and study group. There was also a fruitful and engaging session for teachers that was held in partnership with TRS-UK the nationwide group that serves represents, supports, and promotes the academic study of religion and

theology in UK higher education institutions, uniting academics in university departments and subject units with specialist associations.

- SocRel continues its Peter B. Clarke Memorial Essay Prize. Essay submissions can be on any aspect of contemporary religion addressed from a sociological perspective. The winner of the Essay Prize wins a full pass for the Annual SocRel Conference, a cheque for £100 and a year's subscription to the *Journal of Contemporary Religion*.
- SocRel continues to publish blogs related to current issues via the platform Medium <https://SocRel.medium.com/>
- The study group continues to publish its newsletter (SocRelNews) twice a year. Each edition includes news from the study group and features 2-3 interviews with colleagues. A new feature of the newsletter lists recent publications by members. Past editions can be accessed on our website (see link below).
- SocRel has renewed its subscription with Wild Apricot in which membership accounts and renewals are managed.
- The purpose of Seed Corn funding is timetabled for discussion at the July AGM. This is to review its remit with members.

Concluding remarks:

SocRel looks forward to the forthcoming year and more opportunities to connect with old and new members, colleagues and friends.

Website

<https://www.britsoc.co.uk/groups/study-groups/sociology-of-religion-study-group/>

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