



BSA Early Career Forum Event: Creating diverse coalitions for equality in neoliberal times: Locating the emancipatory city?

Wednesday 4 July 2018 9:00am - 5:00pm
De Montfort University, Leicester

Panel: Professor Chrissie Rogers (Bradford), Francis Ryan (The Guardian), Kitt Bolton (DPAC) and Professor Kathleen Richardson (DMU) – other speakers tba

In association with the **British Sociological Association – Early Career Forum** and the **Centre for Urban Research on Austerity (CURA)** at **De Montfort University** we are organising a conference on the 4th July 2018. This participatory and interdisciplinary event examines what disability research encompasses in terms of theoretical directions and practical methodologies when thinking of diverse coalitions in sociology (Holmwood 2010, Burawoy 2013, Cooper 2013). It asks if socially just agendas for equality can be created in neoliberal times and how to go about this? We decided to work from the perspective of social 'coalitions' to think critically about collaborations (Barvosa-Carter 2001) and create an intersectional space (Crenshaw 1991) where we could learn from differing innovative approaches to interdisciplinary research (Cho et al. 2013, Collins & Bilge 2016).

The theme of this event mirrors the focus by the Centre for Urban Research on Austerity (CURA) on developing interdisciplinary, cross-faculty research partnerships committed to advancing the idea of The Emancipatory City. It poses critical questions regarding how the relationship between government and urban spaces is changing what constitutes society's social fabric for inclusion and tolerance of diversity (Lees, 2004). It asks how urban spaces that are predominantly ableist in nature can challenge social exclusion, care-less spaces (Rogers, 2016), and the stigmatisation of disabled people under current austerity measures. The event focuses on how disability research across different disciplines can benefit from each other to explore how public and private spaces can become more inclusive and socially-just for disabled people. It examines how interdisciplinary academic spaces can conscientiously engage in socially-just disability research within a neoliberal form of government.

The programme

We aim to provide a space for interdisciplinary learning and discussion about what understandings of freedom and social justice are implied by the emancipatory city. The discussions will be around the following themes:

- **Inclusion:** What does inclusion mean in the city? Who defines what disability means and the methods of research? Is the term 'disability' outdated and do we need something else? Does inclusion mean participation co-production or emancipation? Who are allies and what does that mean? What kind of political and social changes does disability research inspire? Can disabled people do research that is controlled by an able-bodied academy? Is it socially just to do disability research in neoliberal times?
- **Interdisciplinarity:** What does interdisciplinary disability research look like and how does it become enacted? What kinds of methods and methodologies are at stake? Can we also think about interdisciplinarity in terms of critical theories and their use? Do we

think of disability as part of interdisciplinarity? Who controls and sets an interdisciplinary research agenda? What are the theoretical and practical aims of interdisciplinarity and what or who do they align with? What are the potentials of intersectionality for social justice and emancipation in a space? How do they become operationalised?

- **Impact:** What should the impact of disability research be and for whom? The Research Council's 'pathways to impact' (Research Councils UK, 2014) emphasises working in terms of co-production to achieve 'impact' (Mathews 2017) but is that what disability research does or should do? Should we be rethinking an independent impact agenda in terms of public, practice and policy or working towards multiple impacts? Impacts are also increasing quantified but should we also be evaluating the qualitative aspects, such as inclusive spaces? How can we engage in more socially just, equitable and non-oppressive research agendas and impacts? What will the unintended impacts of disability research be for city spaces? What do we do when there is no impact or when an urban site oppresses?

Call for Abstracts

We are seeking abstracts for paper presentations that fit with the conference theme. It should be no more than 250 words, and in British English. **Please send by email to emancipatory-city@outlook.com on or before Friday 30 May.**

Bursaries

We are pleased to offer a number of bursaries and especially encourage independent researchers, activists, PhD students and ECRs to apply. Bursaries will cover travel and conference attendance. Please email explaining in up to 150 words how attending or presenting is relevant to the work you are currently doing and providing estimated travel costs. **Please apply by 30 April 2018 to emancipatory-city@outlook.com**

Exhibition and workshop

An exhibition linked to urban life and disability and workshop about research involvement are also being organised by The People's Forum and the Service User and Carer Research Audit Network (SUCRAN), De Montfort University.

Getting to De Montfort University

The venue is The Gallery, ground floor of the Vijay Patel building (LE2 7PT). It is building 40 on the campus map, and is in the centre of campus, next to the Food Village.

- [Directions to Leicester and to De Montfort University](#)
- [Information about the accessibility of the building](#)

Registration

Spaces are limited for this exciting event, so do book early. Lunch and refreshments are included.

BSA Member - £5

Non Members - £15

Registration closes on June 4th, 2018.

For further information and to submit your abstract, please contact the team via email at emancipatory-city@outlook.com