



July 2025 RC49 Newsletter

Welcome

I am writing this July newsletter having recently come back from the International Sociological Association's 5th Forum of Sociology, which was held in the capital of Morocco, Rabat, this month. We had a very busy program with 18 individual sessions, including two joint sessions with the Research Committee on Clinical Sociology (RC46) and the Research Committee on the Sociology of Health (RN15).

As always, our sessions spanned a wide range of approaches and topics, including sessions on research methods, gender perspectives, violence and victimization, experiential knowledge, the family, young people's mental health, social work and mutual support in community settings. The program is still available online and can be viewed here:

<https://isaconf.confex.com/isaconf/forum2025/meetingapp.cgi/Symposium/827>

It was particularly good to see so many PhD and early career researchers at the session as well as many old hands. Our business meeting discussions focused on how we might increase networking opportunities between group members going forward and increase co-operation so that we can continue to support one another and to increase our understanding of mental health and illness across the globe. Watch further newsletters for more information about these events.

We held our first five minute thesis competition this year, which was judged by previous RC49 presidents Dr Gary Linn and Dr Takashi Asakura. The winner of the competition was Dr Stephan Brown, from Roayl Holloway University in the United Kingdom, who spoke on 'Social Work Perspectives on Mental Capacity Act decision making'. Congratulations to Stephan.

This summer newsletter provides information about new members, member publications and our planned online events this year. If you are interested in organizing a seminar or

workshop as a member of RC49 then please do get in touch with me, at Dixonj7@cardiff.ac.uk¹.



1 - Group shot after the RC49 Business Meeting - Rabat 2025



2 - Speakers from the Mental Health and the Family session.



3 - Speakers from the Researching Responses to Distress Caused By Extreme Events session.



4 - Speakers from the The Sociology of Mental Health and Illness - General Session 3.

¹<mailto:Dixonj7@cardiff.ac.uk>



5 - Speakers and Chair from The Sociology of Mental Health Social Work



6 - Group dinner after the business meeting.



7 - Group dinner after the business meeting.

RC 49 Forthcoming Events

Why is the Mental Healthcare System in the United States of America Failing US? - Online on Microsoft Teams on Thursday 04/09/2025 15:00 - 16:00 UTC

Mental disorders are the most common health condition that physicians in the United States face in their daily practice. They are far greater than the combined number of patients who have heart disease and cancer as recently reported by the National Alliance for Mental Illness. Data from the National Institute of Mental Health projects that 50 percent of the U.S. population will have a mental disorder at least once in their life. Also, yearly, 25 percent of

Americans experience a major mental disease. This means that approximately one in four American families will, on average, have a member who is mentally ill. The 2020 National Survey on Health and Drug use reported that almost 40 million people in the U.S. had some type of substance abuse problem (alcohol and/or illegal drugs). Also, in the same year, the Alliance on Mental Illness found that there were 52.9 million Americans with a mental illness unrelated to drug abuse.

Unfortunately, in that same year, less than half of patients with a mental illness and less than 10 percent with a substance abuse had any access to professional care. In another recent investigation completed by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), only one quarter of the mental health patients in the United States have any access to care because of the limited availability. Consequently, three-fourths of patients with a major mental disorder in the United States do not receive care (Robert C. Smith, 2025). Professor Linn will provide a structural and organizational analysis of the American Mental Healthcare system and explain why it is failing to provide adequate care. Professor Binford will discuss her role and experience as a psychological therapist in the United States and the complexity and challenges of the mental healthcare system in which she continues to work.

Reference Robert C. Smith,MD. Has Medicine Lost Its Mind? Prometheus Books,Essex.Connecticut,2025.

Speakers

James G. Linn,Ph.D. is a Senior Researcher at Optimal Solutions in Healthcare and International Development and Clinical Professor at Meharry U.S.A. He is also a Visiting Professor of Sociology at the University of Valparaiso,Chile. He is Past President and a current Board member of the Research Committee of on Mental Health and Illness of the International Sociological Association and editor of JAHR(Journal of AIDS and HIV Research). For more than four decades he has led and collaborated on funded health and mental health research in the U.S.,Brazil,Chile,the Dominican Republic, Ghana,Botswana,Malawiand Mozambique. He has published over 80 articles in academic journals.

Leslie Binford,DNP,RN,PMHNP-BC is a doctorally prepared,Board Certified Adult Psychiatric,Mental Health Nurse Practitioner and Assistant Professor of Nursing at Austin Peay State University,U.S,A. Dr. Binford's experience includes working with individuals with severe and persistent mental health needs, addiction, women's mental health, perinatal health and postpartum mental health and trauma.

Link to Join

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_YWNmYTlxMGUtMTNiZC00OTY5LWI3ZDctZjkzOWU0MDU2YTlh%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22id%22%3a%22bdb74b30-9568-4856-bdbf-

06759778fcbc%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22fa92d818-fea5-4aa7-95c8-b859b702b0ca%22%7d²

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Researching Mental Health in a Megacity of the Global South: Reflections on Five Years of Qualitative Work in the Periphery of São Paulo - Online on Microsoft Teams on Thursday 28/11/25 14:00 - 15.30 UTC

Urban living has frequently been associated with mental illness, and current research has clarified the social determinants at an epidemiological level. Yet, it has not fully identified what aspects of adversity lead some individuals to experience mental distress or develop mental disorders. Nor has it determined what social resources—beyond specialist mental health services for those already unwell—might reduce the incidence of mental disorders or support resilience and recovery.

Over the past five years, our group has conducted more than four interconnected research projects in the same district on the outskirts of São Paulo—a region marked by significant social challenges, including poverty and various forms of everyday violence. Despite these hardships, the territory is rich in practices of mutual support, community solidarity, and collective engagement, which are frequently overlooked in mental health research. In this seminar, we aim to reflect on the lessons learned so far and systematize the key findings gathered throughout our research trajectory. We will discuss how we have navigated a range of ethical, methodological, conceptual, and practical challenges inherent in conducting qualitative research in complex urban peripheries over time.

We will also explore how we have drawn on interdisciplinary perspectives, highlighting the contributions of team members from psychology, sociology, epidemiology, and psychiatry.

The seminar will be led by the Social Research Team of the Section of Psychiatric Epidemiology at the University of São Paulo Medical School, Institute of Psychiatry. Speakers from our team will identify key lessons from conducting qualitative research in the Global South and will welcome debate and discussion with RC49 members.

Link to Join

[https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MjFjYTlZNzltMjM0NC00OTMxLWEyZDUtMTU3NDgxNTY3MjU5%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22bdb74b30-9568-4856-bdbf-06759778fcbc"%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22fa92d818-fea5-4aa7-95c8-b859b702b0ca"%7d](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MjFjYTlZNzltMjM0NC00OTMxLWEyZDUtMTU3NDgxNTY3MjU5%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22bdb74b30-9568-4856-bdbf-06759778fcbc)

²[https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_YWNmYTlxMGUtMTNiZC00OTY5LWI3ZDctZjkzOWU0MDU2YTlh%40thread.v2/0?context={%22Tid%22%3a%22bdb74b30-9568-4856-bdbf-06759778fcbc"%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22fa92d818-fea5-4aa7-95c8-b859b702b0ca"%7d](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_YWNmYTlxMGUtMTNiZC00OTY5LWI3ZDctZjkzOWU0MDU2YTlh%40thread.v2/0?context={%22Tid%22%3a%22bdb74b30-9568-4856-bdbf-06759778fcbc)

06759778fcbc%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22fa92d818-fea5-4aa7-95c8-b859b702b0ca%22%7d³

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A Report on the Mad Studies Forum

Mad Studies Forum 23 May 2025 – “Mad Studies: Where to from here?”

At our inaugural Mad Studies Forum, we had people from around the world join us, from diverse positions, including service users, service providers, academics, students, community groups, government officials, and clinicians.

We were privileged to have present, Peter Beresford OBE, Visiting Professor at the University of East Anglia, and Bren LeFrançois, University Research Professor at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador (Canada), both highly esteemed, revered, celebrated and deeply respected Mad Studies scholars.

There is so much happening in this space. It was acknowledged that Mad Studies is a fertile field, with inciting and diverging ideas and perspectives. Mad Studies is progressing as a strong force, in the academy, the community and personally. At the Forum, we asked what is the next step in connecting and progressing in such a generative space? Through learning from each other, hearing each other's stories, we can move forward and develop and nurture the Mad Studies space. In moving forward, we hope to discover unity and dissidence, in sharing ideas, nurturing dialogue, and forging new relationships, and continuing transforming a maddening of academia.

Professor Peter Beresford OBE presented on how we live in an increasingly maddening world linked with rising conflict, division, uncertainty, poverty, disease, threat and death. Beresford examined how an unstated alliance between ongoing neoliberal politics and dominant individualistic psych responses to madness and mental distress is increasingly destructive and diversionary at personal and global levels. It was argued that the twin threats of war and climate change overshadow our lives and age. Beresford highlighted the revolutionary potential of Mad Studies, in equal alliance with other new social movements (NSMs). He asked how can we change existing politics by building such alliances, with the understandings of new social movements, adopting the values and insights of NSMs like the Mad Studies movement, and ideas like intersectionality?

³[https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MiFiYtIzNzltMjM0NC00OTMxLWEyZDUtMTU3NDgxNTY3MjU5%40thread.v2/0?context={\"Tid\"%3a\"bdb74b30-9568-4856-bdbf-06759778fcbc\"%2c\"Oid\"%3a\"fa92d818-fea5-4aa7-95c8-b859b702b0ca\"}](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MiFiYtIzNzltMjM0NC00OTMxLWEyZDUtMTU3NDgxNTY3MjU5%40thread.v2/0?context={\)

Professor Bren LeFrançois spoke about how Mad Studies emerged as a field of study over 15 years ago. Since that time, we have seen it travel around the world, maddening the academy and inspiring a new wave of resistance against sanism and psychiatric oppression. They noted how Mad Studies has become embedded within the academy, specifically in Canada, and considered some of the directions that Mad Studies might deliberate taking at this juncture. They stated that given that Mad Studies emerged from social movements, and specifically Mad communities, there needs to be more of a focus on community values, on an ethics of care and on other Mad community practices, important in the further maddening of institutional spaces. They also identified how we may need to be more pro-active in considering the ways in which Mad Studies is being co-opted and derailed by forces leading us further from our community roots and further from our revolutionary potential. This work may be essential now to realising a meaningful yet always evolving Mad Studies later.

Peter Beresford's new book, *The Antidote: How People Powered Movements can Renew Politics, Policy and Practice* has been published this year by Policy Press.

Dr Rachel McMahon (session organiser and chair)

RC49 Publications

- Ancha, C. and Celebrado, J. (2025). Microaggression towards Filipino Women with Mobility Disabilities: From Micro-Stories to Macro-Struggles, *Review of Women's Studies*, 34(1), pp.37-70.
- Bhoi, D. (2025). Caste, Mental Health and Self-Harm: Emotive Experiences of Dalit Students at the Indian University, *Contemporary South Asia*, In Press.
- Celebrado, J., Awuku, E., and Aung, T. (2025). A Qualitative Inquiry into Non-Local University Students' Mental Health Literacy and Coping Mechanisms: Implications for University-Based Mental Health Interventions. *Hong Kong Journal of Mental Health*, In Press.
- Cohen, B. M. Z. (2025) 'A Critical Manifesto for the Sociology of Mental Health: Past, Present, Future', in von Kardorff, E., Harbusch, M., and Robin, D. (eds) *Zur Gesellschaft der verletzten Seelen: Neue soziologische Perspektiven auf Psychiatrie, Gesellschaft und Subjekt [On the Society of Injured Souls: New Sociological Perspectives on Psychiatry, Society and the Subject]* (pp. 89-109). Springer VS.
- Cohen, B. M. Z. (2025) 'Epilogue', in Hendry, N. A. and Karageorgos, E. (eds) *Critical Mental Health in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand: Social and Historical*

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-82861-4_12⁴

https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdoi.org%2F10.1007%2F978-3-031-82861-4_12&data=05|02|Dixonj7%40cardiff.ac.uk|a579b379bb684ecae7ad08ddc4cc6a1b|bdb74b3095684856bdbbf06759778fcbc|1|0|638883104460622610|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMtMiIsIkFOljoipTWFpbGlzIldUljoyfQ%3D%3D|0||&sdata=v057h2bgwPwTjp3stvihUjofWt5UM%2F4Xi3ENOn3C9h4%3D&reserved=0

Research in Health, Journal of Historical Sociology, Modern China, and International Sociology.

- Neelam Day – Neelam Day is the Executive Director and Director Research of Global Center for Social Dynamic Research. He is currently Chief Editor of Global Journal of Social Scientific Research (Multi-Disciplinary and Bilingual) and Guest Editor of Dilli Vaani, Monthly Magazine of Archdiocese of Delhi and also Associate Editor of Desh Ki Awaz, Newspaper and a Recipient of the National Award on International Women's Day, 2021 for Social Work, Literature and Research. Neelam was a Media Meet Awardee of 2018 and one of the four panel speaker's on International Youth Day, 2022 for International Association of Schools of Social Work.
- Aneta Krzyworzeka-Jelinowska – Aneta is a PhD student, sociologist, migration researcher, and was the coordinator of the Multicultural Center during the 2022-2023 Ukrainian migration crisis in Krakow. Aneta's interests are: integration policies, women and children in the migration process, mental health and disabilities of migrants and refugees, and the role of non-governmental organisations in managing the migration crisis.
- Dr. Iryna Mazhak – Dr Mazhak is a medical sociologist and interdisciplinary researcher specialising in migration health, with over 20 years of experience in teaching and empirical research. She is a former Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Fellow in Denmark (AIAS, 2015–2018) and Ireland (RCSI, 2023–2025) and is currently a Research Fellow at Trinity College Dublin. Her work focuses on women's health, refugee and migrant health, mental health and coping strategies, health inequalities, and disability studies.
- Rich Moth - I am currently a Senior Lecturer in Social Work at Manchester Metropolitan University in the UK. My research interests include sociology of mental health, sociology of knowledge, mental health social work and the welfare state, and critical social theory/critical realism. I have been involved in several research projects including an ethnographic study of shifting ways of understanding mental distress in the context of neoliberal reform of community mental health services (ESRC-funded, and published as a monograph HERE⁵), a comparative study of the impacts of neoliberal reform on social work services in Switzerland and England (funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation), and an ongoing study of the psychological and emotional harms experienced by mental health service users arising from the increased prominence of an active labour market (workfare) policy agenda in social

⁵<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpolicy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk%2Funderstanding-mental-distress&data=05|02|dixonj7%40cardiff.ac.uk|e930d05e92f14ae47f3108dd3f8640ab|bdb74b3095684856bdbf06759778fcbc|1|0|638736568053591365|Unknown|TWfPbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOilwLjAuMDAwMCIslIAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D|0||&sdata=cNDNbTChZLINvfDMIUCLTbvIhcBVR5OBvxl%2FcpvelWI%3D&reserved=0>

security and mental health policy reforms in England (due for publication as a co-authored monograph in 2026). I can be contacted at R.Moth@mmu.ac.uk⁶.

- Josiah Mesngon - Hello everyone, my name is Josiah Gabriel Cruz Mesngon, and I'm currently a Master's student in Clinical Psychology at the University of Guam. My main area of research is intergenerational trauma, especially as it relates to the experiences and perspectives of Pacific Islander communities. I'm honored to join this research committee and look forward to contributing insights grounded in island-based understandings of mental health and resilience and learning more from my international peers.
- Anne-Marie Snider - Dr. Anne-Marie Snider is qualitative researcher in topics of mental health and wellness in Medical Sociology. She is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at California State University, Chico.
- Yuting Weng - I am a PhD candidate at the University of East Anglia (UEA). My research explores the mental health experiences of Chinese international students in the UK, focusing on how they access mental health services. I am particularly interested in the cultural and social challenges they face, the stigma surrounding mental health, and the accessibility and effectiveness of these services. Please inform me if you have any overlapping topics; I am interested in hearing about your work as well.
- Yousef Yang - I am an Associate Professor in the School of Sociology and Anthropology at Sun Yat-sen University. My research explores the impact of structural contexts—ranging from cultural diversity to economic modernization—on health and well-being.
- Feng Yaoyun – I am a male, PhD in Sociology, from China, and am a lecturer at the School of Sociology, Northeast Normal University. My research focuses on sports sociology and sports social work, and I hope that social workers can use sports to heal the physical and mental problems of clients, promote community and even national progress. My email is 31888517@qq.com⁷

Social media

Follow us on LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9042890/>

⁶<mailto:R.Moth@mmu.ac.uk>

⁷<mailto:31888517@qq.com>

Call for news items

We are open to publicising any member or research centre news items, blogs or calls for collaboration by RC49 members. If you would like to write something for the next newsletter please contact Jeremy Dixon on Dixonj7@cardiff.ac.uk⁸.

⁸<mailto:Dixonj7@cardiff.ac.uk>