

BSA Socrel Chair's Response Day

Wednesday 13 December 2017, Imperial Wharf, London

Faiths & Civil Society: Building Bridges or Walls?

Old patterns of belonging are in flux, in politics and society as in religion. Strands of continuity are accompanied by fluidity and change. Brexit and Trump appear to be expressions of something important – but what? Loss of trust in leaders? Growing poverty and inequality? A climate change crisis? Anxiety about migration? Fear of violent extremism? This event will explore faith-based engagement with these civil society issues – both responsive and resistant: how faith in the public sphere forms part of new social movements, activism, digital spaces, the provision of services to meet need, critical voices, and emerging explorations of a new 'common good'. Is public faith part of building bridges or walls? We will consider how the political, social and identity shifts that are underway affect our discipline and its scholars. What conceptual preoccupations and practical impacts will continue and emerge? After the twists and turns of 2016 and 17, how will sociology of religion respond?

Papers are welcomed which engage with these broad themes, preferably with examples and evidence of engagement, but also including theoretical explorations of changing boundaries of thought. Themes may include:

- Changing patterns of action, participation and 'joining'
- Volunteering and social action
- Food banks and social need
- Activism and protest
- Work with asylum seekers, refugees and migrants
- Community Development and Youth Work
- Digital spaces
- New ideas and practices of the common good

Keynote speakers include Professor Chris Baker and Dr Dan DeHanas.

Please submit your abstract for consideration to Céline Benoit at c.benoit@aston.ac.uk. Abstracts should be received by 20 October at midday and outcomes will be confirmed by 3 November.