

Editorial Introduction

January 2011

Happy New Year and welcome to Volume 4 Issue 2 of The Journal of Psychosocial Studies.

We had some very encouraging feedback from the last volume, the first we had edited together, along with submissions of some fabulous papers from a range of academics and students working in the psychosocial field. We hope this edition reflects the breadth, interest and high quality of this work.

In last volume's editorial we promised to keep up an ongoing debate about the state of psychosocial studies as a subject discipline, and/or a practice, by including a discussion piece in every edition – a guest editorial. For this volume **Wendy Hollway** was kind enough to contribute a piece illustrating some ways in which psychosocial subjectivity can be utilised to understand and represent research data. In 'Psychosocial writing from data' the questions of 'How can I work creatively with data: how can I use evidence in a way that is demonstrably valid and ethical while preserving the vitality of participants' voices (Hollway 2009) and doing justice to the complexity of their transitions, throughout the research process until my representation reaches the audience/reader?' are addressed. This raises a whole set of challenging and controversial issues in relation to the validity and ethics of psychosocial research.

After Wendy's editorial piece, we present five academic papers which, in total, reflect the diversity of work being undertaken in the subject area. **David Jones** uses the curious history of Bernard Mandeville, an 18th century social theorist and his life-world to make the case that psychosocial thinking 'needs to be understood as products of particular social and cultural circumstances and therefore such reflection can help us put our own efforts to 'think psychosocially' in the early 21st century into context' and that 'there are some important parallels between the early 18th century and the contemporary period that can help us understand more about the resurgence in interest in psychosocial thinking that emerged at the end of the 20th century'.

Sally Sayles returns us to the present with a thoughtful consideration of class and psychoanalysis in contemporary England in her article on ‘The Making of Docile Working Class Subjects: CBT, Class and the Failures of Psychoanalysis’. This addresses the individualisation of social problems in the context of the coerciveness of ‘relentless middle classness’. **David Gadd’s** paper is equally concerned with social injustices and personal suffering in the contemporary UK. He considers the forms of hatred, including racial hatred, which lead to Robert Stewart murdering Zahid Mubarek in their cell in Feltham Young Offender Institute in April 2000.

Matthew Bowker’s curious consideration of ‘The Meaning Of Absurd Protest’ Drawing on ‘The Book Of Job, Albert Camus, And C. Fred Alford’s After The Holocaust’ poses some fascinating and essentially philosophical questions, the primary of which is ‘What exactly it means for Job (and for us) to experience the world as absurd’ .

Finally – and certainly not least – the book review –reviews in fact- in itself contains elements of a psychosocial examination of how we can understand and think about what we read – the psychosocial epistemology of book review- a new paradigm invented here in this journal by **Tom Wengraf**.

We hope you find the volume stimulating and curious. Please keep on sending us your contributions.

Liz Frost and Helen Lucey, Editors