



EXPLORING *THE COMPARATIVE* IN SOCIO-LEGAL STUDIES

Call for Abstracts

Building on the successful SLSA conferences—‘Exploring the *socio* in socio-legal studies’ (2010), and ‘Exploring the *legal* in socio-legal studies (2012)—the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies at the University of Oxford invites abstracts for a conference to explore the *comparative* in socio-legal studies to be held in Oxford 15-16 December 2014.

As the field of socio-legal studies has expanded comparative issues have come to the fore. The study of law in society is now often the study of ‘laws in societies’, as scholars grapple with the nature and role of different types of law in different types of society. Societies vary throughout the world, as much as laws do and a fruitful way of exploring many socio-legal phenomena—one that captures nuance and subtlety—is to consider the subject-matter in comparative perspective.

The possibilities offered by socio-legal comparison go beyond matters of doctrine and substance. The variety of comparative approaches in socio-legal studies, the opportunities and challenges they present, the range of questions they can address, and the different methods they can employ deserve more sustained reflection. The purpose of the conference is to map out the different questions that may be addressed through comparative socio-legal study, the different approaches that can be used to address them, and the ways in which they can enhance wider scholarship in both socio-legal and comparative legal studies.

Opening the event to socio-legal scholars in the UK, we invite papers from a range of perspectives, including empirical, conceptual, and critical theoretical. They may engage with any of the above reflections and/or illustrate the results of comparative research.

We ask contributors to address at least some of the following questions:

- What issues and questions benefit from a comparative approach in socio-legal studies?
- What different disciplinary and methodological approaches can be used, and what types of question might they address?
- What can such research contribute to debates in comparative legal studies?
- What are the limits of comparative thinking in socio-legal studies?
- To what extent could the comparative be advantageous in socio-legal pedagogical practice?

Closing Date for abstracts of no more than 350 words: **20 June 2014**

Please send your abstract to Katie Orme by e-mail: admin@csls.ox.ac.uk

Paper proposers will be notified if they can be included by **7 July 2014**

Participants will be asked to provide a draft paper by **1 December 2014**. It is intended that selected papers from the conference will form part of an edited collection or a special issue in a socio-legal academic journal. The organizers envisage no conference fee, and one night’s accommodation will be provided for paper presenters. Places are consequently limited.