University of Birmingham

Dr Arshad Isakjee

Teaching Associate

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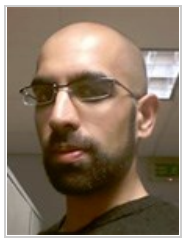
Contact details



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About

I am a social and urban geographer who specialises in identity, belonging, security and the governance of communities. My ESRC-funded doctoral research investigated the political-identity and governance of Muslim communities in Birmingham, in light of the Government's emerging set of counter-terrorism and anti-extremism policies.

Qualifications

BSc Hons (1st Class) Geography and Urban Planning, University of Birmingham

MSc Environment, Enterprise and Place, University of Birmingham

PhD Tainted Citizens The Securitisation of Young Muslim Men in Birmingham, University of Birmingham

Biography

I am an urban and social geographer with a primary research focus on concepts of identity, security and governance of communities in the UK. Since completing my PhD at the end of 2012 I have worked in the University of Liverpool and now the University of Birmingham, teaching core geography undergraduate modules and Masters-level courses on Urban Planning Theory. I have since published two articles, with another in review. I also have extensive experience of research consultancy through working on a number of policy-focussed projects at the Institute of Applied Social Studies at the University of Birmingham.

My doctoral thesis focussed upon the governance and potential securitisation of young Muslim men in the city of Birmingham. It found a striking disconnect between the ways in which identities were experienced and performed by young Muslim men on the ground, and the institutional discourses that surround them. My research used concepts of 'belonging' and the 'politics of belonging' and in particular work by Marco Antonsich, Peter Hopkins and Nira Yuval Davis to explore the complex construction of 'Asian space' and Muslim 'space' in Birmingham: spaces towards which young Muslim participants communicated a strong sense of place-attachment. Simultaneously however, within institutional discourses of terrorism and 'radicalisation', these young Muslim men are considered as being vulnerable themselves and risky to society.

Teaching

BA / BSc Geography, MSc Urban and Regional Planning

I principally teach core Geography theory and methods to second year undergraduates and Urban Planning Theory and Sustainability to MSc students in Urban Planning.

Research

Research interests

- Identity and political-identity of Muslims in the UK
- Analysing security and social-control policies
- Exploring governmentalities of social cohesion policy
- Surveillance and securitisation strategies
- Place attachment and belonging in urban areas

Other activities

- November 2013 – Will be presenting a co-written report on hate-crime towards Muslim women in the Houses of Parliament.
- November 2013 – Panellist and interviewee on the topic of 'Belonging in Birmingham' – ESRC Festival of Social Sciences
- November 2012 - involved in data evaluation for the UK's Cross Government Working Group on Islamophobia, for whom I co-wrote a Briefing Paper in January 2013.
- November 2012 and 2011 - involved in delivering an ESRC-funded event aimed at non-Academics as part of the Festival of Social Sciences.
- November 2012 and October 2011 - given oral and written evidence to the All Parliamentary Party Group (APPG) on Islamophobia.
- Summer 2012 - involved in the KLOE research project around social inclusion in deprived neighbourhoods in Birmingham, as part of a Birmingham City Council project.
- July 2011 - given a scholarship to the international policy roundtable The British-German forum (Wilton Park), chiefly to discuss approaches to counter-terrorism and multiculturalism.

Outside of work, I have an interest in cinema, in particular new-wave American cinema and am a keen cyclist.

Publications

Academic Publications

Davies, T. Isakjee, A. and Spalek, B. (2012) Panic On The Streets Of Birmingham? Struggles Over Space and Belonging In The Revanchist City*, Criminal Justice Matters,* Vol. 87 Issue 1

Isakjee, A. And Allen, C. (2013) "A Catastrophic Lack Of Inquisitiveness": A Critical Study Of The Impact And Narrative Of The Project Champion CCTV Project In Birmingham, *Ethnicities*,

Allen, C. and Isakjee, A. (2013) 'The Innocence of Muslims': Politicising Religion, Muslim elites and Governmental Responses – *in review*

Policy Papers

Isakjee, A. and Allen, C. (2013) Briefing Paper: TELL MAMA and Recording Anti-Muslim Hate Crime, submitted to the *Cross-government Working-group on Islamophobia* (available on request)

Isakjee, A. And Allen, C.(2012) Briefing paper: The impact of the 'Innocence of Muslims', submitted and presented to the All Party Parliamentary Group, The Houses of Parliament

Allen, C. and Isakjee, A. (2012) In pursuit of Shared Values: A Worth Endeavour or a Waste of Time?, presented to Birmingham City Council's Social Inclusion KLOE (Key Lines of Enquiry)

Recent Conference Papers

The Muslim Question: The Future of Multiculturalism in the UK, institute of Applied Social Studies, The University of Birmingham, 7/02/13

Islamophobia in the Media? *From Pavement to Parliament: ESRC Festival of Social Sciences*, Birmingham, 05/11/2012

Islamophobia in the media: Analysis of Existing Evidence, submitted and presented to the All Party Parliamentary Group, The Houses of Parliament 25/10/12

Mobile Methodologies: Using Walked Interviews, Start2Finish Methodologies Conference and Workshop, University of Birmingham, 11/05/2012

Tainted Citizens: Security and Social Control of Muslims in Birmingham, AAG Conference, New York, 13/09/2011

Belonging and Identity: Faith In The City, ESRC Festival of Social Sciences, Birmingham,02/11/2011

Securitising Place: Project Champion and Belonging in Birmingham, UK and Ireland Planning Research Conference, 13/09/2011

Life Through A Security Lens: Project Champion and Surveillance in Birmingham at ISA Research Group 21 (RC21) Urban Conference, Amsterdam, 09/07/2011

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