

## BEAM ME UP! Social research and technology in the 21st century

By Wendy Sykes

This year's SRA Summer Event was a great success, with over 80 members turning out to hear about social research and technology in the 21st century. We had four excellent papers, some good discussion, and enough sunshine to allow some of the later drinking and chit-chat to spill out on to the roof terrace.

Chaired by Ceridwen Roberts, the event began with Michael Willmott, Director of the Future Foundation setting a broad stage for the afternoon, drawing on a wide range of themes and references to sketch out a vision of a future underpinned by 'revolutions' in mechanical/physical technology, biotechnology and genomics, and digital technology.

Alison Walker, Office for National Statistics (ONS), focused on developments within ONS to disseminate survey analyses and reports via the web. Her paper took as its main example Living in Britain 2000, the report of the General Household Survey selected by ONS as a pilot project for electronic publication. Alison brought to life the lessons learned about the different requirements of web and paper publication, for instance the need to be more repetitive in web reports in order to provide context for readers who may simply 'arrive' at a page on a site.

Ray Poynter (The Future Place), spoke about qualitative research carried out over the Internet. Drawing on his experience in this field, he drew attention to key methodological issues and discussed the place of such approaches in the wider spectrum of qualitative methods. Online qualitative research was presented not as an alternative, but as a complement to



*Speakers and Chair prepare for the panel session.*

traditional face-to-face approaches that extends the 'reach of research'.

Finally, Robert Barr, Director of the Manchester Regional Research Laboratory, Senior Lecturer in GIS at the University of Manchester, and founder director of Manchester Informatics, discussed the new freedoms that small-scale, geographically-based, electronically-captured, social information units introduce to social analyses with an area component. This provides an opportunity to cast purpose-specific geographical units of analysis, as well as to maintain traditional classifications where these are desirable or necessary for trend data and/or historical comparisons. A key challenge for the future will be to exploit the flexibility of the new tools and geographies while managing the increase in disclosure risk that accompanies small-scale geo-coding.

Many of those that attended the Summer Event were struck afresh by the pace of change in research introduced by new technology. While the basic intellectual processes of research remain the same, the speed of technological developments can make it difficult for researchers to keep abreast with the changes. The challenge is also there to integrate new technology without loss of standards in social research. We must continue to ask the old questions about quality even as we embrace the new tools available.

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## SRA NEWS – next issue

Copy deadlines for the next issues of the newsletter are:

30 September: November issue  
31 December: February issue  
31 March: May issue  
30 June: September issue

We welcome all contributions. Please send all copy to the Editorial Committee, c/o SRA Administration Office.

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## Ceridwen Roberts

The large turnout at the Summer Event was most cheering, as was the diversity of the audience. Young, old and mid-career researchers from all sectors of the social research world rubbed shoulders and exchanged views. This epitomised the SRA at its best, as did the lively presentations about new ways of doing social research.



This was a buoyant picture of the future! It provoked some questions, however, from the floor about whether we are as well equipped as we should be as individuals, as employers and as a professional association to take advantage of these opportunities, particularly with regard to career development and mid-career training. This is something the SRA Executive is also considering as it draws up the business plan for the next couple of years.

As you know various enquiries and assessment exercises are underway in different parts of the British social science establishment. From some perspectives, the prognosis is good. Professor Rhind's report on the Research Assessment Exercise for the Commission on the Social Sciences (page 6) suggests that, mostly, British Social Science is improving and the future is positive although several key indicators of stress and concern are reported.

Drawing on papers presented to a key meeting to consider the health of the social sciences, he shows that more funding will be available – an increase of 20% as opposed to 5% in other subjects – and more academic departments than before scored 4, 5 or 5\* in the latest RAE assessment. There has been an increase in interdisciplinary working, a development of more linked researchers across institutions or in centres, more awareness of and involvement with 'users', and in some areas more policy research.

However, as several presentations made clear, there are worrying aspects too. Increasing pressures have led to certain homogeneities in research and short-term research at the expense of pluralism and longer-term work. 'Blue skies' research is now harder to get funded as funders set themes and become more prescriptive. Perhaps most striking was the academics' view that increased teaching loads were placing enormous pressures on research, turning it to a weekend or out-of-hours activity.

All this has serious consequences for the wider social research community for if the scientific knowledge base of social research weakens, as less innovative research is done and young researchers trained, then in time we all lose out.

Many of these concerns are echoed elsewhere. Recently the Science and Technology Committee of the

House of Commons held an inquiry into short-term research contracts in science and engineering. The view put strongly by the Academy of Learned Societies for the Social Sciences was that we have too much casualisation and short-term contracts and as a result, cannot develop the strong institutional base necessary to ensure competent, innovative and internationally recognised social science research. The Committee is due to report in the autumn. It will be interesting to see its recommendations and whether the seriousness of the situation is recognised.

The brief of the Commission on the Social Sciences is, of course, much wider and there is still time to send evidence to it as it begins to draw up its report, also due before the end of the year. Email [K.L.Hamilton@city.ac.uk](mailto:K.L.Hamilton@city.ac.uk), the Secretary to the Commission. So far, representatives of the social research community, particularly those in research centres and independent institutes have stressed that social research is still too fragmented with many small groupings lacking critical mass and so unable to respond to ambitious funding initiatives by government, charities or increasingly Europe.

Other factors which people felt undermined 'the health' of social science and social research were:

- the lack of a professional approach to its management as this just was not valued in many settings. Consequently research is often not managed cost effectively, career development of young and mid career staff is limited and there is inadequate sustained development of capacity. This is in marked contrast to the vibrant and professional consultancy sector.
- the limited mobility between the different sectors, commercial, government, academia and voluntary organisations which weakens the ability of each to understand and collaborate with the other.
- the lack of Funding Council support for some of the biggest contributors to the output and reputation of British Social science ( the independent research institutes and centres unattached to universities) despite the real contribution they make to scientific knowledge weakens their capacity to develop.

All these points need to be strongly made and emphasised. Too often social researchers have to work with minimum institutional and personal support with no or limited security of employment and opportunities for further training and development. This is not a climate that encourages people to enter the social research world, nor, crucially, stay in it over a lifetime. If evidence-based policy making and an information society are to have any real meaning, we need to ensure social researchers of calibre are encouraged and supported so that there are people who can provide the informed social science-based research that we all say we need.

To advertise in SRA News please contact  
Suzanne Cohen on  
020 8880 5684 or [admin@the-sra.org.uk](mailto:admin@the-sra.org.uk)

## Interchange Scheme between Home Office and UK Universities

The Home Office and the Academy of Learned Societies for the Social Sciences\* are promoting the interchange of social scientists between the Home Office and the university sector. The Home Secretary has endorsed the scheme commenting, 'I very much welcome schemes which promote a greater interchange between researchers in the academic community and those within Government, and between researchers and policy-makers.'

The scheme aims to promote closer working between the Home Office and academics and to give both academics and government researchers the opportunity to work in and learn from other environments. The scheme is open to junior and senior staff.

Social scientists interested in areas of Home Office responsibility are invited to spend a period ranging from a few weeks to up to a year working in the Research, Development and Statistics Directorate (RDS) of the Home Office. Home Office responsibilities include crime, drugs, policing, criminal procedure, prisons, probation, citizenship, asylum, race relations and immigration. The RDS has mixed teams of social researchers, statisticians, operational researchers and economists ([www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/)).

Home office civil servants with a background or experience of social research or policy are invited to spend a period ranging from one term to one year on secondment to a university social science department where they will contribute to teaching and ongoing research projects.

As well as full time interchanges there are opportunities for part-time arrangements including mentoring, shadowing and joint training.

Opportunities will be advertised on [www.the-academy.org.uk](http://www.the-academy.org.uk) and [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/vacancies1.html](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/vacancies1.html)

Applications should be submitted by 31 October.

Further info from: Professor Nigel Gilbert, [n.gilbert@soc.surrey.ac.uk](mailto:n.gilbert@soc.surrey.ac.uk) or Dr Judy Youell, [judy.youell@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:judy.youell@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

\*The Academy of Learned Societies for the Social Sciences represents the social sciences of the UK. It is composed of more than 300 academicians and over 40 learned societies in the social sciences.

## The ESRC Survey Link Scheme: Invitation for Placements

This scheme offers social scientists, teachers, researchers and research students associated with an academic institution in the United Kingdom the opportunity to observe the data collection phase of some of the following main British large-scale surveys, for example:

British Social Attitudes Survey (BSA)

The Essex British Household Panel Survey (BHPS)  
General Household Survey (GHS)  
Survey of English Housing (SEH)  
Family Resources Survey (FRS)  
International Passenger Survey (IPS)  
Labour Force Survey (LFS)  
National Travel Survey (NTS)

The Survey Link Scheme is run from the Department of Sociology at the University of Surrey, under the Directorship of Professor Martin Bulmer and in association with the Question Bank.

If you are interested in a placement you can obtain an application form by emailing the scheme administrator: Amanda Eastell-Bleakley at [ethnic@soc.surrey.ac.uk](mailto:ethnic@soc.surrey.ac.uk)

More details of the Scheme can be found at:  
[http://qb.soc.surrey.ac.uk/forms/survey\\_link.htm](http://qb.soc.surrey.ac.uk/forms/survey_link.htm)

To visit the Question Bank please go to  
<http://qb.soc.surrey.ac.uk>

## ESRC/ALSISS Social Inclusion/Exclusion Seminar Series

See [www.social-inclusion.org.uk](http://www.social-inclusion.org.uk) for information and material for the ESRC Seminar series. They would welcome comments and are happy to add people to their circulation list if you would like to be informed about future meetings.

## ESRC Studentship Award

The Newcastle Centre for Family Studies is looking for someone who would be interested in doing some unusual and much needed research in the area of family life in forces' families.

Please contact Professor Janet Walker ([janet.walker@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:janet.walker@ncl.ac.uk)) or Dr Michael Anderson ([michael.anderson@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:michael.anderson@ncl.ac.uk)) for information.

*Professor Janet Walker, Director, Newcastle Centre for Family Studies, 18 Windsor Terrace, University of Newcastle, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 7RU  
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## Adding It Up

[www.addingitup.gov.uk](http://www.addingitup.gov.uk) is the new website from the government Adding It Up initiative, and has been designed to promote and facilitate better Evidence Based Policy Making. In January 2000, the government published The Adding It Up (AIU) Report as the first part of an ongoing series of reports looking at the analysis and modelling within central government. The AIU website has been developed as part of the response to that report.

The site contains information about Adding It Up

initiatives such as the Evidence Based Policy Fund and the Whitehall Summer Placement Scheme along with a section on Evidence For Policy Choice. In this section of the site each government department has been asked to submit material organised according to PSA objectives. Ultimately this area of the site will provide references to:

- the most important research which has informed policy choice;
- work in progress which may influence future policy choices; and
- programmes already in place to strengthen the evidence base further.

For further information contact: Daniel Ryan, AIU Secretariat, HM Treasury, 020 7270 5501

## New Appointment at Ipsos-RSL

Ipsos-RSL has announced plans to develop its social, opinion and public sector research presence within the UK and has appointed Sam McGuire to lead the department. Sam comments: 'The resources, staff and ambition of the company puts Ipsos-RSL at the cutting edge of research technology making this a tremendously exciting opportunity. This set-up means we can further establish ourselves as a centre of excellence, not just in research but also in the fields of consultation and research based consultancy'.

## Open Standards

*Breaking Down the Barriers*

Thursday 19th September 2002 at Imperial College, London

Many different data formats, protocols and proprietary systems are used by the various software packages for survey research. The resulting barriers to the free movement of data and information have historically been difficult and expensive to overcome.

This conference aims to establish the current situation and explore the possibilities for the future. It will be of benefit to users in all sectors: public, private and academic. Some papers will discuss technical issues of tools and specific proposals for standards, but the fiscal and quality benefits of standardisation will also be covered and the conference will therefore appeal to managers and practitioners at all levels.

Details can be obtained from Diana Elder at PO Box 60, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 3QH or email: [admin@asc.org.uk](mailto:admin@asc.org.uk).

## ONS Update

The ONS Social Capital webpage [www.statistics.gov.uk/socialcapital](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/socialcapital) has been updated. Two new products are available for download:

- The Social Capital Question Bank, builds on the Social Capital: Survey Matrix, and allows users to compare

and contrast the actual wording of the survey questions;

- The Social Capital Workplan sets out the plans for project outputs for the rest of the year.

Further information from: [social.capital@ons.gov.uk](mailto:social.capital@ons.gov.uk). For the latest data on the economy and society consult National Statistics at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk>

## SRA – Call for Committee Members

Are you interested in helping the SRA move into the 21st century? We are looking for people to join any of the following sub-committees:

- Summer Event and Annual Conference
- Training
- Membership
- SRA News

## SRA – Dates for your Diary

### Cathie Marsh Memorial Lecture – 26 November

The Annual Cathie Marsh Lecture is an event jointly run by the SRA and the Royal Statistical Society. This year, the theme is on researching standards of living. David Gordon (University of Bristol) will be talking about the findings and methodology used in the UK's Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey. Jonathan Bradshaw (University of York) - also a member of the team working on the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey - will lead a discussion following this. The lecture will be chaired by Ceridwen Roberts, the SRA Chair.

This free event will be held on 26 November and runs from 4.30pm to 7pm, at the Royal Statistical Society, 12 Errol Street, London, EC1. It will start with coffee and end with a drinks reception - so it is also a great opportunity to meet other social researchers and statisticians.

### SRA Annual Conference – 4 December

This year the SRA Annual Conference will be on 4 December. Put the date in your diary now! The theme is research and politics, and will cover the politics of conducting, using and reporting research. Workshops in the afternoon will look at the impact of devolution and the importance of understanding the perspective of people who are being researched.

The one-day event will also include the SRA Annual General Meeting. It will take place at the London Voluntary Sector Resource Centre, Holloway Road, London, N7, and runs from 10am to 4:15pm. It will be followed by a Christmas drinks reception. We hope to see many of you there.

**For more information contact Suzanne Cohen, Administrator, SRA, PO BOX 33660, London N16 6WE. Tel: 020 8880 5684 Fax: 020 8880 5684.**

# Commission on the social sciences – The health of UK

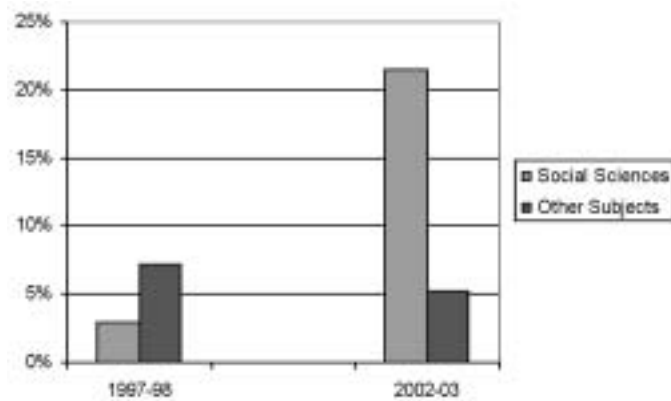
Report of a meeting convened by the Commission on 26 February 2002

By David Rhind

A group of some 70 social scientists drawn from across the UK and from a variety of academic disciplines met to discuss this topic in the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers). Because of the inevitable difficulties associated with making any formal definition of the social sciences, an inclusive approach was adopted; all of the Unit of Assessment panels whose members were in attendance had considered some material submitted to the UoA which they believed to form part of the social sciences.

## The context

The meeting began with a talk by Mario Ferelli, a senior member of staff in HEFCE. He set out the background and essential nature of the RAE and summarised the financial consequences for the broad social sciences. In general, these seemed likely to be very positive. Research funding as a whole in social sciences will increase by 20%, as opposed to 5% for other subjects (the figures for the previous round were 3% and 8% respectively). The rate of funding will increase in almost all social science UoAs, contrasted to a decrease experienced by many disciplines in the previous RAE round. This is a result of a 1996 decision taken by the Board to even out inequalities among UoAs on the basis of cost.



% change in QR funding post-2001 RAE (Source: HEFCE)

This was followed by a presentation by Prof John Beath, based on his analysis of changes between the 1996 and 2001 RAE results through transition matrices of scores within UoAs using matched populations (i.e. only departmental submissions which were made to both RAEs). He showed that an improvement in grades was characteristic of virtually all subjects but to possibly a lesser extent in the Social Sciences than elsewhere. Considerable increases in the distribution of grades had occurred in Law. Many of the improvements arose from departments with low grades in the previous assessment. The difference in results obtained by studying the proportion of submitted units within each grade and the proportions of staff in each grade were

noted. Prof Beath raised the key question of whether the improvements were real or simply grade inflation, acknowledging that this could not be answered solely by recourse to the statistics – but further statistical analysis might be helpful. It was also noted that Ministers, initially sceptical about the genuineness of the improved results, seemed now to be convinced that these were due to efforts of universities allied to the incentive mechanisms in place.

## What did individual panels deduce from their submissions?

Five brief presentations then followed by chairs of panels or their alternates to indicate how each panel proceeded and how they interpreted the evidence submitted (participants had the benefit of early sight of most social science subject overview reports made available on the day by HEFCE – see <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/funding/qrfunding/default.asp>).

*Prof. Sally Brown (Education)*

There was a fall in submissions to this panel from 104 in 1996 to 83 in 2001. The proportion of submissions ranked as 4, 5 or 5\* rose 10% between 1992 and 1996 and a further 10% in the latest period. Key features identified included:

- Top quality research did not depend on large critical mass, being achieved in some cases by 10 active researchers
- Four ‘users’ were on the panel, including practitioner viewpoints
- Policy-related research was on the increase and relatively less blue-skies research was in evidence
- No geographical clusters seemed to be present. It was noted that expertise was necessarily distributed nationally through the need to deal with four different education systems
- Inter-disciplinary discussion and work between Education departments and others within HEIs seemed to be common
- There was a shortfall in quantitatively-based approaches and longitudinal research in Education
- Half of the 3a and 3b submissions came from teacher training organisations. Research in these bodies helped to create a research-informed profession but lack of funding will make this much more difficult

*Prof. Richard Munton (Geography)*

Research in Geography flourished between 1996 and 2001, fuelled by increases in funding and greater selectivity: there were only 55 submissions in 2001 compared to 65 in 1996 but an increase in the numbers of staff submitted. Research income had grown across the board but 40% of all income had been obtained by six large departments; a number of on-going forces

## research in the social sciences: evidence from the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise

encouraged this trend. The number of research students overall had increased by 7% over the 5 year period. Key messages included:

- Geography had always been a bridge between the social and physical sciences and its interdisciplinarity was increasing. The number of cross-referrals to and from the panel was high. Such interaction seemed most commonplace with Economics, the humanities and environmental science
- The 'user inputs' was primarily handled by having a user sub-panel with contributions from the public, private and voluntary sectors. The user group was adamant in commending high quality research rather than simply applied work (e.g. in consultant reports)
- The panel noted innovative methodological research in numerical (especially longitudinal) modelling and Geographical Information Systems and in novel participant observation approaches

*Prof. Susanne MacGregor (Social Work and Social Policy and Administration)*

The panel identified much innovative and creative work, with an increasing emphasis on research on evidence-based policy and practice. Some of this is in challenging areas which do not seem readily susceptible to research council funding such as sexuality, abuse and violence and involving 'hard to access' groups. Half of all external research funding comes from government, with a relatively low proportion from research councils; this research focus was reflected in the RAE UoA assessment processes and the results. Research approaches favoured across the sub-disciplines varied considerably. Other key points made included:

- There had been major restructuring of departments in this UoA over the last five years due largely to market forces manifested in student numbers and leading to many joint submissions
- Significant methodological and thematic area improvements in research had occurred in the period; comparative studies had become more numerous, especially cross-national ones fostered by EU funding
- New popular areas included criminology, health studies, race and ethnicity
- There are no major geographical clusters but local and regional community links influence the research portfolio e.g. work on devolution in Scotland, Welsh language-related research, work on industrial decline and its social consequences in the North West
- Previous HEFCE funding largely explained the pattern of those with top grades, though HEI strategy, the creation of research centres, the provision of sabbatical leave and teaching load are also crucial determinants of success

*Prof. John Urry (Sociology)*

Sociology experienced a modest increase in the number of 5 and 5\* departments. Of those large departments with ESRC research centres, half were awarded 5\* and the others were 5; these centres were usually highly active in national and international networking. The top departments were widely dispersed; perhaps unusually, there was no 5\* Sociology department in Oxbridge or LSE. The mean size of departments was 22; good work was found even in small departments and research is increasingly focused on particular topics. A possible weakness was that few research groups numbered more than 6 or 7 people. Other key points made included:

- Crucial determinants of research success in Sociology seem to be good HEI support, high student numbers to generate sustainable revenues and obtain economies of scale and overlapping research centres without too much central planning. Staff enthusiasm helped to create a self-reproducing culture when some 'stars' left
- Good relationships with the user community were the norm in the best departments
- Internationalisation and awareness of what is going on elsewhere are also characteristics of the best departments
- There is a need for longer term funding to carry out certain types of research programme, notably analysis of large data sets and some 'blue skies' work. Even ESRC Centres were funded for too short a period for maximum effect
- Academic publishing is now largely commercially driven. Too many young staff are writing too many textbooks for the subject's good. We need more research monographs and substantive research publication
- Many new universities whose Sociology departments had raised themselves to 3 grading would now be crippled by the new funding regime. Those at the top of the tree are likely to stay there

*Prof. John Beath (Economics)*

There was a reduction of 9 in the number of units submitted to the panel, many traditional applicants submitting to the Business and Management Panel (though 12 were cross-referred from that Panel to Economics). As a result, there was little weak research in the submissions seen. Few post-1992 universities submitted to this panel. All of the 5\* departments are clustered in the south of the UK. The panel was very strict in adhering to what it believed the HEFCE criteria should be; the upper boundary of a range was used as the threshold. Two users on the panel advised on the policy relevance of the research. Academic journal papers were a key factor in the decision-making but Discussion Papers were also used, especially to judge the quality of young or new staff.

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## Other contributions

Professors David Banister (Town and Country Planning), Philip Burnham (Anthropology), Greville Corbett (Linguistics), David Evans (Philosophy), Stephan Feuchtwang (Asian Studies), Frank O’Gorman (History), Nick Pidgeon (Psychology), Philip Schlesinger (Communication, cultural and media studies) and Ian Sinclair (Social Work) also spoke. Their comments are grouped below with other key points made by the rest of the audience.

The RAE process and its implications for what we can deduce about health of the social sciences:

- Overall, the RAE had significantly changed the nature and quality of British social science research – and hence of subjects themselves. It had led to the excision of many research-inactive staff and the differential growth of already good units. But it had fostered certain homogeneities and short term research at the expense of pluralism, longer term work and the demise of research monographs (see below);
- The greater sums ‘won’ by social sciences are to be welcomed but these may not be manifested in many universities because of the need to safeguard – at least in the short term – other ‘loser’ subjects;
- The RAE was predicated upon particular concepts of research and assessments of its value. Many social scientists now, for instance, have research and practitioner engagement with local communities. Little input from this ‘grass-roots’ existed. Regionally-orientated research may be of huge significance and value but (it was argued) was under-valued by national panels except in Scotland, Wales and Ireland;
- Panels’ interpretations of the funding councils’ guidance seemed to vary considerably in practice. It was evident that individual members of a single panel even differed on what constituted excellence, especially ‘international excellence’ with the 4/5 boundary being assessed very differently by different panels. As a result, it was impossible to interpret the RAE results – especially simply in statistical terms – across the many panels;
- The RAE UoA boundaries are misleading in many cases, especially where interdisciplinary work is commonplace (e.g. Linguistics, Psychology); in such cases, individuals or groups have a choice to submit to where they think best. Measuring the overall size and significance of research in a discipline can thus be enormously complicated;
- Interdisciplinary work is more acceptable in some subjects than others; in some, it is regarded as being less rigorous and praise-worthy and more difficult to assess than research in the core of a subject. This is particularly the case in the smaller subjects;
- Innovation in new research areas and methods is often from newly created units; existing star groups in York and Warwick would not stand a chance of succeeding if they were launched in today’s financial regime. A (current) ‘winner takes all’ scenario was emerging even in relatively

inexpensive subjects; ‘brand image’, finance, attractiveness to overseas students and RAE grade were all inter-connected. It is important to fund ‘improvers’ as well as established stars;

- The use of international advisers and user panels seemed to vary considerably in practice between different panels; some dissatisfaction was expressed and the need for more resources to make this work better, plus steps to increase the awareness by overseas researchers of the RAE process, were requested for next time.

## Substantive findings about UK social science research:

- Much of the work surveyed by panels was very Euro-centric, even UK-centric in parts. Some of this was driven by funding opportunities from the UK government and the EC. Allied to the reduction in funding from other countries (e.g. Japan and Taiwan), this has damaged the survivability of many minority subjects (such as Asian Studies) which nevertheless have major ramifications for public policy, etc in the UK;
- There is too much research funded in pre-defined areas (e.g. ESRC Thematic Objectives) which stifles diversity and in particular ‘blue skies’ research;
- Critical mass in the social sciences can be manifested in different ways. Perhaps surprisingly, student numbers may be a good indicator: without financial resilience provided by significant student bodies, some subjects (e.g. Population Studies) may head for extinction;
- The nature of effective publications clearly differs from one subject to another. In some subjects, commercial publishing based on projected market sales is absorbing publication effort; in others (e.g. Economics) publications in major journals were the major determinant of research success but conscious efforts were made to assess the quality of new people to the system;
- The most common expression of what is missing - but is necessary to promote good, innovative research - is staff time. The pressures of teaching are extreme in many departments; for many, research is a weekend or out-of-hours activity. The ability to buy out time would be very beneficial;
- There is an argument that research concentration is not as essential in the social sciences as in the physical sciences where expensive equipment is needed;
- Is there a serious threat to future research from demographic ageing in the Social Sciences? The high proportion of contract researchers is inappropriate. We need evidence with which to assess this nationally.

## Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the speakers at the meeting on 26 February; to Libby Langley of the Academy for help in organising the meeting; to the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) for providing the venue free of charge; and especially to my City colleague Dr Xenia Dassiou whose notes form the basis of this account. That said, responsibility for any errors of interpretation in the views cited is mine alone.

**If you would like a copy of any of the books/reports listed below all you have to do is write a short review of no more than 300 words. In return you get to keep the reviewed item.**

## **Ground Rules for Good Research**

*Martyn Denscombe*  
Open University Press

## **The Cultural Industries**

*David Hesmondhalgh*  
Sage

## **The Gender Dimension of Social Change: the contribution of dynamic research to the study of women's life courses.**

*Edited by Elisabetta Ruspini and Angela Dale*  
The Policy Press

## **Guide to Successful Personal Interviews and Focus Groups with Older People**

*Malcolm J. Fisk*  
University of Stirling

## **Making the Most of It: Economic evaluation in the social welfare field**

*Tom Sefton, Sarah Byford, David McDaid, John Hills and Martin Knapp*  
JRF

## **Simulation for the Social Scientist**

*Nigel Gilbert and Klaus G. Trotsch*  
Open University Press

## **Policy Review of Higher Education**

*Education and Lifelong Learning Committee*  
The National Assembly for Wales  
Crown Copyright 2001

# SRA Reviews

## **Family Understandings: Closeness, Authority and Independence in Families with Teenagers**

*Langford, Lewis, Solomon and Warin (2001)*  
London, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Reviewed by: Wendy Wills, Centre for Population Studies, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London

This report is based on findings from a study of 70 families with at least one child aged 11-16 and is a follow-up to the report *Fathers, Work and Family Life* published by Warin et al. in 1999. The report aims to explore what 'family' means to parents and teenagers and how the 'meaning' of family changes for each member as children pass through adolescence.

A noticeable difference between this and other work on families is the emphasis given to the perspective of the parent. The authors rightly point out that little is

known about how parents feel about teenagers' growing independence and detachment from family life. They give a rich description of the distress that this shift can cause for parents, not least because of the way that parents have to redefine their own roles and identities as they 'lose' their children to semi-adulthood. This notion of change is set into the context of family closeness and parental authority and I think this gives the reader a broader appreciation of the dynamics of family life and how roles are often constantly renegotiated as children move through secondary school. It was interesting, and perhaps reassuring, to read that teenagers enjoy 'doing the family' just as much as parents do.

The authors have provided a lively account of contemporary family life, richly detailed and described. They also use their findings to explore the ideas of family 'democratisation' suggested by Giddens. The report shows that talk between parents and teenagers is important within families but gender and generational roles often constrain the democratic process, with mothers being available for talk more than fathers and teenagers often keeping information from their parents in order to assert their own authority and independence. This 'mismatch' is described as partly at odds with family-oriented policies that stress the need for increased parental control. I felt that the discussion of theory and policy could have been better integrated throughout the report, rather than concentrated in the first and final chapters, but this is a minor criticism of an engaging report.

## **Surveying the Social World: Principles and practice in survey research**

*Alan Aldridge and Ken Levine*  
Open University Press, £16.99, ISBN 0 335 20240 3

Reviewed by: Tania Fisher

Surveying the Social World looks at the principles involved in social research, whilst addressing a range of practical issues. The book is aimed at readers with little or no experience of conducting a survey and although reference is made to large-scale surveys, the focus is on conducting small-scale surveys with limited resources. The main characteristics of the survey as a research strategy are addressed clearly, taking into account both the strengths and weaknesses. Guidance on the choice between strategies is also offered, with the aim of assessing how a survey can contribute to the research process.

Essentially, Surveying the Social World is a practical guide to undertaking small-scale social surveys. The book begins with an overview of the role of theory in social research and challenges the common misconception that social surveys can only be used as a quantitative research strategy. The reader is then taken clearly and systematically through the various steps involved in conducting survey research. Assessment of the pros and cons of various methods of data collection, is followed by a non-technical overview of sampling strategies. The book is aimed at people who are

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## TRAINING DAYS

- **11th September: Focus Groups**
- **6th November: Report Writing and Presentation Skills**

All training days will be held at the London Voluntary Sector Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Road, London, N7 6PA.

Contact Joanne Maher, on 020 7533 5372, joanne.maher@ons.gov.uk for further information about SRA training.

**Fees:** members £65, non-members (includes membership of SRA for one year) £110, student/unwaged £16. To book, print out the specific booking form or print out and complete our standard booking form (at [www.the-sra.org.uk](http://www.the-sra.org.uk)) and send it with payment to the SRA or contact the SRA administrative office.

- **4 December: AGM and annual conference**  
London Voluntary Sector Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Road, London, N7

Further details: SRA Admin Office

## SRA in Scotland

- **25 September: Attempting to change the 'culture' of smoking: findings from the evaluation of a community-based study in a low income area**

At the Quaker Meeting House Library, Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh, 6.30 (refreshments from 6pm), with Wendy Gnich, Health and Behaviour Unit, Edinburgh University.

Theory-based evaluation approaches are becoming increasingly popular in the evaluation of complex community initiatives. This presentation will detail the experiences and learning from using one such approach, Theories of Change, in a range of externally funded evaluation projects, including the Scottish Health Demonstration projects, the Health Action Zones in England, New Deal For Communities and Healthy Living Centres. The usefulness of Theories of Change will be considered in relation to sharpening planning, improving performance management, providing formative

feedback, guiding internal and external evaluation and reducing problems of attribution.

For further information about the SRA in Scotland and its activities please contact Kerstin Hinds, National Centre for Social Research, 0131-557 5494 or Valerie Strachan, 0131-527 8435

## COURSES AND SEMINARS

### Association for Survey Computing

- **19 September: Open Standards**  
Imperial College, London

The conference will include discussion of Triple-S and other interchange standards based on XML.

Details: ASC Administrator: Diana Elder, ASC, PO Box 60, Chesham, Bucks HP5 3QH, UK  
Tel and Fax: 0494 793033  
Email: [admin@asc.org.uk](mailto:admin@asc.org.uk)  
[www.asc.org.uk](http://www.asc.org.uk)

## CASS Courses

- **20-22 November: Multilevel Discrete-time Event History Analysis** at the University of Southampton.

The course provides a practical introduction to discrete-time methods for the analysis of event histories.

- **4-6 December: Short Course: Survey Data Analysis I** at the University of Southampton.

The course aims to develop an understanding of the basic principles of statistical analysis.

- **15-17 January: Survey Data Analysis II: Exploring Relationships** at the University of Southampton.

The course is intended to develop a practical understanding of the basic statistical principles and methods of modelling relationships between variables.

For further information on the CASS

courses contact: Jane Schofield, Department of Social Statistics, University of Southampton, 023 8059 3048, email [cass@socsci.soton.ac.uk](mailto:cass@socsci.soton.ac.uk)  
[www.socstats.soton.ac.uk/cass](http://www.socstats.soton.ac.uk/cass)

## CCSR Short Course Programme

Level one courses:

- **30 October:** Surveys and Sampling
- **14 October:** Questionnaire Design
- **9 October:** Introduction to Data Analysis Part 1
- **23 October:** Introduction to STATA
- **27 November:** Introduction to Data Analysis Part 2

Level two courses:

- **4 November:** Analysing Hierarchical Surveys
- **11 December:** An Introduction to Sampling Theory

Level three courses:

- **13-14 November:** Demographic Forecasting with POPGROUP
- **16 October:** Multilevel Modelling

**Fees:** one-day courses £120, two-day courses £200, three-day courses £500 (reduced fees for those from educational institutions).

For more information please contact Nasira Asghar, tel: 0161 275 4736, email [nasira.asghar@man.ac.uk](mailto:nasira.asghar@man.ac.uk)  
[www.ccsr.ac.uk/courses/shortsum2002.htm](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/courses/shortsum2002.htm)

## Lancaster University Centre for Applied Statistics in conjunction with Information Systems Services - Statistics Short Courses

- **17-19 September:** Introduction to R
- **23-25 September:** Introduction to GAUSS
- **26-28 September:** Introduction to Atlas.ti

**Fees:** £300: a reduced rate is available to academic staff and

students in Higher and Further Education.

Contact: 01524 593064 or  
m.peckham@lancaster.ac.uk  
www.cas.lancs.ac.uk/short\_courses

NatCen (National Centre for Social Research)

### Public Seminar Series

All seminars take place at 4.45-6pm at 35 Northampton Square, London EC1V 0AX.

Places for these seminars are limited. If you would like to attend you must contact Carol Lawrence on 020 7549 9560 or c.lawrence@natcen.ac.uk to confirm a place.

#### 16th September Families without work

More than five million British adults of working age have no job, and are not married to a worker either. Richard Berthoud, research professor at the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex, will ask whether the gap between families with and without earnings is sustainable.

#### 7th October Listening to Children and Young People: Ethical, Methodological, Policy and Practice Challenges

There is a new imperative to put users closer to the centre of services. Helen Roberts and Katherine Curtis will talk about work they are involved in on listening to children and young people in Camden and Islington and talking to regular, irregular and expert patients about their experiences. They will discuss some of the methodological and ethical challenges they are working with, and policy practice challenges of ensuring the research reaches those who might use it.

#### 18th November Does teenage pregnancy have adverse outcomes?

Kaye Wellings of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine draws on her experience of evaluating the Teenage Pregnancy

Strategy to explore whether teenage pregnancy has adverse outcomes.

### RSS

How Statistics can add value to Market Research

**22 October**, 5pm at the RSS (Tea 4.30pm)  
Rory Morgan (Research International), Andrew Zelin, Roger Mortimore (MORI).

Market and Social / Political Research surveys lend themselves to a wealth of different types of statistical techniques, allowing one to look beneath the contingency tables presented to find "hidden" trends and patterns in the data. This relatively practical / presentational session gives an overview of the general techniques used, focusing on Perceptual Mapping (via Correspondence Analysis) and Conjoint (or Trade Off) Analysis, a technique to assess people's preferences relating to a feature of a new product.

### University of Reading SSC

The SSC offers a variety of courses for a range of audiences - from relatively inexperienced users of statistics through to experienced senior statisticians. Their aim is to provide the skills necessary for dealing with particular problems, with the emphasis on the practical application of statistics. Mathematics, as far as possible, is kept to a minimum, and lectures are supplemented with computer-based practicals to reinforce ideas and methods taught. For those qualified at least to first degree level in statistics, there is a range of courses providing up-to-date coverage of topics at the standard of current-day MSc level. These are suitable as add ons for recently qualified statisticians, or as updates for less recently graduating individuals. Excel users may be interested in Statistical Concepts for Microsoft™ Excel Users, whilst experienced statisticians may be interested in the new Exact Tests and Bootstrapping courses.

### Courses in Applied Statistics

- **7-8 October:** A Review of Basic Statistics
- **9 October:** Introduction to Regression Analysis
- **9 October:** What Sample Size Do I Need?

For more information contact: Statistical Services Centre, The University of Reading, Tel: 0118 931 8025, Fax: 0118 975 3169, Email: statistics@reading.ac.uk

## CONFERENCES

### Centre for Policy on Ageing

**Choice in Later Life Living Arrangements**  
30 September 2002, Central London

Conference exploring housing choices for older people and specifically promoting innovation; involving older people in housing planning decisions and design; and responding to the diversity of people's needs.

Further information: Keith Sumner, Centre for Policy on Ageing, 020 7553 6500 or cpa@cpa.org.uk  
www.cpa.org.uk

### ISSC

International Conference on Social Science and Social Policy

9-11 December, Vienna International Centre, Vienna, Austria,

The International Conference on Social Science and Social Policy and the 21st Century is organised by the International Social Science Council (ISSC) in cooperation with the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and co-sponsored by the Austrian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and the Austrian Commission for UNESCO. Founded in 1952 by UNESCO, the International Social Science Council (ISSC) is holding this conference on

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the state of the social sciences and their role for national and international societal policy making to celebrate its 50th anniversary.

For more information, please contact:  
Leszek A. Kosinski  
Tel. +33 1 45 68 25 58  
Fax. +33 1 45 66 76 03  
Email: [issclak@unesco.org](mailto:issclak@unesco.org)  
[www.unesco.org/ngo/issc](http://www.unesco.org/ngo/issc)

### The United Kingdom Evaluation Society (UKES) 8th Annual Conference

The Art of Evaluation: Artistry,  
Discipline and Delivery.  
South Bank Centre, London, SE1  
12th-13th December (pre conference  
workshops 11th December).

The conference has five main themes:  
use of evaluation; participatory and  
innovative models; evaluation and  
the arts; evaluation of international  
development; policy evaluation.  
For bookings contact: Professional  
Briefings Registration Department,  
Tel: 01920 487672, Fax: 01920 462730.  
Further details and registration forms  
can also be found on the UKES  
website at: [www.evaluation.org.uk](http://www.evaluation.org.uk)

### The British Sociological Association

Annual Conference 2003  
Social Futures: Desire, Excess and  
Waste  
Friday 11th April to Sunday 13th  
April, University of York  
Abstract submission deadline 30th  
September 2002  
Further details and abstract  
submission form available from:  
[Conference2003@britsoc.org.uk](mailto:Conference2003@britsoc.org.uk) and  
the BSA web site:  
[www.britsoc.org.uk/events/annual2003.htm](http://www.britsoc.org.uk/events/annual2003.htm)

## SRA in Scotland

Our April event, Neighbourhood Statistics in Scotland, was run jointly with the Royal Statistical Society Edinburgh Local Group and echoed last year's Cathie Marsh Memorial Lecture with a touch of tartan. The event attracted a full-capacity audience and consisted of four presentations covering key issues in the provision and use of local information.

Jon McGinty (Office for National Statistics) gave some background to the Neighbourhood Statistics project, describing how it is innovating and leading statistical development, and will provide unprecedented power to enable statistics to be used to change the circumstances of individuals.

This was followed by Catriona McKay (Scottish Executive) presenting the Scottish perspective, highlighting where different solutions are required which reflect Scotland's social structures and statistical development. The last two presentations focused on practical issues of how local data might be generated and used. Mary Taylor (University of Stirling) and Gillian Young (Communities Scotland) described a project exploring the potential for accessing meaningful statistics about neighbourhoods using data held by Registered Social Landlords. Lynnette Carey (Glasgow Alliance) explored how recent research in Glasgow is beginning to inform one challenging component of the Social Inclusion Partnerships' monitoring agenda in relation to identifying the Partnerships' impacts on the quality of life of their populations.

The May evening seminar was presented by Avril Blamey and Mhairi Mackenzie (University of Glasgow) who spoke about their experiences and learning from using a theories of change approach to evaluate a range of complex community-based initiatives, including the Scottish health demonstration projects, the Health Action Zones in England, New Deal For Communities and Healthy Living Centres. They discussed the usefulness of this approach in relation to sharpening planning, improving performance management, providing formative feedback, guiding internal and external evaluation and reducing problems of attribution. From the tone of the debate following the presentation, one would conclude that implementing and evaluating complex initiatives tends to be a messy and protracted process regardless of methodology, and can be made more problematic by unrealistic expectations and timescales of funding bodies.

The training day on Better Questionnaire Design run on 10 May was well-attended and we would welcome ideas for future training events. Future events include our annual event in September on Research directions for the 21st Century, as well as an evening seminar on September 25. We are also exploring the possibility of another joint event at the end of the year with the Scottish Local Government Information Unit on quality of life indicators.

For further information on the SRA in Scotland, please contact Kerstin Hinds ([k.hinds@natcen.ac.uk](mailto:k.hinds@natcen.ac.uk), 0131 557 5494) or Mandy Littlewood ([mandy.littlewood@nfoeurope.com](mailto:mandy.littlewood@nfoeurope.com), 0131 656 4038)

**Are you running a course, seminar or conference?**

**If you are involved in (or know of) a training course, seminar or conference that other SRA members could attend, please contact: The SRA admin office.**

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collecting data themselves and provides clear and instructive guidelines to undertaking data collection. Detailed and practical advice is given about designing the questions, followed by the key issues involved with processing the data. The chapter dealing with strategies for analysing data avoids a heavily statistical approach, by focusing primarily on descriptive and inferential statistics, but aims to clarify which statistics are appropriate to use and when. The book concludes with a guide to the presentation of survey findings.

Throughout the book, a recent and actual example of a survey is referred to, which helps to illustrate the various practical and theoretical issues which arise at each stage of the survey process. The inclusion of this example allows the reader to examine the problems involved in planning and executing a single survey. Each section is clearly structured and provides a useful concluding summary of key points and list of further reading. An extensive glossary of terms is also included in the book. The clearly practical approach adopted throughout the book is concise and well structured and reassuringly offers alternative solutions to potential problems and pitfalls. *Surveying the Social World* provides a practical guide to undertaking social survey research and successfully covers the key issues in a manner which is both accessible, yet highly informative. Whilst the book is clearly aimed at non-professional people and students conducting a small-scale survey on a limited budget for the first time, it is nonetheless a useful reference guide for the more experienced social researcher.

## **Local strategic partnerships: Lessons from New Commitment to Regeneration**

Hilary Russell, 2001, The Policy Press, Bristol

Reviewed by Bill Smith-Bowers, London Research Focus Group, University of Westminster

'Local strategic partnerships' is an important contribution to answering some of the biggest questions in urban and rural policy. How is regeneration best managed? What are the roots of urban and rural success? Why do some regions work better than others do? How can 'hot spots' of deprivation embedded in prosperous localities best be addressed?

'Local strategic partnerships' describes The Local Government Association's pathfinder project 'New Commitment to Regeneration' (NCR), which commenced in 1999. NCR is now one of the precursors to the Governments 'Local Strategic Partnerships' (LSPs) which The Urban White Paper (2000) called 'the key to our strategy to deliver better towns and cities'.

Speakers at the recent 'Cities: competitiveness and cohesion' conference (2002) - the 5 year ESRC funded programme - highlighted that the 'successful' and the 'least successful' British cities are very different places. The successful cities are in the South rather than the North East and North West. They are smaller, engaged in non-traditional industries: high technology and the

business service sector. The least successful are in older urban conurbations engaged in traditional low added value manufacture. The successful cities are growing with a well-educated population rather than a declining population which is poorly educated. Paradoxically the most successful city, London, also includes some of the most deprived areas of high unemployment, and concentrations of ethnic minority households in poor housing.

Initiatives to address this 'problem' can be traced back to the Industrial Transfer Board created by the Labour Government in 1928, which aimed to move workers from declining industries to local viable employment. The intervening years have seen the number and size of the 'Depressed' and 'Special' areas grow. The names and programmes targeted at these areas have changed many times since the 1930's but the underlining issues have changed more in size rather than definition.

Since the election of New Labour, a new emphasis has emerged in the rationale of regeneration programmes. At the core, the new approach is 'joining' together local people, local businesses, local agencies, and government department in 'regeneration partnership' working. The complexity at the local level, the number of independent funding activities that require strategic management for regeneration funding to create real improvements in the lives of local people, requires strategic thinking different from the local government model.

What are the lessons from the LGA's New Commitment to Regeneration (NCR)? Hilary Russell's book covers the first two years of the LGA pathfinders. Its important to recognise that the focus of NCR was different from the local area focus in the New Deal for Communities (NDC) pathfinders introduced by the Labour Government in 1998. NDC like NCR played central role in the development of the Governments Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and the thinking that lead to the creation of LSPs.

Both programmes are about strategic working in partnerships to deliver regeneration. The NCR covers a much wider geographical area than the NDC. The NDC is focused on deprived neighbourhoods or 'hot spots' (normally around 3000 dwellings). The NCR pilots covered a much wider area such a borough (Lewisham) the city (Liverpool) or the county (Herefordshire).

A key lesson of the NCR pathfinders was its vision securing sustainability and creating a partnership in strategic management for that purpose. This brief has now passed to the newly created LSPs. Partnership working is comparatively new and therefore requires a different approach to policy formulation and implementation. It requires that agencies commit to the process and work together. Another lesson from NCR is that such commitment takes time and building that commitment is essential. This may not result in 'quick wins' for communities aimed at by the NDC. However, building a delivery pipeline for regeneration is challenging, agencies are using existing resources to the

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limit and are involved in many other initiatives. At the time the research for this ended, most NCR's were still in the action-planning phase and just about to enter the delivery phase. The need for leadership and partnership has led to the local authority taking the lead role in most NCR areas.

NCR pathfinders represent an intermediate agency between the 'Regionalism' represented by the Regional Development Agencies and the 'Localism' of New Deal for Communities. A key task is therefore to build a vision that incorporates both levels of partnership working. The NCR appears to be a capacity building, intelligence gathering, and strategic commissioning entity that will enable national policy goals and local regeneration requirements to be married together. The NCR experience is a useful guide to how to engage local people, the business, and the voluntary sector. Each of these partners needs to be 'sold' involvement by making a case that speaks to them. Because NCR's are pathfinders, they will provide the 'evidence based practice' we now expect and 'what works' outputs for dissemination.

It could be possible, given the number of regeneration initiatives with similar names and objectives, to let the learning of the NCR pathfinders slip by, this would be a loss given the importance of NCR lessons to developing LSPs. Hilary Russell's book ensures that its lessons are there to be read and learned from.

## Danger in the Field: Risk and Ethics in Social Research

Geraldine Lee-Treweek and Stephanie Linkogle (2000), London: Routledge (Paperback - £16.99)

Reviewed by Ron Iphofen, Faculty of Health, University of Wales, Bangor.

This is a readable and vitally important book for those engaged in the practice of social research in our contemporary 'risk society'. The authors identify four key 'danger areas': physical, emotional, ethical and professional; and their valuable introduction sensitises the reader to how these issues figure in the reflexive accounts of research practice, the management of risk and ethical decision-taking provided by the contributors to the collection.

It is a dedicated researcher who can recommend '...physical dangers should not merely be understood as negative aspects of research but ...as opportunities for greater insight into participants' worlds.' Call me 'chicken' but I found myself much more in sympathy with the researcher who in preparation for risks was even '...prepared to leave the field' if necessary. I am grateful for the raising of awareness around some of the personal biomedical dangers of health-related research - even if it is merely ethnographic.

Indeed one might expect the experienced ethnographer, particularly coming from an anthropological tradition, to express surprise at some researchers' naivities about what one might have to confront when working in violent policing settings, with young male delinquents, amongst nightclub bouncers and in crowded places. But the more unanticipated dangers of hospital work, of researching caring settings with older people and of writing (auto)biographically do warrant some mature reflection.

Accounts such as these were the kinds of insights we sought while updating the SRA's Ethical Guidelines but the fact that researchers were unwilling to offer even anonymous reports of the dilemmas and dangers they faced does suggest that 'professional' risks have been inadequately considered in the past. Perhaps, once again, it should come as no surprise that those daring to criticise academic convention or even methodological tradition might be exposing their professional careers to risk. And it is clear that the recognition that researchers are also emotional beings comes as a welcome insight into the personal experiences of social researchers and the limitations to detachment. Moreover it is worth remembering that these problems are not exclusive to so-called 'qualitative research'. Similar dangers may be visited on quantitative researchers when 'in the field'.

The editors' postscript prompts reflections on what can be done to minimise danger and whether social research is 'worth the risk'. I suppose that depends upon what we do it for and who we do it for and, while those questions appear to require collective responses, when we ask 'How far am I prepared to go?' only the individual researcher can decide. It is books such as this that can help with that decision.

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**Department of Sociology**

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## WEB SITE

£75 for first advert and £50 each for any within the following 12 months. Each advert/vacancy can stay on the site for up to three months. After this time, it will be charged at £50 for each additional three months.

## MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

The Directory is distributed to members in October. The deadline for advertising copy is the 31st August. Early payment rate is obtainable up to the end of May.

	Full rate	Early payment
Full page display advert		
Black and white	600	500
2 colour/spot colour	900	800
4 colour process/any colour	1,050	950

#### Notes:

- ♦ SRA Directory is currently in A5 format and is produced annually. Full artwork to be supplied by advertisers.
- ♦ Early Payment Rate payers may choose page position on a first-come, first-served basis.

## SEMINAR/TRAINING COURSE PUBLICITY

Full rate only

Leaflets only supplied by advertisers	150
Leaflets/inserts in course delegate packs	200

## CONFERENCE PUBLICITY

Full rate only

Leaflets supplied by advertisers	150
Leaflets/inserts in conference delegate packs	200

## SEMINAR/CONFERENCE SPONSORSHIP

**£400** will sponsor the drinks reception that follows the Summer Event, the Annual Conference, or the Cathie Marsh Memorial Lecture. Sponsorship of the drinks is by a single organisation only and provides: the opportunity to display material on a stand (provided by the sponsor); free advertising on the programme; the option of putting promotional material in the delegate packs; and 2 places at the event.

**£300** provides: the opportunity to display material on a stand (provided by the sponsor); free advertising on the programme; the option of putting promotional material in the delegate packs; and 1 place at the event.

**£250** provides: the opportunity to display material on a stand (provided by the sponsor); free advertising on the programme; and the option of putting promotional material in the delegate packs.

**£200** provides the option of putting promotional material in the delegate packs.

**If you would like to advertise with SRA or if you have a query please contact:**

**Suzanne Cohen, Administrator**  
**Social Research Association (SRA)**  
**PO Box 33660, London N16 6WE**  
**Tel: 020 8880 5684 Fax: 020 8880 5684**  
**Email: [admin@the-sra.org.uk](mailto:admin@the-sra.org.uk)**



## Hard-hitting facts

We specialise in researching sensitive social and political issues that are not always comfortable to conduct, or to read about later. Our researchers are used to meeting challenging briefs, and have extensive experience in researching subjects as diverse as domestic violence, child abuse, illegal drug use, post-prison rehabilitation and gay sex.

Our projects range in size from small fast-turnaround studies to complex and large-scale evaluations of government programmes. Recent recognition for BMRB Social Research includes MRS awards for our work with the NSPCC on the prevalence of child abuse and our work with the Home Office on crime, including the British Crime Survey.

For research into any area of public policy, including employment, education, housing, welfare, environment, crime, health, science and technology, BMRB Social Research has both the experience and the resources. Whether you are interested in us as a supplier of high quality research, or maybe as a future employer, we would like to talk to you.



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