

Radical Statistics Annual General Meeting

26 February, 2011

Attendance: David McNulty, Alistair Greig, Lee Williamson, Bob Sanders, David Lamb, Mary Cooper, Harriet Walsh, Russell Ecob, Stephen Clark, Katy Fone, David Byrne, Christian Brand, Aubrey Blumsohn, Simon Tanner, Sanjay Nayak, John Buttone, *Ellen Gill*, Liz Riley, Sarah Drew, Peter Long, Robin Rice, Jude Towers, Geoffrey Rendle, Alison Macfarlane, Rachel Cohen, Melanie Simms, Fazilat Dar, Pam Ashton, Pete Latarche, Val Saunders, Jane Galbraith, Robert Grant, Brian Jackson, Judith Furnace, John Urquhart, Ludi Simpson, Stuart Parkinson, Peter Wilmshurst, Paul Marchant, Susan Mimmelweit, Eileen Magnello, Jay Ginn, Chantal Franco, Alan Franco, Larry Brownstein, Janet Shapiro, Diane Elson, Hafiz Khan, Howard Reed, Nesta Holden, Roger Boyle

David Manley chairs. Alistair Cairns takes minutes.

1. 2010 AGMminutes accepted.

2. Troika Report: by Ludi Simpson (report attached). Blog has been particularly effective in promoting RadStats' goals. New promotional materials will be available very soon.

3. Treasurers Report: by Janet Shapiro (report attached). A gain in income is reported. Geoffrey Rendle audited and has approved the report. There are some outstanding cheques, but still in positive for 2010, as indicated. Problems with erroneously paid Direct Debits have been corrected.

JS to approach Coop to switch to 'paying in only' status for account.

AC to propose to JS tighter method of relaying different income categories.

JS proposes two further signatories be added. Approved.

4. Editors Report: by Janet Shapiro. 3 issues were produced in 2010 which was quite ambitious. Thanks is given to Janet Galbraith, who has stepped down. Since 2004, JS & JG have been Editors, with recent help from Bob Saunders and guest Editors, all of whom are thanked. Despite lack of peer review the quality remains very good. There are, as of now, no themes for future journals but there are plenty of issues which could be addressed. JS calls for guest Editors & for Editors.

Larry Brownstein & Alistair Greig are nominated. Both accepted.

Motions from Jane Galbraith accepted after amendment. Final accepted motion reads: "Radical Statistics will not knowingly publish falsehoods, gross misrepresentations of the work of others or misuses of statistics, except for the purpose of exposing and/or correcting such falsehoods, misrepresentations or misuses. The editors of the Radical Statistics newsletter have the duty to ask authors to correct any identified misuse of statistics, falsehood or gross misrepresentation of the work of others before an article is accepted for publication. Should disputes be unresolved between editors and authors, editors will refer to the Troika who will liaise and arbitrate."

The editors agreed to consider policy on liability and rights, and retraction and correction of falsehoods.

5. Web Editor Report: by Robin Rice (report attached). Quite a few changes have taken place recently but journals continue to provide main content of the website. RR suggests statistics on website use/ hits are not absolutely reliable, but they indicate that users are going beyond the home page to specific articles, some quite heavily.

Blog theme is currently 'Reduced Statistics' but there are many other topics that could be raised and used. The new interest group should use the blog.

RadStats now has a presence on social networking at Twitter and Facebook; anyone can 'like' & blog posts can be re-tweeted. Further information is on website. RR thanks Alastair Grieg for the social network enhancements and together they plan to 'migrate' the website to a more contemporary site.

Larry Brownstein's offer of help on developing the website was accepted.

Troika will be consulted on proposed changes as the website is moved over to Wordpress. RR & AG thanked.

6. Email list report: by Alison Macfarlane. Currently there are 337 subscribers. There are a series of ongoing discussions. There has been less 'trouble' on the list this year. There is a members-only Announce RadStats list, which is low volume. There is also a separate, open to members & non-members alike, discussion list which generates significant volume, relating to any number of topics and issues.

7. Membership Report: by Alistair Cairns (report attached). Another year where we see a drop in membership is expected to taper off; that being a result rate increase two year ago rate. There have been an encouraging number of new members in 2010. AC thanked for work.

8. Subgroup activity Report (attached). Spoken to by Ludi Simpson. There is a new subgroup: 'Population Studies'. It aims to collate its notes on the Optimum Population Trust; contact Sylvie Dubuc if interested in rejuvenated subgroup.

9. Essay Competition: by Lee Williamson. LW & Alan Marshall are coordinating this year's competition. Flyers are available; please help to promote. Judges have been selected and information is available on the website.

10. Troika elections: by David Manley. All three current Troika intend to remain another year. New members are encouraged to join. JG proposes Troika be encouraged to accept a fourth member. Larry Brownstein self-nominates. Accepted.

11. Conference 2012: by David Manley. Jay Ginn suggests Croydon and her offer to be local coordinator accepted. Offers of help will be greatly appreciated & Troika will support. Topic/theme suggestions include 'Getting out of the cuts' ("*something a bit positive in tone*"), 'Statistical Literacy', 'Are we happier?' and 'Statistics & well being'.

Of course, measuring the effects of the cuts would be possible by that time. Along this line, suggestions include 'Less is more' or 'Measuring the cuts' or, as an activist-oriented theme 'Power to the people'.

At the point the conference is being organised, all offers of help & guidance will be appreciated and incorporated.

12. AOB.

The bank balance from the Health sub-group remains. AM suggests activity may increase in coming times. Although the funds are ring-fenced, if there are pressing issues needing addressed, that money could be made available to help. LS points out, as a general trend, print material are not necessarily going to be as important as has been the case in the past.

Meeting ended.

Radical Statistics Troika report

As the organising committee of Radical Statistics between conferences, we have tried to support the other Radical Statistics volunteers and add a bit more:

Promotion materials. After discussion at the 2010 AGM and on the email list, we considered that the existing materials were good and didn't need changing, but that the printed leaflet was no longer as important as our web materials. We have therefore discussed and printed credit-card-sized adverts for the website, where the RadStats concerns, and subscription form, are available.

Radical Statistics blog. We started this in August with a theme of Reduced Statistics, and welcome alerts to cuts in statistics and statistical analysis of any kind in any part of the world. We have recruited long-time RadStats member David Gordon to write an occasional blog, and are seeking a diverse team of editors able to comment on a range of topics, to ensure that content is regularly updated.

Administration. We have prepared for the 2011 AGM; helped pursue non-paying members and ended the subscription of those who are more than a year out of date.

Links. US-based group **Statistics Without Borders** provided a short report for RadStats newsletter – it gives voluntary support to statistical enterprises in developing countries; we supplied a report on RadStats to them, that was published in November. Ilaria Geddes of UCL got a short piece in English from an **Italian Statisticians** section on statisticians and war, also published in the newsletter. We provided a small donation to the **Young Statisticians' meeting** of the RSS, and material about Radical Statistics was circulated to it.

Eileen Magnello, David Manley, Ludi Simpson

Radical Statistics Group Accounts 2009-2010

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT				
for the year ending 31 December 2009				
	2010	2009	2008	2007
GENERAL INCOME				
subscriptions	£4,212.00	£4,315.00	£2,989.00	£3,997.80
Conference Fees	£3,134.03	£815.00	£458.00	£583.00
Publications			£81.50	
library subs	£110.00	£435.00	£295.00	
donation*	£15.00	£94.00	£375.00	
			£4,819.36	
other				
subtotal	£7,471.03		£9,017.86	£4,580.80
Interest Health account	£6.85			
Interest Deposit account	£3.33			
TOTAL INTEREST RECEIVED	£10.18	£12.65	£76.39	£78.05
TOTAL INCOME	£7,481.21	£12.65	£9,094.25	£4,658.85
EXPENDITURE				
Conference costs	£878.89	£122.65	£100.00	£840.66
Radstats Newsletter	£2,663.37	£2,167.47	£3,057.62	£3,340.18
Administrative costs	£849.21	£810.00	£793.35	£1,279.48
Miscellaneous	£30.00	£309.29		
Central publications				
Bank charges	£83.86	£17.14	£24.83	£38.44
Other (leaflet)	£55.00	£100.00	£99.70	£721.57
Essay			£1,021.00	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£4,560.33	£3,526.55	£5,096.50	£6,220.33
NET INCOME	£2,920.88	-£3,513.90	£3,997.75	-£1,561.48

NET WORTH				
As at 31st December 2010				
	2010	2009	2008	2007
BANK BALANCES				
Current Account	£7,224.70	£4,314.00	£2,181.55	£1,285.19
14 Day Deposit	£3,555.31	£3,551.98	£3,543.61	£5,286.58
14 Day Deposit (Health)	£4,855.49	£4,848.64	£4,844.36	
TOTAL	£15,635.50	£12,714.62	£10,569.52	£6,571.77
INCREASE IN NET WORTH				
bank balances at 1st Jan 2010	£12,714.62	£10,569.52	£6,571.77	£8,133.25
bank balances at 31st Dec 2010	£15,635.50	£12,714.62	£10,569.52	£6,571.77
Net Income for Year	£2,920.88	£2,145.10	£3,997.75	-£1,561.48
Janet Shapiro, Treasurer				

Treasurer's comment

The net gain for 2009 – 2010 is given as £2,920.88, but the expenses for this year should include cheques for administration # 103 newsletter cover - £970.28 and £150 respectively. There was also a printer's bill of £925 that rightly belongs to 2010 activity.

That would still leave us with a net gain of £875.60; this is much better than earlier years. Most members are now paying at the new rate of £25 that covers outgoings better; for this we have to thank our administrator (assisted by Ludi) for chasing up members who failed to update their standing orders.

We can also congratulate ourselves on producing three newsletters this year within this budget.

One problem arose with a rogue set of Direct Debits on our account – the money was reinstated and does not appear in the account above. The bank suggested that our bank details were taken from the web page. Also a few cheques did not arrive. In one case the cheque was stopped – but this turned out to be very expensive. For the other two I have just sent replacement cheques.

The accounts may not make clear whether library subscriptions have gone down. Statements do not give much information about the creditor – and the rate is £25 for both members and libraries. I have not been able to distinguish between them. Also the account does not give a clear picture for the revenue from conference last year. A more fool-proof system is needed to record the proportion of bank credits according to conference and subscriptions as information sent to me by the administrator tends to get lost. This will be addressed for next year.

We shall arrange for additional signatories and for this the AGM should minute the intention. I would like to thank Mike Quiggin who has second signed cheques very promptly and reliably.

Janet Shapiro
February 23rd 2011

Radical Statistics Group Newsletter Editor's report

Jane Galbraith and myself have jointly edited newsletters from #94 to #101 with help from Bob Saunders. Bob took a more active role in preparing #102 (the conference issue), when Jane suspended her co-editorship. The last issue, 'The Cuts' was produced by guest editors Paul Spicker and Ludi Simpson in record time, giving us the full complement of three issues in 2010.

Our recent success is largely due to team work: the contribution of good quality articles, author's cooperation & patience when amendments are needed fast, editor's determination to achieve deadlines and last but not least - the eye-catching cover designs produced by Melanie Schoellhammer.

We hope that our newsletters help to defeat the misleading use of statistics in the media. There is considerable potential for RadStats in public education. To achieve that potential the out-going editorial team felt strongly that our message should be delivered with rigour. Bob Sanders has been helpful in this regard with his meticulous helpful type-checking of final copy.

We are not a peer reviewed journal, but articles will have greater influence if they are checked for their validity and certainly avoid personal innuendo that marred the RadStats checklist in past years. That is why I think that Jane's contribution over the last four years has been invaluable.

This is a good time for new editors to come forward. I am not standing down but we lose Jane Galbraith. With a coalition government introducing so much damaging legislation, particularly the Health & Social Care Bill, little preparation has been made in forward planning for future issues. There are imminent statistical issues, such as the forthcoming census, the referendum on the Alternative Vote. Can we find guest editors for these topics?

Radical Statistics has many able members. This is an opportunity to come forward to carry out what is an interesting and invaluable exercise.

Janet Shapiro

Radstats Web Report – 2011 [www.radstats.org.uk]

Robin Rice, Website editor

Year in Review

Pages and links were maintained & updated throughout the year. The only main content additions over the year were **new journal issues**. There was still a lag time between printed newsletter distribution and making these available on the website, but as requested last year we did not necessarily wait for the new issue to be distributed before putting the previous issue up.

Website Usage Stats & Top Referrers (14 Feb 2010 – 13 Feb 2011)

Total Sessions Served	227,071	(includes crawlers)
Total Hits	771,620	(includes PDFs)
Total Page Hits	327,155	
Total Non Page Hits	444,465	
Total Transferred	48.86 GB	
Average Hits Per Session	3	
Average Page Hits Per Session	1	
Average Session Duration	198 seconds	(eg roughly 3 mins. This may be skewed.)
Average Transfer/Session	225.64 KB	

URL	Total Referrals	% of Total
 http://community.bonnaroo.com/service...	351	1.6%
 http://smoking2.thumblogger.com	329	1.5%
 http://www.google.co.uk/	265	1.2%
 http://www.100people.org/statistics_d...	147	0.7%
 http://www.google.com/reader/view/	141	0.7%
 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_o...	138	0.6%
 http://www.newscientist.com/article/m...	129	0.6%
 http://www.google.com/	125	0.6%
 http://leninology.blogspot.com/	124	0.6%
 http://www.100people.org/statistics_d...	114	0.5%
 http://forums.d2isp.org/topic.php?t=4...	108	0.5%
 http://www.badscience.net/	102	0.5%

▶ Most commonly accessed pages

/	with	34.953	hits (i.e. homepage)
/robots.txt	with	33.486	hits (only crawlers view this)
/journal.htm	with	6,945	hits
/no071/article2.htm	with	6,927	hits (Ruth Levitas on measuring social exclusion)
/newsletters/	with	4,200	hits
/about.htm	with	3,798	hits
/index.htm	with	3,778	hits (also homepage)
/subjects.htm	with	3,690	hits
/books.htm	with	3,218	hits
/no079/webster.htm	with	2,729	hits (on unemployment official statistics)

“Subjects” are not being kept up to date by assigning subjects to new articles. Perhaps these stats show this should be a priority.

New Blog

A Wordpress blog was set up on the free Wordpress site, and launched in July 2010 with the URL, <http://radstats.wordpress.com>. A pleasing template was chosen (called the Twenty Ten theme) and was customised by adding the Radstats banner along the top and various links down the right side menu. A google script was used to scroll the titles of the 3 most recent posts to the bottom of the Radstats home page.

Three subject categories are currently in scope: **Reduced Statistics** (tracking cuts to statistical programmes worldwide, **Radical Statistics** (for organisational news) and **Statistics in Society** (for posts about poverty, health, education statistics, etc.) “Badstats” was another topic suggested, but there are no current contributors blogging on this topic.

Active contributors are Ludi Simpson, David Swanson, Dave Gordon and Robin Rice. Editorial control of blog content is the responsibility of the web editor and the troika. More frequent posts are desirable. ***If you would like to contribute blog content, please speak to the web editor or the troika.***

Blog Stats

[Administrator’s views are not counted.]

13 have subscribed by email so far.

Top Posts (the past week)

[Editorial: ‘The cuts’ \(Radical Statistics issue 103\)](#) 39 views

[Reduced Statistics](#) 22 views

[Break-up of NHS to hurt poorest households](#) 13 views

[Radstats 2011 Conference: Cuts & Corporations](#) 4 views

Top Searches

alan franco radical stats, uk health priorities, what does the lancet say about nhs changes, "citizenship survey", wordpress radstats



Social Networking

A new member, Alastair Greig, offered to volunteer for Radstats in January. The troika suggested he help with the website. While Alastair plans to help me with the website migration in the upcoming year, he is also monitoring and maintaining a new **Facebook** page, and together we are monitoring and maintaining a new **Twitter** account (Radicalstats, as Radstats was taken by a dormant user from the US). There is also a **LinkedIn** group. Members are encouraged to follow, like, friend, join, etc. if they use these social networking tools to support Radstats in gathering a following in these social networks. Links have been added from the home page and a twitter feed has been added to the blog right side menu.

Website Migration to Wordpress

The use of Wordpress for the blog since July has given the web editor and the contributors practice using **Wordpress, which is the chosen software for a new website**, to be set up and migrated during 2011. Wordpress is one of a few well-known open source content management web systems which is the easiest to manage, has lots of plug-ins to add functionality, and is well-supported and documented. Using a web CMS instead of static html pages will enable a new look and feel, integration of the blog with the rest of the website, upgrading of the html coding of pages, control of levels of permission for users, a Graphical User Interface allowing troika and other members to contribute content without having to learn html, and less time-consuming maintenance.

I propose that we change our **website hosting** from Fasthosts (£65/year) to Evohosting (£79.99/year), because although Fasthosts allows customers to install Wordpress, they do not support it, whereas Evohosting does. They are competitive with other Wordpress hosts and have numerous customer testimonials; they use a green, UK-based datacentre; 24/7/365 support; offer

6.5 GB space, domain registration is included, and we can transfer our email aliases. See <http://www.evohosting.co.uk/uk-business-hosting>

As we move the content over to the new site, we will need to keep the current site and blog going until we are ready to transfer the domain name. I suggest we try out a Wordpress theme for look and feel, but ask the troika for money for help from a graphic designer if necessary. A 3 column theme may be needed to get all our content onto the home page, such as the Tipz theme, <http://designdisease.com/portfolio/tipz-wordpress-theme/>

Similarly we feel we can move all the content over on volunteer power, but will ask the troika for money for help with data entry if necessary.

Copyright cleared images (e.g. those with Creative Commons licences) will be used to enhance the web pages.

Membership Report for 2011 AGM

Alistair Cairns, Administrator

As of February 2011, membership within Radical Statistics consists of:

	2011	2010	2009
Unwaged		*	11
Low waged/Student	32	30	16
Standard	180	187	204
Institutional	26	25	25
Overseas	6	7	10
Gratis **	7	8	8
Total	251	257	274

** Following 2009 AGM, unwaged category was combined with low/student.*

*** Five copies are sent to the Legal Deposits Libraries and two to the cover's graphic artist.*

Editors, authors & essay competition winners each receive two copies (one additional if already members).

27 new members joined in 2010.

14 " 2009.

RadStats new '*Population group*' Report of activity

The group has extended to 9 members since its creation in November 2010. The *Population Studies* group has initiated an investigation into the debates on population and the environment that pose an 'optimum population', following exchange concerns and ideas by members (including feedback from a Seminar on 'Overpopulation' at the University of Cambridge in October 2010, where Ludi Simpson was invited to contribute).

A critical analysis paper examining the policy reports of the Optimum Population Trust, initiated by Michael Grayer, Ludi Simpson, Sylvie Dubuc and Alan Marshall is underway. The first draft will be submitted to all 'Population group' members for input/feedback. Work is expected to be completed by the summer and proposed to the next BSPS conference 2011. Alan Marshall will organise a session on '*Population and the environment*' at the next BSPS conference, Sept 2011 (agreed by BSPS).

We invite anyone who wishes to take part to this initiative and/or propose other activities to contact the group through Sylvie Dubuc, at sylvie.dubuc@socres.ox.ac.uk.