

SHORT ITEMS

Education Group

A meeting was held on 24th October. For further details please contact Radical Statistics of Education Group, 9 Poland Street, LONDON. W.1.

RADICAL COMMUNITY MEDICINE

This group recently held its inaugural meeting at Bristol. Its purpose is the promotion of public health through the effecting of change in the practice of community medicine, with particular regard to the political determinants of health and health care. Radical Community Medicine will complement rather than supplant existing health groups. There are no restrictions on eligibility.

The group will publish a quarterly newsletter, and it is hoped that a regional structure will develop. Organiser and editor for the first year is Alex Scott-Samuel. Please send contributions (100-1500 words; articles, letters, book reviews, comments, etc.) and subscriptions (£1) to him at 5 Lyndon Drive, Liverpool L18 6HP.

The Question of Race: a new BSSRS pamphlet

This pamphlet, subtitled "The case against including any question on race or ethnic origin in 1981" has just been published, and is available from BSSRS, 9 Poland Street, London, W1V 3DG (01-437-2728) for 10p + sae, or 90p for ten.

The pamphlet discusses the background to the ethnic question and discusses various possible wordings, as well as who wants the question and why. The objections listed include an unwillingness to enter "The numbers game", technical difficulties, its lack of usefulness for policy, possible misuse, and the threat it poses to black people. The "main danger" however is seen as "the fact that it legitimates race as a category for social policy".

BSSRS annual conference

This is on 24th November, from 10.30 a.m to 5.30 p.m. Among the probable workshop topics is Radical Statistics - RS will do the workshop rather than be discussed.

On the 23rd November is the BSSRS tenth Anniversary meeting, at 7.30 p.m in LSE. Speakers include Maurice Wilkins, Joseph Needham, Mike Cooley and our very own demystifying Dorothy Griffiths.

Further details of both these events from BSSRS (address above).

Race Group News (Heather Booth)

For those of you who are unfamiliar with our activities, the Race Group has been working on the publication of a book on black people in Britain since May, 1978. The work is being done in conjunction with the Runnymede Trust. The book is (probably) to be called "Britain's Black Minorities" and covers the demography of the black population; the legislation concerning immigration and race relations; the position of black people in society including in education, employment, housing, health and social services; and the problems of dealing with statistics on race or ethnic origin.

Not a lot has actually happened since Nic Wright wrote the last piece for RS15. Despite our carefully planned timetable aimed at publication in October, there have been various setbacks so that the publication date has been moved yet again and now stands at December, 1979. The final draft has finally been written and will be edited shortly by someone working in the field.

No-one from Radstats took up our invitation in RS15 to read the draft, nor did anyone request a formal Radical Statistics-acceptance-of-putting-name-on-publication meeting. The deed will thus be done.

We have abandoned our old name, REMIS standing for Race, Ethnic Minorities and Immigration Statistics (I think), in favour of Race Group. It is easier.

Contacts:	Dave Drew	0742-20911 ext: 397 day
	Nic Wright	01-633-6916 day
	Heather Booth	01-828-4242 ext 28 day until end October

Health Group

At our meeting on 11th June, it was decided that the almost perpetually unnamed 'current project' needed still further re-writing. David Jones and Dave Haran offered to do this. No agreement was reached about the name but our distributors subsequently asked us to give them one to put in their new catalogue. The title 'The unofficial guide to official health statistics' was subsequently generated in Oxford by a suitably undemocratic process. Due to a general feeling of apathy it was decided not to undertake any further projects at present, especially as we had not yet got shot of the 'current millstone'. It was decided to meet in some central place (Meriden?) in the autumn to discuss some more interesting subject than the future of the group. Plans for this meeting are not yet made, but might be in time for a stop press. In any case people on the health group list will be notified.

We did meet at Bristol during the Society for Social Medicine conference. Because of the tight schedule our meeting took place late at night. Some people were tired and others had raised blood alcohol levels. Having been simultaneously affected by both afflictions, I will not attempt to give a coherent account of the discussion on 'What is Health Information?', but thank David Greaves for leading it in these trying circumstances.

Alison Macfarlane
September, 24th 1979

Local Radio Workshop

A tape 'A Better Start in Life?' on the subject of perinatal mortality has nearly been made - at least it will be made by the time this newsletter is out! There should be a chance for those who come to the Radstats seminar on the subject on 20th November to hear it. There are twelve groups who have made programmes on subjects such as social security benefits, 'Police against black people', council housing, battered women, nuclear power, etc. The groups are going to jointly send all 12 tapes to the London local radio stations in the first instance, and publicise the fact that we have done so by a press release and other means. We are also interested in distributing the tapes to those to whom they may be of use, or have money to pay Local Radio Workshop for them, or are in both categories. If anyone has useful contacts for any of these ends, please contact Local Radio Workshop (Tel: 01-402-7651).

Alison Macfarlane

FORTHCOMING SEMINARS

Radical statistics holds regular meetings of interest to workers in statistics and in social and medical research. These are held on the same day as RSS Social Statistics Section Meetings. At the next meeting, on Tuesday 20th November, 1979, the topic will be Perinatal Statistics. (The session will include a preview of the tape produced with the Local Radio Workshop). The starting time will be 6.30 p.m. at the BSSRS, 9 Poland Street, London. W.1. (Ring the bell).

MISCELLANEOUS

Postscript to RSN 15

The reference to Nicos Mouzelis in footnote 13 of Martin Hammersley's article should have included "New Left Review 112, Nov-Dec, 1978" - 'just in case anyone wishes to follow it up', as Martin rather optimistically told me.

Varna Conference, Bulgaria

A soft sell for Radstats at this conference netted three Hollanders and a Greek. Eastern Europeans remain singularly uninterested as usual. I wonder why? Maybe we are not disorganised enough.

SMALL-AD FROM HEATHER

"Do we have ads in the newsletter?", asks Heather Booth. Well we do now, so here it is:

"Would anyone like to make better use than I of a set of journals of the Royal Statistical Society, Series A, B and C (Applied Statistics), 1973-1978. Excellent condition! Donations (to me, of cash) accepted. Tel: 01-828-4242 ext 28, or write H. Booth, 4 Rokeby House, Lamb's Conduit Street, WC1."