

Editorial

Welcome to Issue 89 the long awaited conference edition. We start by apologising for the delay of the first issue for 2006, which is Issue 88, the special issue on Labour Market Statistics, and continue by apologising for the slight delay of this conference issue. Issue 88 is nearing completion should also be out soon! Issue 90, a general RadStats issue and to mark 30 years of the journal/newsletter, will be out in the early spring time at the latest. While all articles have been commissioned for these issues, please feel free to submit articles for issues 91 onwards.

This year the RadStats annual conference in February was held in the Central Methodist Hall in Manchester. This issue, along with the AGM minutes and the financial report, is a collection of articles by Dave Gordon, Roy Carr-Hill and Peter Edward, a talk by Peter Hardstaff and an abstract by Kath Moser all relating to their presentations given at the conference.

The theme for the 2005 Radical Statistics annual conferences was ***Global Poverty and Inequality***, for as statisticians we want to advise on how far progress is being made in the eradication of poverty worldwide. The difficulties in making valid interpretation of statistical data from a variety of countries is acknowledged, but the problems in assessing levels of poverty in developing countries is far more problematic.

The conference presented various methods for obtaining valid measures for global poverty, health and mortality. With due regard for reliability, the selected data was used to examine the extent and implications of inequity. The conference also attempted to identify the underlying processes that frustrate efforts to monitor and improve global well-being. The aim was to improve our understanding, an important step for achieving a fairer world.

Editors

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Conference Speakers

Professor **Dave Gordon** is the Director of the Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research. Dave combined his background in biology and geology with anti-poverty policy, while helping to find safe public water supplies in the South Pacific. He has researched and published in the fields of the scientific measurement of poverty, crime and poverty, childhood disability, area-based anti-poverty measures, the causal effects of poverty on ill health, housing policy and rural poverty.

The Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research, where Dave is based, is dedicated to multi-disciplinary research on poverty in both the industrialised and developing world. The Centre has been established by the University of Bristol in response to the United Nations First International Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) and in recognition of the work of Professor Peter Townsend. Recently, for example, Dave has been working on a UNICEF and DFID funded project to produce the first scientific measurements on the extent and nature of child poverty for the whole world.

Roy Carr-Hill is a Professor in Health and Social Statistics at the Centre for Health Economics, University of York and Research Professor in Education at the Institute of Education in London. Roy originally trained as a mathematician, but also has degrees in Philosophy, Social Administration, Criminology and Penology. He is most well-known in the UK for the part he has played in introducing more consistent resource allocation formulae in the health and social sectors; and for the work he has done on assessing the potential for skill mix among health care workers. Both of these have required the development and application of sophisticated analytic tools to address complex methodological problems.

He also has an international reputation as a pragmatic and realistic evaluator of complex interventions and programmes, and the report on the evaluation of literacy programmes in Uganda that he designed in 1999 has been published by the World Bank Knowledge Development Network as an exemplar of its kind. In particular, he has been working on problems of measurement since working for the OECD in the 1970s on the development of an internationally agreed set of indicators to monitor the quality of life

Peter Edward is currently a PhD Research Scholar at Judge Business School, Cambridge University. Peter has over 20 years professional experience as an engineer and management consultant. For the last 10 years he has specialised in change management and programme management for the UK government and for large corporations, with a particular focus on the use of private finance to deliver public services.

The paper presented to the Radical Statistics conference arises from work done for an MA dissertation in Development Studies at Manchester University. This represents the start of a career-shift into a more critical engagement with the role of corporations and orthodox economics in the shaping of our globalised world. These ideas currently come together in his PhD research topic, 'applying Critical Management theories to analyse the World Bank's involvement in the privatisation of the power sector in India'.

Peter Hardstaff is the Head of Policy, World Development Movement (WDM). As Head of Policy, Peter Hardstaff is responsible for facilitating development of policy, research and advocacy work to support WDM's campaigns. Prior to joining WDM in April 2002, Peter spent three years leading research and advocacy work on international trade policy issues at the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Before joining the RSPB he was a consultant, researching, writing and designing a web site on international trade issues for Friends of the Earth, where he had previously worked for 5 years on forests and wildlife issues. Peter has a degree in Environmental Sciences from the University of East Anglia and a first class Masters degree in Natural Resource Management from Edinburgh University.

Kath Moser joined the Non-communicable Disease Epidemiology Unit at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) in June 2002. Her research concerns health inequalities in low and middle income countries and her teaching includes statistics, demography, and epidemiology. She had worked at LSHTM before, in the Centre for Population Studies, where she obtained her MSc in Medical Demography. In the intervening years her research included working in the Social Statistics Research Unit at City University on a project investigating socio-demographic differentials in women's mortality, and the relationship between unemployment and mortality in the UK. Kath has also worked at the Office for National Statistics initially as a researcher on the General Practice Research Database, and more recently on inequalities in child health.