

# **Annual General Meeting Minutes**

## **February 24th 2007**

Chair: Shailen Nandy, Minutes: Alistair Cairns  
Apologies from Alan Marshall, Jay Ginn, M Gonzalez

### **Minutes 2006**

2006 minutes accepted as a correct record of last year's AGM.

### **Matters arising**

Ray Thomas moved compliment of Robin Rice as keeper of the website.

### **Membership report**

The membership report prepared by Alistair Cairns was circulated.  
(appended below)

New leaflets are now available and can be requested from the administrator. In discussion about the new subscription rates and the need to boost membership, it was suggested that student preferential rates could apply to graduate students. Does 'unwaged' explicitly include 'students'?

Ways to encourage students to join were explored, remembering that students on non-specialist statistical courses could be targeted. The website should attract more members. The lists of academic departments suggested by Lee for publicizing the essay competition could also help, also a literature swap with Scientists for Social Responsibility. Another suggestion was for RadStats speakers to recruit members.

An official statement or briefing paper on Trident replacement was suggested, and discussion followed as to how this could be achieved. There could be liaison work with CND following on from earlier activity and publications on nuclear issues.

### **Treasurer's report**

The treasurer's report prepared by Janet Shapiro was circulated.  
(appended below) This indicated that funds were 'healthy' but diminishing each year. Approximately £1000 expenses for 2006 journal publications will appear in next year's account. While the essay competition is a money loser it is potentially good publicity for RadStats. The category 'other' was questioned. In response it was explained that this was 'unknown' as some payments needed fuller identification. It was asked whether we had income from publication. As the answer was 'No', discussion followed as to whether we needed another book or some other means to generate income in the next few years. There will be some money from the defunct 'health group' will be in 2007.

The pensions briefing produced by Jay Ginn was good but going out free. The exploitation of other potential printed material was discussed. A

request for voluntary donations could be posted on the website with clear indication of our being a voluntary organisation. The auditor's report (David Byrne) included a suggestion to ask for donations.

### **Editor's report**

The Editors' report compiled by Alan Marshall (absent) was circulated. (appended below)

Lee Williamson explained the problems of producing *Radical Statistics* on a regular basis, particularly for a 'special' issue. RS needs an editor as of today. The amount of work involved was described by Lee as former editor. In view of the difficulties, discussion favoured promising publication of 'usually' 3 per year. Suggestions to make it a more realistic task were put forward, such as reducing the emphasis on long scholarly articles instead seeking shorter pieces for a more 'campaign-oriented' approach. However lengthy articles could be the basis of a book.

Two members volunteered to be editor: Janet Shapiro and Jane Galbraith. Lee Williamson offered to advise.

### **Website report**

Robin Rice gave a verbal report.

The range of delivery is now more varied, for example a 'blog' facility that would give opportunity for people to comment on articles, also a new provider will be arranged. Robin asked for more volunteers and Humphrey suggested there would be RadStats expertise. An entry had been attempted for RadStats in Wikipedia.

Shailen asks about 'worthy website' archiving. RadStats was chosen and website is being archived for posterity. Could this be mentioned on site?

### **Critical Essay Competition**

A report on the 2006 Critical Essay Competition was circulated. (appended)

Reasons for the failure of the 2006 publicity to gain enough interest, despite having 5 excellent judges were explored. It is suggested that the advertisement includes more guidance and motivation, that the timing suits potential applicants and that publicity reaches professional organizations and lecturing staff that would encourage applicants. Including a school category was suggested but doubts were expressed. Publicity should include courses where Statistics was not the main subject, using electronic means so that the budget allocated should not be excessive.

Alan, Lee & Janet are all willing to organize the 2008 competition and will meet to discuss.

### **Troika elections:**

Janet will step down after 3 years and much hard work – which will continue in other contexts. This leaves 3 on the troika, and another

could be co-opted if there is a volunteer. It was suggested that the troika apportion their duties.

Geoffrey has one more year. Shailen & Lee have 2 more years each.

**2008 themes, conferences:**

Robin has spoken to Edinburgh members who have considerable enthusiasm for hosting 2008 conf. Perhaps a theme on: devolution, separate methods of collecting statistics, voting systems & constitutional issues, & etc. Russell, Robin, and others will start work, soliciting any help, settling/focusing themes.

**Other business:**

Christopher asks about subgroups. Contacts details are listed on brochure & inside cover of journal. It was suggested that it was unrealistic to list them. The troika asked to investigate interest through the 'Announce' email list, particularly to find a lead for the 'Education' subgroup.

Humphrey will explore 'blogs' with Petra and the possibility of collaboration. Members were asked to follow up ideas on 'bad statistics' which might appeal to journalists. Robin suggested that a 'blog' should be members only or appointed by troika.

Shailen thanked all the speakers and those who attended.



Our administrator, Alistair Cairns, sitting at the desk, takes the minutes.

# Membership Report for 2007 Conference

*Alistair Cairns*  
*Administrator*

As of late February, 2007 the Membership of Radical Statistics are as follows.

| <b>Membership Category</b> | <b>2007 (2006)</b> |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Unwaged                    | 15 (15)            |
| Low Waged                  | 10 (11)            |
| Waged                      | 233 (226)          |
| Institution                | 24 (23)            |
| Overseas                   | 11 (11)            |
| Gratis *                   | 16 (17)            |
| Total                      | 309 (304)          |

Since the last AGM, 11 new members have joined and 7 have withdrawn. This does not include anyone registering for the conference on the day.

A breakdown by payment method for current members:

| <b>Payment Method</b> |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Cheque                | 112 |
| Invoice               | 11  |
| Standing Order        | 170 |
| Gratis *              | 16  |
| Total                 | 309 |

\* There are currently 16 members listed as 'Gratis' but an additional four copies are sent for the Legal Deposits Libraries and one to the covers' graphic designer. Authors are due two copies and are not always members of RadStats. (This was 12 copies in the case of the most recent issue - #93.)

I anticipate quite a bit of change for current members next year, as all members will be reviewing their status for the rate change.

# Treasurer's Report to AGM February 2007

*Janet Shapiro - Treasurer*

## **RADICAL STATISTICS GROUP**

### **NET WORTH As at 31st December 2006**

|                                   | <b>2006</b>      | <b>2005</b>      | <b>2004</b>       | <b>2003</b>       |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>BANK BALANCES</b>              |                  |                  |                   |                   |
| Current Account                   | £1,924.72        | £1,356.48        | £506.27           | £345.88           |
| 14 Day Deposit                    | £6,208.53        | £8,162.09        | £9,569.07         | £11,395.62        |
| Instant Deposit                   |                  |                  |                   |                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                      | <b>£8,133.25</b> | <b>£9,518.57</b> | <b>£10,075.34</b> | <b>£11,741.50</b> |
| <b>INCREASE IN NET<br/>WORTH</b>  |                  |                  |                   |                   |
| bank balances at 1st<br>Jan 2006  | £9,518.57        | £10,075.34       | £11,741.50        | £14,462.39        |
| bank balances at 31st<br>Dec 2006 | £8,133.25        | £9,518.57        | £10,075.34        | £11,741.50        |
| <b>Net Income for Year</b>        | <b>£1,385.32</b> | <b>-£556.77</b>  | <b>£1,666.16</b>  | <b>£2,720.89</b>  |

*The above accounts have been audited by David Byrne as a true record.  
The auditor proposed not only an increase in subscription but an appeal to  
our more affluent members to make donations at a higher rate.*

The accounts show a continued trend for income to exceed income. In fact two payments amounting to more than £1,000 narrowly missed being included in last year's account. Another payment cheque was not presented. Expenditure was greater than last year caused by a more efficient publication of newsletters.

It is hoped that raising the subscription as they become due will improve the stability of our finances. There are sufficient funds to support the circulation of the new recruitment leaflet and for publicity for the 2008 Critical Essay Competition.

The possibility of using direct debit has been examined and rejected, and we intend to encourage the use of standing orders to make less work for our administrator.

Bringing in an increased subscription will make for additional correspondence for the administrator. As tracking lapsed payments is time-consuming we shall look for ways to make this less onerous. The AGM should comment on whether the administrator may condone past subscription deficits where a member has updated his/her current subscription. How many reminders should be sent before the member is excluded from the list? Other practical suggestions would be welcome.

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE  
ACCOUNT  
for the year ending 31  
December 2006**

|                          | 2006             | 2005             | 2004             | 2003             |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                          |                  | £                | £                | £                |
| <b>GENERAL INCOME</b>    |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| subscriptions            | £2,269.00        | £2,179.00        | £2,659.00        | £2,916.00        |
| Conference Fees          | £1,002.00        | £705.02          | £1,125.00        | £601.50          |
| Publications             | £0.00            |                  |                  |                  |
| Other                    | £633.00          | £224.00          | £302.00          | £212.00          |
| subtotal                 | £3,904.00        | £3,108.02        | £4,086.00        | £3,729.50        |
| <b>INTEREST RECEIVED</b> |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|                          | £46.44           | £91.02           | £173.45          | £203.73          |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>      | <b>£3,950.44</b> | <b>£3,199.04</b> | <b>£4,259.45</b> | <b>£3,933.23</b> |
| <b>EXPENDITURE</b>       |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| Conference costs         | £571.93          | £700.33          | £839.79          | £708.91          |
| Radstats Newsletter      | £2,034.64        | £1,178.45        | £3,104.76        | £1,815.30        |
| Administrative costs     | £1,969.28        | £943.10          | £1,547.44        | £534.36          |
| Central publications     | £0.00            |                  |                  |                  |
| Bank charges             | £28.77           | £27.18           | £33.62           | £104.80          |
| Other                    | £0.00            | £178.75          | £400.00          | £3,490.75        |

# **Editors' report for 2006-7**

*Alan Marshall*

Three journal issues were prepared in 2006. At the start of the year it was planned that the second journal of the year (issue 92) would be a guest edited Housing issue. Unfortunately, unanticipated problems meant that this issue was converted to a miscellaneous edition and moved to the final newsletter of the year. As a result of these problems we were not able to get all three journals out in 2006. However, the final journal, issue 93, was completed and sent out in February.

Details on each of the 2006-7 journals are given below:

## **1. Conference issue (91)**

Guest editor - Shailen Nandy

Editor - Alan Marshall

*Government spin and statistics* – Ray Thomas

*Spinning pensioner poverty issues* – Jay Ginn

*Radical demography* – Ludi Simpson and Jamie Goodwin-White

*Investigating whether a crime reduction measure works* – Paul Marchant

## **2. Miscellaneous and essay writing competition issue (92)**

Editors - Alan Marshall and Ivan Rappaport

Sent out – November 2006

*Uses of statistics in the civil war in Chechnya* – Ray Thomas

*A critique of the development of quantitative methodologies*

*in human geography* - Alan Marshall

*Figuring out social class – an overview* – Pierre Walthery

*RADSTATs cartoon retrospective* – Robin Rice

## **3. Miscellaneous Issue (93)**

Editor - Alan Marshall

Sent out – February 2007

*Fit for Purpose – Official measures of homelessness in the era of the activist state* – Hal Pawson and Emma Davidson



*The citizens research network: Linking grassroots and government – Gareth Potts*

*Urban governance - the complex politics of measuring – David Byrne*

*Female labour participation in rural and urban India: Does housewives' work count – Wendy Olsen and Smitha Mehta*

I have now stepped down as an editor of RADSTATs. I would like to thank the Troika, administrator, and all those who contributed to the journal for the help, support and advice that they given me over the year.  
*Alan Marshall – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2007*



Jane Galbraith on the left, and Janet Shapiro on the right, volunteered to be editors.

## **Report on the Radical Statistics Critical Essay Competition 2006.**

*Janet Shapiro*

The 2006 competition failed to get enough entries. We awarded a joint second prize.

I have comments on why that was so and what can be done for the 2008 competition.

- We had very good judges (see below), so it was disappointing to have so few entries. Also all entries received were largely analytical and contained little data-analysis.

- A great many posters went out in good time, but the publicity did not reach those people who would be influential in reaching potential candidates.
- The specification was vague and thus attracted students on courses that already have set coursework, or those already working in the field of statistics with the leisure and motivation to write.
- Courses on which statistics is taught are dwindling.
- To attract schoolchildren the title should indicate the sort of problem that could be addressed. There could be some guidelines on the web-site. We want to target school students and undergraduates as part of our membership drive.

**Conclusions:**

- The framework of the competition needs changing. The judges themselves made some suggestions.
- Publicity for the 2008 competition could be sent widely to colleges and schools with the new recruitment leaflet.
- A budget needs to be set by the AGM to cover the publicity. Should we get a poster designed by Melanie? Should we cost a mail shot to schools?
- Janet Lee and Allan have volunteered to be a committee to organise the 2008 competition.

Our thanks to the 2006 judges who were:

**Simon Briscoe**, Statistics Editor of the Financial Times, **Len Cook**, National Statistician, (2000-2005), **Professor Ruth Levitas**, University of Bristol, **Professor Denise Lievesley**, Health and Social Care Information Centre,

**Dr. Susan Starkings**, London South Bank University