Radical Statistics

Using statistics to support progressive social change

Good data, good policy?

Saturday 7th March 2015, 9am - 5pm

Coffee & Registration from 9:00

9:30   Welcome

**9:35   <u>Data and policy:</u> How good is the data we have and is it used well for policy-making?
What are the threats to the production and democratic use of good statistics?
What can be done to improve this situation?**

Denise Lievesley, King's College London

Denise was, from 1991 until 1999, Director of the UK Data Archive and Professor of Social Research Methods at the University of Essex. She led UNESCO's Institute for Statistics and also set up the NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre. After working in the UN Economic Commission for Africa, she joined King's College London and is Dean of the Faculty of Social Science & Public Policy, and Professor of Social Statistics. Denise has held the Presidencies of the Royal Statistical Society (1999-2001) and the International Statistical Institute (2007-2009), the first woman ever to hold this office.

David Walker, Academy of Social Sciences

David is Head of Policy at the Academy of Social Sciences and also a contributing editor to Guardian Public. Previously he was director of Getstats and a member of the British Academy's Strategy Group on Quantitative Skills (in social sciences). His book with Polly Toynbee - "Cameron's Coup" - was published in January 2015.

Hetan Shah, Royal Statistical Society

Hetan is Executive Director of the RSS, a charity whose vision is a world with data at the heart of understanding and decision-making. Previously Chief Executive of the charity Think Global, Hetan is a visiting senior research fellow at the Kings Policy Institute, Kings College London. He is a non executive director of the Higher Education Statistics Agency and has been a board member of the Equality Trust, founded by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett.

Gavin Freeguard, Institute for Government

Gavin is a senior researcher where he has focused on Whitehall Monitor, transparency in government contracting and preparing politicians for government. His previous posts include being a political adviser to Harriet Harman MP, deputy director of the Orwell Prize and senior editor at the Media Standards Trust.

There will be a short break between the second and third speakers

11:15   Coffee / Tea

11:45   Breakout Sessions:
          discussion of issues raised in the first session

12:45   Lunch
          Demonstration of *Constituency Explorer*
          Jim Ridgway, Durham University

1:45   Session of 3 Breakout Groups:
          What can we learn from data-based
          policy initiatives and campaigns?
          (1)
          Will Moy (Director, Full Fact)
          Fact checking and the election

The possible roles for an independent fact checking
service in the UK, with plans for a special campaign of
information and rebuttal, in the run-up to the 2015
election. Also, ongoing efforts to ensure that the
information received by political figures and the media is
as clear and useful as possible.

          Jim Ridgway (Durham University):
          Strategies for Encouraging Data Driven Debates

A collaborative venture with the House of Commons
Library to create a powerful data visualisation called
Constituency Explorer ahead of the 2015 election,
providing a 'playground' to explore multiple variables
disaggregated e.g. by region, and a quiz game (aimed at
citizens) that runs on smartphones, along with
downloadable datasets for every constituency.

Deana Leadbeter (Statistics Users Executive):
Approaches to User Engagement

The role that the Statistics Users Executive plays in bringing together a wide range of user groups, and in liaising with the Government Statistical Service and other producers, as required by the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The latter emphasises the importance of consulting and meeting the needs not just of government users but also of the wider user community.

Alison Macfarlane (Health Statistics User Group):
Can users improve official health statistics?

Focus on the practical experience of the Group in encouraging effective collaboration between producers and users of health and social care statistics, and appropriate use of these statistics, with particular respect to recent cuts in ONS health statistics, and access to NHS data for England for both public health analysis and for research.

Christina Beatty (Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research , Sheffield Hallam University):

The Impacts of Welfare Reform on people and places - Hitting the Poorest Places Hardest

An overview of a set of national reports on the effects of the range of welfare reform measures undertaken by the government, and how these vary considerably across the country or by household types, using government statistics to assess the financial loss and number of households affected for all local authorities in the UK. Also studies which drill down the data to the community level and consider which types of families have been affected.

Nissa Finney (University of Manchester) & Ludi Simpson (University of Manchester):

Race and ethnic statistics: what more (or less) would a community agenda demand?

A consideration of whether UK race statistics are appropriate for generating evidence of discrimination, or for suggesting necessary policy changes. An opportunity to consider these questions in groups from the perspective of community campaigns concerned with issues such as police violence against black people in custody, employment disadvantage and exploitation for ethnic minorities, and race discrimination in housing agencies.

3:00   Coffee / Tea

3:30 Radstats at 40:
      "Using our past to develop our future?

RadStats members, including:

- Ludi Simpson on "Statistics for taking power"
- John Bibby
- Harvey Goldstein
- Alison Macfarlane
- Rachel Cohen

+ contributions from the floor

5:00 Conference close

5:15 Radstats AGM

Friday 6th March, 6:30-10:30 pm
Lucas Arms, 245A Grays Inn Rd, WC1X 8QY

A social beginning with a review by economists Larry

Brownstein & Julian Wells of the book "*Capital in the 21st*

Century" (2013) by Thomas Piketty.

Sunday 8th March, 10:30-12:30

Meeting in front of King's Cross Station