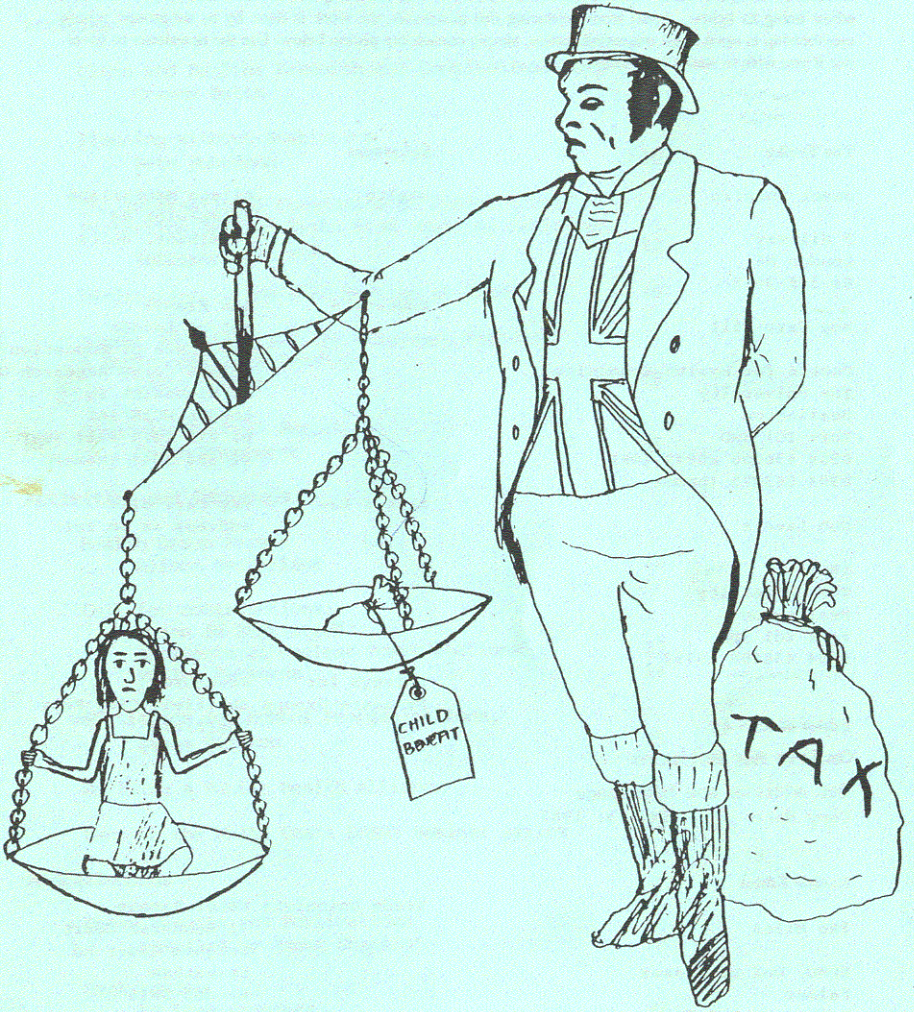


RADICAL STATISTICS NEWSLETTER 39



Sept. 87

ISSN 0268-6376

The Radical Statistics Group is a group of individuals based on the distribution of this newsletter. The small amount of central administrative work is done by a three person committee elected at the Annual General Meeting known as "The Troika" - names below. The editorship of this newsletter rotates - the next editor being as below. Apart from producing this newsletter, the work is done by its subgroups, whose membership is open to all interested parties; simply consult the person below. Use the newsletter to advertise if you wish to start a new subgroup.

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Newsletter 39
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CONTENTS

Editorial	4
Articles	
Class and Health: Research and Longitudinal Data Graeme Betts	6
Planning without Statistics Pete Ruhemann	10
The International Commission on Radiological Protection and the Risks from Ionising Radiation Patrick Green F0E	12
Declaration to the ICRP Meeting at Como	16
Higher Education and the Voluntary Sector: A Reciprocal Relationship Libby Cooper	18
Community OR Unit Report Colin Thunhurst	21
Activities and Subgroups	
Health Group Report Alison MacFarlane	22
Call for contributions: Women in Statistics Accidents at Nuclear Power Stations Voting Patterns	23 24
Statistics for School Reorganisations, Steve Simpson	25
Building a Public Health Alliance	26
Beneath the White Coat: BSSRS seminar series	27
Miscellaneous	
Press Reports and Publications compiled by Janet Shapiro	28
Book review by Dave Saunders	32
Spectacular Times: Cities of Illusion and others extracts compiled by David Bayat	33
Notice of Conference 1988	38

COMMUNITY O.R. UNIT REPORT

The early months of 1988 will see the opening of a new Community Operational Research Unit to be located at the Northern College near Barnsley. The Unit will be part-funded by the Operational Research Society. It represents the (possibly unexpected) fruition of nearly two decades of radical gingering within the O.R. profession. It follows, most directly, the election of Jonathan Rosenhead to the Presidency of the Operational Research Society. Jonathan stood, and was able to claim the mandate, for the extension of the clientele of operational research.

The Operational Research Society invited institutions interested in hosting the unit to present submissions. The response was perhaps surprising both in number and in the extent to which they represented the amount of thought that had already gone into the limited client base of operational research, and into how the limit might be transcended. The conclusion of the 'competition' was the selection of the proposal for the Unit to be located at the Northern College, jointly submitted by the College and the Department of Applied Statistics and Operational Research at the Sheffield City Polytechnic.

The Northern College offers quite unique opportunities for the Society's initiative. It is a residential adult education college which runs, in parallel and in close coordination, a programme of three two-year long courses and a programme of trade union and community short courses. It is the latter programme, through its extensive contact with community groups, that will be exploited for the development of community operational research.

Workshops for community groups and organisations form a major part of this latter short course programme. Individual centres or organisations in Leeds, Barnsley, Rotherham, Doncaster, Sheffield, Chesterfield and the surrounding areas come into the College for programmes on organisational development or to work on specific issues (for example, tenants organisations learn how to make the best contribution to housing reorganisation and decentralisation; mother and toddler groups are offered the opportunity to explore how their organisations fit into the network of pre-school provision in their areas and nationally; community associations consider how national and local government policies and budgets impinge on their activities). The Community O.R. initiative will allow this existing, largely pedagogic, relationship to be transformed into a concrete problem-solving one - with the process and the relationship developing over a period of time.

The Unit will have two full-time workers, located at the Northern College. They will be supported by staff from the College and by Operational Research specialists from the Department of Applied Statistics and Operational Research at the Polytechnic. The staff at the Polytechnic have a wide range of experience of conventional O.R. methods and have been to the forefront in the development of the newer 'softer' methodologies to which most of the interested practitioners are looking to provide the technical base of community O.R.

The Unit will be managed jointly by the academic institutions, the professional body and the community groups themselves. Its work will be steered by a directorate comprising Jim Bryant, from the Polytechnic, as assistant Director and Colin Thunhurst, now of the Nuffield Institute for Health Service Studies, University of Leeds, 71 - 75 Clarendon Road, Leeds LS2 9PL (0532 - 459034), as Director. Interested Radstatsers can find out more about the Unit by contacting Jim or Colin.

RADICAL STATISTICS HEALTH GROUP

Since June our main activity has been addressing envelopes to deal with the encouraging number of orders for 'Facing the figures'. We had 4,000 copies printed at an overall cost of about £6,000, including cover design and incidental expenses. About a third of this came from money from sale of past publications, a third from loans by individuals and the now inactive Nuclear Disarmament Group and the remaining third came from sales up to the time the printers' bill arrived.

Now (July 25), we have recovered half of our costs, but £600 came from a bulk order from NUPE. There is still a long way to go, so if anyone has an opportunity to sell copies at a conference or meeting, we can let you have some.

'Facing the figures' has made more people interested in joining the group. This leads to the question of future plans, a subject we shall be discussing actively in the autumn. The message of the January conference was that people wanted something to supersede 'The unofficial guide to official health statistics'. If so, what? Or should we do something else? If you want to be part of this discussion please get in touch.

For people new to Radical Statistics, perhaps I should add that the Health Group has its own mailings, which are normally more frequent than this newsletter. They haven't been recently, but this is likely to change in the autumn. If you want to receive these mailings, please send me some stamped addressed envelopes to the address inside the front cover.

Alison Macfarlane

What really is happening to the National Health Service?



The subgroup Women in Statistics has seen little activity recently. Jean Ullman is not able to lead this subgroup herself but would be very happy to receive enquires from those keen to carry on this important concept of Radical Statistics work.

Please contact: Jean Ullman,
22 Kipling Street,
Salford M79 FF
061 792 7413

ACCIDENTS AT NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS IN BRITAIN.

Will anyone interested in the probability and statistics of accidents at nuclear power stations please contact:

Ms P. Dugard
c/o Dundee College of Technology
Faculty of Science
Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
Bell Street,
Dundee DD1 1HG
Tel: 0382 27225

At the Radical Statistics Conference, Cecilio Mar Molinero introduced his wide-ranging work on statistics of schools in Southampton. It was agreed that his material could be edited into a Radical Statistics pamphlet on statistics for school reorganisations. The main audience would be community groups facing Local Council proposals to close/open/merge/re-organise schools.

Cecilio's work raises very starkly the poor state of forward planning in some LEAs and the effect of "parental choice" in discriminating against working class children. It contains both a politically critical approach, and original evidence. See Newsletter No. 37, pp 11-14.

Such a pamphlet would require at least two editors/Writers apart from Cecilio. I am happy to be one of them - My paid work has involved forecasts of school populations for LEAs. I need at least one other person to work with.

My "aim" would be a pamphlet of about 40 pages (A5) with contents as follows:

1. Politics of school reorganisations: DES and LEA pressures, pupil and parent needs. About 4 pages.
2. Southampton examples: using published statistics to assess the demand for school education and access to it. About 30 pages.
3. What can LEAs do, given their access to unpublished statistics: a checklist of statistics and procedures for consultation in this respect, which LEAs can be asked to meet. About 6 pages.

1 and 2 are Cecilio's work. See Newsletter 37, pp 11-14, which is a summary of some five different papers in this field. They would require extensive editing.

Number 3 would be written by the Editors.

My preferred time table is to work on the editing/writing from January 1988 and to complete it, ready for printing by Easter 1988.

Both the timetable and the contents are open to negotiation with any other willing editor/writers - the more the merrier - who would like to work with me on this.

Please contact: Steve Simpson, 242, Keighley Road, Bradford BD9 4JZ

I am not at home Oct 3 - 16 Dec 1987.

I look forward to reading letters concerning this proposal.

BENEATH THE WHITE COAT

A seminar series on Science and Politics in the 1980s organised by the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science.

VENUE

Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, WC1
in either the Library (L) or the Small Hall (SH)
as indicated.

(nearest tube: Holborn)

Monday evenings fortnightly at 6.30pm

October 5 (L)

Radical Statistics Health Group
Facing the Figures. What really is happening to
the National Health Service?

October 19 (SH)

Peter Tatchell
Alternative non-nuclear defence

November 2 (L)

Joe Schwartz
Some Considerations on Nuclear Accident
Emergencies

November 16 (L)

Mark Strong, London Cycling Campaign
Whose Roads Are They Anyway?

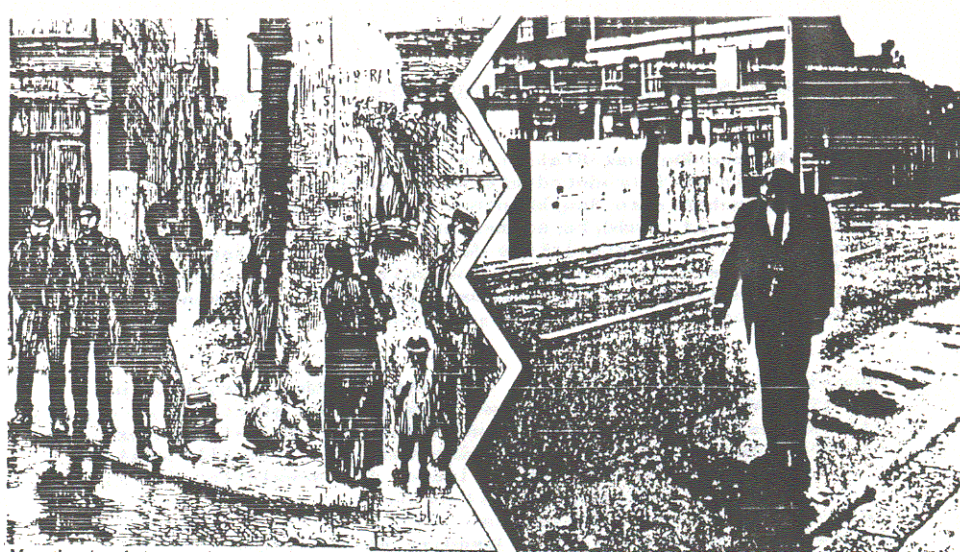
November 30 (L)

Shelagh Doonan and Mary Jennings
Science for All? Scientific Literacy and
Women's Education.

December 14 (SH)

Radical Statistics Education Group
Figuring Out Education Spending

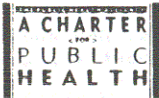
For more information, please contact: BSSRS office, 25 Horsell Road,
London, N5 1XL Tel: 607 9615.



More than just drains... the new public health movement is uniting professions alarmed at the return of Dickenson conditions.

Building a public health alliance

Fears of a looming public health crisis have spurred a group of agencies and individuals into calling for the formation of a new movement to tackle the problem.



'No time for fighting each other'

Wendy Moore reports on the launch of the Public Health Alliance

The following are the essential basis of every citizen's right to good health.

INCOME

which provides the material means to remain healthy.

HOMES

that are safe, warm, dry, secure and affordable.

FOOD

that is safe, nourishing, widely available and cheap.

TRANSPORT

that permits accessible, safe travel at reasonable cost and encourages fuel economy and a clean environment.

WORK

properly rewarded, in or out of the home, which is worthwhile and free from hazards to health and safety.

ENVIRONMENTS

protected from dangerous pollution and radiation and planned to preserve and enhance our quality of life.

PUBLIC SERVICES

which provide care for those who need it, and support for carers. Clean safe water and waste disposal, adequate childcare and recreation facilities.

EDUCATION AND HEALTH PROMOTION

which give all the necessary information to keep us healthy and the confidence and resources to tackle the causes of ill health.

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH SERVICES

properly resourced, free at the point of use and sensitive to our health needs.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

to good health regardless of class, race, sex, physical ability, age or sexual orientation.

The Health Service Journal, 23 July 1987

RETURN TO the Public Health Alliance: C/O HVA, 50, Southwork St,
London SE1 1UN.

I/We support the CHARTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
 NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 POSTCODE _____
 ORGANISATION _____
 I would like more information about the Alliance
 I enclose a donation of £ _____ payable to the PHA.
 Signature _____ Date _____

Baker's Bill:-

'Opting-out'

In the Guardian Sept 22nd, children from the 'centre of excellence' Bronx High in New York report 'over-crowding', large classes, rapid staff turn-over, lack of real guidance from teachers, no social mixing of racial groups and neglect of pupils who are struggling to keep up. This is the model which Kenneth Baker has in mind for his City Technology schools. Highly selective, resting upon good parental support, efficient on funding, and with limited educational objectives, steering away from liberal educational thought which advocates the teacher's responsibility to adapt the school environment and teaching style to the pupils' needs. This is definitely 'OPTING-OUT' of the responsibility of providing comprehensive education for all. The idea is catching. Mr Neil Fletcher approved the idea of Local Authority run 'Magnet Schools' to compete with the City Techs. Press quotations and publications:

'Magnet Schools'

IEA 2 Lora North Street London SW1P 3LB '3

'Teachers sense death knell for state schooling' Guardian Sept. 21st

'The biggest parent's organisation The National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations has come out against proposals intended to give them more choice' Guardian Sept 23rd

'Counties object to Baker's Bill'

The Association of Metropolitan Authorities sought to extend the formal consultation period to Dec 15th.

'Wandsworth Conservatives, with a majority of only one on the council look the most vulnerable to a determined campaign by teachers and parents of the kind that has seen off earlier attempts to break up inner London's education service.' Guardian Sept. 22nd

'Right urges more radical reforms'

'The reform of British Education' The Careidge Press, 8 Victoria Square, London SW1 £2.95 Guardian Sept 21st.
Could someone do a critical review of this paper?

Government Consultation Paper
'The Organisation of Education in Inner London'

This paper is available to parent governors, but some parents may have had no sight of it. Parents of children in ILEA schools have been advised to write (before October 16th) to Mr F Cohen DES Room 3/54, Elizabeth House, York Road. SE1 7PH. The consultation period is very short, but pleas to extend the period have so far been rejected in spite of the declared objective in the paper of educational provision being more responsive to local need.

The bill will make very fundamental changes to ILEA schools. These are not reforms. The proposals will uproot the schools from their network of support and funding, a system that has been developed over decades. Parents and teachers are very worried, but how many will collect their thoughts together in time to write?



● Schoolchildren in the classroom... but who'll pay for their education in the near future?

RADICAL STATISTICS

CONFERENCE FEB 27th 1988

A. G. M. FEB 28th 1988

There will be a sociable event/entertainment on Saturday evening Feb 27th Proceeds to Nicaraguan Statistics Fund.

Venue, in London, to be announced.

Note this date in your diary so that you do not miss this important event

Conference Organisers:

David Bayat 01 790 3460

Janet Shapiro 01 348 3485



The Radical Statistics Newsletter is available by subscription. Current rates are £5 per year for individuals and £7 for institutions and £1.50 for the unwaged. The newsletter is available from the Radical Statistics Group, c/- BSSRS, 25 Horsell Rd, London N5 1XL. Tel 01 607 9615.

The Radical Statistics Newsletter is produced three times a year in May, July and December

Editors: send the typed newsletter to Janet Shapiro one month before they want the newsletter to reach readers. Copy to be typed on A4 paper.

Contributors: send articles to the Editor by the copydate on A4 paper, typed single-spaced with 1½ inch margins all round. All members of RSG are invited to contribute to the newsletter - articles may vary from very short to quite long. Letters and reviews are also welcome.

Addresses: The Editor's address usually appears in the last newsletter, but articles can also be sent to "The Editor, RSG, c/- BSSRS, 25 Horsell Rd, London N5 1XL.

Next Editor: **Cecilio Mar Molinero, Dept. of Accountancy and Management,**

Copy Date: Dec 31, 1987 **The University, Southampton SO9 5NB**

DATA PROTECTION ACT

In accordance with the DPA, any member is entitled to ask

- (a) for a printout of his/her personal details (name and address) as kept on the RadStats computer
- (b) that his/her personal details should not be so stored

Anyone wishing to avail themselves of this right, please contact the Troika with requests in triplicate.