

RADICAL STATISTICS NEWSLETTER

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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 committee known as "The Troika", and elected at the Annual General Meeting. The editorship of this newsletter rotates; the next editor will be Dave Gordon, who can be contacted via the address and telephone numbers given below. Apart from producing this newsletter, the work of the RSG is done by its subgroups whose membership is open to all interested parties. Please consult the contact people below if you wish to get involved. Use the newsletter to advertise if you wish to start a new group.

The Troika

Christy Maginn, 12 Spring Close, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 7HA.

Andrew Philpott Morgan, 20A Dunollie Road, London, NW5 2XP. Tel. 071 485 9968

Steve Ludi Simpson, 41 Park Crescent, Bradford, BD3 0JZ. Tel. 0274-635469 (home).

This newsletter was produced by **Jacky Holloway** and **Tina Posner**.

Review Editor: Brendan Burchell, Social & Political Sciences, Free School Lane, University of Cambridge, CB2 3RQ, 0223-334538 (work).

Editor of RSN49: Dave Gordon, 95 Effingham Road, Bristol BS6 5AY. JANET computer network address: US_DG@UK.AC.BRISTOL.CMS. Telephone: 0272-303030 ext. M405 (work), 0272-240344 (home).

Deadline for copy: **31st August 1991**.

Subgroups

Health: Alison Macfarlane, 40 Warwick Rd, St. Albans, Herts, AL1 4DL. Tel. 0727-52111.

Education: Cecilio Mar Molinero, Department of Accounting and Management Science, The University of Southampton, Southampton, SO9 5NH. Tel. 0703-592561.

Race and Law: Roy Carr-Hill, Centre for Health Economics, York University, Heslington, York, YO1 5DD. Tel. 0904-433650.

Surveys for Pressure Groups: Dave Drew, Sheffield City Polytechnic, Sheffield. Tel. 0742-20911.

Trade Unionists: Peter Ramage, 7 Ipswich Road, Tooting, London, SW17 9RH.

For general correspondence, write to:
Radical Statistics, c/o London Hazards Centre,
3rd. Floor, Headland House,
308 Gray's Inn Road, London, WC1X 8DS.

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*** CALLING ALL MEMBERS ***

Sue Haslam and Steve Simpson

Do you think the Radical Statistics Group is too laid-back? Do you think it is of value? Do you think we could be more effective? We want to know what you think.

To increase the impetus we thought a survey of membership was an appropriate course of action. We want to know more about you, what your views are on Radical Statistics and whether or not you can make a positive contribution.

The first draft of the questionnaire was piloted at the Radical Statistics Annual Conference in February. Although we have been back to the 'drawing board' several times since then, it formed the basis of the **questionnaire circulated with this Newsletter.**

The Radical Statistics Group has been in existence since 1975 and this is the first time we have carried out a survey of membership that goes wider than the encouragement to get involved in one of our projects.

We are fortunate to have the assistance of a computer studies student who is making the computation of the results form the basis of her final project. To gain the optimum benefit from this student resource, we not only want a response from you, but we want it quickly. She is available **now.**

In anticipation of your response - **thank you.** The results will be published in the winter Newsletter.

The discussion after the talk took up some of the difficulties faced by the ending of the Cold War. These included the problems of adjustment to the decline in demand from the military sector and its knock-on effects, the security problems that this could present in areas where there was a significant superpower military presence which could leave a vacuum and greater instability. Although on a more positive note the opportunities made possible by a safer world have presented themselves as an opportunity which should not be missed and one which RADSTATS might have an important role to play by pointing to the gap between opportunity and reality.

(Further reading: Malcolm Chalmers, 'The peace dividend: a European perspective' in *European Security: the New Agenda*, Safer World Foundation, November 1990).

Annual General Meeting Report

Christy Maginn

At the end of the Annual Conference there was time set aside for reports from sub-groups, and other proposals. This was the AGM. The **Education Group** have not been active in the last year, and had no annual report to submit.

Health Group Report

The Group is hoping to hold three or four meetings annually at the London School of Hygiene. The first of these was due to be held on 21 March when health and homelessness was to be discussed. Later the group indicated that weekend meetings may be possible. A request for volunteers to help with work on the new *Unofficial Guide to Health Statistics* was made to the AGM. The unallocated topics include GP statistics, dental statistics and statistics on healthcare outside the NHS.

The Group are updating *Facing the Figures*. It has been both time-consuming and very hard work. A suggestion was made that individuals could work on specific chapters and allow these to be issued as pamphlets. This will be considered by the Group. The Group are presently discussing whether Radical Statistics ought to liaise with the NHS Federation, which some felt was dominated by doctors.

Troika Report

As noted in previous newsletters, a full list of the archives has been compiled. Requests for materials can now be made through our new address clearly indicating 'Publications'.

There have been two initiatives on publicity. Firstly Steve Simpson has had a letter published in the *Guardian* and Andrew Philpott Morgan and Steve have drawn up a publicity leaflet. This is being posted to every research department, trade union and university department in the country.

The last part of the AGM centred on a proposal from the Troika to have a publicity initiative on Official Statistics. The feeling of the Troika was that the issue of integrity of official statistics was very important. Specifically there was a proposal to have a public meeting with three speakers. Some people at the AGM felt that we may damage our standing with the Royal Statistical Society (RSS). It is very important to get our views clear. Was the concept of integrity clear to everyone? A compromise proposal to run a meeting in conjunction with the RSS was put forward, but could not be agreed since some people felt that the RSS had lost the opportunity for such a focus in the RSS report. The Chair suggested that the idea be brought back to the Troika for further discussion. Any offers of help or further ideas can be sent to any Troika member.

Elections to Troika

Cecilio Mar Molinero was the only member of the Troika wishing to step down. Christy Maginn, Steve Simpson and Andrew Philpott Morgan were all willing to stay on, and were re-elected without a vote.

Vote of thanks

The Chair proposed a vote of thanks to Waqar Ahmed, Trevor Sheldon and Colin Thunhurst for organising the conference. It was clear that a lot of hard work was done in preparation for the day.

There was a request for anybody who wanted to take on the task for next year to contact the Troika.

1990 Finance report

1. Income and expenditure

23.1.90 - 31.12.90 (Previous year in brackets, taken from RS45)

Income		
Conference	662.50	(79.00)
Subscriptions		
Standing orders	348.00	(253.50)
Cheques/cash	1,177.91	(479.10)
Publications sold centrally		
Subgroup publications	41.15	(4.45)
Central publications	42.80	
Deposit account interest	14.52	
Donation	200.00	
Total income	2,486.88	(816.05)

Expenditure		
Conference	743.12	(40.00)
Radical Statistics	1,248.57	(479.85)
(Issues 44-46, 2 issues only in 1989)		
Administration		
Bank charges	6.09	
PO Box at LHC	50.00	
8,000 labels	42.90	
Interests survey report	52.04	
Stamps, discs, stationery, mail redirection, other admin	152.67	
Promotional leaflet	31.00	
Transfers to subgroups for publications sold	27.50	
Bounced cheque	5.00	
Total expenditure	2,358.89	(591.23)

Excess of income over expenditure	127.99	(224.82)
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2. Balance of assets & liabilities

Bank balances	Current	1,075.51	(988.50)
at 31.12	Deposit	510.22	(495.70)
Stocks of stamps, labels, disks		90.07	
Cheques received to be cashed		70.00	
Cheques written to be cashed		-43.54	
Net assets		1702.26	(1484.20)

3. Budget 1991

Assuming conference and publications break even, and Radical Statistics and Administration costs rise by 10%, we should be able to break even in 1991 without raising subscriptions.

Income (from subs)	Total 2,000
Expenditure	Total: 2,215
Radical Statistics	1,380

Promotion leaflet	
mailout and reprint	200
Administration	335
Events	300

Notes on finance:

Every category of income and expenditure was much higher in 1990 than in 1989! Subs went up, but so did administration, conference and newsletter costs - partly because of the full 3 issues this last year and partly because their postage was more fully paid for.

In the conference section, the 1990 one made a surplus of £53.79; there has been some advance publicity for the 1991 conference included in these accounts.

Overall we broke even in 1990. Income from subs will rise in 1991 with more paying at the rates decided in spring 1990, and new members from use of the promotional leaflet.

We have well over £1,500 in two bank accounts. I have put £300 in the 1991 budget for events such as the planned discussion of official statistics. There's plenty for other uses.

Agreed at conference:

1. No change in subscription rates; but future change should consider a differential between individuals and institutions, and between home and overseas subscribers.

3. Groups' and members' suggestions for use of assets are invited.

Steve Simpson

Membership report for 1991 Conference

1. Membership at 31.1.91 (RS47)

Membership is defined here as receipt of *Radical Statistics* through payment up to 4 issues previously.

Unwaged	7
Low-waged	10
Waged	190
Institutions	41
Overseas	11

Total	259
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Free copy (exchanges and journalists) 10 included in the 161 'contacts' who are not members.

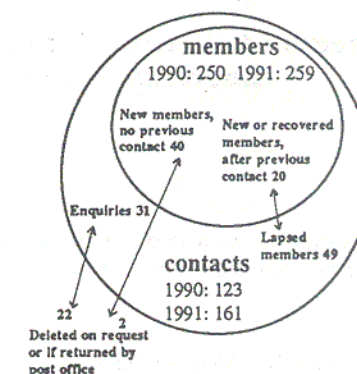
2. Method of payment

Last payments of members at RS47.

	Standing orders	Cheques or cash
£1.50	0	6
£2	2	0
£3	24	7
£4	1	0
£5	30	47
£6.60	0	1
£7	1	16
£10	31	93
Total	89	170

The 6 at £1.50 have been sent final reminders; the £6.60 resulted from changing foreign currency.

3. Membership changes 14.2.90 - 31.1.91 (RS44-RS47)



Notes on membership and payments

Membership remains around 250 after 60 members have been made, and 51 lost. The number of overseas members is rather low.

Details of membership a year ago are a little hazy... the newsletter was then sent to 250 apparently paid up members, but RS45 reported just 176. More than thirty standing order forms were passed to me by the previous treasurer unprocessed and past their 'begin payments' date - apologies to all those pissed off and around by the mix-ups that hopefully have been less this year. The database is nearly ship-shape now and keeps details of contacts (including lapsed members) to send notices of conference and so on.

Agreed at conference:

1. Wide circulation of the new promotional leaflet.
2. Calendar year subscriptions from 1992, essentially to ease administration: everyone would get reminders at the same time of year, say in the Autumn.

**Official statistics:
do we need a new agenda?**

A discussion meeting organised by Radical Statistics

Opening speakers:

Muriel Nissel

Social researcher and former government statistician

David Taylor

Unemployment Unit

Andrew Philpott Morgan

former government statistician

Elizabeth Chapman

Librarian, Oxford Institute of Economics and Statistics

Peter Davies

Deputy Editor, Health Service Journal

Monday June 17, 6.00 pm

Manson Theatre

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

All welcome to come and contribute to the discussion

Things to do

- * Return your completed membership questionnaire **immediately** (page 3)
- * Find out how you can benefit from, or contribute to, community OR (page 4)
- * Join the debate on official statistics, at the meetings in Bradford or London (pages 26 & 47)
- * Help the Health Group with its campaigning and forthcoming publications - contact Alison Macfarlane (page 38, cover)
- * Offer to help with or host the next Conference - contact the Troika (page 39, cover)
- * Contribute to the quest for a better Labour health policy - contact Karen Buck (page 44)
- * Respond to Hugh Lowe's plea on the means tested welfare state (page 50)
- * Send in an entry for the Data Graphics Award! (page 55)
- * Revive another sub-group - or start a new one (cover)
- * Contribute an article - long or short - to the next newsletter, or voice your views on the items in this one - contact Dave Gordon (cover)

The Radical Statistics Newsletter is available by subscription. Current rates are £5 per year for low waged and £10 for waged, institutions, and overseas. The cost to unwaged people is £3. This newsletter is available from the Radical Statistics Group (Subs.), c/o. London Hazards Centre, 3rd. Floor, Headland House, 308 Gray's Inn Road, London, WC1X 8DS.

The Radical Statistics Newsletter is usually produced three times per year.

All members of the Radical Statistics Group are invited to contribute to the Newsletter. Articles may vary from brief notices to detailed articles. Letters and reviews are also welcome.

Articles should be sent to the next editor using the address given below.

Data Protection Act

In accordance with the Data Protection Act, any member of the Radical Statistics Group is entitled to ask:

- a) For a printout of his/her personal details and the record's name and address (as kept on the Radical Statistics Group computer).
- b) That his/her personal details do not be so stored. Anyone wishing to avail themselves of this right, please contact the Troika (address on inside front cover) with requests in triplicate.

Editor of Newsletter No 49

*Dave Gordon
95 Effingham Road
Bristol BS6 5AY.*

Deadline for copy: **31st August 1991.**

As well as hard copy, contributions on floppy disc or via electronic mail may be welcome. It will help the editor if you contact them when preparing to send copy, to find out preferred formats.