

# Radical Statistics



Number 60  
Spring/Summer 95



The **Radical Statistics Group** is a group of individuals based on the distribution of this newsletter. The small amount of central administration 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 **Andrew Philpott Morgan** who can be contacted via the address and telephone number given below. Apart from producing this newsletter, the work of the RSG is done by its sub-groups 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

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#### The Troika

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This newsletter was edited by **Azeem Majeed and Neil Vickers**.

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Deadline for copy: **29th February 1996**.

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**Radical Statistics**, c/o London Hazards Centre, Interchange Studios, Dalby Street, London NW5 3NQ

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**A date for your 1996 diary!**  
**Radical Statistics conference**  
**Saturday February 24 1996**  
**Leeds University**

# Progress with the Second Edition of the Unofficial Guide to Official Health Statistics

*Susan Kerrison*

Despite a slow start the guide is now well under way with contributions received from seventeen people to date and another eight promised by the end of September. A big thank-you to all concerned, even if you have not delivered yet.

The aim is to have a first draft ready by Christmas and then hold a seminar for all contributors so that the general issues identified can be drawn together to form a conclusion. In the mean time I am writing an overview of DoH and OPCS publications related to health . I thought it might be a good idea to spice this up with some comments from "consumers" i.e. yourselves, about the difficulties they have found in using these publications. For example, one immediate problem is that there appears to be no correspondence between the title on the publications list and the title on the front cover of the document. In the envelope you received this newsletter you should find a list of DoH publications and I look forward to receiving your comments on them as your contribution to the guide.

## Preparing art work for Radical Statistics

The last two newsletters were delayed because of the problems with some of the art work, which were returned by the printer. I subsequently found out what the problem was, from a different printer in connection with a different publication! When using low-cost printing methods, as we do, the subtly different grey solids that can be produced on a laser printer polarise into either black or white and can also develop white holes in the middle of areas which should be the same shade of grey or black. The effect also happens when photocopying, of course. **The way to get round this problem is to use patterns, such as dashes or cross-hatching.**

# Radical Statistics AGM 1996

## **When - Saturday February 24**

Starts at 10:30

Finishes at 5:00

Followed by "A Social Event"

## **Where - Leeds University**

Behind Hyde Terrace - more precise address to follow

## **Who - Lorna Arblaster**

Danny Dorling

The Health Group

and many more....

**Can I speak too?** - Yes, if you let Anthony know quickly!

## **More information from -**

Anthony Staines,

17 Springfield Mount, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9NG

Tel 0113 244 3517 (w) 0113 266 2584 (h)

Email A.Staines@leeds.ac.uk

## **How much?**

£12.00 for employed persons,

£5.00 students/unwaged

If you need a creche, or have special dietary needs, please let me know a.s.a.p. Vegetarians will be catered for.

Thanks very much,

Anthony

## Wanted: Editor(s) for Radical Statistics Newsletter

The newsletter is to be published 3 times a year in. The editor(s) is responsible for producing the newsletter in a suitable length and format to be delivered to Alison Macfarlane for printing. The job is to chase the authors and produce the newsletter by the required deadlines. The deadlines for submission of copy are the last days of February, June and October. Copy received late will go into the next newsletter. Any prospective editor(s) will need to have access to a PC with a variety of word-processing systems. It should be noted that some authors submit articles in handwriting and these have to be typed up by the editor(s).

The TROIKA is putting this job out to tender and anybody can submit a tender for this position. **Please submit tenders to Pat Duggard of the TROIKA**, address at the front of this newsletter. The deadline for submission of tender is one calendar month from receiving this newsletter. The proposed start for the new editor(s) will be for the Spring issue of the newsletter.

### Tips for Radical Statistics Editors

Contributors- Jacky Holloway, Tina Posner, Waqar Ahmad, Ludi Simpson, and Anthony Staines.

#### The start

It is never too soon to start chasing people for contributions. Before the previous newsletter hits the streets you should have a couple of volunteers lined up to write for you. Friends, and people who work within screaming distance are good first choices. Start chasing people for their contributions anything up to two months before the copy deadline. Deadlines mean what they say! If people don't get stuff in to you on time, then send it on to the editor of the next newsletter. Bitter experience teaches that people who miss one deadline are very likely to miss all of the rest. Obviously copy which is only a few days late is not a problem, but after this be careful. Try to get a reasonably diverse set of articles, preferably not all written by you.. Failing this, call it a special single topic issue. A balance of long and short bits is ideal, and if you can find something funny, a good cartoon, or something similar, use them. Keep an eye out for potential material, particularly graphics, fillers, and something for the

cover. Remind prospective authors that the newsletter has a wide general readership, and contributions likely to be unintelligible to those in other fields are neither useful nor desirable. Also remind them to include their name, and the address/phone number/e-mail address which they want publicised. A membership survey in 1991 showed the following dislikes - unnecessarily academic or inaccessible language - unclear or loose arguments - inadequate explanations of political context - overly cosy or cliquy articles.

### Some food for thought when making editorial decisions!

#### *Handling the work*

Let people know precisely how you would like their copy. You probably want it on disk formatted in a standard way, in a file which the word processor of your choice can read. Graphics, where possible, should also be provided as files on disk in a form which your word processor can handle. This is much easier than leaving blank spaces, and trying to glue them in afterwards. Remember that, unless you are an unusually good typist, it will take several hours to type, proof-read, and correct, six pages of A4. If you have access to, and are familiar with, a 'real' DTP package, so much the better. It is doubtful if it's worth learning one just for the Newsletter. Typing is not really acceptable these days.

As soon as you get copy on a disk, read it, and stuff it into your chosen word processor. It is particularly galling to discover on the day before you plan to send it to the printers, that one of your contributors has used an unheard-of word processor, and a different operating system! Most contributors are very helpful, and will try to provide their work in your chosen format, if you give them enough advance warning. It is also a good idea to format the work as you get it. It takes a long time to go through an article checking, and standardising all of the headings, format codes, reference styles, spelling errors etc.. Fixing sentences which make no sense in any known language (an unfortunate by-product of word processing) is also better not done at the last minute. Authors can get aggrieved if you chop their stuff up, even with prior consultation. Remember, however, that you are the editor! References are particularly awkward. We suggest that you insist on numbered references in Vancouver style. Formats like (Jones and Digglesworth 1897) and so on break up the text a lot more than a nice unobtrusive'. It is usually much easier for the author to do this than for you to do it. Many newsletters have



joint editors. This has lots of advantages, as you can split the work, and you also have another opinion available on request. It's also useful for contributors, who have two ports of call, if one of you is away from time to time. Remember that you are jointly and severally responsible for producing the goods. If catastrophe strikes, for example you just can't get it finished, can't get any articles or something of the sort, let any member of the Troika know, or rope in a friend to help.

## Technical issues

Radstats is printed on folded A4 at A5 size. The simplest way to produce it is on single sided sheets of A4, as camera ready copy. The printers will reduce it, and collate it correctly. Very few packages can produce this sort of newsletter as A5 pages, printed two to a sheet on A4 in the right order, and the right orientation. Obviously if you print it on A4, you must ensure that it will be legible when reduced to A5. It is well worth your while getting the previous newsletter's inside covers on disk from its editor. It will save a lot of your time retyping it. Also note that it must have a number of pages divisible by four, (including the covers). Generally the larger the better, but try not to go over 52 pages, as this costs more. Front covers with large areas of solid black are also more costly. Printing from your camera-ready copy, (but not final editing, printing from disk, page numbering, pasting of graphics etc.) is handled by Alison Macfarlane. Please do not send the only copy off by post, but keep one in reserve for accidents. Also try to back up the computer version early and often. Alison also arranges to collect it from the printers, find 'volunteers' in London to stuff it into envelopes and post it. Help with this is always welcome....

This newsletter (RS60) used the following specs (and Word 6.0 for Windows) : - Margins 20mm all round (right and left, top and bottom). Binding 5mm extra on inside margin. (most packages handle this easily). Font Bookman (supplied with WordPerfect, and PostScript printers). Article titles 24 pt bold Authors 18 pt italic Subheadings 18 pt bold Text 13 pt Front cover Helvetica 72 pt. and 48 pt. (and a WordPerfect butterfly!) Inside covers Helvetica 13 pt. Back cover Helvetica 24 pt, 18 pt, and 13 pt. It is available (on MS-DOS 3 1/2 disks) from Anthony Staines, Tel 0113 266 2584.

*Radical Statistics* is available by subscription. Current rates are £5 per year for low waged (self defined) and £12 for waged and overseas, and £20 for institutions. The cost to the unwaged is £3.

**\* Note the new subscription rates \***

This news letter is available from the Radical Statistics Group, c/o London Hazards Centre, Interchange Studios, Dalby Street, London NW5 3NQ

*Radical Statistics* 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 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 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. 61

**Andrew Philpott Morgan,**  
20a Dunollie Road, London, NW5 2XP. Tel: (0171) 485 9968.

Deadline for copy: **29th February 1996**

For those with access to computers the next editor will take contributions on 5.25" or 3.5" DOS discs, using Wordperfect or ASCII text (both if possible) mentioning the hardware the discs were prepared on. Please also include a hard copy of the contribution. Ideally use 2 cm margins, Bookman 13 pt for text, 18 pt bold for subheadings, 18 pt italics for your name, and 24 pt bold for headings. If you haven't got access to a computer, paper is quite acceptable, but a lot of extra work for the editor.