

EDITORIAL

We had a reasonably successful 2016 conference in York late February with about 60 participants. I think most people enjoyed it.

We have been waiting for the papers from the February Conference for several months and have at last received three; together with a follow-up to a previous article and some other bits and pieces, we now have a respectable 'November 2016' issue. All these papers were written and completed before the Brexit referendum unless otherwise specified.

The conference papers are by Jonathan Bradshaw on trends in Child Poverty; by Stewart Lansley on trends in inequality in income; and by Andrew Street on Financial Crisis in the NHS. We have an additional paper by Lisa Buckner on census-based local labour market research, and a response by John Hume to the criticism of his article in the previous issue on work capability assessment; together with updates by Jonathan Rosenhead on the academic boycott of Israel, on progress with the next RadStats book on Social Statistics by Jeff Evans and the provisional programme for the 2017 RadStats Conference on Saturday 18th February in Edinburgh.

Once again a very eclectic collection and no any attempt is being made to link them, other than that they are all very interesting papers.

In this editorial, written only a couple of weeks after the second populist Trump 'shock' of the year, the previous question has to be re-emphasised: why have data and information had so little impact on political debates (and obviously that lack of impact is multiplied several times in terms of the impact of *our* information) and how that can be changed. Once again, the appeal to 'take back control of our country' was very powerful – and will be in France with Marine Le Pen and Geert Wilders in the Netherlands – but it is very disconcerting to believe that information has NO effect at all. What can we do – or what could be done by others - about it?.

Following on from the Brexit debate, much of the US Election debate was based on misleading economic and immigration information, yet attempts to deliver correct information had absolutely no impact. Why Not? Our problem is that 'we' have not understood the ways in which 'information' is adsorbed or understood by different socio-economic groups. Perhaps there should be real - rather than virtual - answers this time.

Finally, an urgent appeal for contributors / papers; we are seriously running out of material!

The Editor