

EDITORIAL

This is the first post-2017 Edinburgh Conference Issue. I/we have to apologise for the tardiness in appearance; been more than a bit submerged by other tasks. Anyway, I/we think that most of the 60+ participants enjoyed and profited from the Conference.

We have been waiting for the papers from that February Conference for four months and have only received two; so we have decided to publish an issue with our backlog of submitted papers, and make the next issue the 2017 Conference papers.

These are a very mixed bag. The first is a paper, which will be seen as controversial, by Ian Plewis on Glyphosate and Green Politics reviews the evidence for and against 'Round-up' (and glyphosate more generally) with a special focus on the confusion of hazard with risk and the dodgy sampling and statistical methods employed. It is most certainly worth reading carefully before jumping to any hasty judgements; if nothing else he shows that (most of) the 'Green' evidence is hyped and suspect.

This is followed by a forensic examination of Welsh School Inspection Reports by Robert Moore showing how

Then there is a fascinating two-pager by Larry Lesser – our first but I hope not only statistical poet - on the 'recent' history of the portrayal of the normal distribution, which is our new cover page.

On the other side of the normality sandwich, we have an article on the appalling state of Irish breathalyser statistics by Frank Houghton which 'links' - totally fortuitously – with the article by Roy Carr-Hill in the previous issue.

The last article is by Dougal Hutchison analysing and reviewing the success – or otherwise – of the Indian government in providing equal educational opportunities to primary school children, focussing on the bottom quintile and on Scheduled Tribes. He concludes that whilst impressive gains have been made, there are still wide disparities between these two disadvantaged groups and the rest.

Obviously a very eclectic collection and I am not going to make any attempt to link them, other than that they are all very interesting papers.

The issue is back to its usual length because there are two additional pieces. One is a very critical review by Neil Wilson of a book on Basic Income by Van Parijs and Vanderborght

The other is the text – finally agreed on among ‘members; of the Working Group set up at the 2016 RadStats meeting in York – of a proposal for the issue raised by Palestinians to support Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions (BDS) of Israeli University institutions (not individuals). We’ll know whether they have responded positively before you get this issue.