

EDITORIAL

I/we had hoped that this issue would include some of the conference papers but it was not to be. However, my rather hopeless intervention at the beginning of the London Conference, which most – including myself – thought unlikely to be successful has, in fact generated several papers from new authors so that there is not only this issue but a surplus for the next issue.

Contents of this Issue

The result of course is that the contents of this issue are a mixed bag, so they have been put in the order of author's surnames. We start, appropriately with a homage to Arthur Bowley, one of the pioneers of statistics and especially a precursor of Tukey's approach to analysis and presentation. Written and illustrated, lovingly, by John Bibby, who found it buried in a mess of papers somewhere. It is followed by a novel approach by Riekkinen and Burns to understand daily journey-to-work commuting behaviour in London and link this to environmental and health impact, and to devise a replicable framework through which areas can be rated based on low carbon and active travel with this information then being used to support policy implementation for more sustainable commuting.

The next two articles are clear critiques of the current use of statistics. The first is by Frank Houghton expanding on the revelations concerning the extensive falsification of breathalyser testing statistics by the Irish Police (O'Sullivan, 2017), which have recently escalated into a damning expose of a series of more incriminating practices. What started out as an investigation into inflated activity figures by some Irish Police officers (Garda) has subsequently revealed financial misconduct, wholesale errors and incompetence, and extensive data falsification and a nefarious cover-up at the highest levels. The second is by Brendan Lawson on the coverage of the 2017 South Sudanese Famine by *The Guardian* and *BBC News*. There were three interlinked findings: one, the United Nations was the source for the vast majority of statistics; two, these statistics were unilaterally accepted as indisputable truths by the news media; three, they underpinned and constructed a narrative of constitution-measurement-solution. This framed journalists' use of statistics as serving to reinforce existing power dynamics of the humanitarian field.

Prospects for RSN 121

Whilst we do have some material for the next issue RSN 121, due in October 2018, we would like it to be at least partly devoted to that conference. The Editor has written to each of the speakers asking if they can produce a paper but we think it would also be very useful if any of those who attended (or did not attend) have any ideas or thoughts on the subjects raised could make a contribution, however short. I/we have written to all of the authors individually and circulated all members asking them to submit anything they want to write on one or more of the themes addressed in the conference.

The themes addressed at the conference were the issue of inequality as it relates to income, reproductive health and intimate partner violence, while the fourth explored the feasibility of low-carbon towns. The day included workshops specifically related to these themes, and one on the role of the statistician in the age of alternative facts.

Please send anything directly to Roy Carr-Hill roy.carr_hill@yahoo.com with **Subject Title:** Contribution on 2018 London RadStats Conference: theme Income Inequality **OR** Reproductive Inequalities **OR** Inequality and Intimate Partner Violence **OR** Feasibility of Low-Carbon towns **OR** Role of statistician in the age of alternative 'facts'.

Roy Carr-Hill