

Network



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INTERVIEW WITH SUE SCOTT

 See Page 4



SOCIOLOGICAL EYE ON... LIVERPOOL CITY OF CULTURE

 See Page 27



CONFERENCE SPECIAL

Pages 8-15

Contents

- 2 Eds
- 3 Bulletin Board
- 4 Interview – Sue Scott
- 8 Conference Matters
 - BSA Annual Conference report
 - Conference Comments
 - AGM Report
 - Philip Abrams Prize 2004
- 16 BSA News
 - Subscription News
 - A new way to submit to BSA Journals
 - Introducing the new WES editorial team
- 21 Professional News
 - Research Libraries Network
 - Hazel Genn appointed to RAE
- 23 Occupational Mobility
- 24 Bookends
- 27 Sociological Eye on...
- 28 Desert Island Discourse
- 31 Soapbox / Letter
- 32 Research News
 - Gender Equality Network
 - Sociology of Sleep
- 34 Student News
 - Surviving the Viva
 - Europe without Homophobia

COMING SOON...

Working class academics?
The abuse of sociological buzzwords
BSA Summer School report
Impact factors explained



Conference Matters

As well as our usual batch of professional news and announcements, this issue has a definite conference theme running throughout its pages. The Autumn issue of *Network* usually reports on the Association's annual conference, and beyond this we have an excellent interview with one of this year's plenary speakers, Sue Scott. The issue of conferences is also raised by two contrasting articles written by David Beer and Esther Dermott. David offers us an insight into his experience of presenting his first conference paper, while Esther presents the first in a series of pieces that are intended to stir up comment and opinion from our readers.

Both of the pieces, I'm sure, highlight some of the feelings many of us share about conferences, and they certainly generated a lot of discussion at our last editorial meeting.

In particular, David Jary made the important point that 'the BSA Conference is the discipline's most important public space. You need it and it needs you'. A point reinforced by David Morgan who said 'for the first time for many years I missed the 2004 conference and felt quite bereft'. Though many people enjoy the chance to meet up with friends and colleagues, and hopefully hear some stimulating papers, others (including myself) have more mixed views. In particular, Nic Groombridge pointed out the high cost of attending conferences saying 'conferences are important I just wish I could afford some'. An opinion echoed by Sara Edwards, who looks forward to the day she can afford to attend the Annual General Conference and assess for herself how relevant and useful it is.

My own concern about conferences is that the real reason for attending them is networking. Now I know for most people the term 'networking' has no negative connotations; it is simply what we do as academics. However, maybe because I am still relatively new to this game, and not completely divorced from my working class roots (which allows me to trailer a coming piece that Esther has promised on whether any academic can really call themselves 'working class'), I still harbour this slight feeling that anyone senior to me, rather than being sucked up to, should be treated with caution and suspicion. Victoria Gosling's comments sum up many of our feelings quite succinctly, that 'conferences can be fun, scary, interesting, expensive, boring, educational and a pain to organise, but are necessary'.

Garry Crawford

Further information on these and other events can be found on our website. The comprehensive members notice board is updated regularly and contains detailed information on forthcoming conferences and seminars, calls for papers and funding deadlines. Simply login to the Members section and select Notice Board. www.britisoc.co.uk

Forthcoming Events

New ESRC seminar series

Sleep and Society: Critical Themes, Future Agendas

Seminar one: Sleep, wakefulness and everyday/night life: social, cultural and historical perspectives
University of Warwick, Friday 3rd December 2004, from 10.30am-5.00pm

www.warwick.ac.uk/go/sleepandsociety

See page 33 of Network for further information on the Sociology of Sleep.

Postgraduate Research Seminar: Technologies: Studies and Strategies

Thursday, 9th December 2004
University of Surrey, Guildford
FREE including a light lunch and refreshments
Email: k.orton-johnson@surrey.ac.uk or s.smith@surrey.ac.uk
<http://incite.surrey.ac.uk/index.html>

Learning About Risk

28-29 January 2005, University of Kent, Canterbury
Full details and booking form at: www.kent.ac.uk/scarr/events/events.htm

Drugs, Sport and Society Conference

BSA Sport Study Group
University College Chester
Friday 11th February 2005
For more information contact andy.smith@chester.ac.uk or k.liston@chester.ac.uk

23rd Annual International Labour Process Conference

University of Strathclyde, Glasgow
21-23rd March 2005
For more information email conference administrator Debbie Campbell: d.campbell@strath.ac.uk

Race and State Conference

Emmet Lecture Hall, Arts Building, Trinity College, Dublin
30th – 31st March 2005
www.tcd.ie/Sociology/mphil/mphil.htm

Sport and the Body

BSA Sport Study Group
Friday 6th May 2005
For more information contact: Dominic Malcolm dem4@le.ac.uk or Andrew Parker andrew.parker@warwick.ac.uk

Culture and Social Change

Hulme Hall, The University of Manchester
11-13 July 2005
For more information e-mail: cresc@man.ac.uk or visit www.cresc.man.ac.uk/events/eventsmain.htm

Norbert Elias and Modern Sociology

University of Leicester
1-3 September 2005
Call for papers
Deadline for abstracts: 15 January 2005
Deadline for papers: 15 June 2005
Email: dm13@leicester.ac.uk
www.le.ac.uk/sociology/ccs/events.html

New Contexts in Learning and Teaching

23rd – 25th November 2005
Jury's Inn, Birmingham
Email: enquiries@c-sap.bham.ac.uk
www.c-sap.bham.ac.uk

EDITORIAL NOTES

The views expressed in this publication should not necessarily be taken as BSA policy. Whilst every care is taken to provide accurate information, neither the BSA, the Trustees, the editors nor the contributors undertake any liability for any error or omission.

Network has an ISSN, which makes it possible for substantial articles to be refereed and noted in RAE submissions.

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Got some interesting news or information? Fancy doing a feature article? Like to interview someone? Need to get something off your chest? Moving on or up? Please contact Garry Crawford or Libby Marks (see above).

CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE FOR SPRING 2005 ISSUE: 26th November

Final decisions to publish contributions lie with the Network Editorial Team who also reserve the right to edit contributions. We ask that the word limits below are strictly observed. Over-length contributions will be returned to author for shortening.

WORD LIMITS:

300 words for notices in Bookends and Study Groups
400 words for Professional News, Research News and Student News (up to 750 words with approval of editorial board only) Please contact the editor in advance for guidance on book review essays, features, interviews, Desert Island Discourse, Soapbox and Sociological Eye

Please note, we can only print the name of an event, its date and venue in the Bulletin Board section. Longer notices can be posted on the website. Contact Libby Marks.

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**"THE WORST
THING ABOUT
BEING A
FEMINIST
SOCIOLOGIST IN
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NOW IS THAT
THERE ARE SO
MANY MORE."**



SUE SCOTT

POSTGRADUATE DEAN AND PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM

Sue was formally Professor in the Department of Applied Social Science at the University of Stirling and in earlier incarnations worked in the Universities of Manchester, Cambridge and Lancaster as well as for the Health Education Authority. Sue has been a member of the BSA since 1975 and has served on the Executive and on a number of other committees. She has been engaged in debates within feminist sociology since the late 1970s and has written widely about gender, sexuality and risk especially in relation to children and young people. Her current research includes an ESRC funded project with Lydia Martens on [Risk and Routine in Domestic Kitchen Practices](#) and a book project with Stevi Jackson entitled [Theorising Sexuality](#).

Elizabeth (Betsy) Ettorre was born in the US where she received a BA in Sociology from Fordham University. She completed her PhD at the London School of Economics. She has a consistent research interest in women's studies, gender and drugs, sociology of health and illness and ethics. She is currently Professor of Sociology and Associate Dean at the University of Plymouth, UK.

Sue, let's begin by talking about your intellectual development. Whose work influenced you? How would you describe your own intellectual development as a feminist Sociologist?

My intellectual development as a feminist Sociologist is not really separable from my development as a feminist and my mother probably made me a Feminist. Although, like so many things for women, there wasn't really a clear language to talk about it at that point. She probably was a kind of gut feminist, very determined that it should be possible for women to succeed and insistent that I was as good as any man - all of which was very good for my confidence. We both read *Second Sex* when I was 16 ...and she took a great interest in both mine and my sisters involvement with the movement. My introduction to academic feminism in the context of Sociology was as an undergraduate on a course on modern British society at Newcastle Poly that presented women's liberation as a social movement. After the seminars, the male lecturer insisted on opening doors for me and generally engaging in that sort of ridiculous performance to remind me of my marginal status. That was a practical introduction to dealing and engaging with such contradictions. I don't think I was reading an awful lot of feminist stuff until after I graduated, moved to London and got more involved with the movement. When I decided to do postgrad work, I went to Lancaster which was very much about wanting to do something that related to gender and which would enable me to use the political ideas that I was developing.

Can you say more about your time at Lancaster?

There I got more involved with the BSA and with building a network of other feminists. The significant point really was going to the BSA Summer School in 1978 which was on feminist theory and to a Women's Research and Resources Centre Summer School around the same time. I realised that there were other women in the same sort of position and that we could support each other. My academic/friendship network developed

from there and has had an enormous influence on me. Beyond that, the kind of feminist Sociologists that have had the biggest impact on me have been Liz Stanley and Dorothy Smith academically and Meg Stacey in terms of organisational issues. Also some male academic sympathisers especially David Morgan. So that's the sort of nexus of influences ... there are hoards more of course but those are the key ones for me.

Do you see yourself as someone who has had a consistent commitment to attempting to shift understanding around sexuality and is this where your initial interest and commitment comes from?

Yes, I think that the late 70s and early 80s were quite exciting for discussion about sexuality. I was reading stuff like Gagnon and Simon and Jeffrey Weeks' and Ken Plummer's early stuff and then Foucault alongside the small amount of feminist sociology such as Stevi Jackson's work and was also involved in the debates within the movement. On one level I couldn't get my head round what all the fuss was about ... I mean that sex and sexuality was incredibly important but why did it cause so much interpersonal damage and why did it seem to be so important at the expense of everything else? Why did we organise our lives around sexual relationships? It still strikes me as bizarre that we are obsessed with sex - it is everywhere - and yet many people continue to be deeply uncomfortable with it. I wish that we could see it as, at least to some extent, just part of everyday social interaction with those we are close to. A personal factor which influenced me at the time was that my sister came out as a lesbian while I was a post-grad at Lancaster. Although she's lots younger than me, we were engaged in all sorts of discussions. Two of my closest friends had decided that they were lesbians. So within my close network of feminist friends, there was a lot of discussion. It was about making the personal political, and at that point I suppose I had already kind of questioned heterosexuality as given and didn't accept the binary divide around sexuality.

Looking at feminist Sociologists in Britain, I see you among those who have been able to maintain this kind of interest and questioning about sexuality over the years. It's very visible in your work. How do you think you have been able to do that?

Although I've lived my life ostensibly as a heterosexual woman, I've always seen the heterosexual monogamous couple as something to be problematised. Although it hasn't always been easy to bring the political and the personal together and it has caused problems in my personal life sometimes - it has meant that there hasn't been a separation between my academic and personal thinking. But, I think it's probably most important that I always have had this close network of friends who are lesbians, bisexual and heterosexual. So when there were battles going on within the movement that put people in boxes and when I felt bashed about as a defined heterosexual, I have had in my everyday life a space where these things could be explored and discussed in an unthreatening way. I hope I have been able to take that sort of flexibility and openness gained from my friends into my academic work. So I've never been happy with the boxes really. A big positive has been the opportunity to work closely with Stevi Jackson who I've known since the late 70s. We have been through many similar experiences and this is reflected in the way we work together.

In your BSA plenary you raised a series of issues about sexuality and anxiety. Do you think we as a society can ever become less anxious about sexuality? What mechanisms need to be in place before we become less stuck?

I think we are getting more anxious about these things and I find that depressing. I had hoped that there were things we could learn from elsewhere, but the whole risk culture has re-emphasised earlier concerns. I think as long as we can't talk to young people about sex and sexuality, and as long as we present the dominant definition of sex as being heterosexual penetration, then all of those sorts of issues around risk and anxiety will keep coming back.

What was so enlightening about your talk was that your approach showed a much more flexible way of looking at things. You mentioned being reflective, so if we look towards the future maybe its about not making such a big deal about sexuality and sex anymore?

I would quite like to get beyond that in some way and Stevi (Jackson) and I have been writing about that as well, the possibility of living in a world that isn't gendered in the way that this one is. I am still quite optimistic about that. I don't know if I like the word equality anymore, but a 'transformation of women's positions'... We need to think about it as a spiral. Sometimes it feels that we're going back round the circle, certainly in debates about young people's sexuality and sex education, but I think we are coming round the spiral from a different position. Yes there are some of the same problems and issues but we've got different ideas and capital to bring to bear on it.

You mentioned in your plenary quite pointedly a quote from an evolutionary psychologist. Do you think that kind of renewed interest will have an effect of how people view sexuality in the future? These folks present a very fixed view. It's the setting of issues in stone that we were trying to challenge way back in the 70's.

That's right, I find it deeply depressing that it's so strong at the moment and I think it locks into a whole agenda of wanting quick fixes and answers. What's interesting from a point of view of feminism and sociology are all the wider debates about post-modernism and increased complexity

and flexibility and all the theorising we do around those sorts of things. But it seems to me, in the public media and policy debate, people are still looking for the straight forward causal relationships and quick fix answers. We only have to think about the way that genetics have been used in that context. I think we have to be much more vocal and engaged on wider terrain in order to present an alternative view.

We need to think about how to engage with Government. We perhaps focus too much on the media and not enough with engaging directly with special advisers and people in the departments. I think we are all busy - everybody's under pressure. Why do the evolutionary Psychologists get on Radio 4 all the time? Because they are prepared to do it, and because it makes for good sound-bites. Sociologists want to say more complex and subtle things and I think we have to get better at saying them more succinctly and in more places. We have things to say that resonate with so many people's actual lives and experiences.

There's this huge disjuncture between the kind of official stories and public discourses and what people's lives are like. For instance we know perfectly well that most people don't sustain lifelong or monogamous relationships but there is still a kind of pretence that that's what we do. We all need to come out and talk about it. But not in an individualised confessional sort of way - in a way that actually looks at the social patterns and the effects on wider sort of social issues and social processes.

Going back to your plenary, you were speaking about the very edges of the social and the cultural and the need for a sociology of sexuality which challenges this positioning of sex and sexuality. Can you say what would be the elements of this kind of sociology of sexuality? How do we start constructing it?

We need to be much more engaged in debates with what we generally call science. I don't have any problem about talking across disciplinary boundaries especially to scientists and many scientists that work in this kind of terrain don't have fixed ideas, they're doing exploratory work and they don't generally think that they are going to find the gene for homosexuality or whatever, that's a much more popularised version of it. I think if we actually found some way of being better at talking across those sort of disciplines about these things, we might get further. What we get is the crude version of everything which must be as frustrating for them as it is for Sociologists. So that's one element. I think it's about engaging with the political and policy agenda trying to move back again from the tendency to single issue politics and to look at how the campaigns and the politics around sexuality relate to other sorts of issues. The way for example that the Government's near obsession with teenage pregnancy reinforces ideas about gender and a 'them and us' view of sexual risk taking. So it's actually about pulling back from some of the focus that divides people up.

This is really the complexity of it all. . . Your work has consistently reflected feminists' concerns within Sociology. Why do you think this is so?

I suppose if you were to cut me open it would say 'Feminist Sociologist'. Although I studied Sociology before I would have formally labelled myself a feminist, I don't think they're separable really. And so I had that disposition before I got involved with the movement. So it is so much a part of my biography and of my everyday social and intellectual life. It isn't a separate academic practice; it's been so much part of my friendship network and the way, not wanting to sound too pious, I try to work. More recently I have moved into more managerial and organisational kinds of things but both the feminism and the Sociology gets brought to bear

on that. So I'm really interested in the way organisations are gendered and how we can work to change organisational practices as well as organisation structures.

It sounds like your feminism has been practised in the sense that you've always wanted to combine the personal and the political ...

I would still call myself a radical feminist. That used to be such a big debate what sort of feminist were we ... One of the real challenges for me was having to come to terms with the fact that I was no longer marginal. I think because I had all of those temporary jobs and for such a long time I had a sense of myself as just clinging on to academic work by my fingernails. Then you wake up one morning and you're a Professor and then you're Postgraduate Dean – or whatever. I can't any longer kid myself that I'm marginal, even though there are still relatively few senior women in the Academy.

Sue, what about considering the best parts and the worst parts of being a feminist Sociologist?

Well there is no doubt the best part is the networks, the friendship and the sharing of ideas - the women in Sociology and that shared project of trying to change it. Another thing is the way in which women's issues, feminist issues and gender are so much at the heart of such a lot of Sociology now. But the word mainstream doesn't quite work anymore anyway. Because it's less disciplined and more fractured and the boundaries are more blurred. Yes there are dinosaurs in British Sociology but not so many of them. I don't want to be or sound complacent but I feel that the kind of battle now is much more for a feminist sociological way of thinking

on the wider terrain ... So that's the good thing. The worse things have been the factions and the way that some feminist academics have over exaggerated and personalised differences....

It doesn't happen so much any more does it?

No. The worst thing about being a feminist sociologist in the beginning was that there weren't very many of us and one of the best things now is that there are so many more.

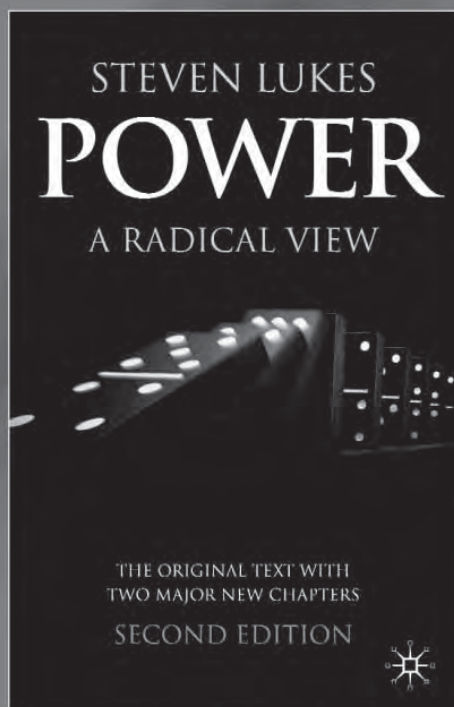
How about if we think about feminist Sociology at the moment and where you think its going? What hope is there for feminist Sociology?

I think it is important that we continue to develop what is quintessentially sociological about feminist sociology – the theoretically informed empirical focus on everyday practices and social relations so that our work isn't subsumed under more abstract feminist theorising. But it is also crucial that we continue to communicate and collaborate across 'disciplinary' boundaries so that we can do better research.

We must continue to be reflexive about our practice. Feminist research has had such a significant impact on thinking about the research process and that way of thinking has now spread beyond sociology.

We should also be positive about the impact of our work outside of the academy. There are feminist sociologists working in all kinds of organisations and we should continue to build relationships and research links beyond the walls of our institutions. It is also particularly important that we continue to support the next generation of feminist sociologists.

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INTERVIEW 07 

BSA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2004

Thanks to the fantastic efforts of the BSA Conference Manager, Nicola Gibson, and a team of Conference Organisers based at the University of Plymouth (Alison Anderson, Gillian Dunne, Elizabeth Ettorre, Kevin Meehan), this year's annual conference, held at the University of York from 22nd to 24th March, ran very smoothly. The conference attracted 324 delegates despite being held during term time (something not planned but rather resulting from a delayed venue booking which meant that a term time slot was the only one available to us if we wanted to hold the conference over the Easter period.)

The plenary speakers were Sue Scott and Joan Busfield. Sue paid special tribute to Meg Stacey who sadly died earlier this year (an obituary appeared in the Summer 2004 issue of *Network*) and entertained the audience with some amusing visuals to accompany her talk on *Sexuality, Anxiety and the Challenge to Sociology*. Joan's plenary on *Pills, Power, People: Sociological Understandings of the Pharmaceutical Industry* provided a truly fascinating insight into the rather worrying exploits of those who supply and dispense us with medication.

There has been a concerted move of late towards greater involvement of the BSA's Study Groups in the conference and nine groups chose to take an active part this year: Consumption; Family Studies; Museums and Society; Sociology of Architecture & Environment; Sociology of Media; Realism & Social Research; Risk & Society; Theory, and Work, Employment & Economic Life. It was good to see new groups being established and old and new research areas thriving. The hope is that study group streams will become a more prominent feature of the conference in the near future, providing more focussed research area activities within the conference.

The journal *Sociology* had a strong presence at the conference – the Editors being keen to highlight the (now in place – see page 18) move to electronic submission and to discuss and receive ideas and contributions for the journal. The BSA Summer School directors were there too to talk to any postgraduates thinking about applying. A number of roundtables and workshops were held – *Sociologists and Their Audiences*, *Sociologist Bites Dog – Getting the Most of the Media*, *The Future of the Social* as well as events designed specifically for postgraduate delegates.

In addition to the oral presentations, there were ten poster presentations this year. This mode of presentation is becoming increasingly popular and is an excellent way of getting your research and/or ideas in progress seen, if not heard. Doing a poster presentation means that your work is on view to a bigger audience and throughout the whole conference rather than for just the thirty minutes of an oral presentation only. For those with work in progress, or those with less well-honed oral presentation skills, poster presentation could be the ideal alternative.

92, or 28%, of delegates returned a conference evaluation form and, as ever, their comments and suggestions were wide ranging. There were those who seemed to love every minute of it 'I had a fantastic time and met some really friendly people', 'The conference is one of the best. I truly enjoyed the overall contents of the programmes and paper presentations' but also those who thought it could be better 'The conference was pretty good at times, but "pretty good" can't justify the expense' and there were many suggestions for improvement (see page 11). However, there were two recurring themes.

Low attendance levels at papers

The sheer volume of presentations (211 over the three days) means that parallel streaming of papers is essential. Assuming that there are twelve parallel streams which are also running alongside BSA organisational meetings (committees, editorial boards etc), the potential audience (324) is divided each day (apart from plenary sessions and the AGM) between about fourteen parallel activities. If the delegates were divided equally between streams each day, one could reasonably expect audiences of about twenty at every paper session. However, all things are not equal, and some sessions will inevitably attract a larger audience, leaving others less well attended. We could cut back on the number of papers given but as about 60% of conference delegates attend the conference with funding provided by their institutions on the basis that they will be presenting a paper, this is likely to reduce the numbers of delegates attending, which would defeat the object.

Poor quality/unpolished papers

It is impossible for the Conference Organisers to know exactly what the finished product will be like on the basis of the 250 word abstracts that are currently submitted. Perhaps the BSA should move to full paper advance submission (a requirement of many other academic conferences) but this would require quite a big cultural leap. However, there is another bonus in requiring full paper submission and that is that all papers could be made readily available in electronic version, so the conference proceedings could relatively easily be posted on the BSA website. It is also the case that papers presented at the conference are at different stages in development. Perhaps we could ask prospective paper-presenters to identify at the outset on their submission form whether their paper is, for example, a completed research paper, a professional research paper in progress or a postgraduate research paper in progress. This could be indicated in the programme so that delegates would be clearer about the status of any papers that they chose to attend.

We would welcome your feedback on these issues – and those detailed later on page 11. Please email judith.mudd@britsoc.org.uk with your comments and suggestions.



THE BSA AIMS FOR CONSTANT IMPROVEMENT TO THE CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE AND FEEDBACK IS ALWAYS WELCOMED. HERE, TWO MEMBERS OFFER THEIR VIEW: DAVID BEER SUGGESTS HOW NEW TECHNOLOGIES MAY REVIVE INCREASINGLY FRAGMENTED CONFERENCES WHILST ESTHER DERMOTT'S DELIBERATELY PROVOCATIVE ARTICLE INVITES A RE-EVALUATION OF THIS TRADITIONAL ANNUAL EVENT.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

EMAIL judith.mudd@britsoc.org.uk

My first conference paper

David Beer

Having attended the 2003 BSA annual conference I decided to work on a paper to present at the conference the following year. I began writing a piece based on an advert I had seen for the Apple i-Pod in a magazine and a debate I had heard about the storage of popular music on Radio 5. To test the paper out I had a practice run at a small interdisciplinary symposium at the University of York (where I am currently studying for a PhD). This helped me gain focus on the types of questions that my paper would generate and narrowed the content to exactly fit the time-slot. I now had a paper ready for 'mass' consumption.

After the freedom of critique I had enjoyed at the 2003 conference I found myself slightly more restrained in 2004. My paper was to be presented on day three of the conference and I found that giving a paper actually radically altered the conference experience: my empathy with the presenters restricted my critical edge. I began to wonder if this problem was specific to a conference of this size, how many of the delegates were free of these constraints.

Music does not seem to attract the crowds. My presentation was in a lecture theatre built to hold a whole year group. My audience numbered only five. That is if you include the chairperson and the person presenting the other paper. This lack of numbers is no-one's fault. The conference was extremely well organised by the BSA. The streaming of papers, in this case, allowed four relevant papers to be presented together so as to maximise attendance. The issue of low attendance at my session had far more to do with my own position on the peripheries, if not the outside, of sociology. I was not alone in this. A number of other sessions did not get large audiences. The question then is does this matter? Does it detract from the value of the experience? I don't think so.

The five people who attended the session all had a strong interest in the sociology of music. This small group created a very encouraging environment for my presentation and the discussions continued after the session was over. I received some extremely lively feedback and requests for further information and left with several new contacts.

Although presenting was an extremely valuable exercise I have made the conscious decision (at the time of writing this) to remove the shackles of empathy by attending next years conference without presenting a paper.

My conference experiences gave rise to a number of questions surrounding the problems of paper attendance and the difficulty of uniting the fragmented margins of sociology in its contemporary form.

Sociology appears to be an extremely fragmented discipline. This makes specialised communication problematic, particularly at major conferences. It is perhaps now time for a new challenge. Can sociology embrace and utilise technology to facilitate new conversations? Can technology be used to further unite the fragmented margins of sociology and therefore ensure its ongoing viability?

If we take conferences as an example then the problems of paper presentation attendance might be eradicated if access were to be gained through web based technology. It seems that an opportunity has now presented itself to make sociology more inclusive and accessible through removing the obstacles of time and space. Could this reinvigorate sociology?

A virtual conference on even the most specialised sociological subject could last for hours or indefinitely. Papers could be 'presented' (in a written, audio or video format) to be consumed and commented upon either in real-time or when convenient for the audience. This has potential to be far more interactive and audience-led than other online facilities currently available.

I am not arguing here that traditional conferences should be abandoned; they offer specific and valuable benefits. However, I believe that an increase in communication in sociology would be highly beneficial in terms of developing new forms of rigorous critique, the accessibility of interaction, and the unification of theoretical movements. A combination of traditional and virtual conferences may offer a pathway forward.

'THE PROBLEM WITH THE BSA ANNUAL CONFERENCE IS NOT THAT IT'S TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL - IT'S TOO MEDIUM'

My Last Conference?

Esther Dermott

What is the point of the BSA conference? The landmark event in the sociologist's calendar interferes with an Easter holiday every year, but what other purpose does it serve?

Conference grumbling is nothing new - it's practically an art form in itself. There are complaints about being scheduled for a 9am slot on the last day of the conference, the poor quality of the catering, and how it can possibly cost so much when you are staying in a room that a student has been booted out of for the vacation and there is no PowerPoint available. Yet these are actually relatively minor concerns and there is a much more fundamental problem that prompts the question, why am I here? None of this is a personal criticism of the poor souls labouring to run the conference each year - the dilemma remains no matter who is in charge.

Think about the most enjoyable conference that you've been to recently. Anyone have the BSA in March spring to mind? Thought not. What do I want from a conference? It's good to have the opportunity to catch up with friends who, because of social mobility, now live at the other end of the country. And we all appreciate the chance to get out of our respective departments to moan about teaching workloads, levels of administration, university restrictions and bitch mildly about colleagues. This is all fair enough but if it turns into the sole reason for being there then something is going terribly wrong. The last conference I attended left me feeling stimulated by discussion that I had, a little bit intimidated about my own abilities because of the quality of the papers, produced a few useful references and most of all meant that I came home re-enthused about my work and what was going on in the area.

It isn't surprising that this conference was on a specific topic. Most people I speak to say that small-scale, focused meetings are much more successful. The move to sub-disciplinarity happens unintentionally. At the BSA there were huge swathes of current sociology missing- just try playing 'spot the medical sociologist'. Well, why should they turn up when they can go off to MedSoc and feel they are understood? The problem is not that the BSA annual conference is too big or too small - it's too medium. In really huge conferences there are much stricter themes so that you can find the specific sessions that are relevant to your research, and pop into a plenary from someone you have never read but know you should have as well. By contrast the BSA manages neither and frustrates everyone.

I don't know what the answer is but the idea of abandoning a general conference is beginning to feel inevitable. At any rate if something doesn't change I fear that there will be a lot more of us scanning travel brochures for March next year.

CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

Delegate feedback is essential to conference improvement and the office is very grateful to those who took the time to complete their evaluation forms. Further comments and suggestions on how to improve the annual conference would be very much welcomed. Please email judith.mudd@britsoc.org.uk.

Here are a few more comments/suggestions (with responses where appropriate) from this year's evaluation forms.

'9-7 made for a very long day'

Agreed, however, it would be difficult to fit 200 plus papers into shorter days without increasing the number of parallel sessions and potentially reducing per session audience numbers still further.

'Accommodation was dreadful'

Members might be pleased to hear that York have now employed an Accommodation Manager whose remit includes to improving the standard of service offered to visitors during vacation time.

'Chairs need more guidance on handling unpleasant, hostile questions'

There are occasions when an audience member can get pretty vocal in a session. Senior academics should be hardened enough to cope with this but it's obviously very unwelcome for first-time presenters. Additional relevant points will be added to the current guidelines issued to session chairs.

'Facilities for socialising are central to a dynamic conference'

Agreed - financial constraints have restricted the provision of socialising opportunities at conference of late, but this is now being reviewed for 2005.

'Rather than having a big conference that incorporates a wide variety of topics - BSA should concentrate on focussing on smaller conferences within particular areas'

This is an interesting idea - what do other members think?

'I would like a bigger range of speakers'

Bringing in speakers can be a costly business and can mean significant increases in the conference fees, but this is being reviewed - do any members have any specific speaker suggestions?

'A lot of people sang "I'm not a sociologist but . . ." - this could be built on as a strength in terms of attracting delegates.'

A new and interesting idea - anyone out there have any ideas as to how this might be taken forward?

'Not having PowerPoint was a drawback and would put me off giving a paper in future.'

PowerPoint provision is pretty expensive, about £6,500, and adds to the cost of conference fees but audiovisual provision is being reviewed.

'The conference should move to being a showcase.'

Another interesting suggestion - again practical ideas on how this might be taken forward would be welcomed.

'Dominated by postgraduate student presentations'

In fact 33% of conference delegates were postgraduates with 34% of papers being given by postgraduates.

2004 AGM Report

Sixty-three members made a good choice when opting to attend this year's Annual General Meeting (the BSA's 53rd), as it provided a colourful and lively distraction from the academic activity going on elsewhere during the conference.

It opened with the excitement of the 2004 BSA Philip Abrams Memorial Prize award-giving ceremony. The winner was David Hirsh (Goldsmith's College, London) for his book *Law Against Genocide: Cosmopolitan Trials* published by Glasshouse (see pages 14 and 15). Congratulations to Goldsmiths - this is not the first time they have produced a Philip Abrams Prize winner.

More formal business matters then took the stage. . .

Work on a new set of BSA Equality & Diversity Guidelines was nearing completion and members could expect to see these appearing on the BSA website towards the end of 2004.

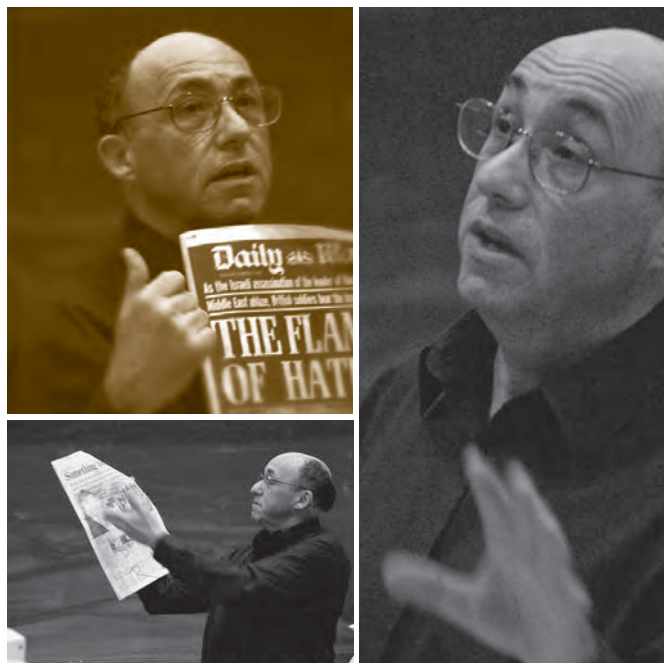
Current BSA journals publishers, SAGE had back-digitised the full back run of *Work, Employment & Society* and twenty years of *Sociology*. Full access to this 'BSA Journals Archive' was currently only available to BSA members (via the BSA members' area of the BSA website). A demonstration of the BSA Journals Archive was waiting for interested members after the AGM. Both journals would be moving to electronic 'paper' management during the coming year, with *Sociology* expected to accept electronic submissions from Summer 2004 and *Work, Employment & Society* expected to accept submissions from Spring 2005. This should speed up the paper submission and refereeing process enormously, shortening submission to print times significantly (see page 18).

A further operational change was being implemented for the journals in that editorial support would be moving in-house to the Durham office. A Publications Manager was to be appointed early in the Summer (see page 16) whose remit would include providing editorial support for both journals (helped by a Publications Assistant, to be appointed a little later on). These were major, quite complicated changes but ones which were expected to bring long-term benefits to the journals and the Association as a whole.

Talks were also underway with SAGE about the possibility of establishing a new journal on Cultural Sociology. If it goes ahead, this would be something quite different to the BSA's journals in that it would not be wholly-owned but joint-owned with SAGE. A preferred bidder had been identified at Aberdeen University and members would be kept posted on developments.

A new editorial team, led by Professors Helen Rainbird and Michael Rose, had been appointed to take over the running of *Work, Employment & Society* from January 2005 and *Sociology* would begin the search for a new team to take over from January 2006 very soon.

The financial fortunes of the Association were currently on an upswing with last year's £43,000 deficit now technically cleared on paper. However, planned additional expenditure in the coming year, including an office move (see page 16 for more news of the move) undoubtedly heralded a downswing. There was to be no increase in membership



ABOVE: PROFESSOR IVOR GABOR EXPLAINS HOW TO LIVE WITH SPIN

subscriptions over and above the usual cost of living rise for 2005 but an in-depth review of membership categories and subscriptions was underway (see page 21).

AGM approved an increase in the number of elected trustees (from 15 to 18) to provide more 'hands on deck' to carry out the many tasks of the Executive Committee. Membership of the Executive Committee for the coming year was confirmed as Pamela Abbott*, Pat Allatt*, Meryl Aldridge, John Brewer (Chair), Mike Cole, Brian Goldfarb, Susan Halford*, Tom Hall, Barbara Harrison, David Inglis*, Ray Lee*, Gayle Letherby (Vice Chair), Linda McKie, Liam Murphy (Treasurer), Tim Strangleman, Emmanuelle Tulle*, Iain Wilkinson*. Martin Albrow, Sara Arber, Robert Burgess, David Morgan, Jennifer Platt, John Westergaard and John Scott were confirmed as Honorary Vice Presidents for the coming year and a new category of membership 'Honorary Member' was approved for members with over 50 years of BSA membership.

A proposal for the 2006 Conference organisation, with the provisional title *Sociology, Social Order(s) and Disorder(s)*, from a team based at the University of Essex was approved.

A closer look was being taken at the current trends in sociology, with there being increasing anecdotal evidence of members being redeployed due to department restructuring and closures and others teaching sociology on courses no longer labelled sociology. Members were asked to reflect on the changing position of sociology within their institutions; on how this might impact on the long-term future of the discipline and the BSA; and to think proactively about how their Association might alter its services to strengthen its membership to ensure that sociology, as the 'mother' discipline, retains its identity.

The AGM closed with a real treat – an animated Ivor Gabor (Emeritus Professor of Broadcast Journalism) giving a short talk on *Living in Spin: sociology meets the media* - a valuable insight into journalists' working practices with suggestions on how best to handle them. The talk certainly conjured up plenty of smiles!

*newly elected



The British Sociological Association Annual Conference 2005

LIFECOURSE

FRAGMENTATION, DIVERSITY AND RISK

Monday 21st - Wednesday 23rd March, University of York

Plenary Speakers: Professor Liz Stanley and Professor Jenny Hockey

Conference organising team: Adam Burgess, Miri Song, Sarah Vickerstaff, Azrini Wahidin, Iain Wilkinson (University of Kent at Canterbury)

www.britsoc.co.uk

BOOK BEFORE FEBRUARY 18TH FOR EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT

BSA PHILIP ABRAMS MEMORIAL BOOK PRIZE 2004



SHORTLISTED AUTHORS DAVID HIRSH, CHRIS GREER AND TOM HALL



TIM STRANGLEMAN WITH WINNER DAVID HIRSH

The Philip Abrams Memorial Book Prize is awarded annually, and presented at the BSA's Annual General Meeting during the annual conference, to the best first sole-authored book within British sociology. This year the judging panel comprised Joan Busfield President of the BSA, Joan Chandler the Chair of the Executive Committee, and Tim Strangleman the Chair of the Publications Committee and an Honorary Vice President.

All of the nine books submitted for the 2004 prize were impressive examples of current sociological writing. Each title was read by the panel between November 2003 and January 2004. Following much discussion, three titles were shortlisted for the prize:

●●● Sex Crime and the Media: Sex Offending and the Press in a Divided Society Author: Chris Greer
Publisher: Willan 2004

●●● Better Times Than This: Youth Homelessness In Britain
Author: Tom Hall
Publisher: Pluto Press 2004

●●● Law against Genocide: Cosmopolitan Trials
Author: David Hirsh
Publisher: Glasshouse 2004

In coming to a decision, the panel judged the most impressive and engaging of these, and therefore the winner of the 2004 prize, was *Law against Genocide: Cosmopolitan Trials*. It was thought that this title was an exciting example of the use of the sociological imagination that developed a new area within the discipline. David's book has set a high standard for next year's competition.

In accepting the award, David thanked the Association for recognising the work that went into his book and also for foregrounding an area which did not usually get mainstream sociological coverage. He thanked Barbara Brown of Glasshouse, feeling lucky to be the first of the Glasshouse imprints. The book stemmed from his PhD project and David thanked in particular Robert Fine at University of Warwick for his support and help. Robert, David concluded, is a profound social theorist who should be recognised as such.

Enter the BSA Philip Abrams Memorial Prize 2005

Nominations are now being sought by general invitation to publishers, and by the circulation to BSA members supported by online promotion. In addition to the cash prize of a £1000, the winning author and his/her publisher will enjoy the benefit of extensive publicity within, and outside the BSA membership.

The 2005 winner will be announced at the 2005 BSA Annual Conference to be held at the University of York. There be an exhibition of all nominated works at this conference and short-listed nominees will be invited to attend and discuss their work with delegates.

For a list of previous winners, the adjudication process and other conditions, and nomination forms, visit the relevant page on our website: www.britsoc.org.uk/publications/abrams.htm

The BSA established this prize in commemoration of Philip Abram's substantial contribution to both public awareness of sociology and his support and encouragement of young sociologists at the start of their careers. Our aim is to ensure that the prize continues to contribute to both these tasks.

Closing date for 2004 prize entries: 6 December 2004.

Enquiries: libby.marks@britsoc.org.uk

David Hirsh is this year's winner of the Philip Abrams prize for his book **Law against Genocide: Cosmopolitan Trials.**

Can you summarise the main arguments of the book?

The book begins by looking at four 'cosmopolitan' trials. Two at the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY) and two post Holocaust trials in London - the criminal trial of Andrei Sawoniuk and the David Irving defamation trial.

I observed and wrote about the trials in a different way to those that are usual in academic legal discourse. (One anonymous referee responded to a draft of the book by saying that it was a memoir of a court-room.) I was interested in looking at how these trials work as social processes, rather than simply as legal institutions. I was as interested in the public gallery, the feel of the court and the struggles witnesses were having with the structure they faced.

The book starts with actual developments and develops theoretically from them. Much cosmopolitan theory contains within it a narrative of progress – and much critique of cosmopolitanism contains an assumption that the actual world is so terminally compromised by power and interest that cosmopolitanism can never be anything other than a facade, used by the powerful, to cover this reality. Rather than starting with an ideal of international or cosmopolitan law or human rights - and then finding that these ideals are entirely compromised in the real world, I was interested in looking at small instances of success for the rule of law against the utter horrors of totalitarianism - and asking how significant these sparks of light were. In the book I don't understand cosmopolitanism as a narrative of progress, but rather as a possible framework for human agency.

One other argument that is key to the book is that ethnic cleansing and genocide are not to be downplayed as inevitable elements of the normal functioning of modernity. Too many sociological accounts of genocide seem to understand life in Muswell Hill or Bombay or New York to be little different, in any profoundly important sense, from life in Auschwitz or Srebrenica or Darfour. The idea and the actuality of human rights comes under such harsh criticism that distinctions dissolve into a picture of a modernity that is so entirely dehumanised as to render them insignificant. Then any action against genocide is represented as little more than a replication of the underlying causes of genocide.

What do you think the role of sociology is in relation to human rights?

Sociology has developed a number of critiques of human rights and of law. We have insights and techniques that enable us to think about these things in a way that is not possible in purely legal discourse. But we need to be able to hold on to the critique and also the critique of the critique - debunking and deconstruction are not enough.

You have a background in various disciplines and your book could fit in a number of categories - do you think of yourself as a sociologist now?



PHILIP ABRAMS PRIZE WINNER 2004 DAVID HIRSH

I was not entirely committed to sociology. I wanted to study politics but was advised that sociology was more political - which I think might have been good advice. My thesis - and the book - are on the borders of sociology, politics, international relations, philosophy, law and I suppose that part of which discipline you become committed to is luck.

What have been the benefits of winning the prize?

Confidence, mainly. I had often felt a little intimidated by a particular kind of postgraduate - those who talk so fluently in the technical language of social theory or philosophy. The prize was a part of a realisation that we must write and teach things that make sense to us and that there is room for different styles and approaches.

And what will be your next research project/book?

I want to write on Israel-Palestine - as a case study in nationalism, fundamentalism, racism, ethnic cleansing, narrative production, cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitan law. Each way of telling the Israel-Palestine story, each truth, constitutes only a part of the whole. There are forms of both Jewish and Palestinian nationalism that are so seductive and there are forms that are so repugnant. The complexity of the story is in holding all of the claims to justice and to injustice together. I am currently writing a piece on the internet and radio output of the extreme right wing Israeli settlers. I am also interested in the Israeli refusenik movements. Also in the struggle within Palestine between secular movements that are interested in statehood and religious currents that are interested in eternal redemption.

Interviewer, Esther Dermott

DIRECT DEBIT PRIZE DRAW

The BSA is now able to collect membership subscriptions by Direct Debit. Direct Debit is the preferred payment method for over 45% of the UK bill paying population, there is the peace of mind of knowing subscriptions are being paid automatically and payment dates will not be missed, it's convenient and cheaper.

We recently held a monthly prize draw for BSA members signing up for this method of payment where one member per month who enrolled on the Direct Debit Scheme would receive a cheque for £100. Our winners are listed below. We will be holding another draw around Christmas time, so the earlier you join the scheme the better the chances of you being included in this draw.

Congratulations!

Dr Keith M Macdonald,
University of Guildford, Surrey
Dr Tracey Warren,
University of Nottingham
Ms Sharon E Smith, Goldsmiths'
College, London
Mr Alex Twitchen,
University College Chichester
Professor Angela Dale,
University of Manchester

BSA OFFICE ON THE MOVE . . .

Some of you will remember that the Executive has been keen to purchase a property to house the staff and provide an asset to help secure the long-term future of the BSA.

Despite searching hard, there has been a dearth of suitable property up for grabs. In the meantime, this January the office received notice to vacate the existing premises (the University of Durham, our landlords, are reposessing the property). The staff are therefore moving into new rented accommodation. A small group of volunteers will, however, continue to seek a property suitable to buy.

From 1st November, our contact details will be:

**BSA, Bailey Suite,
Palatine House,
Belmont Business Park,
Belmont, DURHAM,
DH1 1TW**

**There will be no change in phone,
fax and email details.**

NEW STAFF AT THE BSA OFFICE

Over the summer the BSA office was joined by two new faces – Joyce Campbell and Libby Marks.

Joyce, who has a long track-record of charity administration work, joins as Administrative Assistant. She is providing general administrative support for the rest of the team and is the voice that you will be most likely to hear if you ring the office.

Libby, who joins as Publications Manager, graduated from the University of Kent at Canterbury with a first class degree in English Literature in 2001. Her background, since leaving University, has been exclusively in publishing – producing in-house publications and acting variously in proof-reading, publicity and marketing roles. Libby's role at the office is to assist Judith with all aspects of the Publications activities of the BSA (principally journals and newsletter production).

Joyce and Libby are perfect appointments – hard-working, committed but at the same time fun to work with. They look forward to meeting and speaking to you!

BSA SUPPORT FUND

**ARE YOU A MEMBER
OF THE BSA BASED
IN THE UK? ARE YOU
A POSTGRADUATE
STUDENT?**

**IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO
BOTH THESE QUESTIONS
THEN YOU ARE ELIGIBLE
TO APPLY TO THE SUPPORT
FUND. SEE PAGE 34 FOR
MORE INFORMATION**

“The BSA Support Fund allowed me to enjoy my first international conference without worries about extraordinary expenses for travel, accommodation, and the conference fee. I found the application process very straightforward and it didn't take much time until the BSA Support Fund team informed me about its decision. In view of my own very positive experience, I would like to encourage others to consider the opportunity which the BSA offers with its support fund.”

Andreas Pollmann, University of Essex

“The BSA support fund enabled me to attend a conference in London on Businesses and the Environment. Before attending this event I had been trying to decide what direction my research should take. I had been looking at how companies reacted to environmental concerns but was

swamped by the amount of research that had been undertaken in this area and could not see a unique angle that my research would investigate.

The conference enabled me to hear from and talk to various academics and industry leaders and presented me with a specific area of interest for my research. Since this conference my research has been able to be focused and I came away from it with a number of contacts.

If I had not got the support fund then I would have been unable to attend and my research would be very different now, I suspect I may even have still been looking for a direction for it.”

Adam Frost, Aston University

SUBSCRIPTION NEWS

The BSA is a membership organisation, supported by membership subscription and existing to provide services to members. This makes subscription rates and their payment an important and sometimes delicate issue. Rates must be set at a level that enables the Association to provide a range of services, with some members effectively subsidising others; and as it is members themselves who provide this subscription income, rates need to be kept modest where possible and always reasonable. The balancing act is an obvious but tricky one: the lower the subscription rates the better as far as (many) members are concerned; the more money the BSA has the more it can do for members and for sociology.

So the BSA has a duty to look closely at subscription rates every year, to ensure that these are set at a level which is both financially responsible and fair, bringing any suggestions for change before members at the AGM. Some years – most years – there is little to do: the complicated machinery of costs and benefits and rates of payment and assorted membership categories seems to be running fine. If BSA subs were a car then these are forecourt years – check the air pressure, refill the screen-wash, top up the oil. This year is not a forecourt year, this year is a garage year. Subs are due a service.

Over the next few months the BSA will be reviewing all existing subscription rates and all existing membership categories. We need to be sure that these rates and categories are set so as best to serve the combined interests of members and the Association; we need to be sure that there are no inequities, no inconsistencies; we need to think about the changing needs of members, and new services the BSA can offer; we need to think of ways in which to extend membership numbers and widen the membership profile. Where things are not broke there is certainly no need to fix them, but there are some important issues to consider here and perhaps some positive changes to be made.

Here are a few ideas not necessarily being discussed by the BSA Executive but intended to get you thinking . . .

How many categories of membership do you think the BSA should have? There are currently seven. Is this too many or not enough to accommodate the breadth of membership? Should we have more, or less, and why?

Should the categories continue to be based on income bandings? If not, what system should we use? Would a flat-rate system or perhaps one full rate and one concessionary rate of membership work?

What labels should the BSA use for its membership categories? Are category labels such as 'concessionary', 'standard', 'lower' and 'higher' helpful?

Should different categories enjoy different membership benefit packages? If so, what would you include in the different categories? Should members be given the option to 'opt out' of certain services (and then opt out of the costs associated)?

If you have any particular suggestions, or general comments, relating to membership subscription then please do contact the BSA office with these over the next couple of months. It is important that we hear from you in order to bring ideas 'from the membership' to the 2005 Annual General Meeting in March next year. Any and all suggestions welcome.

Email: enquiries@britsoc.org.uk.

Deadline for comments to ensure discussion by the BSA Executive is 30 November.

Members who want to do their bit to aid efficiency and equity in the meantime could usefully do the following: check that they are in the correct membership subscription category for their income; consider moving their subscription payment to direct debit.

Dr Tom Hall, Membership Task Group Convenor,
BSA Executive Committee



UK Concessionary

Full-time students, unwaged, or in receipt of benefit and living in the UK
£24.00



UK Lower

Retired and/or earning between £7,000 and £11,999 and living in the UK
£36.00



UK Standard

Earning between £12,000 and £22,999 and living in the UK
£57.00



UK Standard Plus

Earning between £23,000 and £32,999 and living in the UK
£83.00



UK Higher

Earning £33,000 and over and living in the UK
£108.00



Outside UK Concessionary

Full-time students, or retired, or unwaged and living outside the UK
£36.00



Outside UK Standard

All members living outside the UK who are not eligible for the Outside
£88.00

Manuscript Central

The New Way to Submit to BSA journals

Since August, **Sociology** has been using an online submission system, Manuscript Central, for all submissions. **Work, Employment and Society** will begin using this system in January 2005 (see page 19). Here Lesley Staward explains the reasons behind the change and the benefits to members.

For some time, the BSA have been concerned that at the end of each editorial term (every three years), skilled editorial assistants have been made redundant and the journal knowledge they had accumulated, lost. It was decided that one solution would be to establish permanent assistance based at the BSA office. This would ensure that vital skills and knowledge would be retained by the organisation and that administrative continuity could be maintained during editorial handovers. However, it also meant the need to find a way for the assistant to work remotely from the editorial team. After much investigation, it was felt that an electronic manuscript submission system would provide the solution.

After extensive consultation, I reported to the BSA Publications Committee that Manuscript Central by ScholarOne appeared to meet the BSA's needs. It is a very adaptable system and can be tailor-made according to the specific requirements of the journal.

Once this proposal was approved, and it was agreed that *Sociology* would be the first journal to migrate to this system, I began setting up the system with the project manager from ScholarOne, Nash Pal. This was not an easy task: it was very difficult to try and dissect all aspects of journal management so that every possible eventuality was accounted for. However, the results have been extremely pleasing. *Sociology* have been live now for four months and have not experienced any major problems. Submitted articles are being checked and passed to the editors within two to three days and, in return, the editors are suggesting referees within the same amount of time. This means that articles could be with referees for review in only a week. In the paper system, this would have taken so much longer.

Work, Employment and Society will go live in January and the journal will stop accepting paper manuscript submissions. If you have any queries relating to this, please contact Libby Marks, BSA Publications Manager, who will be providing administrative support to *Work, Employment and Society*. More information on Manuscript Central can be found on the BSA website www.britsoc.co.uk.

Advantages

In January 2004, I prepared a list of expected advantages of the new system for the Publications Committee. I have set out this list below and added comments as to whether these have now come to fruition.

- 1. Faster review process.** Early results show that time in review has been reduced and could even be halved.
- 2. Better service for authors and reviewers.** Manuscripts are dealt with more speedily and authors are able to continually check the progress of their papers.
- 3. Less paper handling.** The administration load has already begun to reduce so that more time can be spent on journal development.

4. Easier report generation. Statistics are available instantaneously so that you can see how well the journal is performing.

5. Reduction of costs - especially postage. Postage has now been halved and once the paper system has completely gone, the costs in this area will be negligible.

6. In future, editors can be based at different institutions. This is definitely the case as most communication is now easily completed electronically.

7. You only need Internet access to be able to access files. The system is hosted on a secure internet site therefore you only need internet access and an email address in order to use the system.

8. Ease of access will encourage more submissions from abroad, raising the profile and potential readership of the journals. We have already seen an increase in interest from international authors.

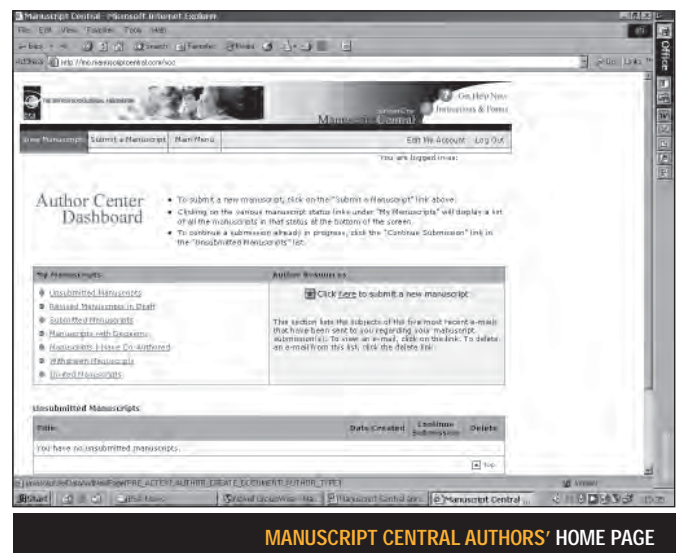
As with most change, I would expect people to be apprehensive and for there to be some teething problems. However, my experiences with *Sociology* is really very positive - there are so many advantages. If you would like to have a look at the site, please log on and feel free to create an account so that you can browse fully.

An introduction to Manuscript Central can be found inserted in this issue of *Network*. Before you submit you will also need to read the instructions published online. This includes important file preparation instructions that must be adhered to ensure a successful submission.

Please go to the journal's website and print out 'Instructions to Authors' from the 'Instructions and Forms' section.

Visit <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/bsa/soc> or from January 2005, <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/bsa/wes>. for WES

Lesley Staward, Manuscript Central Implementation Project Manager



Sociology of Health and Illness is one of the thousands of journals that are already benefiting from using Manuscript Central. They have recently enjoyed unprecedented ISI rankings for a Sociology journal. The Editorial Board are extremely satisfied with the system and we anticipate that *Sociology* and *Work, Employment and Society* will be equally pleased.

'Manuscript Central has been a great success for SHI - I am sure that it has played a part in pushing us up to no. 4 in the ISI Sociology rankings. Contrary to some fears, it actually seems to have widened the international basis of both submission and refereeing. Even technophobe authors and reviewers have been able to manage the system, with some discreet coaching from our editorial office. I cannot imagine going back to the previous system.'

Robert Dingwall, Editor,
Sociology of Health and Illness

'As an academic who spends 12 weeks a year as a Visiting Professor in Finland I can say that Manuscript Central has helped so much - I can referee articles anywhere in the world and I have yet to encounter a PC that does not have the software required.'

Linda McKie, Editorial Board member,
Sociology of Health and Illness

'We have found that moving to Manuscript Central has been excellent in terms of reducing the journal's administrative load. It has therefore freed up more time to spend on the content of the journal.'

Steph Lawler and Dave Byrne,
Joint Editors, *Sociology*

Announcing a new editorial team for *Work, Employment and Society*

Work, Employment and Society has established an enviable intellectual reputation, and a high citation ranking, as a sociologically grounded forum for empirical research in, and scholarly analysis of, work and employment. The journal is noted for identifying contributions from other disciplines that may prove outstandingly relevant to the Sociology of Work and Employment, thus gaining esteem for the journal beyond Sociology as well as within it.

From January 2005 to December 2007 the journal will be edited by:

Prof. MICHAEL ROSE
University of Bath
Editor

Prof. HELEN RAINBIRD
University of Birmingham
Editor

Prof. IRENA GRUGULIS,
University of Bradford
Editor, Notes and Controversies

Dr. ANNE MUNRO,
Napier University Edinburgh
Editor, Book Reviews

The new team's aim is to maintain and enhance this reputation of *Work, Employment and Society* as a pillar of Sociology in Britain with a wide following both outside Sociology and outside the UK.

Editorial support for the journal will be based at the BSA Office in Durham, led by Libby Marks, BSA Publications Manager. Submissions will be moving to electronic submission early in 2005 – see adjoining article. Details of this will be announced on the BSA website in late 2004.

About the editors

Helen Rainbird holds a BA in Anthropology and Geography, MA and PhD in Social Anthropology (University of Durham). She has worked at the Institute for Employment Research and the ESRC's Industrial Relations Research Unit at the University of Warwick, at University College Northampton, and is currently Chair of Human Resource Management at the Business School, University of Birmingham. She has been editor or co-editor of six books, notably: *Training in the Workplace: Critical Perspectives on Learning at Work* (Macmillan 2000); *Education and Work in Great Britain, Germany and Italy* (Routledge 1997 with

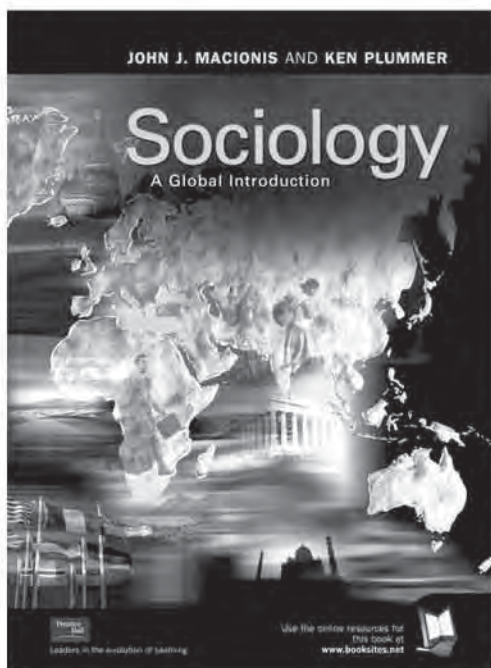
A. Jobert, C. Marry and L. Tanguy); she has been a member of the editorial board of the Spanish language journal *Sociologia del Trabajo* (Madrid) since 1995 and is an associate editor of the *International Journal of Training and Development*.

Michael Rose has held posts in the universities of Cambridge, Salford, Bath, Oran, Oxford, and Paris. His doctorate was awarded by the Cambridge Economics Faculty for publications in the history of industrial sociology in Britain, France and the USA. He remains a staunch supporter of methodological pluralism and mixed methods. He is currently Professorial Research Fellow at Bath University doing ESRC funded research on skills, work orientations, careers, and the e-Society. He has edited and co-edited three books, notably: *Skill and Occupational Change* (OUP 1994 with R. Penn and J. Rubery) and *Trade Unionism in Recession* (OUP 1996 with D. Gallie and R. Penn); he was a member for the ESRC/Social Change and Economic Life Initiative series editorial committee for Oxford University Press; Series Editor for *Work and Society* in the 1980s for Batsford Academic; an editorial board member of *Sociology* 1988-1991; and UK corresponding editor for *Sociologie du Travail* 1983-2002.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO AUTHORS:

From January 2005, *Work, Employment and Society* will migrate to Manuscript Central (see left) and will stop accepting paper manuscript submissions. Libby Marks, BSA Publications Manager, will be providing support to WES and is available to answer any queries you might have. Please email libby.marks@britsoc.org.uk or call 0191 383 0839. Further information on Manuscript Central can be found on the BSA website www.britsoc.co.uk.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

John J. Macionis is Professor of Sociology at Kenyon College in Ohio. His publications are wide-ranging and he is co-author of *Seeing Ourselves: Classic and Cross-Cultural Readings in Sociology*, *Cities and Urban Life* and of the concise introductory text *Society: The Basics*.

Ken Plummer is Professor of Sociology at the University of Essex and has been actively involved in teaching introductory sociology for the past thirty years. He is author of *Sexual Stigma* (1975), *Documents of Life* (1983) and *Telling Sexual Stories* (1995). He has also edited a number of journals and is currently the editor of *Sexualities*.

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£3 million national framework for UK research information announced

Research Libraries Network promises UK researchers 'joined-up' services

A new national initiative launched in July this year - the Research Libraries Network (RLN) - is set to transform the way research information is collected, organised, preserved and accessed across the UK. The RLN will bring together the UK's four higher education funding bodies, the British Library, the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales and the eight members of Research Councils UK to develop the UK's first national framework aimed at addressing the information needs of researchers.

The financial, technological and organisational demands on university and research libraries are huge. They include the transition to electronic publishing, the increasing volume and cost of information, new models for publishing and disseminating research (such as Open Archives), researchers' changing patterns of behaviour, massive growth in the volume of publicly-funded research, and government initiatives to foster innovation and technology transfer.

The RLN aims to provide the unified and focused strategic leadership needed to address these demands. Set up following the recommendations of the Research Support Libraries Group (RSLG), and endorsed by the House of Commons Select Committee on Education and Skills, the RLN will:

- ▄ provide strategic leadership for collaboration between publicly-funded research information providers and their users – to develop effective, efficient and integrated information resources and services to support UK research
- ▄ co-ordinate action to propose and specify solutions to meet researchers' changing needs - building on the earlier studies into UK researchers' needs carried out by the RSLG
- ▄ act as a high-level advocate for research information, across the UK and internationally.

The RLN will be set up in autumn 2004, initially for three years up to the end of July 2007. It will be led by an executive unit, with a budget of up to £3 million, which will be based at the British Library and take strategic guidance from an advisory board. Key positions in the executive unit and on the advisory board will shortly be advertised nationally.

Initially the RLN's work is likely to include feasibility studies and market research to shape the longer-term programme. Early emphasis is likely to be on improved knowledge of and access to existing resources (for example, by developing search tools and 'union catalogues' which give a single point of access to a number of different collections). Future potential workstreams include collaborative work on developing and preserving digital archives, maximising access for professional researchers to key collections, and working towards collaborative development of collections to ensure access to the widest possible range of research materials. Sir Howard Newby, Chief Executive of HEFCE, said: 'The Research Libraries Network will provide a unique service to UK researchers by actively promoting dialogue and collaboration between research information providers and users at all levels. This world-first initiative will consolidate the UK's strong position in the international research market, building on well established traditions of joint working and progressive thinking.'

Hazel Genn appointed to represent sociology in 2008 RAE

The four UK higher education funding bodies announced in September the appointment of 15 distinguished academics to chair the Main Panels for the next Research Assessment Exercise, due to take place in 2008. Rama Thirunamachandran, Director of Research & Knowledge Transfer at HEFCE, said:

'The standing of these individuals will provide the RAE Main Panels with leadership of the highest quality, and will greatly assist the Sub-Panel members and chairs in the development of appropriate working methods, and assessment criteria.'



HAZEL GENN CBE

Hazel Genn CBE, BA, LLB, LLD has been appointed as the Chair of the panel representing Law, Politics and International Studies, Social Work and Social Administration, Sociology, Anthropology, and Development Studies.

She is Professor of Socio-Legal Studies in the Faculty of Laws at University College London, where she is also an Honorary Fellow. She previously held a Chair and was Head of the Department of Law at Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London. Before joining London University she held full-time research posts at Oxford University Centre for Socio-Legal Studies (1974-1985) and the Cambridge Institute of Criminology (1972-74). She was awarded a CBE in 2000 for research into civil justice. She has recently completed a term as Deputy Chair and then Chair of the Economic and Social Research Council's Research Grants Board. She has a long-standing research interest in civil justice and has published widely in the field.

She is currently undertaking a major research project on Tribunals and Diversity commissioned by the Department for Constitutional Affairs. Her principal research and teaching interests are access to justice, civil process, and Alternative Dispute Resolution.

INDIVIDUAL ACADEMIC

Victoria Robinson, previously Lecturer in Sociology in the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology at the University of Newcastle, has moved to the Department of Sociological Studies at the University of Sheffield, where she is Senior Research Fellow.

Professor Jim Beckford, University of Warwick, has been elected a Fellow of the British Academy.

Dr Edwin van Teijlingen, Department of Public Health and Dugald Baird Centre for Research on Women's Health, University of Aberdeen has been promoted to Reader.

Mairi Levitt, previously Principle Lecturer in Social Ethics, Centre for Professional Ethics, University of Central Lancashire, has moved to Lancaster University to be Deputy Director of CESAGen (ESRC Centre for the Economic & Social Aspects of Genomics)

Dr Susan Eley, Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology Section, Department of Applied Social Science, University of Stirling has been promoted to Senior Lecturer in Sociology.

Dr Nicholas Gane will leave his current post as Lecturer in Sociology at the University of York to take up a Senior Lectureship in Sociology and Communications at Brunel University on 1 December.

From September 2004, **Dr Kathryn Backett-Milburn** will have a personal chair at the University of Edinburgh as Professor of the Sociology of Families and Health. This is a cross college appointment between the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine and the School of Humanities and Social Science.

David Mason, currently Professor of Sociology and Head of the School of Sociology, Politics and Law at the University of Plymouth, has been appointed Dean of Social Sciences at The Nottingham Trent University with effect from November 1, 2004.

Eileen Barker, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, London School of Economics, has been awarded a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship to conduct research on 'Changes in New Religions and Social Reactions to them'.

After nearly 3 years in South Africa as Dean of Humanities at the University of Cape Town, **Robin Cohen** has returned to Warwick - to his professorship of sociology and to a research position in the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation. He is working on the theme of 'mixed identities' especially on creolisation and hybridity and would welcome contact with others working in the field.

Dr Reiner Grundmann, Senior Lecturer at Aston University, moved from the Business School to the School of Languages and Social Sciences.

Victoria Gosling has been appointed Lecturer in Sociology in the Department of Sociology, Politics and International Relations at Nottingham Trent University.

Catherine Walker has been appointed Research Assistant in the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of York.

INSTITUTIONAL ACADEMIC

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

The University of Sussex has recently taken on a number of staff.

Dr Susie Scott, formerly of Cardiff, joins as a lecturer in sociology

Gurminder Bhambra takes up a new ESRC postdoctoral position in the department

Dr Tim Reed starts a one year lectureship

Dr Barbara Einhorn has transferred to the department from Media Studies.

UNIVERSITY OF KENT AT CANTERBURY

At University of Kent at Canterbury, **Chris Rootes** has been promoted to a Chair - he is now Professor of Environmental Politics and Political Sociology.

Sarah Vickerstaff has been promoted to a Chair - she is now Professor of Work and Employment.

MANCHESTER

There are five staff changes in the Sociology Department at Manchester.

Colette Fagan and **Nick Crossley** have been promoted to Readerships.

Virinder Kalra has been promoted to a Senior Lectureship.

Jennifer Tomlinson and **Darren Nixon** have been appointed to temporary lectureships in Sociology.

SURREY

The following have recently joined the University of Surrey:

In 2003, **Nick Allum**, public understanding of science, and survey methods, from LSE.

Dr Paul Hodkinson, youth and popular culture, from Northampton.

Dr Chistine Hine, virtual methods and e-science, from Brunel.

Rod Earle, criminology, from LSE.

In 2004, **Dr Katharine Tyler**, race and ethnicity, from Manchester.

Kate Orton-Johnson, new technology.

Recently promoted are **Dr Andy Bennett** to Senior Lecturer, **Dr Martin Innes** to Senior Lecturer, and **Dr Nina Wakeford** to Reader.

Not all bad for the future of Sociology

In the previous issue of *Network* we reported on the closure of the Sociology department at the University of Swansea, and there are many other Sociology departments that have been 'downsized' or restructured due to falling student numbers. However, it seems that the current state of Sociology is not looking bleak in all of our universities, and the occupational mobility pages shows that there does appear still to be some Sociology jobs out there. In particular, Iain Wilkinson reports on the continued growth and expansion of the sociology team at Kent.

Exciting Times for the Social Sciences At Kent

Recent years have seen a series of dynamic changes take place in the School of Social Policy, Sociology, Social Research at the University of Kent. A number of high profile senior appointments and a raft of new lectureships have built upon the School's existing strengths.

The new Kent School has grown to include over 40 full time members of staff. Additions to the sociology group include, Adam Burgess, Anthony Elliott, Margarita Leon, Vince Miller, Balihar Sanghera, Rodanthi Tzanelli, and Iain Wilkinson.

The numbers in social policy now include Ellie Lee, Nico Siegel and Lavinia Mitton, while the criminology team now boast the presence of Mike Presdee and Jock Young. These additions will add considerable weight to Kent's standing in British sociology, social policy and criminology.

The new Kent School is home to four funded research centres (Centre for Health Service Studies, Personal Social Services Research Unit, Kent Criminal Justice Centre and European Institute for Social Services).

In addition to this, the school research centres for the study of Social Science and Risk, Social and Political Movements, Women's Studies, European Migration and Social Care,

and Urban and Regional Studies continue to attract world attention as international centres of excellence.

With new funding from HEFCE and the support of the Vice-Chancellor, David Melville, many more new initiatives are in the pipeline.

While we continue to expand our programmes at the new Medway campus, we are also developing a package of new Masters degrees in Sociology, Criminology, and Risk and Society (the latter being the first degree of its type in the UK). Over this year we shall be running a series of research seminars devoted to reviewing 'The State of the Disciplines in British Social Science'. We also plan to host a number of workshops devoted to promoting the value of 'public sociology'.

The Kent Sociology Group is responsible for organising the forthcoming BSA annual conference on 'The Life Course: Fragmentation, Diversity and Risk'.

NEW IN SOCIAL THEORY

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A-Z OF TITLES REVIEWED

- **The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements**
- **Doing Social Science Research**
- **Encountering Nationalism**
- **Globalization & Technology**
- **Husbands, Wives and Lovers: Marriage and its Discontents in Nineteenth Century France**
- **Sociology: Short Introductions**
- **The Struggle for 'Community' in a British Multi-Ethnic Inner-city Area: Paradise in the Making**
- **Women in Charge: Policing, Gender and Leadership**

••••• **The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements**

Edited by David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule & Hanspeter Kriesi
 Oxford, Blackwell, 2003
 xvii + 754pp
 £95.00 hb
 ISBN: 0-631-22669-9

The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements is a comprehensive overview of debates in the field. The authors comprise a roll call of key researchers in the area and provide informed accounts of their particular areas of expertise. The volume is well compiled and organised in sections dealing with substantive aspects of Social Movement research, which makes it an excellent teaching resource.

Unusually for such a compendium several contributions touch on new territory and raise pressing questions for further research. Whilst some chapters simply reprise the existing debates all of them are up to date and include detailed bibliographies that constitute an excellent reference point. There is, inevitably, a fair degree of overlap and repetition in the tome. The editors have, however, allowed for contrasting positions to be represented and thus provide a wide ranging survey.

It is obviously impossible to cover everything but there were a couple of notable absences. In view of the editor's expressed intention to 'reflect and embody the growing internationalisation of social movement scholarship', the book is exceptionally light on non-western studies. Fleeting references are made to movements around the world, and slightly more detail is accorded to South America, but the bulk of this volume focuses on Europe and the United States.

The contributors reflect this bias and it is disappointing that a book of this size could not incorporate the work emerging out of Latin America and Asia at least.

There is also a tendency to favour movements geared towards institutional politics as exemplars above lifestyle protests – movements around issues of sexuality, recognition and youth are absent, as are detailed accounts of more contemporary ICT based protest forms. These omissions aside the volume is an invaluable resource for scholars and a comprehensive guide to the debates, insights and questions of social movement research.

Hugo Gorrige
 University of Edinburgh

••••• **Doing Social Science Research**

Simeon J. Yates
 SAGE Publications, London
 2004
 293pp
 £19.99pb
 ISBN: 0-7619-6798-2

This book is an introduction to qualitative and quantitative methods of social research. Although it is a course textbook for an Open University postgraduate module, it is also useful as a guide for social researchers and for undergraduate students engaged in social science research more generally. It is particularly relevant if used in conjunction with the UK Research Council research training programme.

The book is split into four sections. The first part offers a brief introduction to the philosophy of the social sciences. Part two concentrates upon quantitative methods of research, centring upon survey and experimental research. It also contains a chapter on numerical data analysis. Qualitative research methods follow with a specific focus on interviews and ethnographic research methods. There are also chapters on how to analyse qualitative data, including a section on discourse analysis. The final part of the book briefly discusses the evaluation of existing research, and in particular a guide on how to select an appropriate method. This book is interactive and uses self-assessment tasks with solutions at the end of each chapter.

I found the coverage of the interview method to be very concise and raised some important points for new researchers. For instance, Yates includes an example of how to introduce an interview, and I found his advice on interview structure very helpful. However, despite recommending this book wholeheartedly, it could have been improved in two ways. First, it would have been advantageous to cover focus group research in more detail. Second, I found the tone of the book to be a little patronising in places. Nonetheless, these are not major problems and *Doing Social Science Research* is a very useful resource that includes much practical advice.

Jody Mellor
 University of York

Encountering Nationalism

Jyoti Puri
Blackwell, Oxford
2003
248pp
£17.99 pb
ISBN: 0-631-231064

This well-written introduction to the sociological and historical literature on nationalism starts by asking how one can understand the terrible events of September 11th 2001, and the feelings this aroused in ordinary Americans. The first chapter provides a thorough review of theoretical debates about the relationship between nationalism and the state. It argues that nationalism is a 'product' of the rise of the modern state, and has an 'invented' or 'imagined' character, although 'this does not mean that nationalisms or nations are any less real or reduced in their power' (p.66).

The next two chapters draw on recent feminist and post-colonial scholarship and show, through historical and contemporary examples, how nationalism developed alongside ideas of racial superiority, and how it mainly appeals to men, and constructs women in a subservient role. There was an interesting discussion of the Miss America beauty pageant which is criticised for promoting 'heterosexual, class- and race-based ideals of femininity in the national imagination' (p.108). This feminist case was over-stated in relation to Britain; my reading of Linda Colley's work is that many women enthusiastically supported nation and empire building in the eighteenth century.

The next chapter on nationalism and sexuality was less interesting, and shows how almost anything relating to culture or the state can be blamed on nationalism. It also seemed a little unfair to criticise the male homosexual group Queer Nation for promoting a form of nationalism. Finally, there are two interesting discussions of nationalism and ethnicity, and whether nationalism has a future after modernity.

My only real complaint about what is otherwise an excellent introductory text is that it criticises nationalism for being allied with racism, sexism and imperialism, without acknowledging positive achievements such as the welfare state or simple pleasures like enjoying 'national' foods, and without suggesting there is an alternative.

Max Travers
University of Tasmania

Globalization & Technology

Rajneesh Narula
Polity Press
2003
Xvi + 243pp
£16.99 pb
ISBN 0-7456-2457-X

This book discusses the interdependence of globalisation and technology. Its focus is on the increasing interdependence of economic units and locations across nation state boundaries, defined as economic globalisation, and their relationship with technological innovations. Narula looks at the technological innovations developed by economic units, their interdependence an example of the fuzzing of boundaries, while locations often remain distinct with economic units concentrating their knowledge and technological development programmes in the 'home' nation. The growth of the multinational enterprise (MNE) is explored, but it is not fully explained how these differ from global trading links.

Several of the claims Narula makes are contested in sociological debate and there is no acknowledgement of this in the book. For example, globalisation and technology are asserted to be evolutionary, with technology identified as a cause of globalisation, claiming that this is 'acknowledged almost universally'.

There are some interesting observations on how the design and creation of new products involve the use of an increasing amount of new technologies and therefore non-intuitive knowledge. However I found some of the examples problematic, the design and creation of a bicycle is deemed to be purely mechanical, whereas new technologies are used in the alloy, paint, suspension, tyres and sometimes automatic lighting. Narula acknowledges that as new technologies emerge they will become old and the knowledge associated with them becomes 'intuitive'. This left me unclear as to why the technological and knowledge intensive MNEs under discussion are so significant.

The book provides some interesting information on cross border developments by MNEs and some implications for nation states and policy makers and would be of interest to those studying business developments in these areas. I feel it is less suitable for those concerned with the sociology of technological change.

Claire Tupling
University of Teesside

Husbands, Wives and Lovers: Marriage and its Discontents in Nineteenth Century France

Patricia Mainardi
Yale University Press
2003
xii + 310pp
£25.00 hb
ISBN: 0 300 10104 X

This book focuses upon adultery in Nineteenth Century France by analysing theatre, literature and the visual arts. Cultural production is related to social history in a fascinating and enchanting manner. This analysis of cultural production during a specific historical period encompassing changing social values is an insightful erudition for any contemporary reader, especially contemporary feminists. The author demonstrates the social expectations and control of women as property within the institution of marriage before the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment is shown to result in a number of changes to marriage and the development of corresponding notions of individual happiness.

The author successfully traces these changes through prints, plays, novels and tracts, evoking two predominant descriptions of marriage; the marriage of reason and the marriage of inclination. The marriage of reason was primarily a business arrangement before the Enlightenment. Comparatively, the marriage of inclination was post-Enlightenment and related to individual happiness and love; the general contemporary Western arrangement still in existence today. Most of the voices heard throughout the book are male and this is unsurprising given the context. However, some female voices do emerge particularly through novels written to express the issues of that time. Ignoring gender, the voices brought to life by the author vividly depict the issues of the time relating to the changing institution of marriage and associated perceptions of adultery.

The author postulates that experience can be evaluated through art, which in turn encourages self-reflections about life. Indeed, any female reader following the narrative of marriage throughout this book should reflect on the vast changes for women that have occurred since the Nineteenth Century, as I did, and probably be truly thankful that the institution of marriage has evolved since the Enlightenment.

Louise Warwick-Booth
University of Sheffield

Sociology: Short Introductions

Nicolas Abercrombie
Polity Press
2004
x + 142pp
£13.99
0-7456-2542-8

While undertaking my teacher training I was asked to teach a short introductory Sociology evening course at the FE college where I worked; the logic being that I was a young teacher who could probably make this course interesting and appealing. However, I encountered immense difficulty doing this. I had not long left my undergraduate Sociology studies, and my grasp of the subject proved not as strong as I had hoped. Making a subject seem simple and easy to understand is an immensely difficult task, and I have a lot of respect for those people who can do this well. Nicolas Abercrombie is one of those people.

Abercrombie has dedicated a large proportion of his academic career to writing books aimed at 'introductory' Sociology audiences, and he does this very well. The book provides a good feeling for what Sociology is about and some of its key controversies. Unlike many other Sociology 'textbooks' this is not arranged around 'classical' theories such as Marxism and Functionalism or even key structural features such as class and gender, but rather key social questions, such as 'who do we think we are?' and 'why don't things fall apart?'.

However, adopting this approach does leave Abercrombie open to the criticism that he does not directly address many core aspects of the subject, and certainly if you wanted an introduction to key Sociological concepts such as class, gender and ethnicity, you would be much better served by looking elsewhere. I am also sceptical of Abercrombie's claim that this book would appeal to a more 'general reader'. He admits himself that the general reader is a rather 'elusive' creature, and though this book should have wide appeal, I would suggest that its reader would have to be fairly well educated. These few criticisms aside, if you are a student or (especially) a teacher of Sociology you really should own this book as it offers an excellent and engaging introduction to the subject, as well as providing a good indication of how introductory Sociology can be taught in a way that is interesting and relevant to students.

Garry Crawford
Sheffield Hallam University

The Struggle for 'Community' in a British Multi-Ethnic Inner-city Area: Paradise in the Making

Max Farrar
The Edwin Mellen Press, New York
2002
xvii + 421pp
£69.95
ISBN: 0-7734-7042-8

Max Farrar's book is a detailed, engaged and scholarly exploration of the dynamics of communal identity formation across three decades. The book deserves a place alongside the now classic studies of urban social life produced in the 1950s and 1960s that we once used to call 'Community Studies'. Yet, as Stuart Hall rightly notes in his Foreword to the book, '[d]espite the voluminous literature on post-war migration to Britain, there are few, serious, in-depth studies of how the politics of race plays out at local level in particular communities. This book is such a study' (xiii).

This book is more than a detailed 'thick description' of a particular bounded community and its mores. It is, instead, an argument for, and an excellent example of, a form of scholastic engagement into the lives of marginalised communities that many academics are fond of talking 'about' but who, in actuality, know nothing of outside the claims made in theory journals or seminar rooms. Farrar's study is also, in part, an autobiographical account, having lived since 1970 in Chapeltown, the area of Leeds where the book is situated. He argues that the diverse migrant settlers of Leeds have used the tropes of 'community' in order to both resist white racism and to offer a utopian, moral vision that a better life is possible. Farrar's narrative of the formation and fragmentation of an explicitly politicised sense of black community is compelling as he blends sociological analysis, political critique, and ethnographic observation with a deeply humanist sensibility.

A book as bold and as refreshingly insightful as this one demands a wide readership. Max Farrar has produced a gem of a book – though you should note the cost. Go and order five copies for your library today.

Ben Carrington
Department of Sociology

Women in Charge: Policing, Gender and Leadership

Marisa Silvestri
Willan Publishing
2003
viii+215pp
£30.00 hb
ISBN: 1-84392-049-2

This is a most welcome book which adds to ongoing debates about how gender is often viewed as an agent of change within organisations. Silvestri acknowledges that much existing research on the police has focused on the lower organisational ranks and her work seeks to fill this knowledge gap by exploring the experiences of thirty senior policewomen in the UK. Her data was obtained through a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with these women, which, in itself, creates an interesting methodological debate about power within the researcher/researched relationship.

Many of Silvestri's findings can easily be found in other organisations going through similar operational restructuring, particularly those that have sought to simplify and streamline employee grading structures, reduce costs, raise productivity and operate with a heightened degree of flexibility. Within all these debates, women, by virtue of their gender, appear to have been awarded transformative status to drive forward, and benefit from, organisational change.

The book also raises a very interesting debate about the definition of female police officers. Silvestri argues that by referring to them as *policewomen* they become defeminised, whilst calling them *policewomen* strips them of professional status. She also discusses the difficulties that senior policewomen appeared to have with their body image in rejecting trappings of femaleness in self-presentation, despite the fact that policing has been trying to shift from a 'force' to a 'service' orientation, where a more maternal metaphor of management appears more appropriate.

This book will be of particular relevance to students of both organisational change and gender studies. A range of arguments are covered, although a niggling criticism would be they are often repeated. It was also disappointing that the voices of the senior policewomen were too often silent within the text and maybe more could have been made of Silvestri's interesting primary data.

Dr Sue Child
Cornwall Business School.

LIVERPOOL

EUROPEAN CITY OF CULTURE 2008

Like many Liverpudlians, I was delighted when Liverpool's bid to become the European Capital of Culture 2008 (ECOC 2008) was accepted. Liverpool's bid for the award focuses on social inclusion, diversity and the participation of Liverpool's residents in the ECOC programme. Its slogan is 'The World in One City'.

However, one particular regeneration project proposed for 2008 has caused residents to question whether the city's successful bid may have a negative effect of Liverpool's culture: that the economically led, city-centre based regeneration will marginalise aspects of Liverpool's culture that the ECOC is meant to celebrate.

As part of the regeneration of the Paradise Street Development Area (PSDA) being undertaken by Grosvenor Estates (owned by the Duke of Westminster), Quiggins, a local bohemian-style retail outlet, is to be relocated. On 18th May 2004, after a long battle between Quiggins and Grosvenor Estates, John Prescott granted permission for a compulsory purchase order to be issued. Under proposals by Grosvenor, the PSDA will become home to £750 million worth of retail outlets, hotels and leisure facilities. It seems that the regeneration of Liverpool is steadily being led by economics.

In a report by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and Demos, it was suggested that the regeneration of cities could turn them into commercial, homogenous and insipid places.

A report on the BBC's website notes that there are plans to have quartermasters patrolling the redeveloped area, removing beggars and stopping people from eating in non-designated areas. Under this premise, 'culture' will be a highly regulated mode of living.

The Duke of Westminster has claimed that the redevelopment of the area will 'provide an environment in which people will want to work, live, and, indeed, play, and it will look very different from now' (*Capital or Culture*, ITV). Yet a petition signed by 100,000 people, which was presented to the House of Commons by MP for Crosby, Claire Curtis Thomas, suggests that many people in Liverpool are satisfied that Quiggins meets these criteria.

Pro- Quiggins posters are now familiar sights in Liverpool, defiantly emblazoned on city centre walls and in windows. Their messages of 'It's not just a shop, it's a way of life' and 'Save Quiggins, Save Liverpool's Culture' clearly indicate that the retailers and consumers believe that outside investment poses a threat to their culture. It could be argued that there is a degree of 'cultural elitism' about the PSDA regeneration. Jones & Wilks-Heeg suggest that the regeneration of Liverpool is in danger of not including 'those who operate outside of a politically



THE LIVER BUILDINGS, LIVERPOOL

sanctioned culture that can be incorporated into the new rebranded image of the city'.

The ECOC award is intended to improve the status and reputation of the winner internationally but focus on the economic regeneration of Liverpool diverts attention from the very real problems of social inequality in the city. This has been a problem for Glasgow, ECOC 1990.

In an article in the *Observer* (8th June, 2003) the Scottish Socialist Party leader, Tommy Sheridan, argued that Glasgow's year as ECOC divided the city into 'two Glasgows' - the Glasgow of the regenerated city centre, and the Glasgow overlooked by the developers. Research carried out in 2003 by the University of Glasgow, 13 years after the city's ECOC status, showed that the unemployment rates for Glasgow were the higher than any other UK city. Moreover, in 2003, jobs in the service sector in Glasgow were 'inherently unstable'.

The 2004 Wealth of the Nation Survey found that only Glasgow had a higher concentration of low-income households than Liverpool. Considering the long-term economic benefits promised to Glasgow on winning the ECOC in 1990, this is worrying information for Liverpool. For Jones and Wilks-Heeg (forthcoming), Liverpool's ECOC regeneration runs the risk of using Liverpool's multiculturalism to attract economic development without actually addressing some of the problems of that multiculturalism, such as poverty and racism.

It could be argued that both Liverpool City Council and Grosvenor Estates are trying to create an image of Liverpool culture that is at odds with many Liverpudlians' interpretation of Liverpool's culture and 'culture' more generally. For Quiggins and Co, culture refers to the way of life of the local people. For the redevelopers, culture is about tourism and financial progress. There is a growing cultural schism between the real Liverpool culture and the 'tourist-friendly' image of Liverpool that is in the process of being created. If we apply the work of Jean Baudrillard to the issue, then the images of the 'redeveloped' Liverpool, which will be increasingly prominent in the years running up to 2008, will eventually overtake the reality. When this happens, an aspect of Liverpool culture will be lost. Liverpool culture will become part of a 'hyperreality'.

Samantha Caslin, University of Liverpool



Brian Longhurst

Brian Longhurst is a Professor of Sociology and Head of the School of English, Sociology, Politics and Contemporary History at Salford University. He is also the author of numerous books and papers on the sociology of popular culture including *Popular Music and Society* (Polity, 1995) and *Audiences* (with Nick Abercrombie, Sage 1998). His book with Gaynor Bagnall and Mike Savage, *Globalisation and Belonging*, will be published by Sage at the end of 2004.

Before we start talking about your book choices, can I begin by asking where your interest in sociology first came from?

I'd always been interested broadly in social and political issues, and ended up doing a sociology degree. In a way, very much by chance, in the sense that I did not know really what sociology was about, but thought it might be the sort of thing I was interested in. I'd done science A-levels at school and knew that I didn't want to be a scientist and was casting around for something that I might be interested in and I found sociology, or it found me.

Turning to your first book choice. How did your interest in Mannheim come about?

When I was an undergraduate at Lancaster I did a beliefs course that was taught by Nick Abercrombie and Bryan Turner, which in his interview in *Network* Nick described as 'eccentric'. It probably was, but it was really good, and that is when I first came across Mannheim, and *Ideology and Utopia* in particular. It was at a time when some of us as undergraduates, and some of the people teaching us, were interested in structural Marxism and trying to do a general theory of ideology and realising that that was daft and you could not find one. So I came at Mannheim from that direction and it made a lot of sense of how ideological and discursive struggle takes place. There is dynamism that runs through *Ideology and Utopia*, which makes it something you can go back to and revisit. I've found it very thought provoking, and I think a lot of what Mannheim wrote is still underrated.

Your second choice is *Border Country* by Raymond Williams. Why did you choose this particular book?

After I finished my degree I did postgraduate work at Lancaster, where I was working on ideology, culture and so on. So I went off and read Williams, and again I think there is a lot of his work which is still suggestive. The book I'd take to a desert island is his first novel, *Border Country*. There are other of his more academic and theoretical books you could take, but I think in some ways *Border Country* sums up aspects of the power of Williams, in being able to connect and articulate the academic and the personal. I think *Border Country* captures his own experience, which he always wanted to try to write, but it also captures some of that experience of being in between things and trying to put different things together; the experience of being involved in academic life, while not coming from a community or group of people that have any connection with university life. I think for a lot of people who end up in sociology and the social sciences that's something that many of us share. But it is also a pretty good novel.

Your third choice then is Berman *All that is Solid Melts into Air*.

I still, when I get chance in lectures, recommend students to read Marshall Berman's *All that is Solid Melts into Air*, because I think it is one of the best books on modernity, and it is one of the best books on the city. I don't live in a city, but Berman's is the kind of book that makes you want to live in Paris or New York, and he also captures the double edged nature of modernity in the way he writes about it as both conceptualising progress, but the sense of loss that you get from that progress - the sense of things being pulled apart. It brings together the social and the textual in a way that I think is brilliant. When it came out, Mike Savage and I shared a house in Lancaster and we were both reading it at the same time and talking about it. I've never really used it in teaching, but I just think it's a terrific read. The bit on New York and the way the Bronx is destroyed by an expressway is innovative. Tricia Rose in her book *Black Noise*, which is about the development of hip-hop and rap in New York, draws on the same kind of arguments as Berman, and I think that's a really interesting way for a sociologist to think about culture - not just as a set of cultural forms, but culture as it's lived out in places.

The Hidden Musicians is your fourth choice.

Ruth Finnegan's *The Hidden Musicians* is a terrific book for a number of reasons. Again it tells you something about a place, and in some ways a place that stereotypically wouldn't have been written about. Finnegan tells us about musical/cultural life in Milton Keynes, and it is fascinating what she tells you about the cultural life of that place. It shows how important music is for structuring the experience of the city and the people she investigated. But it is also wonderful on the whole idea of enthusiasm in everyday life, which is something that I'm quite interested in, and the way people get involved in amateur music production, and she is also really good in taking apart the distinction between amateur and professional music production. Music as a consumer has been important to me, and I think that she captures how significant that is in people's lives. Obviously in her book it's in relation to the production of music, in a straightforward sense, but it uncovers this idea of pathways of living, and how culture helps you live through, while connecting you to, a place.

Peterson's *Creating Country Music* is your fifth choice of a desert island discourse.

I have got more convinced that cultural studies and British sociology has really neglected American sociology of culture, which is both empirically rigorous and conceptually innovative. Over the last few years I've tried to delve into that stuff as much as I can, and I think Pete Peterson's work, or Richard A. Peterson as he is formally, sums up quite a lot of that. There are a lot of things I could have chosen, a lot of his stuff is in a series of really clear brilliantly written, provocative and thought provoking

articles. His stuff on production of culture, and so on, is I think really good. *Creating Country Music* is a book about how county music has changed in America and about different notions of the authentic, how they have shifted and how authenticity is a social construction. I think that it's reasonably well known, that authenticity discourse runs through popular music, I don't buy the NME anymore but every time you pick it up there's something about a band 'selling out' or being 'inauthentic', you can't image a discourse on popular music without that, and Pete's book is a really good way of taking that apart. It's a great read, and Pete knows country music, as you would expect of someone who works in Nashville. It's engaging, and I find reading about music almost as pleasurable as listening to it. I don't think a lot of America sociology of culture is innovative theoretically in the 'grand' sense, when you read some theorists you expect them to spark you with a big idea, it is different, what it does is take some really interesting ideas and it work them through and has a groundedness and clarity that is really refreshing.

Moving on to your sixth choice, which is Putman *Bowling Alone*.

I think *Bowling Alone* is a wonderful book to read as it's got vision and boldness. I heard Putman speak at a conference about six years ago now, and it was just a fantastic performance. I can see all sorts of reasons why people hate *Bowling Alone*, and I can recognise those arguments, and in some ways I agree with them, but the attempt to capture what's happening to a culture, and the whole notion of voluntary association and enthusiasms and what that means in everyday life connects with a set of interests I've got. Ok, it's kind of 'Happy Days' sociology in some ways; there is this mythical America that I might buy into in a way as I grew up with television programmes of that era. But as a bold attempt to do a political science/sociology it's terrific. I think a lot of it is wrong. The arguments about television, and what it's done to associative life, for example, completely neglect everything that cultural and media studies have shown for the last twenty-five years.


I did find it a strange choice, as in some ways it does go against much of your own work and thoughts on popular culture.

One of the things I try to do, is say that you can't understand community and cultural life without paying attention to how people live their imaginative life through watching television, as well as going to a pub quiz or going to some other community involvement. I'd like to think Putman is wrong, and in some ways the evidence shows that it does not work in this country in the way that it does in America. By choosing Putman, I don't think Putman is right, but he alerts us to a series of issues about the relationship between those modes of enthusiasm that mobilise people in their everyday lives, and it also poses the question of what the relationship is of those activities to working longer hours, to more women being employed in the labour market, to people watching more television? Now there is an incredibly boring conservative way of doing that, and some people will interpret Putman's book as being like that, and in some ways it is, but on another level it opens up a set of issues about taking everyday life seriously


Your final choice is another music related book, DeVeaux's *The Birth of Bebop*.

There are huge numbers of books on music I could have chosen from, but those that really move me are the ones that try and connect up the production of the music, something about how it works textually and what that means for audiences. That's a very crude way of thinking about those sorts of things, and I'd not want to theorise it in that way, but DeVeaux's book is just wonderful on the birth of Bebop. I always think that music books are great if they send you away to listen to something, and if you

Brian Longhurst's Desert Island Discourse Choices


 **Karl Mannheim (1936)**
Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge
(Routledge & Kegan Paul)


 **Raymond Williams (1960)**
Border Country (Chatto & Windus)


 **Marshall Berman (1983)**
All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity (Verso)


 **Ruth Finnegan (1989)**
The Hidden Musicians: Music-making in an English Town
(Cambridge University Press)


 **Richard A. Peterson (1997)**
Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity
(University of Chicago Press)

 **Robert D. Putnam (2000)**
Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community
(Simon & Schuster)

 **Scott DeVeaux (1999)**
The Birth of Bebop: A Social and Musical History (Picador)

 **Music choice:**
Miles Davis (1965)
The Complete Live at the Plugged Nickel

 **Instead of the Bible:**
Martin C Strong (2002)
The Great Rock Discography, 6th edition (Canongate)

 **Instead of Shakespeare:**
Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Box set on DVD

 **Luxury:**
A DVD/CD player

are reading about something you have some music of, I go over to my shelves or a tape box, but you listen to it in a different way. DeVeaux does that for Bebop, and it captures some of the nature of the music, it captures the innovation. Here is a popular art form, being turned into cutting edge avant garde music, so much so that it completely loses its mass audience of course. It shows also the professional ideologies and the social bases from where it was coming, in terms of who the musicians were and the clubs they were playing at. And I think that is sociologically interesting, and if the sociology of culture is anything, then it has to do that for me. It is going to be pretty sophisticated about the textual form, but it's going to tell us something about how that music has got to how it was and the work I've tried to do in more recent years, is what that means in audience terms. There are other books you can chose, I've mentioned Tricia Rose's book on hip-hop, that's great, and say Robert Walser on heavy metal, or Barry Shank's work on Austin, Texas is also terrific at doing those things.

A lot of your work, and the books you have chosen here, have been about popular culture, and in particular, music.

Yeah, that's one of the pleasures for me of being a sociologist and the type of sociologist that I am. I think it's an incredible privilege; to bring together your own enthusiasms and the things that move you, with having something sociologically to say about them. It matters hugely to me that I can enjoy a television programme and bring what I have read in cultural studies and media studies to bear on it, it sometimes drives the people I live with round the twist though.

Obviously since we have talked about music so much, I have to let you take at least one musical choice onto the island with you, and you've selected Miles Davis.

Yeah, I've picked jazz partly because I read to jazz, I'm going to be reading quite a lot on this island so I want some music to listen to. Some people who I know who are incredibly more knowledgeable about jazz than me can't understand this, because they say you have to listen to jazz, but I can work with jazz on. And I can especially read with either Miles Davis or John Coltrane, which would be another choice. The choice I have for Miles Davis is the box set which is called 'The Complete Live at the Plugged Nickel' and I've never listened to all this, partially because I'd never been able to afford to buy the box set, but the Penguin guide to jazz on CD gives this a 'must listen', so I'd quite like to have this. The problem with music choices is you always go back, there is a huge amount of contemporary stuff I like, but you've got to have something you can listen to again and again.

Your replacement for The Bible and Shakespeare are interesting choices.

Yeah, instead The Bible I've gone for Martin C. Strong *The Great Rock Discography*. I don't know anything about Strong, but he is obviously an enthusiast who has spent a great deal of time collecting large volumes of information on all these artists, and it would be really good to have on a desert island to flick through. Again, nothing against Shakespeare, the thing I chose instead of that was 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer'. When I had more time I used to watch more television, I've got too many pressures on my time now, but I get great pleasure from television. I find the whole thing about cult television interesting and the literature on fandom fascinating, but there is now all sorts of things happening about 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer' in the literature and I feel a bit like a High Court judge in the '60s saying 'who are The Beatles?' I've never watched an episode of Buffy, so I feel completely left out of this, there is obviously something interesting going on in cultural and media studies, and here is an opportunity to catch up. The problem would be if I watched one and decided that I hated it, I've got nothing else to watch, but if I had another choice maybe I'd take a box set of something else that I know I did like.

Obviously, your luxury item has to be a DVD/CD player.

If I want to take some music and I want to take something to watch, then I need something to play it on. I think it was Nick Hornby on 'Desert Island Discs' who asked to take an i-Pod with him. I haven't got an i-Pod, a DVD/CD player is where I've got up to, so I can watch Buffy and listen to Miles.

Interview by **Garry Crawford**

ESRC Seminar series

Family, Community and Social Change: Looking Back and Moving Forward

Seminar 1: Learning about long term trends – 6 January 2005
Social historical overviews of substantive, theoretical and policy trends

Seminar 2: Learning about what changes and what stays the same – July 2005
Studies that replicate or adapt the focus and methodology of past studies

Seminar 3: Learning about the past from the present – November 2005
Secondary analysis of archived data to reassess contemporary assumptions

Seminar 4: Learning from history in contemporary policy – June 2006

The organisers of the series are Rosalind Edwards, Families & Social Capital ESRC Research Group, London South Bank University, in association with Miriam David, University of Keele, and Dominic Abrams, University of Kent, on behalf of the Academy of Social Sciences. All the seminars will be held at London South Bank University.

If you are interested in attending the seminars, **please contact Jane Williams:** williajv@lsbu.ac.uk

Places are limited to 30 for each seminar. There is no registration fee.

There are 5 travel bursaries available for each seminar for student/low income participants. If you wish to apply for a bursary, please supply a written piece stating your situation, institution affiliation and research interests.

Further details about the seminar series can be found at <http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/events.shtml>



NUMBERS COUNT

There has been a steady debate in *Network* over the last few editions on the importance (or not) of quantitative methods for the Sociologist. A survey conducted by CSAP found that ‘quants’ are being widely taught in Sociology, though acknowledging that ‘how successful this is in producing sociologists with quantitative skills cannot be determined’ (*Network*, Autumn 2003). In the spring edition of *Network* I highlighted the difficulties I initially experienced as a graduate trying to find work in social science research, despite having studied some (rather limited) quantitative methods during my degree.



Though I have now secured a research post in Public Health, I find myself constantly trying to keep pace with my fellow researchers who hail from all manner of academic backgrounds – the most respected being Psychology, because of their ‘superior research methods training’.

This often seems strange as I reflect on the diverse range of topics researched at the Centre, which either cross over significantly into Sociology, or in fact are aspects of the social world, being studied in a sociological way – but by anyone except sociologists!!

In the last issue of *Network*, Simon Mussell wrote about ‘fully embracing sociology as an art (as philosophy and politics are)’, whilst downplaying the overall importance of the ‘scientific credentials of sociology.’ In the same edition of *Network*, Nick Abercrombie expressed the opposing view, that there was now ‘too much humanities and not enough science’ in Sociology these days. I have come to see the worth of both, and regret that my insufficient training has limited my options in terms of research until I can ‘catch up’.

For me, the most compelling argument for Sociologists to undergo quantitative training, is its importance in terms of developing and exploring new areas of research on topics previously afforded little attention from Sociology. For example, drug facilitated sexual assault, for which much of the literature comes from psychology and toxicology based disciplines. Whilst the research is not any more valid because of their ‘quants’ emphasis, and, in fact, some of them show very little, it is important that we are able to read and understand these kinds of papers, in order to be able to write sociologically on these topics.

A fully analytical approach requires both quantitative and qualitative methods. In a world dominated by science it would be foolish to try to reflect and make sense of the social world without at least engaging with the methods used in so many aspects of modern society. Our ability to embrace both has an impact on our reputation as sociologists, not to mention the employability of many graduates, and quite possibly the future of the discipline itself.

Sara Louise Edwards
University of Liverpool

GOOD RESEARCH TAKES TIME

Having been told by senior academics constantly whilst completing my PhD, that I was experiencing a ‘unique’ research moment in terms of being able to spend a leisurely 3-4 years researching my topic, the reality of contract research came as an initial shock.

To complete what otherwise would have taken a good two years in real time, in government time was converted to seven months. And even as my contribution to the project had not officially begun in any contractual sense I was in fact working on it one month prior to the official start date. Of course, our research team could have all petulantly stamped our feet, downed our research tools and complained about their lack of understanding of the research process.

‘Good research takes time’ I heard myself saying in the same vein as the Grolsch advert. However, once a funding source rears its head and demonstrates a very real interest in your research idea, it is surely sheer folly to prefer to submit a proposal to a research council, and compete with every other Doc, Prof or Fellow. One simply has to weigh up the pros and cons, and also admit that it is better to have researched and lost time, then never to have researched at all.

In any case, with the experience of having completed a PhD in possibly more time than was actually necessary (come on admit it?) perhaps fine-tuning one’s research skills and thinking into a veritable nutshell can still produce what some governmental bodies require. Remember that more often than not, they want to be able to make policy recommendations, or demonstrate that in commissioning or funding research they are clearly attending to the particular social issue or problem. Is it really their concern whether Foucault’s techniques of power is the best model to use to understand African-Caribbean masculinity in English schools?

The worry of course is the rest of the social world, and whilst the pressures of completing the research within seven months is very real to a research team, sometimes it does not want to behave in the way that you would like. Gaining access, gathering data, and conducting interviews therefore may well have to wait until after you have done the analysis: but don’t fret, it will all come together in the final report in the end!

Jo Haynes
University of Bristol

Dear Editors,

I would like to congratulate the editorial team for the new, very much improved version of the newsletter. Indeed the improvement is quite dramatic. It is most certainly more inviting and investing in journalistic pictures is certainly well worth it.

Yours,
Marisa Lincoln

In association with **Sociological Research Online**, Research News is a new section looking at most recent and exciting developments in the discipline. **Sociological Research Online** is a web-based journal publishing high quality applied sociology that engages with current political and cultural debates. The speed of online publishing means that **Sociological Research Online** can respond to breaking news and the site features a 'Rapid Response' section for sociological comment on current affairs. For more information, and to keep up-to-date with the latest in sociology, log on to www.socresonline.org.uk

New Network Addresses Gender Pay Equality Questions

Why are changes in gender inequalities so much faster and more consistent in some spheres and social groups than in others? Why are new pay inequalities between women emerging and growing? Why, despite the many policy initiatives concerned with addressing inequality, has the gender 'wage gap' proved so stubborn? Why has the demise of the breadwinner family left women's primary responsibility for family care-taking unchanged? Why do corporations differ in their willingness to embrace gender equity goals?

These and related questions will be addressed by a new ESRC research priority network on Gender Inequalities in Production and Reproduction which runs from October 2004 for five years. A main objective of the Network is to move forward the theoretical understanding of changing forms of gender inequalities and to provide new substantive evidence of the dynamic inter-links between life processes, resource constraints, and policy contexts.

The Network's research programme is co-ordinated by Jacqueline Scott, a sociologist at Cambridge University. The Network brings together nine substantive projects spread across eight institutions and involves some twenty researchers from a wide range of disciplines. Three large scale longitudinal projects, using state-of-the art analysis of quantitative survey data, are examining the gendered pathways to adult attainment. Picking up on concerns raised by Denise Kingsmill in her Employment Review about the wastage of talent in the British economy, Shirley Dex and Heather Joshi (Institute of Education) will examine how policy initiatives and employer practices affect the careers of men and women and mothers and fathers, and how career paths have changed across the generations. Ingrid Schoon, a psychologist (City University), will focus on young people's changing aspirations and attainments. Demographers, Wendy Sigle-Rushton (LSE), John Hobcraft and Kathleen Kiernan (York) will examine the distinctive gendered pathways that contribute to the different ways childhood (dis)advantages affect adult attainment.

A second theme concerns resource allocations and gender, ethnic and class inequalities. Jonathon Gershuny (Essex) will use cross-national time trend data to test further hypotheses concerning how household division of labour reproduces gender inequities across time and place. Holly Sutherland (Essex), Sue Himmelweit (OU) and Fran Bennett (Oxford) will look at the way the new tax credits help or limit families' capacities to adapt to new opportunities for gender equality in paid and unpaid work. Geographers Linda McDowell (Oxford) and Sarah Radcliffe (Cambridge) will examine the gendered opportunities and disadvantages

faced by new migrants and different ethnic groups in the service sector of London. Sociologist Rosemary Crompton (City) will extend and develop her ongoing study of how particular labour market sectors are changing as a result of a feminised or feminising work-force.

All the projects are concerned to address policy, but two projects are explicitly concerned with policy response. One project based in Cambridge (Simon Deakin and Jude Browne) will investigate the role of corporate governance in the public and private sectors in promoting and blocking the employability of women and men across the life course. Another project on work and care in the UK and EU, with Jane Lewis (LSE) and Ceridwen Roberts (Oxford) will use a historical perspective to understand the turning points in the way problems are defined by policy makers and solutions proposed.

The purpose of bringing distinctive projects together under the umbrella of a Network is to 'add value' to what could be achieved by stand-alone projects. The Network as a whole has the critical mass, diverse expertise, time and resources to make an impact. Our common goal in examining changing lives and structures is both to understand the way these are changing and to identify how policy can intervene effectively to promote greater equality.

We will hold a variety of open events around the Network theme, including international work-shops and conferences. A Network seminar series will be structured around theoretical questions, key concepts, and methodological challenges that confront the research of gender inequalities. The Network will also hold training workshops for researchers who wish to expand their methodological skills in areas directly applicable to dynamic analyses of gender inequalities.

The Network faces many challenges. How to prevent gender being interpreted as "women"? How to ensure reproduction and production are each given due weight in developing theoretical constructs and empirical analyses of inequalities? How to provide an effective evidence base for policy makers? We are optimistic that these challenges will help spur us on to achieve real progress in furthering gender equality, an important and timely task.

Further details of the Network's activities can be found at Genet.ac.uk (under construction).

Jackie Scott, University of Cambridge



A Sociology of Sleep? Surely not!

Sleep, until recently, has been a neglected sociological issue. Early sociological ventures into this terrain seem to have had precious little impact on the sociological mindset. To raise the very possibility of a sociology of sleep, indeed, still engenders a question mark in the minds of many sociologists: 'a sociology of sleep, surely not!' This itself is sociologically interesting, revealing much about the preferences if not prejudices of a discipline firmly committed to the waking social world.

Further thought, however, reveals the rich sociological significance of sleep. How we sleep, when we sleep, where we sleep, what we make of sleep, and with whom we sleep, are all socially, culturally and historically variable matters. The meanings, methods, motives and management of sleep, moreover, tell us much about the social organisation of everyday/ every night life: the 'doing' of sleep, in effect, including incumbency of the sleep role, and the pre- and post-sleep rituals and routines that facilitate movement in and out of this role.

A sociology of sleep, as this suggests, may operate on a number of different levels, from the individual/experiential level, where phenomenological issues such as falling asleep, being asleep, and feeling sleepy, loom large, through the social/interactional level of 'doing' sleep, to broader societal/ institutional issues concerning the social organisation of sleep, including inequalities and injustices surrounding sleep as both right and resource.

There are, moreover, a number of possible options and strategies available to sociologists in taking up the challenge of researching the social world of sleep, themselves far from mutually exclusive. The first involves a careful re-reading of past/present sociological sources, in order to recover sleep-related themes and issues. The second, more direct strategy, involves empirical research on the social world of sleep as a rich and fascinating topic in its own right. The third option involves the use of sleep as a way of accessing existing research topics and agendas; a new window on social processes and social relations across the public/private divide.

One important strand of recent research concerns the medicalisation of sleep. Williams, for example, has drawn attention the 'colonization' of sleep through a variety of 'dormant expertise', particularly through discourses of health, risk and public safety. The media too plays an increasingly important role here, as Kroll-Smith's recent work on the social construction of excessive daytime sleepiness clearly suggests. These issues in turn mesh more or less closely with the commercialisation and commodification of sleep-related 'goods', products and services in consumer culture: a booming marketplace in which we are all sold the dream of a sound night's sleep.

Another important strand of recent research, which sheds further valuable light on these issues, concerns the gendered nature of sleep. Hislop and Arber see sleep as an important window onto gender roles and

relationships. Drawing on data from focus groups, in-depth interviews, audio sleep diaries and a national postal survey, they show that women's sleep is influenced across the life course by the interaction of social roles and relationships, and life events and transitions. In conjunction with physiological factors, these dynamics define the nature of women's sleep, create the potential for disruption, and influence women's response to it. The management of women's sleep problems, in this respect, range from personalised strategies to medicalised solutions. This work in turn has been taken forward through a current ESRC funded project investigating the relationship between the sleep patterns of couples aged between 20-59, which includes the use of actiwatches (watch-like devices which measure movement) in order to integrate sleep measures and qualitative data and to assess the impact each partner is having on the other during sleep.

The sociology of sleep is set for developmental take-off and is likely to gather force and momentum in the coming years. Certainly, sleep is pertinent to most areas of sociology, including debates on embodiment, health and illness, work and employment, consumption, intimacy and family life. As with any new area of research, however, a number of important questions remain. Is it a 'ghettoised' sociology of sleep we are after, for example, or a more general awareness and sensitivity to sleep-related issues within sociology as a whole? What conceptual and methodological challenges does researching the social world of sleep raise, and how are these best resolved? Are there new opportunities for multi and inter-disciplinary research here? Will sociologists take up these challenges?

These are some of the issues that the new ESRC seminar series on 'Sleep and Society' seeks to address in a spirit of open dialogue, discussion and debate. The first seminar 'Sleep, wakefulness and everyday/night life' takes place on Friday 3rd December at the University of Warwick www.warwick.ac.uk/go/sleepandsociety

Jenny Hislop, University of Surrey,
Simon J. Williams, University of Warwick

Read Simon Williams' and Sharon Boden's 'Consumed with Sleep? Bodies in Consumer Culture' in Volume 9, Issue 2 of *Sociological Research Online* www.socresonline.org.uk.

SURVIVING THE VIVA:

TOWARDS A PHENOMENOLOGY OF TERROR

I had my viva recently, after a wait of five months. It went very well and I passed 'with style'. I thanked all appropriate persons for their support and shook hands with my externals, rendered inarticulate with joy, relief and pride. Then I went to the pub where I was still inarticulate, with joy, relief, pride... and inebriation.

When I finally submitted my thesis, after one last weekend of hard graft and little sleep, I felt incredibly tired for two weeks, ready to drop off to sleep if I rested my head against a wall. But somehow I recovered from that and got on with other aspects of my life. I could no longer tell people I was writing up my thesis however. I was simply waiting for my viva. Identity in transition.

Nothing prepares you for the phenomenological dimension of getting ready for the viva, for the emotional states and physical sensations it generates. Suddenly the date gets very close and it's time to retrieve the door stopper from the bottom of the door and start reading it again!

I allowed myself three weeks to prepare: one week to read it right through; one week to take notes, summarise each chapter, tell myself the story of my thesis, rehearse some answers, read key sections, and, finally, one week to panic.

The week which precedes the viva gives rise to an incredible panoply of sensations: sheer, blank terror; an empty sick feeling in the stomach and chest; constrictions of the diaphragm; bad dreams; obsessive, even murderous thoughts about significant others who are perceived not to give enough attention or support; alternating with eerie feelings of calm, numb brain, and the need to tell everyone of the impending event and express, with feeling, doubts about the outcome. All this in a short space of time and repeated several times over several days.

I tried to read my thesis – a fruitless task: all I saw were the typos, spelling mistakes, examples of infelicitous syntax, and I even detected inconsistencies in the basic argument, when only five months ago I saw a tight and consistent theoretical edifice. On the penultimate day, my mind was a blank and I just had to trust it would come flooding back on the day. It did.

So how does one keep on an even keel in the last week, how does one relax? You can try yoga and breathing exercises, strenuous physical exercise, house cleaning, as these can be confounded with the state of distraction in which one finds oneself. I also have some advice to impart, in the search for ways of alleviating the mounting panic.

☼ Do not expect to be able to do anything remotely useful for about a week preceding the viva.

☼ Stop reading your thesis approximately five days before the viva. It will seem to be a misguided piece of work and you will want to rewrite it. Too late, not recommended and probably not necessary, if you've got that far with competent supervision.

☼ Don't rely on your mum or anyone acting in loco parentis. They will be just as nervous as you and quite useless at giving adequate support. I will dissuade my son from doing a PhD because I know I'll be emotionally unstable throughout. This is all the more urgent as he has just announced, at the tender age of twelve, that he is considering doing a PhD (see Bourdieu for the reproduction of habitus position through educational aspirations).

☼ Don't rely on your supervisor for hints about the outcome – I think supervisors these days have to sign the higher education equivalent of the Official Secrets Act and they keep mum. At the same time, no need to subject their discretion and bland statements to textual analysis. The reality is much more mundane. They can't say anything and they are just about as nervous as you are.

☼ Don't rely on anyone who did their PhD more than twenty years ago, before vivas were tightly regulated, or in the natural sciences. In fact anyone who says that their supervisor had already strongly hinted that it was a walkover - walk away singing la la la.

☼ Go hillwalking.

☼ Go for a massage on the morning of the viva – ask for oils that relax you without dulling your intellectual vigour.

THE FEAR GENERATED BY ANTICIPATION OF THE VIVA IS TRULY EMBODIED. THIS SOMETIMES EXTREME PHYSICALITY IS AN INTRINSIC PART OF THE RITUAL IN THE TRANSITION FROM DOING TO HAVING ONE'S PHD, BECOMING A DOCTOR AND A MEMBER OF THE 'CLUB'.

Europe without Homophobia?

In May, I was lucky enough to attend, and present at, the *Europe Without Homophobia* Conference in Wroclaw, Poland, the 5th International queer and gender studies conference organised in Poland since 2000. The aim of the event was to consider the experiences, issues and presence of queer people in the communities of Europe, from the local to the international level. The conference agenda emerged from the European accession of ten new member states in May 2004, seeking to ask how this would alter the lives of queer people in Central and Eastern Europe: how can 'sexual minorities' in the European Community be visible, heard, safe, and equal before the law? The bold vision of the conference was declared in its title, pointing towards and indeed demanding a Europe 'without homophobia'.

The conference was an interdisciplinary one and papers included literary analysis, political activism, popular culture, art, education, history and law, as well as multiple interpretations of, and responses to, queer theory and queer practices (for example 'Do we need queer theory in Poland?' by Pawel Kurpios and 'Legal aspects of the registration of partnerships: examples of regulations in selected European Countries' by Paulina Pilch). The conference opening was given in Polish and English and as a mono-lingual English speaker I faced the embarrassment of realising my own linguistic limitations as those around me spoke and heard across many different languages.

Many papers explored the opening up of political and discursive spaces for developing new strategies for fighting homophobia in new member states and the EC as a whole, some looked at the ways that sexuality has been a tabooed subject for academia in Eastern Europe and the integration of various sexual orientation issues onto university curricula, while others pointed to the symbolic, rather than substantive, changes to lesbian and gay rights. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual politics and movements were widely depicted as moving forces, gathering momentum and coming out into new contexts – this was a refreshing change from the accusations of taken-for-granted apathy which sometimes, rightly or wrongly, attaches itself to queer movements.

Most notable among these papers was Chris Bell's *Analyzing the Viability of a Europe without Homophobia*, which spelled out the need for interconnections and intersectionality - rather than looking at sexuality as a single, isolated issue. His question 'What is the purpose of creating a space devoid of homophobia that is still rife with racism, sexism, classism...?' is a pertinent one, as is the assertion that a Europe without homophobia is not a Europe without heterosexism.

Discomforts were at times tangible, apparent in my own reluctance to participate in the sex education workshop (in fact several outspoken delegates did, at this point, head for a 'coffee' or a 'cigarette'; academic 'experts' it would seem are still capable of experiencing typical embarrassment around sexual matters). On a more contentious note, issues of under-representation of certain issues, over-representation of others, and corresponding accusations of sexism were painfully voiced, again pointing to the ways that academic actors are still implicated in the structures which they discuss, debate and deconstruct.

Thanks to all conference organisers, especially to Dominika Ferens, Wroclaw University.

Yvette Taylor, University of York

Funding available for Postgraduate Members of the BSA

Are you a member of the BSA based in the UK? Are you a postgraduate student? If you answered yes to both these questions then you are eligible to apply to the Support Fund. The BSA Support Fund Committee comprises of the BSA Joint-Vice-Treasurers (Brian Goldfarb and Tom Hall) the Postgraduate Forum Co-convenors (Bronagh Byrne, Ruth McAlister, Sandrine Roginsky and Tam Sanger) and Emmanuelle Tulle (Executive Postgraduate Liaison Officer). There is no deadline, applications are considered as and when received.

During the previous financial year (ending 30th September), 68 members benefited from the fund; 18 individual members (12 females, 6 males) and 50 BSA Annual Conference delegates. Awards went to members based at the Universities of: Aston, Brunel (2), Essex, Kent, Glasgow, London (Royal Holloway), Manchester, Edinburgh, Oxford (2), Portsmouth, Southampton, Warwick and York (4).

For the first time in many years, the full budget of £6,000 was allocated to worthy applicants.

Awards ranged from the usual thesis binding costs to attendance at the following conferences:

- a) Northern Narratives Conference
- b) Postgraduate Perspectives Conference, Belfast
- c) Europe and Cosmopolitanism Conference, London
- d) Work, Employment & Society Conference, Manchester
- e) ESRC Summer School, Italy
- f) Nature, Science & Social Movements Conference, Aegean
- g) Association of American Geographers Annual Conference, Philadelphia
- h) Business & Society: Corporate Responsibility in a Material World Conference, London

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To be considered for the BSA Support Fund, contact Deborah Brown at the BSA Office on 0191 383 0839 or email: enquiries@britsoc.org.uk

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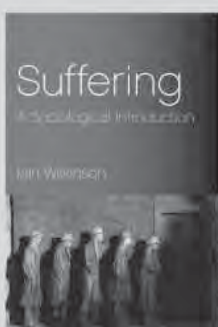
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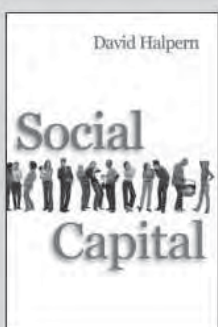
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