

Society Now

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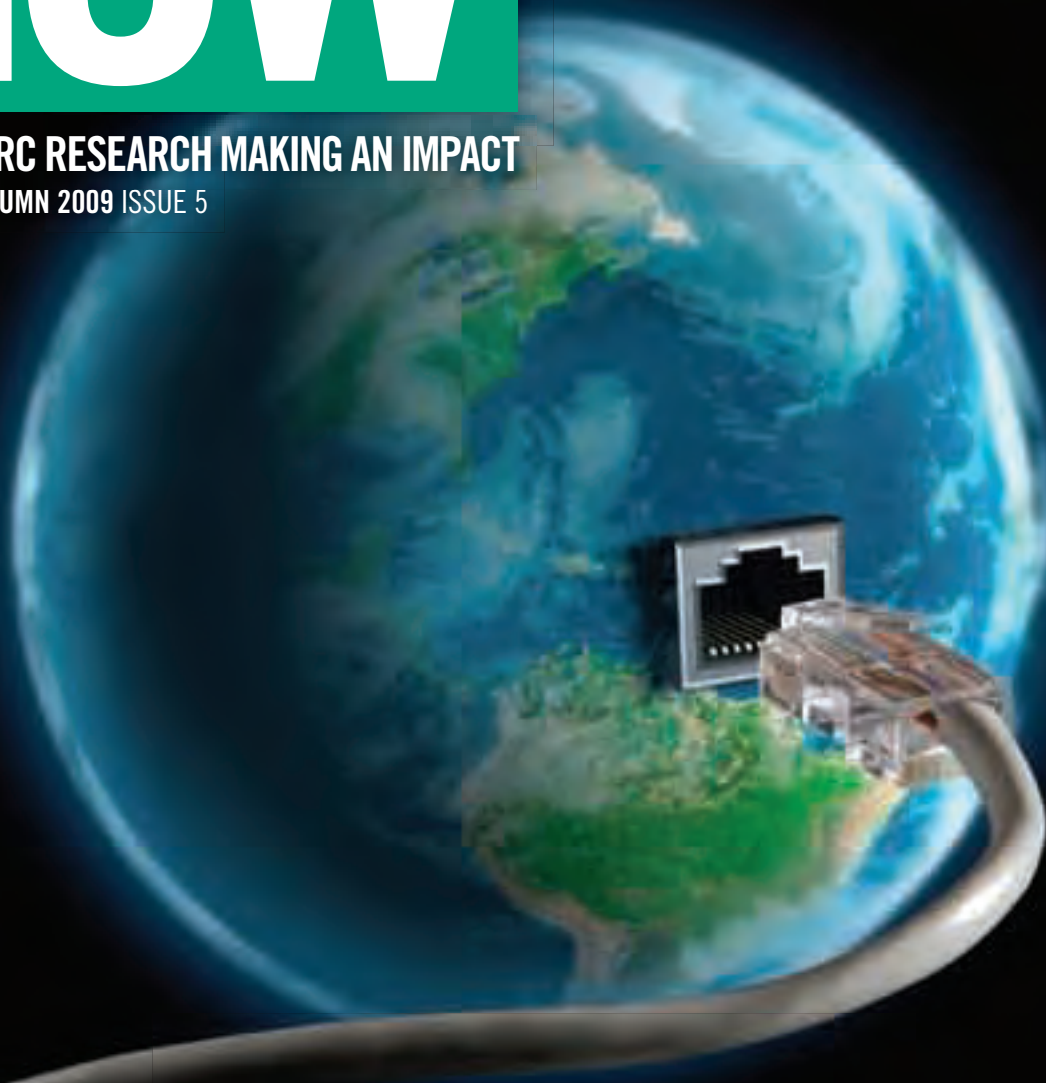
ESRC RESEARCH MAKING AN IMPACT
AUTUMN 2009 ISSUE 5

PLUS!

**Society Now
IN FOCUS**

8 page supplement

**Climate change &
Copenhagen**



World net

How society went global with internet



**Too much
too quickly:
The curse of
abundance**



**Giving the
good life:
Philanthropy
in the UK**



**Voices:
Getting
research
into R&D**

Welcome

to the autumn issue of *Society Now*, the ESRC's regular magazine, which showcases our funded research and the impact of social science.

This issue highlights global change in different forms. The impact of the internet is undeniable, connecting people across continents and cultures, and creating a global community for the first time. Our main feature looks at how this has affected society and human interaction.

The climate is undergoing change on a global scale. To mark the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen this December, the *In Focus* supplement presents ESRC-funded research, centres and programmes exploring different aspects of this urgent issue.

The challenge of feeding new research knowledge into business is illustrated in our Voices feature. Other articles highlight philanthropy in a recession, the 'curse' of abundant natural resources, and how mixed communities could counter segregation.

I hope you find the magazine enjoyable and informative. We always welcome feedback and ideas for content.

Editor, Arild Foss



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The views and statements expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the ESRC

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Society Now **IN FOCUS**

CLIMATE CHANGE & COPENHAGEN

The supplement explores ESRC-funded research related to climate change in the run-up to the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference. We look at the role of social sciences in climate change research, crucial issues in Copenhagen, and ESRC research investments that are relevant to this topic



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How bright pupils stay popular

IS IT POSSIBLE for pupils to be high achievers in the class room without becoming marginalised as ‘boffins’ and ostracised by their classmates? “Research in the past has overlooked those pupils who achieve at school and yet remain popular with classmates,” explains Professor Becky Francis. “Hence, we were particularly interested in understanding how pupils manage to achieve this.”

Based on a study of high-achieving pupils in Year 8 at nine English secondary schools and interviews with 71 other high-achieving pupils, researchers found clear evidence that some pupils are able to maintain popularity with peers in spite of their high academic achievement. “This is a timely reminder that not all high-achieving pupils are marginalised as ‘boffins’, and not all boys are underperforming academically in order to preserve their social status,” Professor Francis points out.

Nevertheless, achieving educational success and popularity is a delicate balancing act and a cause of potential anxiety for some. Many of those interviewed talked of the dangers of being classed as a ‘swot’ and expressed fear of failing to achieve balance.

Good looks, fashionability and a high degree of sociability are key factors that contribute to the high-achieving popular pupils’ ability to ‘balance’

popularity with high attainment. But popularity was also tied to gender performances, with popular high-achieving pupils tending to match the notion of the ‘proper’ girl and boy. In other words, both sexes were engaged in stereotypical pastimes (eg beauty and fashion for girls, sports for boys), and in stressing their heterosexuality.

In class, popular pupils applied themselves to their work and were not deterred by teacher praise. However,

“Achieving educational success and popularity is a delicate balancing act and a cause of potential anxiety for some”

to ‘balance’ this, they were often the centre of interaction in the classroom. Researchers also identified a ‘fall guy’ tendency – high-achieving pupils gain kudos from having a more disruptive and less high-achieving friend.

Findings suggest that teachers and the school itself are crucial in providing an effective learning environment in which high-achieving pupils can reach their potential. Researchers point to different cultural expectations of pupil behaviour within schools, which make it more or less easy for pupils to manage their high achievement. For example, for boys to maintain status with other boys often means hiding the fact they do anything more than

the minimum schoolwork. Hence, it is easier to achieve in schools with an acceptance that to work hard is the purpose of being at school.

The study, researchers conclude, supports previous research which shows how pupils appreciate and respond to teachers who seem interested in them and their needs, and who hold high expectations of them.

In terms of policy, researchers point out that the current preoccupation

with educational ‘credentials’ has filtered into the classroom, producing an acute awareness among pupils of the attainment hierarchies therein. This, they conclude, is particularly damaging for those children who must be marked as failures in order for other pupils to be identified as successes. “We would argue for policies which reduce rather than exacerbate educational selection and distinction,” Professor Francis concludes. ■



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IN BRIEF

ALERT TO AUTISM

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is one of the most devastating developmental disorders of childhood. A new study will investigate the early social interactions between young siblings of children with ASD and their parents. As ASD is highly genetic, some (but not most) of these babies will go on to develop ASD. This research opens up the possibilities for early 'preventative' work.

ESRC Grant Number RES-000-22-3525

INNOVATIVE WAYS

Despite the world-leading position of British academic institutions, British firms have historically had difficulties adapting to the innovation modes that characterise new markets for science-based technologies. Researchers will explore which organisational models can best be employed to manage science-led product innovation and identify the challenges British firms face in adopting these models.

ESRC Grant Number RES-598-25-0032

TACKLING OBESITY

The main cause of the recent rise in the weights of both children and adults is simple: a continued misbalance between calorie intake and expenditure. Researchers will examine the causes and consequences of the rise in childhood obesity and explore whether obesity in children affects their educational performance, happiness, wellbeing and mental health.

ESRC Grant Number PTA-026-27-2335



Profound changes in the workplace

THE BRITISH WORKPLACE has undergone tremendous change over the last 25 years – not just compared to other eras, but also to other countries, according to a new study. Manufacturing and nationalised industries have contracted while private services have expanded, employment has become diverse and trade union membership has collapsed, argue a research team. "Such changes have had a profound effect on both the private and public sector, though changes have been far greater in the former," Professor Keith Whitfield states.

The study is based on the Work Employment Relations Surveys, which were published at roughly five to six year intervals between 1980 and 2004 and provide a unique insight into the world of work in the UK.

Findings reveal that over the past 25 years, collective bargaining has disappeared from much of the private sector, as have strikes. This has been accompanied by the rise of human resource management and a range of new employment practices. The law has increasingly become an important element in governing the employment relationship, while the experience of work has become more pressured and job stress has risen to record levels.

In short, says Professor Whitfield, the UK workplace has been completely transformed in recent years. "Taking the example of voluntary collective bargaining which was so prevalent throughout much of the 20th century: this has been greatly diminished and

replaced by a much more diverse set of arrangements. In its place we see a growing element of individual labour law, communication between employers and workers that does not involve trade unions, and the development of management practices that are directed at improving organisational performance.

"It is difficult to explain to current job market entrants how different things were for their parents when they were embarking on their working lives," Professor Whitfield concludes. "But this study goes some way to closing the gap."

The main policy implications emerging from the study are that the government and employers need to pay more attention to work-related wellbeing issues, especially those linked to job stress, and that there is a need to strengthen institutions that permit the least powerful members of the labour force to assert their legally enshrined rights. The key implication for unions is that they need to find new, and more customised, ways of working in a world that is much more diverse than was the case just a quarter of a century ago.

Published in 2009, *The Evolution of the Modern Workplace* is based on this project and is edited by William Brown, Alex Bryson, John Forth and Keith Whitfield. ■



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No best laws to encourage business

THERE IS NO single best model of laws governing business, says a new study of legal change over time, which focused specifically on the areas of shareholder protection, creditor protection and labour regulation.

A team of researchers from the universities of Cambridge, East Anglia and Oxford set out to explore the belief that effective legal institutions are an important part of economic development. Findings also suggest that there is no single best model for laws governing business, and that legal systems are more capable of evolving to meet development needs in a way that transcends their origins.

Some have argued that countries inheriting 'civil law' legal institutions find it harder to shift to a more business-friendly legal regime

than those with 'common law' origins. However, this study indicates that countries with civil law legal systems are generally capable of change. Findings also indicate that many legal changes aimed at fostering business activity over the past decade have not had the desired effect. A 'one size fits all' approach to corporate governance reforms, which stresses elements of British and American practice, may not work in some economies and developing systems, researchers conclude. ■

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Part of the World Economy And Finance programme

Northern Irish reject labels

RESEARCH BASED ON information gathered from the 2007 Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey shows that an increasing number of people are moving away from the traditional labels of 'Irish Catholic' and 'British Protestant'.

Researchers from the ESRC-funded ARK (Access, Research, Knowledge) asked respondents about their national and religious identities. Almost two-thirds identified themselves as British Protestants or Irish Catholics. There was, however, an increase in the number of people who identified themselves as being 'Northern Irish', with around one in four people opting for this label, compared to around one-fifth in previous surveys. Within this group, around one-third of those questioned described themselves as being equally British and Irish, rejecting the notion that these identities are 'opposites'.

Researchers also presented the 1,179 respondents with emblems or historical images, such as a Union Jack or the Irish Tricolour, and gauged their responses to these images. Results showed that emotional responses to iconic images were stronger among respondents with traditional identities. Interestingly, the iconic image of Ian Paisley and Gerry Adams at the first meeting of the Northern Ireland Executive at Stormont in 1999 produced no evident differences in annoyance, hopefulness or unease. This suggests religious differences are no longer evident when it comes to current or future political situations.

For more about Northern Irish communities, see page 22. ■

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IN BRIEF



GET OUT THE VOTE

At election time, political parties attempt to mobilise voters with traditional door-to-door visits, as well as less personal techniques, including leaflets and telephone calls. Researchers will examine whether these 'Get Out The Vote' campaigns are an effective way of encouraging electors to turn out. The study will focus on the 2009 European elections and the next UK General Election.

ESRC Grant Number RES-000-22-2827

TEMPTED TO WASTE

Food waste and overeating impose substantial costs on society through healthcare costs and environmental costs associated with the disposal of food waste. This project centres on food vendors' pricing practices that are used to drive higher sales volumes, but which may encourage consumers to overbuy for their needs. Researchers will analyse to what extent such offers are beneficial or harmful from an economic and social perspective.

ESRC Grant Number RES-000-22-3524

EYEWITNESS ACCURACY

Effective interviews with witnesses are a key part of the criminal investigation process. Open-ended questioning frequently fails to produce forensically important details, so this study will test a non-leading closed-question technique that requires respondents to provide answers at different levels of detail. Research conducted in the UK and Australia will combine the efforts of researchers with distinct approaches to enhancing eyewitness recall.

ESRC Grant Number RES-000-22-3169

IN BRIEF



EDUCATION STRATEGY

Researchers aim to identify the complexities of advantage and disadvantage in the educational strategies enacted by black middle-class families as they support their children through schooling. The study will analyse the educational perspectives, strategies and experiences of black Caribbean-heritage middle-class families in relation to the extensive body of research on the educational strategies of the white middle classes.

ESRC Grant Number RES-062-23-1880

THE BEST YOU CAN BE

The educational programme 'The Best You Can Be', which was developed after the award of the 2012 Olympic Games to London, aims to facilitate pupil awareness and responsibility. The programme will be integrated into the National Curriculum via personal, social, health and economic education. Researchers will examine whether the programme promotes positive changes in key learning and wellbeing outcomes.

ESRC Grant Number RES-177-25-0011

HOMELESS STORIES

A growing body of research into the causes of homelessness suggests that housing factors are less important in understanding the persistent nature of homelessness than factors such as family history, poverty and the breakdown of relationships. This new study will look at how these factors impact on people's lives, focusing on how they may or may not result in homelessness.

ESRC Grant Number RES-188-25-0016

The art of engaging the public

IN A NEW study, researchers from the ESRC's Genomics Network used a controversial current area of scientific endeavour, stem cell research, to explore the scope for increasing public engagement in this developing field. Based on focus groups and eight public engagement events in which the public and scientists participated, researchers conclude that although some views are shared, no common understanding of what public engagement means yet exists. Different stakeholder groups conceive it variously as a mechanism for science communication, public consultation, and more participatory democracy.

"Our research suggests that scientists and citizens genuinely want a dialogue," Dr Sarah Parry points out. "We found overwhelming support for further opportunities for engagement, which bring together scientists and non-scientists

in non-threatening environments. Yet, we also identified issues which require further attention."

For example, technical expertise tended to dominate in mixed groups. Strategies need to be employed that do not prioritise experts' positions, but enable non-experts to have a say in issues that matter to them. Researchers also pointed to the shortcomings of large panel-type engagement events; people prefer small group discussions where they feel less excluded.

These findings could prove useful in the design and implementation of future public engagement events. ■

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Faith trade

ECONOMIC RATHER THAN cultural reasons may explain why Anglo-Irish communities of southern Ireland did not follow their English compatriots and commit to Protestantism during the second half of the 16th century.

Customs accounts recording the trade between Bristol and southern Ireland are providing a unique insight into the economic development of southern Ireland during this period.

Research suggests that, contrary to widely held views, the Irish economy did not suffer low growth prior to the English conquest of the late 16th century. Ireland's trade with Bristol was buoyant during the first half of the 16th century, before falling sharply – probably due to Irish merchants' interest in the Iberian market. New World bullion

transformed Spain into Europe's richest country, and Anglo-Irish merchants could exploit this market because of their geographical proximity to Spain and their Catholic faith.

"Why did the Anglo-Irish communities of southern Ireland not commit to Protestantism? A neglected part of the story may be that the Anglo-Irish turned their back on Protestantism because commercial interests were making them increasingly reliant on Spain, where their Catholic faith gave them trading advantages," suggests Dr Evan Jones. ■

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Mixed impact from same-sex legislation

RECENT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES, including the Civil Partnership Act (2004), the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2003) and the Adoption and Children Act (2003), have created a substantially new socio-legal environment for same-sex couples. New research suggests that this package of legislation has had some significant positive impacts in terms of increasing the sense of social inclusion and reducing perceived discrimination among same-sex couples.

Some of the most notable impacts include providing some same-sex couples with greater confidence in being open about their sexual orientation, helping to normalise same-sex relationships and parenthood, and thus gradually dispelling stereotypes and increasing the sense of stability that some gay and lesbian relationships and families feel.

Interestingly, researchers from the National Centre for Social Research also found that in some areas the legislation had posed a threat to participants' sense of social inclusion. For example, this study identifies the sense among some that civil partnership, through its difference to marriage, actually perpetuates inequality among

same-sex couples. Moreover, some expressed fears that legislation – by bringing attention to same-sex couples and lesbian and gay employees – might provide certain employers or service providers with an already unsympathetic stance towards gay men and lesbians a mechanism through which to express their disapproval.

Researchers conclude that although there are a number of positive impacts from recent legislation, policymakers and practitioners must also be aware of the negative impacts and differing views on state involvement in the lives of same-sex couples in future legislative reviews. Lead researcher Dr Martin Mitchell says: "Greater support for legislative changes among same-sex couples may come from emphasising the anti-discriminatory impacts of the legislation, its value in terms of social validation and recognition for some couples, and the possibilities of defining civil partnership in one's own way within a broad legal framework." ■

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Large families affected by large classes

DATA FROM DENMARK offers intriguing new insight into the topical issues of schooling, educational attainment, achievement and earnings. Professor Paul Bingley explains that findings show that the effect of class size varies in relation to family size. "The effects of reducing class size on improved educational attainment are small for two child households, irrespective of sibling spacing," he says. "But effects are large for larger families, particularly if the children are born close together."

"The implication of this finding is that parents can compensate for the effects of large class size, but this is more difficult for larger families and with more closely spaced children," he adds. However, Professor Bingley believes that based on this data, the effects of class size in Denmark are not large enough to merit reductions in class size.

Another study challenges recent evidence that a father's schooling has a larger causal effect on the children's schooling than a mother's. "We only identified this for older children," he says. "In recent years, mothers' schooling has become more important for children than fathers'. This is consistent with expanding educational opportunities for women in the 1950s."

A final study shows that the causal effect of education on earnings in Denmark has continued to rise despite the increased supply of higher education opportunities, implying education is not keeping up with demands driven by technological change. ■

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Illness in mind

MEDIA EXPOSURE OF high-profile illnesses, such as swine flu, may result in some people experiencing some of the common effects without thinking consciously about the illness. This possibility is raised by new laboratory-based research into how the information about illness which is stored in the memory might guide people's reactions and responses.

"If we assume that information acquired about illness is schematically encoded, then it follows that a piece of information we may hear or read, or a suddenly felt symptom, might activate that schema, so everything stored in the memory about the illness in question becomes accessible to memory," Professor Sheina Orbell explains.

In an experiment, researchers subliminally primed people with the word 'flu' by flashing the word so quickly on a computer screen they did not know they had seen it. Afterwards, these people behaved in some ways associated with having flu. For example, they walked more slowly and performed more poorly on a memory task than those who had not been 'primed'.

"As far as we are aware, these findings provide the first evidence that behavioural and cognitive components of how people experience illness are encoded and, more importantly, activating this schema outside of a person's consciousness can lead to deficits in performance which are consistent with having that illness," Professor Orbell explains. "While this research is basic, it raises the possibility that contagion effects may occur, even without people consciously thinking about illness." ■

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The attraction of risk

GAMBLING CAN BE viewed as just one of many risk-taking behaviours symptomatic of young delinquent males – along with getting drunk, taking drugs and engaging in irresponsible sex. Yet not all delinquent boys exhibit gambling problems, and only four per cent of 16-24 year-old males who have gambled develop problem gambling. Why, asks a new study, are some vulnerable 12-18 year-old males more attracted to risk-taking than others? And are there any personality factors which may predict who will be drawn to risky behaviours such as problem gambling?

Researchers recruited more than 100 young offenders aged 12 to 18, whose offences ranged from petty theft to more serious crimes, such as attempted murder. They then used a variety of psychological instruments to measure differences in the attitudes, personalities and behaviours of a range of juveniles and young adults, including those with a history of problem behaviour and problem gambling.

"We found that young offenders exhibited a range of neuropsychological problems that could well explain the nature and extent of their behavioural problems," explains Professor Stephanie Van Goozen. "For example, they showed problems in working memory, in planning and in predicting the consequences of behaviour. Using computer-based tests we also found that young offenders gambled more

than matched control persons, and these differences were particularly pronounced after they had won money.

"For non-offending teenagers," Professor Van Goozen continues, "winning a small amount of money was a reason to become cautious and to gamble less; young offenders, by contrast, were inclined to gamble more." Hence, giving a vulnerable gambler a small reward is a trick which makes them gamble more, but a small reward is likely to have the opposite effect on a 'normal' gambler.

In a further experiment, researchers explored the theory that anti-social individuals, such as young offenders, are more likely to take part in risky and dangerous activities because they have either very little or no fear of the possible negative consequences of that behaviour. Findings confirmed young offenders had a deficit in learning from negative consequences. Such evidence has important implications as to the types of interventions used with young offenders, since these youngsters' insensitivity to punishment and oversensitivity to reward appears crucial to the issue of why they engage in risky behaviour and fail to learn from its adverse consequences. ■

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ESRC Grant Number RES-164-25-0017
Part of Research into Problem Gambling

Poorer reading from plane noise

EXPOSURE TO AIRCRAFT noise impairs child development, education and quality of life, according to findings from a large-scale study of noise and children's health conducted in the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

The Road Traffic and Aircraft Noise and Children's Cognition and Health research conducted among primary school children based near London Heathrow airport found that aircraft noise exposure at school was related to poorer reading ability. Early analysis of findings from a follow-up study of these children six years later, now aged 15 to 16 years, suggests noise exposure may also affect reading comprehension at secondary school.

The project findings from around Europe indicate that new schools should not be planned close to airports where noise exposure exceeds the World Health Organisation's recommended levels for school playgrounds. Researchers further advise that measures (such as insulation) should be taken to reduce noise levels in those existing schools where noise exposure is excessive. ■

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Targeting nurse aggression

WOULD AN INCREASE in resources devoted to recruiting and retaining nurses be best spent on wages or on improving working conditions? Timely new research into the importance of pay and non-pay aspects within the reward structure of UK nurses highlights key issues surrounding the trade-offs which are due to be made between pay and non-pay rewards. For example, the study estimates that nurses would be willing to give up some nine per cent of their income to move from a job with a high risk of being verbally abused to one with only a small risk of such abuse.

"Policies to limit the extent that nurses are subject to aggression could have important positive impacts on the

nursing workforce," Dr Diane Skåtun concludes. "In the current economic climate, and given the predicted strain on future public spending, understanding the non-pay drivers of such a major occupational group of public sector workers is important.

"While there have been recent policies to improve the work-life balance of many within the health service, there is a need to ensure these policies are cost effective and targeted at the characteristics most valued by the profession." ■

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IN BRIEF



WIND POWER VIEWS

How do communities respond to wind power developments? A new study brings together views on the consultation and planning process, as well as findings on people's experiences and perceptions of a wind farm after it was granted planning permission and constructed. The study will contribute towards understanding public relationships with science and technology and also provide an assessment of planning processes and policies.

ESRC Grant Number PTA-026-27-2236

STAYING SAFE

Hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality linked to injecting drug use. Over 60 per cent of injecting drug users in London are HCV antibody positive. This qualitative study explores long-term viral avoidance in an environment of high risk. Findings will inform a new generation of HCV prevention interventions in the UK.

ESRC Grant Number RES-062-23-1766

NEGOTIATING STAIRS

The majority of falls among the elderly occur while walking downstairs. This study aims to understand the role played by musculoskeletal and sensory functions and their deterioration in the ability to descend stairs, and also to find ways of improving the ability of older people to walk downstairs safely. The design of stairs and the value of tailor-made exercise training for the elderly will be explored.

ESRC Grant Number RES-356-25-0037

Net results

Forty years ago, at 10:30pm on 29 October 1969, the first ever internet message was sent. Four decades later, large parts of the world are logged on. The internet now connects the global community as never before – but what does this mean for society?

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POLITICS.GOV

Ben Bradshaw, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport

THERE AREN'T MANY politicians today without a website, and most will also have some sort of blog. You can, if you are inclined, keep in touch with your local MP on Facebook or follow the Prime Minister's wife on Twitter.

But have these new forms of communication actually changed politics? To some extent, the age of electronic communication has helped to revolutionise politics, in terms of both the business of working in government and political parties, and in the way that elected representatives interact with those who elect them. People in my constituency who would not think to write a letter are more willing to send off a quick email, while others feel more comfortable sending me a message on Facebook. This has meant an enormous increase in correspondence over the 12 years that I have been an MP, which is a very good thing. The more accessible I am, the more I am able to carry out my duties as an MP.

Around 20 years ago it was the print media (fewer than a dozen national newspapers), the BBC, ITV and Channel 4 that acted as the filter through which politicians could communicate with the public. These forms of media are all still hugely influential today, of course, but from posting videos on YouTube to publishing your expenses online, there are now many alternative forms of communication available. Political blogs in the UK do not have the reach and influence of the Drudge Report or the Huffington Post in America, but their reach is growing all the time and the trajectory of travel is clear.

At the same time, the speed of online communication has changed the way in which we operate – newspaper print deadlines matter less. News sites are updated by the second, and when news breaks it is by going online at your desk or from your mobile that most people find out what is going on. In other ways, the internet is a useful add-on to the traditional business of politics. On polling day, Twitter can be used to encourage voter turnout, but come the General Election it will be activists knocking on doors or making phone calls that local campaigns depend on. President Obama's campaign is cited as successfully using the internet to mobilise his natural constituency, mainly in the cause of building a fundraising base. But come election day, it was having people on the ground that mattered most.

The internet is a source of fact, but also of rumour and deceit. It can inform and mislead, as the debate on healthcare in the United States has shown. But most of all, it has the potential to empower every citizen. This has been the most significant and positive impact of the internet.

Twenty years ago when I reported for the BBC on the fall of the Berlin Wall, protesters had to rely on the TV and radio news to find out what was happening, and for the East Berliners this meant illegally listening to the BBC. Today in Iran, protesters are uploading videos of demonstrations, using Twitter to pass on facts and the internet to keep the protests alive. Journalists (who operate under severe restrictions in Iran) are using the internet to find out what is happening on the ground. The power of a totalitarian state is challenged by the ability of its citizens to communicate independently of it.



BOOSTING BUSINESS

John Wright, National Chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses

THE IMPACT OF the internet has been massive on the business sector, spawning a whole e-business industry as well as boosting advertising, sales and innovation for more traditional companies. Not least for small businesses, the internet presents excellent possibilities for reaching out to new markets, building customer contact and loyalty, and streamlining management and manufacturing flow.

It might not have completely revolutionised the business sector as envisioned in the heady days of the nineties' internet boom, but the internet is ignored at a business's peril. Consider the growth of social media, such as Twitter and Facebook. In a single year, from February 2008 to February 2009, unique visitors to Twitter increased from 475,000 to seven million – including 6,000 small and medium businesses a day. More than 100 million users log on to Facebook at least once a day. These are not services that are dominated by teenagers; more than half of Facebook users are over 26 years old, with their own income and purchasing power. Huge and growing online communities have made it even more important for businesses to be live and present on the internet.

The case for getting online has been made stronger by the current recession, in order to maximise sales and increase efficiency. Our recent survey showed that nearly half of small businesses that used the internet to advertise increased their turnover by more than 20 per cent. Sales for many respondents improved after linking to suppliers and using their website to advertise.

Small firms are becoming increasingly internet savvy, with 70 per cent of the respondents having their own website – an increase of a quarter since the previous survey. When rating the six most important sources of business support for the next two years, the internet was regarded as the most influential for sales and marketing.

At the same time, there is potential for much more. Despite 70 per cent of UK households having internet access in 2009, over a quarter of small firms still remain offline, without a website. A BT study from December 2008 also showed that only 15 per cent of UK companies use social networking sites.

The core principles for a successful and sustainable business remain: high levels of quality, service and efficiency. But the internet has proved to be a valuable booster for promotion, customer base and overall sales. Despite being a rather 'intangible' medium, the internet can produce a very concrete result for the bottom line.



SOCIAL SCIENCE AND THE NET

Helen Margetts, Professor of Society and the Internet at the Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford

THE SHIFT OF many areas of social and political life onto the internet has major implications for social science research. It provides an opportunity to understand areas of life and society that we have lacked the data and research tools to test before. When have we previously seen the complete transaction history of an organisation – as provided by the freely available edit history of Wikipedia, downloaded in its entirety by a research student at the Oxford Internet Institute?

Daily capture of some of the innumerable online campaigns can provide thousands of 'joining curves' of real political mobilisations. Social networking sites, such as Facebook, generate massive amounts of information on social networks. Automatic 'web-crawlers' can collect non-obtrusive data on links between and within sites to provide a structural view of any sector – government, commerce and the voluntary sector.

This change is exciting, but it also brings new challenges. At times we have 'too much' data. The download of Wikipedia generated a six terabyte database, requiring use of the UK National Grid Service to analyse. Web-crawling provides huge maps of organisational relationships and internal structures, which can be extremely hard to interpret. Thousands of curves showing take-up rates of online

petitions or charitable campaigns can be difficult to understand without background knowledge.

Sometimes, we have surprisingly little amounts of data. User data on the internet is the property of the owner of a site, and even if we can obtain it we still know little about where users came from or where they are going. Search engine companies are the custodians of an extraordinary wealth of such data, but they tend not to publish it, let alone share it. There are ethical and legal barriers to data collection. Around 1.5 billion politically-oriented YouTube video clips were viewed during the 2008 US presidential election campaigns, analysis of which would be fascinating for political scientists. But YouTube does not allow the use of automatic crawlers to track download data. Likewise, Facebook operates strict rules which prevent analysis of the thousands of social networks it generates.

Rigorous study of life online is a technologically complex task, continually introducing new research challenges. There are ways around all these challenges though, which mean that studying social and political life is getting more exciting. Social science research increasingly involves borrowing from other disciplines as diverse as physics, computer science and epidemiology, and the development of methodologies such as advanced network analysis, agent-based modelling and experiments. The rich variety of data and insight that these tasks provide is worth the wait and pays back the hope. ►



GROWING UP WITH THE INTERNET

Fiona Blacke, Chief Executive of The National Youth Agency

WITH THE MOMENTOUS evolution of the internet in the late nineties, today's young people are the first generation to grow up in a digitally connected world – where geographical boundaries provide no limitations and information can be accessed on a 24/7 basis. This has had a tremendous impact on the personal and social development of young people, and we are keen to support young people, those who work with them and policymakers in understanding both the opportunities and implications arising from this. *Behind the Screen: The Hidden Life of Youth Online*, a report from the Institute for Public Policy Research supported by The National Youth Agency, identified that “young people inhabit a vastly different world to that experienced by their parents.” Four in five of all 5 to 15 year-olds now have access to the internet at home and use it for several hours a night to socialise with friends, accessing a variety of social networking tools.

Social network sites have driven a massive growth in young people's online social networking since the emergence of MySpace in 2003 and Facebook and Bebo in 2005. Now, over 60 to 70 per cent of 13 to 17 year olds have profiles on social networking sites to link to 'friends', and this figure is set to grow as mobile phone technology continues to develop.

Many opportunities are presented through online social networking. This platform makes it easier for young people to talk to their peers, get advice and information, publish creative works

and engage with brands, opinion formers and the political environment – an area that The National Youth Agency has been exploring with our Young Researchers Network to inform policymakers in how to participate with young people more actively.

The risks of social networking have been well publicised in the media, from increasing the exposure to inappropriate content, commercialism and unsuitable advertising, through to inappropriate contact both on- and offline with strangers, and the erosion of personal time through 'instant connectivity'.

Research has found that young people are aware and conscious of these risks, but for many online social networking is not a distinct activity, but rather part of day-to-day life, communication and interaction with peers.

However, it is essential to note that not all young people are actively using social networking sites – those from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to have frequent or regular access to them. Lack of access to online social networking opportunities may impact upon young peoples' social exclusion, as many of the social conversations and coordination between young people move into social networking spaces, giving rise to 'cyber bullying'.

As the internet continues to grow and develop, we will continue to see young people grow with it. As such, we need to consciously recognise it for the amazing potential it has in transforming the way in which we communicate – but we also need to do more to help young people develop the social and psychosocial skills they need to help them deal with the risks that they are facing.

The history of the internet

1969 1971 1978 1989 1990 1991 1992

The first message is sent over ARPANET

The first network email system is created

The first spam is sent; the US Defence Communications Agency assures that it will not happen again

The World Wide Web is created by Tim Berners-Lee, who proposes connecting hypertext pages with a browser

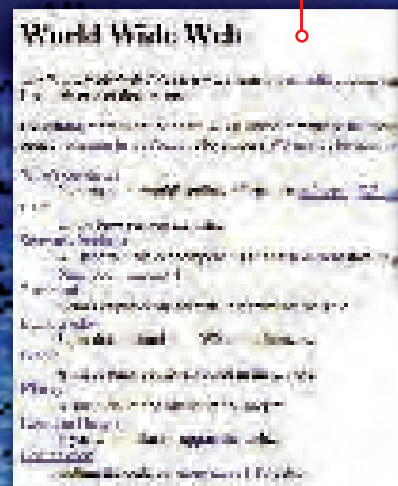
ARPANET gives way to the internet

The first web page is published

The first audio and video are broadcast over the internet



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TAKING TERROR ONLINE

Dr Andrew Hoskins, Department of Sociology at the University of Warwick

THE IDEA THAT the internet provides an unrestricted environment for the recruitment and harbouring of terrorists has gained much support since the September 11 attacks. Yet, it is precisely the intangible nature of the internet that encourages scare stories seamlessly equating the 'grooming' of children by paedophiles with the 'grooming for jihad'. The sense of danger is often embodied in the technologies and the networks themselves as much as in the perpetrators.

One of the most intangible of threats often associated with the rise of the internet is that posed by 'radicalisation', particularly through advances in user-generated content (web 2.0). In the UK, the idea of radicalisation gained much political interest following the 2005 London bombings, the 2006 transatlantic bomb plot, and other high-profile news stories involving 'home-grown' terrorists. Radicalisation can be defined as a process where a person moves from adopting or promoting extremist beliefs to acting upon them in violent actions. This non-specific, intangible idea is neatly similar to the medium that it is spread through. Both the threat and the internet itself are unknowable and undiscoverable compared to the relative certainties of more traditional threats and traditional mass media.

This shift is partly a matter of scale. With the traditional media, academics could use a contained (if inconclusive) amount of data to study media's role in influencing violent behaviour. Today's 'new

media ecology', however, provides a massively increased abundance, ubiquity and accessibility of communication networks and nodes. This reduces the prospect of any comprehensive research into uses and influences of new technologies and media.

This is not to say that there isn't a burgeoning of new approaches, such as 'web metrics', designed to trawl and collect digital content. Rather, there is a division between old and new media studies about what is knowable and the traditions and tools that are relevant to new media uses and effects.

This division is also reflected in the debates around new and old security threats. It is precisely the anxiety stemming from the intangible and uncertain risk of 21st century terrorism that is central to its success. Furthermore, trying to identify radicalisation is a largely fruitless enterprise when there is not even a general set of characteristics that define a person who is most vulnerable to crossing the threshold from holding extremist views to committing a violent action. Instead, it is more pertinent to ask who the reporting and debate on radicalisation serves and in what circumstances, rather than attempting to raise its spectre to help legitimise 'counter-terrorist' measures.

Research funded by the ESRC New Security Challenges Programme reveals that news reporting of issues related to radicalisation have not helped to clarify its meaning or its legitimacy in the public understanding of government strategy on terrorism. In this respect, journalists and policymakers should re-think their use of terminology and approach if their aim is to achieve a more informed and more supportive public in our new media ecology. ■

1998

Google is founded by two Stanford University students



2001

Launch of Wikipedia



2005

YouTube goes online



2006

Launch of Twitter



2007

Cyber-terrorism hits the headlines as the Estonian government, media and bank websites are subject to a mass cyber-attack

2009

More than 1.6 billion people are using the internet

1 October 2009: The internet becomes independent as the United States cedes control over regulating body ICANN



The recession in view

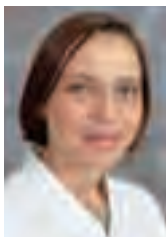


Recession Britain is the ESRC's publication providing the latest research evidence on the current economic downturn. Reporting on its impact towards our labour markets, our businesses and our lives, it is an essential read for everyone.

Out now, for more information please e-mail recession@esrc.ac.uk



Published by the Economic
and Social Research Council



Borderline living

Sixty years ago Germany was split in two, dividing a nation. The drawing of borders has a vast social impact, argues **Professor Sarah Green**

EVERY TIME POLITICAL borders are closed, opened, moved, removed or redefined there will be some social implications, even in much less dramatic cases than the border that was built after the creation of the GDR (East Germany) in October 1949, and the equally dramatic removal of that border in 1989. This is partly because border controls affect the possibilities of movement and exchanges of people, things and information – all of which are basic requirements for creating and maintaining social relations. But it is also because of what borders mean to people: they are rarely simply lines created and policed by governments; they are also made up of a range of other characteristics, both material and non-material. People imagine borders as much as they experience them or have them imposed upon their lives, and they also use borders for many purposes, not all of which are intended by the political authorities responsible for them.

Here it is as important to recognise the diversity of relationships that people have with borders as it is to recognise the diversity of borders that are in existence. The re-opening of a border that had been tightly shut may be warmly welcomed by some people, but others may be fearful of rekindling old enmities. Those who cross a border illegally carry the border with them wherever they go, as do those who feel that a border marks the boundary of their nation.

A border which cuts across a territory that people feel should be a social unity (for example the city of Berlin) will have very different social implications from one that marks what most consider to be a pre-existing social or cultural difference (such as the border between France and Germany). Some borders feel like lines, clearly dividing one side from the other, while others feel like points scattered in the landscape, visible only at border crossings. For example, in parts of the Ferghana Valley, which contains multiple borders of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, you would have to be a local to know all the spots where one country begins and the other ends; a road stretching less than a mile can contain three or four different international borders.

There are also borders whose status is disputed, such as the line separating the northern and southern sections of Cyprus. Those borders are especially difficult for the populations they divide, because their legal status is unclear. And for those territories whose status as a country is disputed, such as the northern part of Cyprus, it is difficult

for the people living in them to travel anywhere, as passports issued by the disputed territory are not actually recognised in most parts of the world. Some researchers studying these disputed territories report that social life in them is often defined by a sense of waiting; waiting for the border question to be resolved before decisions can be made about personal choices – including mundane ones, such as whether to redecorate a house that may, or may not, belong to you.

These cases demonstrate how borders often act as an important form of political, legal, economic and often ideological classification, which is used by governments and social groups alike. International border crossing points also show this: the passports, visas and other bureaucratic procedures required at entry points

“ Borders never simply mark the separation between one territory and another: they also mark transnational relations ”

not only identify particular individuals, but just as importantly, they classify people as citizens, aliens, subjects, refugees, dependants, tourists, businessmen, students, and so on.

The implication of this is that borders never simply mark the difference or separation between one territory and another: they also mark transnational political, social and economic relations. As those relations are continually changing, borders inevitably mark and reflect those changes, which means they are continually in the process of being altered or adjusted in some way. For example, in the UK the political importance of migration and security has risen significantly in recent years. This has led to a considerable tightening of border controls, legal regulations and border surveillance. Inevitably, those changes have had an effect on people who wish to cross UK borders in both directions. The potential social ramifications of these legal and bureaucratic changes might not be as obviously visible as the wall that separated one half of Berlin from the other, but they are no less socially significant. ■



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The costly deterrent

The political cost of scrapping UK's nuclear deterrent is deemed higher than the financial cost of keeping the system, says **Dr Matthew Grant**

THIS AUTUMN HAS seen the Labour government and the Conservative opposition begin to position themselves on the issue of public spending cuts. In the search for cuts outside the key areas of health and education, people not belonging to either of the main parties have identified one area in which the government could easily reduce its commitments: the upgrading of the nuclear deterrent.

A decision was reached in 2006 to replace the ageing fleet of submarines which carry the Trident missile system when they reach the end of their working life in the early 2020s. When the plan was announced in 2006 its cost was estimated at £15 billion, but recent estimates have ranged from £40 to 70 billion. The Prime Minister has announced plans to reduce the nuclear submarine

Strategic Defence Review, and the Conservatives say too that they are committed to the upgrade.

This is hardly the first time that the decision to replace or upgrade the deterrent has been called into question. In fact, whenever the UK has updated its nuclear weapons system since the early 1960s there have been questions asked about its economic and military worth. The rationales for maintaining the deterrent at these times can give us some insight into the firm position of the Labour and Conservative Party alike.

The main rationale is the unpredictability of UK's future security requirements. A decision is being taken now to replace the submarines in the 2020s and provide a deterrent into the 2040s. Much the same happened when debating whether to improve the Polaris system in the 1970s, or when originally purchasing Trident in the 1980s. As it is impossible to second-guess future requirements it has always been deemed safest to possess, in military historian Sir Michael Howard's words, 'every club in the bag'. In addition to the long lead times involved, the widespread assumption that the UK would never be able to resurrect its capability once abandoned has left politicians reluctant to leave their future selves unarmed.

Another consideration for pressing ahead with the upgrade is the diplomatic advantages that possessing nuclear weapons is seen to provide. It has been widely assumed that the deterrent helps preserve the UK a permanent place on the United Nations Security Council. It also ensures UK's position in discussions of disarmament and non-proliferation. Aneurin Bevan in 1957 famously castigated the supporters of unilateral disarmament for wanting to send him (as Shadow Foreign Secretary) 'naked into the conference chamber' – only if the UK possessed weapons could he help bring about multilateral disarmament.

The concrete diplomatic impact of retaining the deterrent is impossible to gauge, but the assumption that these weapons bolster UK's standing in the world has played an important role in ensuring that they remain. As Winston Churchill put it, 'it's the price we pay for sitting at the top table'. The desire to remain at the 'top table' and safeguard against strategic uncertainty helps to explain why the government is so enamoured with Trident replacement when others cannot see the appeal. ■

At a time when British forces in Afghanistan appear to be short of resources, many see the commitment to a new nuclear deterrent as wrong

fleet from four to three in the 2020s – but large sums will nevertheless be devoted to Trident replacement over the coming years, at a time when other areas of the budget will be coming under increased pressure.

Alongside the economic case for cancelling the upgrade, its strategic worth has also been questioned. At a time when British forces in Afghanistan appear to be short of manpower and equipment, many see the commitment to a new nuclear deterrent as wrong-headed. An Institute of Public Policy Research commission, co-chaired by Lord Robertson (ex-Defence Secretary and Secretary-General of NATO) and Lord Ashdown, concluded in June 2009 that ways of delaying the replacement of Trident should be explored – instead using the money to provide more flexible responses to the global security threats that confront the UK on a day-to-day basis.

The economic and military requirements of the day suggest that scrapping or delaying the upgrade of Trident could save enormous sums, some of which could be devoted to improving British capabilities in the face of security threats. According to a recent *Guardian*/ICM opinion poll, such a decision would be popular, with only 42 per cent of those questioned backing replacement. Yet despite these arguments, the government has specifically excluded Trident from the forthcoming

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The *Society Now* **In Focus** supplement gives an in-depth look at ESRC-funded research projects, programmes and activities

CLIMATE CHANGE AND COPENHAGEN

**Society
Now
IN FOCUS**

■ When nature meets human nature ■ Changing climate, changing behaviour ■ Heading for Copenhagen ■ Climate change research



WHEN NATURE MEETS HUMAN NATURE

Professor Andrew Gouldson Co-director of the ESRC Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy

MELTING POLAR ICE, flooding, droughts and rising sea levels – the key words in the debate about climate change have always revolved around nature; how we affect it and how it affects us. Yet while climate change itself is about nature, the challenge it poses to mankind is about human nature. It is about how we choose to act and respond; about the extent to which our political structures are equipped to deal with critical environmental changes; whether our energy and transport systems can make the transition towards a ‘low carbon economy’; how readily green innovation can be pursued in businesses; and about whether we as individuals are willing and able to change our habits. These are all aspects where social science can

provide knowledge about society, behaviour and actions.

Given the scale of the challenge, it is perhaps not surprising that our social, political and economic systems have so far been slow to respond to climate change. However, concerted international efforts are possible, as shown when the global financial markets collapsed last year. Many are hoping for similar decisive action at the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December.

Governance is one of the areas that we are researching at the ESRC Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy. The interaction between governments, institutions, economics and markets is crucial when it comes to encouraging a rapid development of low carbon economies with all of the institutional, technological and behavioural changes that this entails.

While we need to counter the effects of climate change as much as possible, we will also need to prepare for rising temperatures. Effects from climate change will first and foremost hit developing countries with a reduced capacity to respond. Enabling them to adapt to a new climate means making communities more sustainable, addressing inequalities, and reducing poverty. These aspects put social science squarely in the middle of the climate change debate.

It is with this recognition that the ESRC has engaged actively in environment and climate change research through the funding of several research centres, programmes and initiatives. Research covers all levels from the individual to the international and global, ranging from coastal management and consumer behaviour to farming systems and transport infrastructure.

This *Society Now* supplement will showcase examples of ESRC-funded research relating to the

SOCIAL SCIENCE HAS FOUND ITSELF SQUARELY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE DEBATE

Copenhagen conference and climate change, as well as feature an interview with Professor Andrew Watkinson, Director of the Living With Environmental Change programme. As he points out, the climate change issue is still ‘below the radar’ for many people. Nevertheless, negative messages will not generate the important steps needed to bring about an alteration in climate change measures. We need robust research, comprehensive research evidence, and a set of policymakers and individuals who can act on this evidence.

Over to Copenhagen! ■





CHANGING CLIMATE, CHANGING BEHAVIOUR

The UN Climate Change Conference faces pressure to agree on radical political measures. Professor Andrew Watkinson, Director of the Living With Environmental Change research programme, talks to **Sophie Goodchild** about the need for engagement and action

CLIMATE CHANGE IS the single most important environmental issue affecting the world today. Rising sea levels and extreme weather patterns are just two of the dire consequences that come with temperature rises. Experts warn that the impact of global warming will be very costly to future generations if nations fail to act.

Solutions are needed desperately, and this year is a landmark year. In December, world leaders will meet to agree new measures for limiting environmental damage. Much is expected of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. Any new treaty which may be agreed will replace the Kyoto Protocol which expires in 2012 and set binding targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The UK already plays a key international role in tackling climate change – but more needs to be done. A major research partnership, Living With Environmental Change (LWEC), is intent on ensuring that we take the lead in providing solutions. This collaborative programme, which brings together 20 partners including six research councils, is aimed at connecting a range of experts with policymakers, businesses and the public. The ten-year programme is based on combining existing research with new programmes and schemes.

LWEC Director Professor Andrew Watkinson says that social science research is key to how we tackle climate change. It identifies what motivates people, which in turn suggests ways that can help us to make changes. Social science research also uses economics to analyse how much it will cost to adapt. This will support efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as carbon dioxide.



WE HAVE TO THROW ALL TECHNOLOGIES AT THIS. WE HAVE TO PUT ADAPTATION IN PLACE, WHICH MEANS PLANNING FOR UP TO FOUR DEGREES IN TERMS OF TEMPERATURE RISE

Professor Watkinson, who is based at the University of East Anglia, says: “A lot of people think they are doing their bit for the environment if they are recycling. But it is actually your driving habits which make the most impact, or wearing a jumper instead of turning up the heating.

“Social science research also raises very significant questions around economics. It is about how much adaptations cost, and how much money needs to be transferred to the developing world so they can curb greenhouse gases. It is about how you implement global agreements. If rainfall is going to increase in Glasgow, then how do you manage things so it doesn’t flood?”

In his view, our ‘mainstream’ level of awareness about climate change is improving. But we are still lacking a sense of real urgency about reducing the threat.

“The level of understanding was incredibly low, but now it has changed out of all recognition. There is a lot of



appreciation of the damage potential, but I don't think that people have really grasped the urgency of the situation," comments Professor

Watkinson. "There are a whole range of issues around electric

cars, but they aren't being

pushed hard enough. We need to bring out the competitive spirit. Constant negative messages don't work with people."

Predictions for climate change vary enormously. For example, the Hadley Centre model estimates a temperature rise of between 1.5 to 5.8 degrees Celsius by 2100, in average annual temperatures. This variation in estimates can lead to mistrust among the public over how accurate the figures actually are.

OUR 'MAINSTREAM' LEVEL OF AWARENESS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE IS IMPROVING. BUT WE ARE STILL LACKING A SENSE OF REAL URGENCY ABOUT REDUCING THE THREAT



Industrial workers in India

Professor Watkinson argues that estimates are based on core science, which ultimately shows there is a clear problem. "We've always known that increasing CO₂ emissions are going to impact on global temperatures. It is about 'hind-sighting' what happened in the past, such as after the Ice Age. Of course there is always going to be variability, but the fact remains that there is a substantial problem."

Key issues to discuss at the Copenhagen conference include money. Where are the funds going to come from for reducing emissions and adapting to climate change? Also on the agenda will be how much industrialised countries, such as China and India, are willing to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Yet, climate change campaigners are already warning that we should not expect anything truly radical.

Professor Watkinson says that this pessimism could be down to political manoeuvring and is an attempt to force action. What is important, he believes, is that global leaders get together around the table and continue to acknowledge that there is a problem. Kyoto is an example of why world leaders do need to be committed. George

Bush made campaign promises in 2000 to regulate carbon dioxide as a pollutant. Yet in 2001, he pulled the United States out of the Kyoto agreement as one of his first acts of presidency, claiming that its demands were too costly.

"The United States lost us a decade, but we do have to engage with the industrial nations and work through a process that will cut emissions. At a global level, getting all the UN commissioners to agree to agree is important – and strong mitigation is essential. We must throw technology at this. We have to put adaptation in place, which means planning for up to four degrees in terms of temperature rise.

"The cuts agreed at Kyoto did have little impact, but the important issue was that all the countries present agreed there was an issue."

Another key lobbying point centres around the money that was invested into bailing out banks in the recession. "Huge amounts of money were put into this. If they could do this for banking, why not put the same amount into tackling climate change?" Professor Watkinson points out.

The LWEC programme will end in 2017. By then, Professor Watkinson hopes it will have provided the UK's decision-makers with the best information to manage and protect vital ecosystems in the most effective ways.

He says: "At the moment people still don't get the scale of the issue. They ask themselves 'Should I fly to Majorca tomorrow?' They don't get the damage this causes." ■

Sophie Goodchild, an editor on the *Evening Standard*

HEADING FOR COPENHAGEN

The Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in December will aim to tackle the major obstacles to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the industrialised and developing countries. ESRC-funded research has provided valuable evidence for the negotiations ahead of the conference. Here we highlight four key climate change issues and relevant research from our centres and programmes

A MATTER OF ENERGY

IF WE FAIL to meet government targets to cut greenhouse emissions and don't adapt our behaviour to meet the challenges of climate change, we may have to look at a radical third option, according to Professor Gordon MacKerron, Associate Director of the Sussex Energy Group, and co-author of a new Royal Society report – *Geoengineering the Climate*.

The report warns that failure to cut greenhouse emissions could mean having to rely on further action in the form of geoengineering, such as carbon dioxide removal and solar radiation management, to cool the planet.

The report, which summarises the opinions of experts in science engineering, economics, law and social science from eight top universities in the UK and colleagues in Canada and the United States, warns that at present too little is known about the potential ecological impact of geoengineering, and that research into the most promising technologies should be conducted with care.

Professor MacKerron says that the big challenge in meeting the UK's carbon reduction targets is the forecast expansion in the economy over the next 30 years. "This means that we will need to reduce emissions by 90 per cent to compensate for the increased carbon intensity of producing everything that we make and use." The potential savings from expanding nuclear power are not clear, and increasing the supply of energy from renewable sources, including solar, wind and water power, from two to 15 per cent by 2020 will be a huge challenge.

Multidisciplinary researchers at The Sussex Energy Group work in close collaboration with policymakers and practitioners. Their aim is to identify different ways of achieving the transition to sustainable, low carbon energy systems while addressing other important policy objectives, such as energy security. The research group also works in partnership with the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research and is part of the UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC).

The UKERC is the focal point for multidisciplinary UK research on sustainable energy, and is the centrepiece of the Research Councils' Energy Programme. It works to promote a cohesive UK energy research effort, drawing on engineering, economics and the physical, environmental and social sciences.

Recent work at UKERC looks at the environmental sustainability of four electricity production systems that include carbon dioxide capture and storage (CCS). The research suggests that the main capacity constraint for power generation systems with CCS is likely to be CO₂ storage capacity, especially in countries that are less well endowed with storage space than the UK. It recommends further analysis of the storage capacity of saline water-bearing reservoirs as a matter of urgency in many countries, including the UK.

WE NEED TO REDUCE EMISSIONS BY 90 PER CENT TO COMPENSATE FOR THE INCREASED PRODUCTION

First brown coal power plant in the world using carbon capture and storage, in Spremberg, Germany



The researchers conclude that sustainability issues for the CCS power generation chain can be overcome. Therefore CCS could be a very useful bridging technology that could mitigate emissions from new and existing fossil fuel-fired power plants, particularly coal-fired plants, which could buy time to move to lower carbon energy systems.

Another project is looking at the prospects for the accelerated development of a range of low carbon energy supply technologies, including a number of renewables (marine, bioenergy, wind and solar panel technology) and other options, such as nuclear power, fuel cells and carbon capture and storage.

The research presents a set of scenarios devised by UKERC to illustrate how accelerated development of these technologies could contribute to decarbonisation of the UK energy system from now until 2050. "The results suggest that speeding up the development of these technologies could have a major influence on UK decarbonisation pathways, particularly in the long term," the report says.

Workers in the coal depot of a coal-fired power plant near Fengjie, in the province of Sichuan, China



GETTING BRIC ON BOARD

THE CONTRIBUTION OF the world's most developing nations – Brazil, Russia, India, and China, known as BRIC – which make up over 42 per cent of the world's population will be closely watched at Copenhagen.

BRIC nations are going to play a major role in the future of global economy as their middle class develops. Along with the consequent increasing demand for high-priced goods, residents of the BRIC nations are now starting to demand more transport and more expensive

economic development is achievable and there is more than one way to achieve it.

The researchers say that it is vital to start slowing emissions as early as possible – the later a peak occurs, the more difficult it will be for China to comply with targets. They also found that the success and speed of economic transition to a service economy and high-tech industries will be an important element in helping to reduce emissions, and that a large portfolio of renewable energy could contribute to China's energy security.

The results also highlight the importance of international action to help China install carbon capture systems quickly. In policy terms, the report says that low

SITUATIONS OF RAPID CHANGE NEED DIFFERENT, ADAPTIVE APPROACHES TO GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONS

and comfortable homes. Residential consumption accounts for over 90 per cent of building consumption in those developing countries, and the amount of power that is needed to heat, cool and light offices and factories is growing significantly.

The implications for carbon emissions is serious. China, which already equals the United States in carbon dioxide emissions, plans to construct another 500 new coal-fired plants by 2012, and India hopes to increase by 200.

The focus needs to be on energy efficiency and on developing alternative energy sources. China is taking the lead by investing in photovoltaic solar panels, wind power, biofuels, tidal power, hydroelectric and other technologies in order to increase its renewable energy capacity to ten per cent by 2020. It could well become the world leader in these industries.

Research at the Sussex Energy Group and the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research has looked at whether China's future development could be decoupled from a growth in global carbon emissions. The three-year project by Dr Tao Wang and Dr Jim Watson examined how changes in emission trajectories could be achieved by changes in China's economy and society, and the policies and technologies that shape China's energy system. The findings suggest that decoupling emission growth from

carbon development is likely to mean more than utilising low carbon technologies and measures. It is also an opportunity for China to build low carbon industries, but new institutions to foster low carbon innovation will be required to achieve this. International collaboration in technology and finance also has a crucial role, the report concludes.

"Situations of rapid change and high uncertainty need different, adaptive and more flexible approaches to governance and institutions," says Professor Melissa Leach, Director of the ESRC Centre for Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability. Researchers at the centre have been looking at the limitations of mainstream models of governance when dealing with the dynamic realities of the contemporary world.

Healthcare in developing countries illustrates how standard governance models have proved unworkable. In many parts of Africa and Asia, health providers mix community, state and informal structures, while transnational networks linking patients' groups, pharmaceutical companies and international organisations are pushing forward health reforms.

This research indicates that innovative models of governance are needed in order to achieve wide-ranging climate change policy reforms. ►

CUTTING EMISSIONS IN THE WEST

ONE OF THE biggest hurdles to overcome at the Copenhagen conference will be convincing industrialised 'Annex 1' countries, which have emitted the bulk of the human-induced carbon dioxide that is currently in the atmosphere, to agree to deep binding cuts in greenhouse gas emissions. Among the Annex 1 countries, the EU has displayed more willingness to take action, while the 'Umbrella Group' countries – including the United States, Canada and Australia – have sometimes played more of a spoiling role.

Research at the Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy is relevant to some key questions to be addressed in Copenhagen.

One of the centre's five research programmes will be focusing on the theme of 'governments, markets and climate-change mitigation'. One line of research is looking at the impact of climate policies in the UK, to explore why some companies respond positively and others do not. "There seems to be a clear link between corporate performance in general and corporate performance on carbon," says programme director Professor Andrew Gouldson. "In recessions, there is some suggestion that there is a 'cleansing effect', with less efficient firms being more likely to leave the market. The result of this is that even with lower levels of investment in energy efficiency and renewables, downward trends in the carbon intensity of the economy can continue through a recession."

A second project is looking at the take-up of corporate carbon accounting systems in preparation for the government's new carbon trading scheme, the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC), which is scheduled to start next year. "We have found that comparatively few organisations have strong enough mechanisms in place for managing carbon. Governance structures are less developed than we would expect, considering the recent spike in energy prices and the prominence of the climate change debate," says Professor Gouldson. "However, this is changing rapidly – and many companies are more motivated by the prospect of appearing on a carbon footprint league table than the potential economic

impacts of the CRC."

The research team has also been analysing the effect of previous recessions on climate change and has extrapolated results to predict the effect of the current one. Findings suggest the current downturn is likely to mean a sizeable drop in global emissions – but this would only delay by 21 months the point at which the world goes past the crucial two per cent global warming threshold. "Our results show that the recession has put the world on a path to achieve the ambitious targets that are being called for in Copenhagen. But they also show that real ambition is still needed to make the structural, technological and behavioural changes necessary to achieve a lower carbon economy and to avoid dangerous climate change," Professor Gouldson points out.

MANY COMPANIES ARE MOTIVATED BY THE PROSPECT OF APPEARING ON A CARBON FOOTPRINT LEAGUE TABLE



1890s: Scientists Svante Arrhenius and PC Chamberlain independently consider the problems that might be caused by a CO₂ build-up in the atmosphere

1957: First continuous monitoring of CO₂ levels in the atmosphere; results show a regular year-on-year rise

1979: First World Climate Conference adopts climate change as a major issue

1988: UN sets up the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

1992: The Climate Change Convention, signed by 154 nations in Rio, sets target of reducing emissions from industrialised countries to 1990 levels by the year 2000

1890

1900

1940

1957

1970

1979

1987

1988

1990

1992

1995

1890s to 1940: Average surface air temperatures increase by about 0.25 degrees Celsius

1940 to 1970: Worldwide cooling of 0.2 degrees Celsius. Scientific interest in greenhouse effect wanes. Climatologists predict a new ice age.

1980s: Warmest year since records began. The 1980s turn out to be the hottest decade on record

1990s: The first report of the IPCC finds that the planet has warmed by 0.5 degrees Celsius in the past century

1995: The hottest year on record to date



Deforestation in a tropical rainforest near Miri, Borneo

SUPPORTING DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

EARLY ACTION BY developed countries alone will not be enough to prevent dangerous climate change. Emissions need to be tackled both in the developed and developing world to slow overall greenhouse emissions. A challenging issue at the Copenhagen conference will be how to support developing countries in limiting greenhouse emissions and encouraging low carbon technologies.

In order to encourage reduced emissions it is also necessary to develop more sustainable societies. Humans have made huge changes to ecosystems to meet growing demands for food, fresh water and energy. While these changes have improved the lives of billions of people, they have also weakened nature's ability to deliver key environmental services, such as purifying air and water, providing food, fuel and medicines, and regulating the climate and soil formation. Many people in the poorest countries rely on ecosystem services for their livelihood, but these are already under pressure and are likely to degrade further as changes in land use and climate continue.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, which was called for by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2000, showed that the loss of services from ecosystems (for example deforestation, soil degradation, and water purification) is a significant barrier to reducing poverty, hunger and disease. Tackling this set of problems requires

a combination of environmental science, ecological economics and political economy.

A major research initiative in this area is the cross-council Living with Environmental Change (LWEC) programme. The programme will address how to achieve sustainably managed ecosystems, and find ways in which poverty can be reduced by accounting for regional variations in climate, weather patterns and land use without causing or worsening enduring environmental problems.

As part of the forthcoming LWEC programme Ecosystems Services for Poverty Alleviation, researchers have conducted regional assessments to find out what is happening in places that are facing major challenges to ecosystem services. The assessments will help to identify what decision-makers need to know in order to manage ecosystems and achieve sustainable and fair use of ecosystem services.

Ongoing research at the Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy is looking at adaptation to climate change in parts of India and China. The Indian research project will study the link between climate change and mortality, while the Chinese project will examine why some regions are vulnerable to climate change in terms of extreme weather, and others are not. ■

The Kyoto Protocol agrees legally binding emissions cuts for industrialised nations to be met by 2010

IPCC scientists warn that the world could warm by six degrees Celsius within a century

The second hottest year on record

Global warming linked to the 2003 heatwave

The Kyoto Protocol comes into force. Europe launches its Emissions Trading Scheme

The World Conservation Union finds that thousands of species are at risk from climate change

1997

1998

2000

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2008

2009

1998 is the hottest year in the hottest decade of the hottest century of the millennium

US President George W Bush renounces the Kyoto Protocol because he believes it will damage the US economy

Europe experiences the hottest summer for at least 500 years, with an estimated 30,000 fatalities as a result

2005 becomes the second warmest year on record

The Stern Report is commissioned by the UK government

Governments prepare to negotiate a successor to the Kyoto Protocol at the Copenhagen conference in December

CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH

An overview of ESRC research centres, programmes, collaborations and activities focusing on climate change and environment

CENTRE FOR BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS, ACCOUNTABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIETY (BRASS)

<http://www.brass.cf.ac.uk>

Director: Professor Ken Peattie. BRASS is an interdisciplinary research centre aiming to understand how to make progress towards a more sustainable society and economy.

CENTRE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ECONOMICS AND POLICY (CCCEP)

<http://www.cccep.ac.uk>

Co-Directors: Professors Judith Rees and Andrew Gouldson. CCCEP aims to advance climate change policy and decision-makers' capacity to respond, and to improve the evidence base, tools and implementation strategies available to decision-makers.

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH ON THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT (CSERGE)

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/env/cserge/>

Director: Professor Kerry Turner. This research centre focuses on sustainable consumption and production policies, ecological services, water resource management and climate change adaptation.

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL, TECHNOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABILITY (STEPS)

<http://www.steps-centre.org/>

Directors: Professors Melissa Leach, Ian Scoones and Andrew Stirling. The centre aims to develop a new approach to understanding, action and communication on sustainability and development.

CLIMATE CHANGE LEADERSHIP FELLOWSHIPS

http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/research/research_programmes/cccl.aspx

These ESRC fellowships enable leading edge social scientists to address key research issues in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

ELECTRICITY POLICY RESEARCH GROUP (EPRG)

<http://www.eprg.group.cam.ac.uk/>

Director: Professor David Newbury. The EPRG is a focus for applied interdisciplinary research into the electricity supply industry.

GOVERNANCE OF CLEAN DEVELOPMENT (GCD)

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/dev/gcd/>

Director: Professor Peter Newell. This programme focuses on the governance of clean development, principally in the area of energy.

LIVING WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE (LWEC)

<http://www.lwec.org.uk/>

Director: Professor Andrew Watkinson. A collaborative research programme aiming to make better predictions and analysis of environmental change so that we can adapt, mitigate or avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

RESEARCH COUNCILS' ENERGY PROGRAMME

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/ResearchFunding/Programmes/Energy/>

This RCUK programme brings together engineers and physical, natural, social and economic scientists to create new technologies and examine their social and economic consequences.

RESEARCH GROUP ON LIFESTYLES, VALUES AND ENVIRONMENT (RESOLVE)

<http://www.surrey.ac.uk/resolve/>

Director: Professor Tim Jackson. This group aims to develop a robust understanding of the links between lifestyle, societal values and environment, particularly focusing on the behaviours and practices of energy consumers.

RURAL ECONOMY AND LAND USE PROGRAMME

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/>

Director: Professor Philip Lowe. The programme will encourage social and economic vitality of rural areas and promote the protection and conservation of the rural environment.

SUSSEX ENERGY GROUP

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sussexenergygroup/>

Director: Dr Jim Watson. This interdisciplinary research group looks into ways of achieving the transition to sustainable, low carbon energy systems while addressing other important policy objectives, such as energy security.

TYNDALL CENTRE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH

<http://www.tyndall.ac.uk/>

Director: Professor Kevin Anderson. This national centre for interdisciplinary research on climate change is dedicated to identify, promote and facilitate sustainable responses to the challenge of climate change.

UK ENERGY RESEARCH CENTRE (UKERC)

<http://www.ukerc.ac.uk>

Director: Professor Jim Skea. This research centre undertakes research addressing whole-systems aspects of energy supply and use. It aims to provide research, information and leadership on sustainable energy systems.

RELATED RESEARCH INITIATIVES

CHILDREN, FLOOD AND URBAN RESILIENCE

http://www.lec.lancs.ac.uk/cswm/Hull%20Children%27s%20Flood%20Project/HCFP_home.php

FLOOD, VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE: A REAL-TIME STUDY OF LOCAL RECOVERY FOLLOWING THE FLOODS OF JUNE 2007 IN HULL

http://www.lec.lancs.ac.uk/cswm/Hull%20Floods%20Project/HFP_home.php

ENVIRONMENT & HUMAN HEALTH

<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/programmes/humanhealth/>

THE RISK CENTRE – UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

<http://www.cranfield.ac.uk/sas/risk/index.jsp>

WASTE OF THE WORLD

<http://www.thewasteoftheworld.org>

UK TRANSPORT RESEARCH CENTRE

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/scienceresearch/ee/uktransportresearchcent1902>

Still strong relationship

The UK's 'special relationship' with the United States has been questioned – but the bond is likely to hold strong, says **Professor Caroline Kennedy-Pipe**

IS THERE STILL a special relationship between the UK and the United States? Recent press coverage of President Obama's alleged 'snub' of Gordon Brown and the odd looking 'kitchen summit' might suggest this is not the case. Yet at the same time, the very public common stand of the UK and the United States on Iran's nuclear enrichment operation, as well as the closeness of their discussions on tackling the global economic downturn, would suggest that the relationship is still in very good shape. Which is more likely?

The question has, of course, been raised on both sides of the Atlantic. There have been suggestions that President Obama, with parents born outside the United States and living much of his life in Asia, is hardly likely to see the relationship with the UK in the same light as some of his more obviously Anglophile predecessors. On the British side, there has been a concerted effort by those around Brown to eschew the 'poodle' tag that became attached to Blair and instead invoke a new age of internationalism and individualism for the UK. Under Foreign Secretary David Miliband, a clear rejection of the view that the UK is simply acting as a bridge between the United States and the capitals of Europe has become more pronounced, and the 'mood music' of Anglo-American relations has often sounded very different than during the Bush-Blair years.

There are obvious areas of policy tension as well. The President has made it clear that Afghanistan is at the centre of his policy against radical Islamism, and Washington has been aided by the relationship which exists between Pakistan and the United States. But this alliance itself is quite problematic from the UK perspective. The Brown government will expect Washington to seriously address issues of torture, human rights and the cost to the roles and rights of women in its alliance with the more 'Islamist' sections of the Pakistani elite.

And, of course, there is also an internal debate going on in the UK about what may or may not constitute military 'victory' in Afghanistan. The UK is currently overstretched and under-resourced in terms of its military commitments, and a new revisionism about military co-operation might be one of the few ways that the Brown government can overcome the idea that 'special' simply means obedience to US wishes. The UK public might not share any of the enthusiasm that is demonstrated within the Washington elite for a 'troop surge', given rising rates of fatalities and maiming for

British troops in Afghanistan. There will need to be serious consideration for many in the UK of whether a 'troop surge' holds the answer to the lethal challenge of roadside bombs.

Then again, there is the potentially problematic issue of Iran. The Prime Minister, President Obama and President Sarkozy were all united in their condemnation at the recent disclosure of a uranium enrichment plant. The prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran could, however, result in disagreement over the ways of resolving the situation. The Brown government has previously given some very strong hints that it does not support the use of 'the military option' against Iran, but President Obama has refused to rule it out. Any US use of force against Iran would be a real test of the strength of the special relationship

“ A new revisionism about military co-operation might be one of the few ways that the Brown government can overcome the idea that 'special' simply means obedience to US wishes ”

between the UK and the United States – as well as creating a major new source of instability in global politics.

But against all of the naysayers, it should be emphasised that the US-UK relationship has weathered similar storms before. Relations reached a nadir in 1956 at the time of the Suez Crisis, but then within a few years, under the watchful eyes of Kennedy and Macmillan, they were triumphantly restored. And attention should always be paid to the uniquely close intelligence relationship that exists and its spillover into joint military operations. The special relationship may well be in for some testing times over the next few years, but it is likely to come through them as it always has done – in the interests of both the United States and the United Kingdom. It is perhaps in its ability to withstand such prolonged and deep divisions that the 'special relationship' most obviously demonstrates what really is special about it. ■



Professor Caroline Kennedy-Pipe is Director of the Centre for Security Studies at the University of Hull, and was a member of the ESRC New Security Challenges Programme commissioning panel

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The National Autistic Society

Day for Autism 2009

The real give-away

We are in the age of giving, despite the onslaught of recession. Business and private wealth has been hit hard by the downturn – but the donors are still remaining, Professor Cathy Pharoah tells **Arild Foss**

CHARITABLE GIVING IN the UK is a large (and until recently, thriving) business. There are approximately 170,000 registered charities in the UK, with a combined annual income of £46 billion from all sources. The charitable causes are many, and the ways of giving are extremely varied; through trusts and foundations, social/private partnerships, ventures and social investments. Philanthropy has come of age, and without the stigma of condescension that it may have had in previous times. Major donors are often entrepreneurs and innovators who have gained their wealth through their own efforts and initiative, rather than simply inheriting the role of benefactor in a socially divided society.

Professor Cathy Pharoah, co-director of the Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy (CGAP), calls the modern interest in philanthropy an 'ideological shift'. "There has been a growing awareness of the role of private philanthropy in society. The growth of private wealth over the last few decades has opened up a new era in private giving," she says.

CGAP, co-funded by the ESRC with the Office of the Third Sector, the Scottish government and

Carnegie UK, aims to study trends, motivations, and effectiveness in the expanding field of giving and philanthropy. As part of the 'third sector' alongside the public and business sectors, charity and philanthropy has become an accepted part of UK society.

This has not always been the case. After a previous 'golden age' of philanthropy in the late 19th and early 20th century, with benefactors supporting major public welfare programmes in social care, education and the abolition of slavery, philanthropy fell out of fashion in the UK. In a 1948 poll more than 90 per cent of people felt that there was no longer a role for charity. Instead, the general opinion was that the state should take over all welfare responsibilities.

Throughout the following decades it has become increasingly clear that the welfare state, despite its good efforts, is not able to meet all welfare needs. As governments began to roll back the boundaries of the state and to contract out the provision of welfare, the role of charities assumed a new importance once again. "There is a growing recognition that there are limits to

what the state can provide. There are certain jobs that charities and the third sector can do better than the government," Professor Pharoah points out. "Charities can fill gaps when it comes to socially excluded groups, disabilities and special needs – for instance forming user groups for diseases that are less prevalent. Charities allow for more user representation, engagement and involvement."

By the 1980s, as global markets saw increasing levels of private wealth, philanthropy was on the rise again, particularly supporting causes such as health research, aid and famine relief. By 2007, the UK was one of the main countries outside of the United States to boast high figures in private giving, amounting to almost one per cent of gross domestic product, with a rapidly growing group of committed givers. "There is some evidence that people have become more comfortable with giving," says Professor Pharoah.

Then came the recession. Disappearing wealth and struggling businesses were bound to impact on donations, and figures from the National Council for Voluntary Organisation's 'UK Giving 2009' survey indicates that there has been a noticeable decline in donations. Individual donations were down 11 per cent from 2007/2008 to £9.9 billion. The amount of people giving monthly donations was down two per cent, from 56 to 54 per cent, while the average donation declined to 2006/2007 levels.

An analysis by Professor Pharoah for *Charity Market Monitor 2009* shows that 41 per cent of the top 300 charitable trusts experienced reduced value in their grant-making in 2008, with an overall ten per cent fall in net asset value. The toll the recession has taken on wealthy donors could hit grant-making even harder in the future. Professor Pharoah and her CGAP co-

dependent on commercial marketing techniques, such as direct mail. "If we want to increase giving in the UK, we have to look at how the public is approached. We may need to find alternative and increasingly value-driven ways of capturing donor commitment," she explains.

The drive for evidence of effective fundraising and use of donations is partly coming from major donors with a background in the business sector. They often approach philanthropy as a venture investment, and wish to apply business models to the operation. The focus is on donating to charities with a capacity to become sustainable. Donors and funders are approaching their charitable expenditure in the same way as other spending – with a careful eye on priorities, returns and value for money.

"There is a swelling interest in effectiveness in intervention and impact, and in making a sustainable difference, but this is very hard to measure," adds Professor Pharoah. "My own view is that any significant growth in major giving by entrepreneurs will have to be accompanied by evidence of effectiveness. They will look for good evidence they can lay their hands on. Evidence is always powerful."

So far, evidence is also scarce. But Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy is aiming to fill the gap. ■

Arild Foss is Editor of *Society Now*

i The Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy is jointly funded by the ESRC, the Office of the Third Sector, Carnegie UK Trust and the Scottish government. The centre aims to develop knowledge and engage with donors, charities and practitioners
Contact Professor Cathy Pharoah
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There are many ways to raise money for charity

The growth of private wealth over the last decades has opened up a new era of giving

director Professor Jenny Harrow points out that "in worst case scenarios, charities will experience falling donations and revenues just at the point where demand for their work rises."

In this situation we need to know more about why and how people give, what they give to, and how the money is managed. Empirical data is thin on the ground, however, which is why the CGAP research centre was launched a year ago. "There is an urgent need for a more comprehensive evidence base," emphasises Professor Pharoah. "Research would enable us to develop better measures of donation trends in different areas, such as major giving, philanthropy among ethnic minorities, effectiveness in managing donations, or public understanding of the concept of charitable giving."

Effective fundraising is of particular interest for those charities which have become heavily



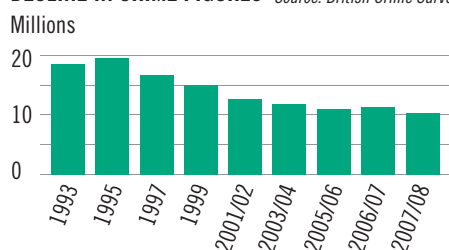
THE UK BY NUMBERS CRIME

Here we present an at-a-glance overview of the key issues in Britain today. In this issue our focus is on **crime**. All statistics are from the Office of National Statistics unless stated

For information: Recorded Crime – this is crime reported to the police. These statistics provide a good measure of trends in well-reported crimes. British Crime Survey (BCS) – these statistics are based on interviews and can provide a better reflection of the true extent of crime.

Overall crime

DECLINE IN CRIME FIGURES Source: British Crime Survey



10.1m

estimated crimes were committed against adults living in private households in England and Wales during 2007-08. This represents a fall of 48 per cent compared with a peak of around 19.4 million crimes in 1995. Source: British Crime Survey

5m

crimes were recorded by the police in England and Wales during 2007-08.

21.7%

is the proportion of respondents to the Scottish Crime Survey that had been the victim of at least one crime in 2005-06.

Source: Scottish Crime Survey

Types of crime



19%

is the total of violent crime recorded by the police, whereas the figure stands at 22 per cent in the British Crime Survey (BCS) in 2006-07.

Source: Home Office

15%

Vehicle thefts account for 15 per cent of all BCS crime in 2006-07, while other thefts make up another 30 per cent of BCS crime and 23 per cent of police recorded crime.

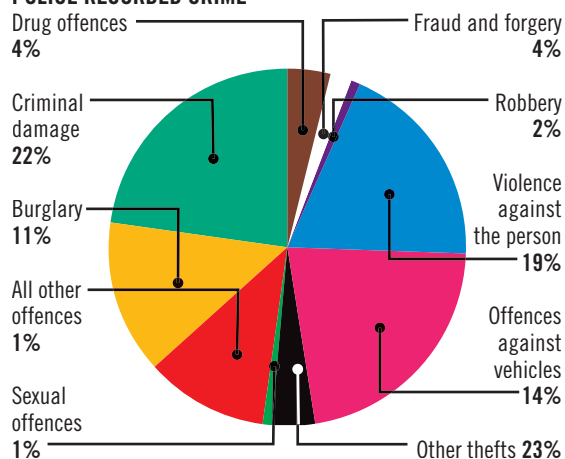
Source: Home Office

1 in 10

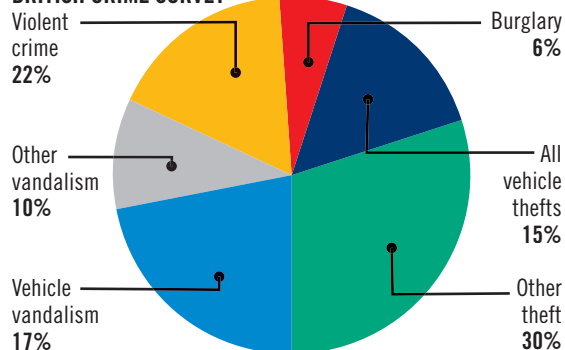
Also in 2006-07, burglary accounted for six per cent of BCS crime and 11 per cent of police recorded crime (1 in 10). More than half of recorded burglaries happened in a building other than a home.

Source: Home Office

POLICE RECORDED CRIME



BRITISH CRIME SURVEY



“Crime is a product of social excess”

Vladimir Lenin

Alcohol and crime

45%

In nearly half of all violent incidents, victims believed offenders to be under the influence of alcohol. This figure rose to 58 per cent in cases of attacks by people they did not know in 2007.

Source: Home Office

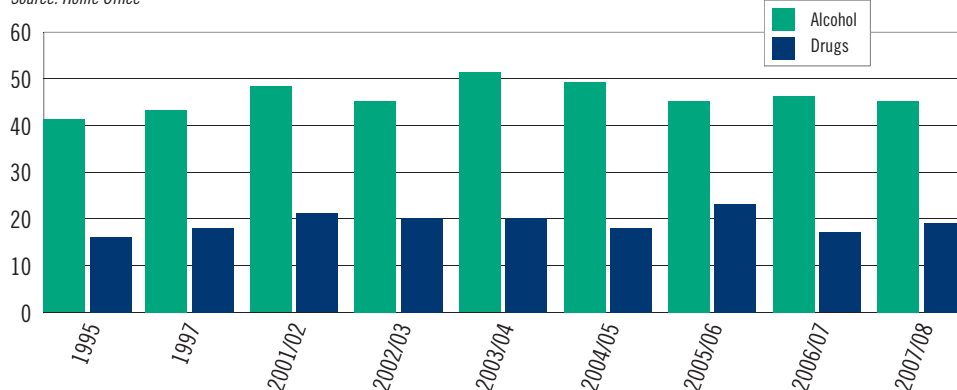
37%

of domestic violence cases involved alcohol in 2007-08.

Source: Home Office

VIOLENT INCIDENTS WHERE THE VICTIM BELIEVED THE OFFENDER(S) TO BE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR DRUGS, 1995 TO 2007-08

Source: Home Office

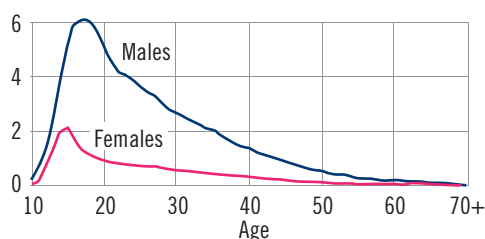


"Justice is too good for some people and not good enough for the rest" Norman Douglas, British novelist



OFFENDERS AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION: BY AGE, ENGLAND AND WALES, 2006

Percentages



Gender and crime

1.42m

offenders were sentenced for criminal offences in England and Wales in 2006. The majority of these offenders, 80 per cent, were male and of those, seven per cent were aged under 18.

21%

of women were worried about violent crime compared with eight per cent of men in 2007-08. Women aged 16 to 24 expressed the highest level of worry, at 28 per cent.

40%

Two-fifths (40 per cent) of women and one-third (33 per cent) of men reported that fear of crime had a moderate or high impact on their quality of life in 2007-08.

"Crime takes but a moment but justice an eternity" Ellen O'Grady, American artist and activist

Prison

80,150

male prisoners and 4,232 female prisoners existed in September 2009.

Source: Home Office Ministry of Justice – Prison Population and Accommodation Briefing

74%

of white males made up the male prison population of British nationals in England and Wales in 2007. Black British nationals accounted for 15 per cent. The female British national prison population followed similar proportions.

Source: Ministry of Justice – Offender Management Caseload Statistics

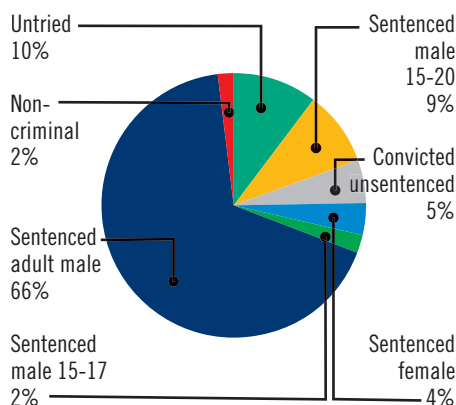
7,376

was the average daily population in Scottish prisons in 2007-08, an increase of three per cent when compared with the 2006-07 figure of 7,183, and the highest average annual level ever recorded.

Source: Scottish Government – Prison Statistics Scotland

PRISON POPULATION, ENGLAND AND WALES, APRIL 2009

Source: Population in custody monthly tables, April 2009, Ministry of Justice



Getting the right mix



The legacy that the Troubles left behind is still strongly felt in many segregated Northern Irish neighbourhoods. Protestant and Catholic communities need to start mixing in order for things to change, Professor Ed Cairns explains to **Pamela Readhead**

“THE PROBLEMS IN Northern Ireland are an inter-group phenomenon. It’s a mistake to think that making individual victims happy will bring peace,” says Professor Ed Cairns, whose recent research has begun to compare the ‘them and us’ perceptions of groups living in segregated and mixed areas of Northern Ireland.

The research, which has been presented to the consultation on the controversial Eames/Bradley proposals into how to deal with the legacy of the Troubles, confirms that people who live in mixed communities have a more complex perception of their own, as well as other people’s, identities. “There is a greater tendency for people who live in mixed environments to make a clear distinction between the perpetrators of violence and intimidation and the bulk of the religious group to which they belong. ‘They’ are not all tarred with the same brush,” Professor Cairns explains. “People living in mixed areas are also more likely to acknowledge that members of their own group are not all the same,” he adds.

Loyalist protesters block the road in front of a burning vehicle on the Albertbridge Road, Belfast

The research, which was conducted by a group of multi-disciplinary experts from the universities of Ulster, Oxford and Sheffield, was part of the recently completed ESRC Identities and Social Action research programme. The findings, which help to endorse the government policy of encouraging desegregation in Northern Ireland, suggest that concrete moves to bring Protestant and Catholic communities into closer contact, both at home and at school, are an essential component in building real peace. “At the moment, what we have is merely an absence of violence,” says Professor Cairns, who has been researching conflict and post-conflict in many parts of the world for the past 30 years.

The findings are based on data gathered from focus groups, interviews and a survey conducted in four segregated and mixed Catholic/Protestant working-class estates in market towns. The focus groups were used to identify themes, which were followed up first in individual interviews and then in a survey of 1,948 respondents who were interviewed face-to-face in their own homes.

Residents of mixed communities said they preferred ‘mixing’, even if they had experiences of sectarian violence and intimidation



The results of the focus groups and interviews suggest that there is a stronger sense of community cohesion and solidarity in segregated communities where there are strong family and social networks. There is also more active support for community organisations in segregated communities than in mixed areas, where such groups are commonly perceived as being politicised or hijacked by sectarian groups.

Paradoxically, residents of mixed communities said they preferred ‘mixing’, even if they had experiences of sectarian violence and intimidation. One young Catholic interviewee who had previously been chased by masked militants from a Protestant organisation said that he had Protestant neighbours ‘who had been brilliant’. In mixed areas such sectarian acts tended to be excused as the actions of a minority, and were not seen as



Peace wall separating the Catholic and Protestant communities in Belfast

representative of a whole group. Many would agree with the 23 year-old Catholic man who said: "To me there are two types of Protestant and two types of Catholic; Catholics and Protestants who want to get on with their lives, and those who are bitter and want to cause trouble."

The researchers also found that in each of the four communities they studied there was a lack of connection between people in positions of power or influence and those lower down the hierarchy. The lack of support from key government agencies such as the police service and housing executive, as well as locally elected government representatives, was a common theme in interviews.

Despite the apparent benefits of living in a more tolerant environment, what explains the residential self-segregation in Northern Ireland? "We found a number of contributory factors, notably the perception that living 'with your own sort' provides protection against a number of perceived threats, including increased sectarianism and intimidation. People in segregated areas also reported higher levels of trust in their neighbours. Despite this, people who actually live in mixed communities are the most receptive to other groups and most committed to the idea of a shared future," says Professor Cairns.

The key questions in the survey concerned identity, in particular how an individual perceives himself/herself and others. People were asked to report how many of their family or friends lived in the area, to rate the extent to which people in the area could depend on each other, and to rate their sense of 'belonging'.

Results revealed that people in mixed areas not only had more opportunities for direct contact with

members of another group, but also had wider, indirect contact through friends of friends. They were also more likely to leave the area to carry out everyday activities with people who lived elsewhere and with people from their out-group. Their increased tolerance and lack of bias also extended to members of other ethnic or religious groups.

The researchers also looked at the importance of a number of different identities. National (Irish/British) and religious (Catholic/Protestant) identities tended to be more important than identification with the local community or with the potential common identity of 'Northern Irish'. However, people from segregated areas said their ethno-religious identity was more important in certain situations, such as entering an out-group area or seeing their own community flag.

Professor Cairns and his colleagues believe that their findings have the potential to inform the development of a fundamental and complex strand of policy in Northern Ireland. "Northern Irish society at all levels needs to take on board the need to promote inter-group contact. This is not an issue only for schools or indeed only for government, but for all – schools, churches, politicians, employers, housing managers, policymakers and the media. Only in this way can the boil of sectarianism be successfully lanced," he says. ■

Pamela Readhead is a freelance journalist



Social Identity and Tolerance in Mixed and Segregated Areas of Northern Ireland. Part of the ESRC Identities and Social Action research programme
Contact Professor Ed Cairns, University of Ulster
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The curse of abundance



Rather than lifting the population out of poverty, abundant natural resources in developing countries can sometimes lead to more conflict and poverty. **Elisabeth Jeffries** looks into how large resource revenues can leave countries worse off than before

THE NIGER DELTA in West Africa is the heart of bitter ethnic divisions. Nigeria was fortunate enough to discover huge oil reserves in the 1950s, and this suddenly acquired wealth should have allowed the government to spend more on public services, tackle social problems and increase economic growth – but this was not to be. Instead, Nigerians have been fighting over oil rights. Leaders of local tribes have sabotaged oil installations and kidnapped oil workers, oil production has plummeted, and the economy has been in trouble for years.

Nigeria is not unique. Angola, Venezuela and other countries have experienced similar problems. Finding a wealth of oil or another natural resource does not ensure a country's economic development or the wellbeing of the population. Instead, it can trigger conflict, civil war and poverty. The 'resource curse', when a country becomes worse-off once it finds abundant resources, has torn societies apart.

But this is not always the case. The Norwegian government, for example, kept its head when

Nigeria:
environmental
pollution by burning
off gas from oil
production in
the Niger Delta
Ogoniland

large oil reserves were found in the North Sea. A contributing factor was that the new-found oil wealth was less significant in proportion to other economic resources. "In less resource-rich countries, those holding political power have fewer opportunities for personal enrichment, everything else being held constant," remarks Professor Francesco Caselli, an economist at the London School of Economics. His research project *Natural Resources, Politics and Economic Development* examines ethnic and elite behaviour in relation to resource abundance. He has developed two models that show some of the political and economic circumstances under which the natural resource curse takes hold.

Professor Caselli's work on local government spending in different parts of Brazil is of considerable interest because it sidesteps some of the concerns about cultural or other issues that can affect international comparisons. His research shows that Brazilian oil abundance did not benefit



natural resources experiences a small addition to its natural-resource wealth, its governing elite may decide to invest the proceeds in infrastructure or other growth-enhancing projects. However, in a country that starts out from a high reliance on natural resources, the same increase may trigger more intense struggles for power and lead to lower growth,” explains Professor Caselli, describing the model he has developed under which these mechanisms take place. If the windfall is large enough, governments will use some for development purposes. At a more moderate level, they will use the money to keep power and invest lower amounts in development.

Another issue is resource abundance in ethnically divided societies. “The likelihood that resource abundance will lead to conflict depends on how different the ethnic groups are,” states Professor Caselli. His second model aims to show how ethnic conflict will evolve in relation to these problems.

Finding a new abundant resource could spark off a civil war between ethnically different groups. Many people will seek to benefit from a share of the spoils seized by the elite and shut out other parts of the population. Clear divisions will emerge between the privileged elite and other people from different ethnic groups. On the other hand, groups who are more similar may be harder to differentiate, so the ethnic divisions are less clear and will not result in war.

Conflict might not erupt if the natural resource is less substantial. “The strong group will start a conflict only if the amount of natural resources to be shared per member is large enough,” says Professor Caselli. This depends on how significant the wealth is in relation to the country’s other assets; if these are great enough, the rebels have more to lose. The ethnic mix may also change as people succeed in joining the stronger group, and this also affects the likelihood of war. ■

Elisabeth Jeffries is a freelance journalist.

local businesses directly through, for instance, higher wages. Instead, the main beneficiaries were local government budgets. Professor Caselli found that the bulk of the oil windfall was diverted or appropriated by government officials. “We often find no effects of increased spending by the local government on household income. It seems that the local population has little cause to rejoice when oil is discovered in the subsoil,” he states.

This is a major reason why resource abundance may make little or no difference to economic development. Indeed, it may worsen it. “Natural resources are more easily appropriated by the governing elites than other sources of wealth, such as the output of the industrial sector,” Caselli points out. But certain situations do prompt public spending from those sources.

Four workers
at an oil exploration
site in the rainforest,
in Brazil

i Natural resources, politics and economic development
Contact Professor Francesco Caselli
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Natural resources are more easily appropriated by the governing elites than other sources of wealth

Governments that seize oil wealth are more likely to be challenged by revolutionary or militant groups seeking power. Their planning horizons will be shortened due to the fact that this wealth is easier to seize, and they might therefore choose to keep the wealth without spending it on the public sector. However, in some cases governments may need to spend some money in order to retain that power. Much depends on the size of the windfall and how much the rebels feel they have to lose by attacking the government. “If a country with few





Putting the 'R' into R&D



Business needs ideas from research – but academic language is a major barrier, says Mellor Hennessy at pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca. The Global Portfolio Strategist talks to **Mandy Garner** about the challenge of middle management, research and his *Hot Spots* experiment.

MANDY GARNER *What is your role in AstraZeneca?*

MELLOR HENNESSY I am part of the small central staff in Research and Development that designs and supports both performance management and portfolio management processes. I have worked in this area for over ten years. Essentially, I work with colleagues in different functional areas and look at the value, risk, time and investment for each of our R&D projects.

MG *Why do you think pharmaceutical firms need to take on board the findings of research?*

MH When Alderley Park (AstraZeneca's major UK facility in Cheshire) was bought in the 1940s, innovation was conceived as creating an environment that encouraged bright R&D scientists to be creative. AstraZeneca and other pharmaceutical companies employ graduates from scientific, medical and biological disciplines and they naturally read a lot of published scientific research. Managers need to look more broadly

“The main obstacle is the way academic research is often packaged. Some of the raw academic output is very difficult to read”

for their sources of innovation. Pharmaceutical companies are now working in a rapidly changing environment where there is an increasing need to reduce unit costs and increase the speed and success of developing new medicines.

There is an urgent need to make use of research on so-called soft management issues, such as leadership and employee motivation. What will continue to distinguish pharmaceutical companies in the future is how they manage to take on board good ideas based on sound academic research to tackle these soft issues.

MG *Are there particular issues for middle management, which social science research can help with?*

MH There are an increasing number of challenges which middle managers are presented with. We are being squeezed all the time – asked to do more in a shorter amount of time and with fewer resources. The pace seems to be quickening and

there is much less time to reflect. There is also an increasing need to bring people from different backgrounds and disciplines together in cross-functional teams. This is where soft issues come into play. We need to encourage teams to have good conversations so they can decide what to do and then deliver.

MG *Do you use social science research in your job?*

MH The principles of social science research-based ideas like Myers-Briggs personality profiling are well established in business, but we do need new ideas to trickle through. Without innovation in management-thinking, business processes can become stale, bureaucratic and mechanical. We also need to achieve the right balance between innovation and stability.

MG *What are the barriers to using social science research in business?*

MH I am open to using more social science research, but the main obstacle is the way that academic research is often packaged. Some of the raw academic output is very difficult to read – it can feel as if it is written by academics for academics, with its main focus on precedents in the literature and methodology, and the language tends to be quite dry. This is not relevant to middle managers in business. Most business people want research to be interesting, to grab their attention and leave them with memories of ideas that they will be able to easily apply on a day-to-day basis. I have been sent social science articles to review and I have refused them because they do not seem relevant. I sometimes wonder why some of the research into business is being done if it actually serves no function in the real world.

A colleague of mine went into the business section of a bookshop recently. She said that many of the books were about CEOs and found little that was relevant to middle managers dealing with day-to-day issues. Some books talk about middle managers as the problem layer in business – the so-called ‘frozen middle’. That type of language is unhelpful. We need to find ideas which are relevant to us in the jobs we do.

MG What research have you found useful?

MH I have found the approach of the ESRC refreshing, particularly that of the ESRC-funded Advanced Institute of Management (AIM) research centre. Its research is lucid, well written and aims to include business in its findings. Like the Harvard Business Review, the research also tends to make its key messages clear. I first met Julian Birkinshaw, a senior fellow at AIM, five years ago and he told me about his research on middle management and its focus on the way middle managers drive innovation from within their organisations. Conversations with him have always been thought-provoking, providing me with a range of ideas about how to approach my day-to-day role.

I find that interaction with members of AIM always re-energises me, whether by way of a phone call, reading one of their books or articles, or attending one of their meetings where they pull in a group of like-minded people.

There are always new challenges arising for middle managers

MG Have you used any of AIM's research in your work?

MH As a physicist by training, I like doing experiments. The difference in business is that

we run experiments on organisations rather than on big pieces of kit like at CERN (the European Organisation for Nuclear Research). We run many of our business processes, such as scorecards, which are used in strategic performance management, on an annual cycle and we can easily factor in change and monitor what happens. As with physics, we often learn from our failures as well as from our successes.

I once did a small experiment with the book *Hot Spots* by Lynda Gratton, Professor of Management Practice at London Business School

“ We need to ensure that new research also seeps into business consciousness ”

and a senior fellow at AIM. I thought the book was brilliant. When you read *Hot Spots*, the examples given by Professor Gratton of how to develop areas that buzz in your business jump out at you and are so alive. I could relate to them immediately. I thought my colleagues would be equally excited, so as part of our regular team meetings last year, I put one chapter of *Hot Spots* at a time on the agenda. Over three months we managed to cover six chapters in our team meetings – all it needed was a ten-minute discussion of what would be relevant to our work.

This experiment died after six meetings as my colleagues preferred to focus on the discussion of more immediate tasks. So, for my next experiment, I put a few copies of *Hot Spots* on my desk. It has a bright red cover, so as people walked into my room it drew their attention. When I explained about my passion for the book, several colleagues took a copy to read in their own time.

The ideas that I read in *Hot Spots* have percolated into my subconscious and provide a framework with which to analyse the dynamic and less dynamic areas where I am working. I am still looking at ways to encourage these hot spots whenever I can.

MG What more can be done to encourage use of research?

MH More needs to be done to disseminate social science research to a wider audience so it can achieve a greater impact. The results of previous research, such as Myers-Briggs, is an established common language in business. We need to ensure that new research also seeps into business consciousness. I feel too that there are opportunities for the establishment of a practitioner community to work alongside social science researchers. This would be more than just a talking shop and would involve people who are experimenting with the conclusions of AIM research and sharing their results. It should be a two-way process. That would be a mechanism to make UK business more competitive. ■

Mandy Garner, freelance journalist and former features editor of *The Times Higher Education Supplement*



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People

PROFESSOR IAN DIAMOND

ESRC Chief Executive, Professor Ian Diamond has been appointed as the next Principal and Vice Chancellor of the University of Aberdeen. He will succeed Professor Sir Duncan Rice on 1 October 2010. Dr Alan Gillespie, ESRC chair said: "On behalf of the wider ESRC family, I would like to offer Ian our warmest congratulations on this important and prestigious appointment. Professor Diamond has made a monumental contribution to the work of the ESRC and the standing of the social sciences in the UK's universities." To aid transition, Professor Diamond will be Principal-Designate from 1 July 2010. The ESRC will be commencing a process over the coming months to identify and appoint his successor.



NEW ESRC COUNCIL MEMBERS APPOINTED

Lord Drayson, Minister for Science and Innovation, has appointed a new member to the ESRC Council. Professor John Beath of the University of St Andrews has a wide range of research interests in economics, most recently in industrial organisation with a particular focus on knowledge transfer between firms and universities, and on taxation policy. Professor Beath has been appointed for a period of three years from 1 August 2009 until 31 July 2012.

Two re-appointments have also been made to Council; Professor Michael Lamb and Mr David Walker. Michael Lamb is Professor of Psychology at the University of Cambridge and David Walker is the Head of Communications at the Audit Commission. Professor Lamb has been appointed for a period of two years from 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2011 and Mr Walker has been appointed for a period of three years from 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2012. <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk>

YOUNGEST EVER FEMALE FELLOW FOR THE BRITISH ACADEMY

Professor Fiona Steele has become the youngest ever female Fellow to be elected to the British Academy, a national body for humanities and social sciences. Aged 38, Fiona is Professor of Social Statistics at Bristol University's Graduate School of Education. Her research in multilevel modelling, longitudinal data analysis and demography has led her to collaborate with social scientists and economists on many projects. She is currently engaged in several ESRC-funded research projects focusing on multilevel methodology, statistical modelling structure and survey analyses.

UKCDS CHAIR

The UK Collaboration on Development Sciences (UKCDS) has named Professor Anne Glover as its new Steering Board Chair. The UKCDS brings together key UK funders (including the ESRC) and stakeholders to provide support for the development sciences research base. "I am delighted to be following in the footsteps of outgoing Chair, Professor Sir Gordon Conway," says Professor Glover. "He has made substantial progress since the formation of UKCDS in providing a more coordinated approach to development sciences research in the UK, and it is now my intention to take the UKCDS work to the next level and use its outputs to influence future government policy." <http://www.ukcnds.org.uk/>



FREE TRADE NATION WINS THE WHITFIELD PRIZE

Professor Frank Trentmann's *Free Trade Nation* has won the coveted Royal Historical Society's Whitfield Book Prize. The book, which is an output from the ESRC and Arts and Humanities Research Council's Cultures of Consumption Programme, is the story of how free trade became a defining part of British identity and politics, and how it lost its moral

high ground after the First World War. "Frank Trentmann's brilliant achievement speaks for itself, needing little praise or analysis from us," say the judges of the prize. "He identifies free trade as 'uniquely central to (British) democratic culture and national identity' between the 1870s and the 1930s." <http://www.oup.co.uk>

ESRC-FUNDED SCHEME WINS PRESTIGIOUS IMPACT AWARD

The Practice Theme Committee (PTC) Awards Committee, on behalf of the Academy of Management, unanimously voted for Professor Mike Jones, Director of the Foundation for Management Education (FME) and the ESRC/FME Fellowship Initiative, to receive the PTC Impact Award for 2009.

The award is given in recognition of the impact of Professor Jones' longstanding efforts in FME to support the connectivity between academics and business practitioners. In particular, it singles out the ESRC/FME Fellowship Initiative as delivering direct impact to management scholarship by providing the opportunity for business practitioners to embark on a career change in becoming management academics. <http://www.management-education.org.uk/default.asp>

ESRC CENTRE DIRECTOR WINS MAJOR ECONOMICS PRIZE

Professor John Van Reenen, director of the ESRC Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics, has been awarded the Yrjö Jahnsson Award in Economics for 2009. The award is Europe's most prestigious prize for economic researchers. It is given every two years in cooperation with the European Economic Association, to a European economist under the age of 45 who has made a significant contribution in theoretical and applied research to economics in Europe. <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/>



Publications

Time, Consumption and Everyday Life

How do people handle hurriedness, burnout and stress? Has material civilisation spun out of control, becoming too fast for our own wellbeing and that of the planet? Are slower forms of consumption viable? Based on research from the ESRC and the Arts and Humanities Research Council Cultures of Consumption Programme, this book focuses on a number of case studies covering the United States, Asia and Europe. Highlighting our routines and rhythms, along with their emotional and political dynamics, the authors show how they are anchored in material culture and everyday practice.

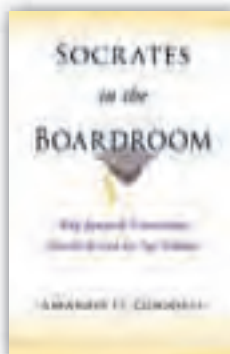
■ *Time, Consumption and Everyday Life* by Elizabeth Shove, Frank Trentmann and Richard Wilk. Published by Berg. ISBN: 978-1-847-88365-0 (Hardback), 256pp, £60.00. Visit <http://www.bergpublishers.com>



Socrates in the Boardroom

Socrates in the Boardroom argues that world-class scholars, not administrators, make the best leaders of research universities. ESRC-funded researcher Dr Amanda Goodall draws from the latest data on the world's premier research universities and in-depth interviews with top university leaders to explain why the most effective leaders are those who have deep expertise in what their organisations do. Her findings carry broad implications for the management of higher education, and she also demonstrates that the same fundamental principle holds true for other important business sectors.

■ *Socrates in the Boardroom: Why Research Universities Should Be Led by Top Scholars* by Amanda Goodall. Published by Princeton University Press. ISBN: 978-0-691-13800-8 (Cloth), 208pp, £20.95. Visit <http://www.princeton.edu>



The Limits to Governance

Does the state still frame debates about new technology? Can policymakers ensure the benefits of health developments through genomics while satisfying the expectations of society and the economic imperatives? Research from Innogen based at the ESRC's Genomics Network, has led to this critique of the new governance agenda for research and innovation in life sciences. It discusses the worldwide policy decisions needed and suggests that the many facets of policy and regulation could be treated as a government-governance continuum, where aspects of genomics may sit at different points and still co-exist.

■ *The Limits to Governance* by Catherine Lyall, James Smith and Theo Papaioannou. Published by Ashgate. ISBN: 978-0-7546-7508-2 (Hardback), 300pp, £60.00. Visit <http://www.ashgate.com>



News briefs



ESRC FINAL REPORTING CHANGES

Will your ESRC grant end after 1 November 2009? If this is the case, then there will be major changes to the final reporting process and the way in which grant holders report to the ESRC at the end of a project. You will now need to submit a streamlined end of award report after three months and an impact report after 12 months. For more information, visit <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/finalreporting>

ESRC POSTGRADUATE TRAINING GUIDELINES 2009

The new ESRC Postgraduate Training Guidelines for 2009 are now available

online. The latest guidelines cover all compulsory core training requirements in general research skills, research methods and transferable skills. They aim to guarantee that the ESRC can continue to promote excellence in postgraduate training provision, ensuring that the very best training is delivered to students from right across the social science research base. For more information, visit <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/>

[ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/postgraduate/fundingopportunities/ptf.aspx](http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/opportunities/postgraduate/fundingopportunities/ptf.aspx)

RCUK BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION

Research Councils UK (RCUK) has launched the fourth RCUK Business Plan Competition. This hugely popular competition offers a prize of £25,000 to the researchers who present the most commercially viable business plan to a panel of experts. Participants



receive training throughout the competition, which equips them with the necessary skills to find successful routes to market.

Last year's winners were Blackford Analysis with their 'real-time' MRI scanner, which is set to greatly reduce the number of wasted scans and generate large savings for hospitals and health authorities. If you are a researcher who thinks that your research has commercial potential, and you want to learn more about routes for marketing your research, the RCUK Business Plan Competition is an ideal opportunity to take your ideas further. The closing date for entries is 4 December 2009. For more information, visit <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/innovation/fundingkt/bpc/default.ht>

RECESSION BRITAIN

A new report has been published by the ESRC exploring what can be learned from the evidence on previous recessions: the three that Britain has experienced most recently – in the mid-1970s, the early 1980s and the early 1990s – as well as recessions elsewhere in the world, and the global recessionary period of the 1930s. It draws on a broad range of analysis from data sources through to the work of numerous ESRC researchers and research institutions. It is also supported by a new ESRC Society Today section, where you can download the report in full. For more information, visit <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/recessionbritain>



BRITAIN IN 2010 MAGAZINE

Showcasing the diversity of ESRC-funded research around the state of the nation in 2010, the annual ESRC newsstand magazine is on sale from 19 November 2009. The magazine is a mixture of academic opinion pieces alongside informed journalistic writing. Features in this edition include: the UK in recession – are there signs of green shoots or are things getting worse; the forthcoming UK election – is there apathy among

voters; epidemics – the spread of diseases with modern travel; young people and web communities; and much more. For more information, visit <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk>

ESRC FESTIVAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE 2010

Running from 12 to 20 March 2010, the Festival of Social Science, organised by the ESRC, is part of the National Science and Engineering Week and is aimed at everyone from politicians to schoolchildren. Participants can join in to find out about social science research at the Festival's varied events. It is expected to take place in more than 25 UK towns and cities, with events ranging from conferences, workshops, debates and exhibitions to film screenings, plays, policy briefings and more. For more information, visit <http://www.esrcfestival.ac.uk>

NEW WEBSITE FOR SCHOOLS

Social Science for Schools is the ESRC's new website for teachers, providing information and resources about social science topics, plus recent academic research for A-level students and their tutors. The topics range from elections to body image, and crime to universities. The website also features relevant social science news stories where students can read articles relating to their studies, and links to collaborative or funding opportunities for teachers and schools. In the near future, we will be launching a blog for teachers to discuss ideas. For more information, visit <http://www.socialscienceforschools.org.uk> (website to launch in early November).



ESRC @ TWITTER

You can now follow updates from the ESRC on Twitter. Click to 'follow' us and you will be able to find out about new funding calls, press releases and events. Sign up at <http://twitter.com/esrc>

EVENTS

2 NOVEMBER 2009

The Value of Volunteering – Helping to Build an Inclusive and Cohesive Society

Highlighting the ability of volunteering to enhance employability and skills in those groups who are the furthest from the labour market, this ESRC seminar is organised in collaboration with the Third Sector European Network and supported by the Community Service Volunteer organisation and Solidar. It will highlight a number of European Social Fund case studies from the UK and examples of good practice from other European Union member states that are making use of volunteering as a pathway to employment. For more information, visit <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk>

3 NOVEMBER 2009

Data Management for ESRC Research Centres and Programmes

The Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS) is holding a seminar on managing and sharing research data, which is aimed at researchers and data managers working as part of an ESRC research centre or programme. The ESDS supports the ESRC's Data Policy whereby all award-holders are required to offer research data to the UK Data Archive so it can be stored and shared with the wider research community. The day provides an opportunity to learn about data management matters that are essential to enable data sharing, such as consent, confidentiality and anonymisation; data description; data storage and rights management. For more information, visit <http://www.esds.ac.uk/news/eventdetail.asp?id=2294>

18 NOVEMBER 2009

Myths and Realities: The Issue of Risk

Co-funded by the ESRC along with the British Library and the Academy of Social Sciences, The Issue of Risk is part of a new series of debates looking at significant public and social issues, which challenge some of the common myths and assumptions that we make about risk. It is chaired by Sir Bill Callaghan, Chair of the Legal Services Commission, with a wide range of guest speakers from both the business and academia sectors. For more information, visit <http://www.bl.uk/whatson>, or email social-sciences-events@bl.uk

Know society. Society Now



The ESRC magazine *Society Now* aims to raise awareness of our research and its impact. Aimed at a wide range of readers from the MP to the businessperson, the voluntary worker to the teacher, the public through to the social scientist, it is published three times a year (spring, summer and early autumn).

Society Now offers a readable, intelligent, concise overview of current issues concerning society.

Subscription to *Society Now* is free. To receive your copy, visit:

<http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/societynow/subscribe>

ESRC also issues a bi-monthly e-newsletter aimed at the academic community, containing information on funding opportunities, corporate news, community updates and events. For more information and to sign up, visit:

<http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/enews>



The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funds research into the big social and economic questions facing us today. We also develop and train the UK's future social scientists.

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