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## EDITORIAL

Despite my rather hopeless intervention at the beginning of the 2018 London Conference, which most – including myself – thought unlikely to be successful, it did generate several papers from new authors, but that doesn't appear to have happened after my similar appeal at the 2019 Liverpool Conference; and, with one honourable exception (Ridgeway), I have not received any papers from the presenters at the Liverpool Conference.

### *Contents of this Issue*

The result of course is that the contents of this issue are very limited - but very interesting. We have a critique of Statistical Evidence on Anti-Semitism in the Labour Party from Harvey Goldstein. The second article by Dan Wright is on statistical bias in some of the various methods of ranking schools. This is followed by a commentary by John Bibby on the potential for anti—statistical prejudice in archaeology.

After that, there are four brief pieces, some briefer than others. The first is the DRAFT Progress Report on the Commission on the Future of RadStats – and I want to emphasise DRAFT: not only is it still being discussed by Commission members, they would welcome comments from anyone, preferably before BREXIT day. All responses are welcome either to Alistair Cairns ([admin@radstats.org.uk](mailto:admin@radstats.org.uk)) or Roy Carr-Hill ([roy.carr\\_hill@yahoo.com](mailto:roy.carr_hill@yahoo.com)). Second, there is the announcement of the RS2020 Conference venue and of the space and time for discussing the Commission Report the following morning. Third, we are repeating the proposal to revise the process of Reviewing Books for the Newsletter, since, as far as I am aware, there have not so far been any comments. Finally, there is the very rare – and very welcome – appearance of a letter commenting on the Fragmentation of Social Problems

### *Prospects for RSN 125*

We had little material for this issue (RSN 124) and absolutely nothing for the next issue RSN 125, due late January 2020. We think it would also be very useful if any of those who attended (or did not attend)

have any ideas or thoughts on the subjects raised could make a contribution, however short.

The main theme addressed at the 2019 conference was Inequalities and the Life-course – the Impact of Austerity across Generations. This includes keynote addresses on Longer and Healthier Lives by Alan Marshall and by Yaojun Li on the Dynamics of Ethnic Disadvantage, papers on Inter-Generational Fairness and on Austerity Mortality and Ageing, and an intervention by the Merseyside Pensioners Association. Please send anything directly to Roy Carr-Hill [roy.carr\\_hill@yahoo.com](mailto:roy.carr_hill@yahoo.com) with **Subject Title:** Contribution on 2019 Liverpool RadStats Conference: theme: Longer and Healthier Lives **OR** Dynamics of Ethnic Disadvantage **OR** Austerity, Mortality and Ageing.

Another proposal for generating material is the occasion of the publishing of the third RadStats compendium, Data in Society. It is a landmark publication, bringing together many of the crucial issues around the production and use of quantitative information.

The contributors to Data in Society summarise many of the concerns around the accessibility and use of statistics in contemporary society. Examples include the lack of data from banking and financial organisations hides the extent of tax evasion of taxation. Government agencies are reducing the number of data series they make available for public scrutiny. The number of healthcare treatments in Britain provided by private groups is growing steadily.

The book is an eye-opener on the difficulties in holding governments and large organisations to account. Do you agree the authors' interpretations?

As the editors acknowledge there are data topics the volume does not cover in detail. These include the use of statistics by legal practitioners, housing and homelessness data and climate change data.

The editors of the RadStats journal are planning to devote one journal issue to topics raised by Data in Society, and to topics not discussed in the book. Could you write an article for the journal on any of the topics above? Are there are areas of debate missing from Data in Society?

Roy Carr-Hill