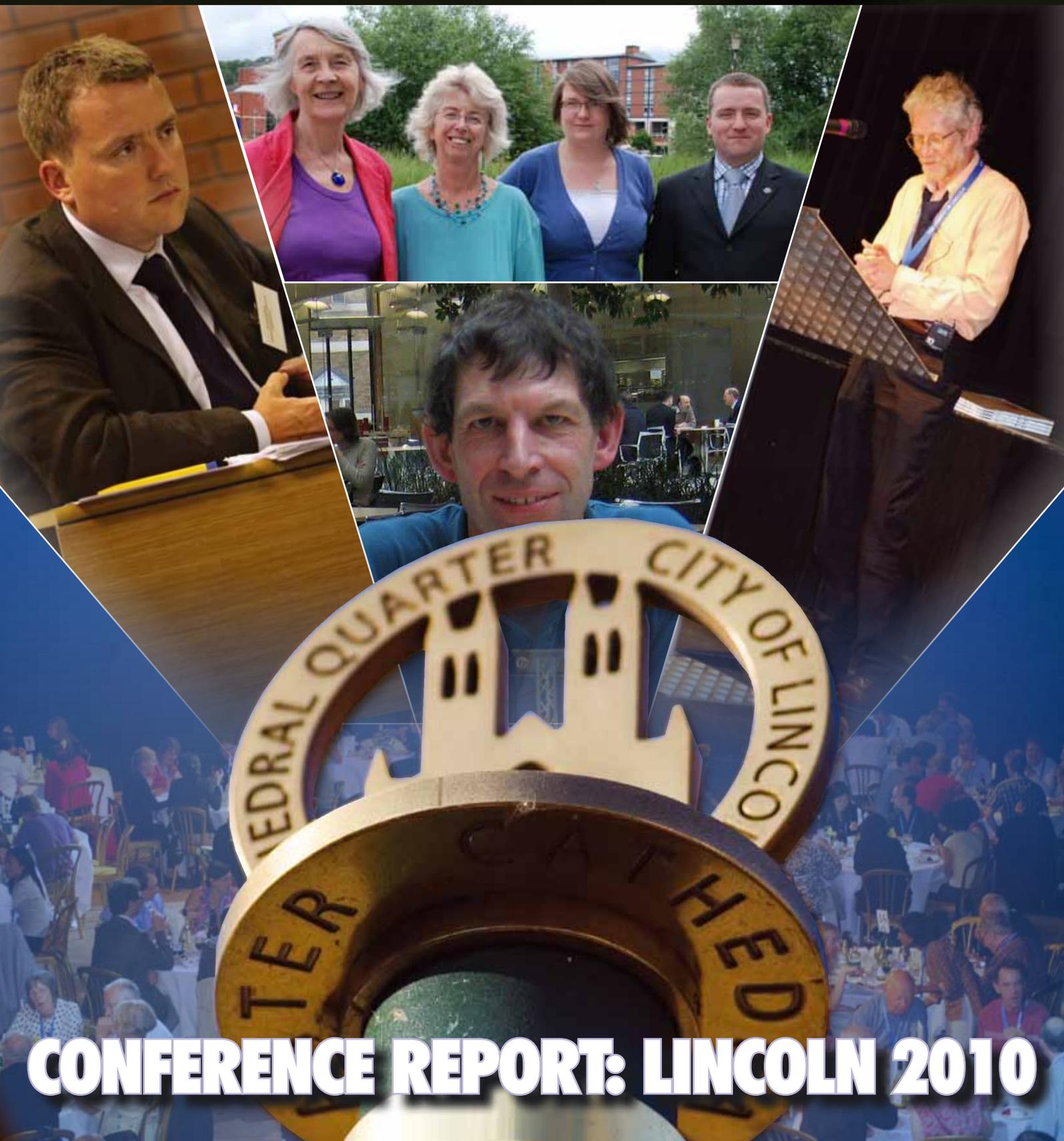


# PolicyWorld

AUTUMN 2010



NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIAL POLICY ASSOCIATION



**CONFERENCE REPORT: LINCOLN 2010**

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The Social Policy Association (SPA) is a professional Association open for membership to academics and practitioners working in

social policy, and to others with an interest in UK and international social policy. The association hosts an annual conference and funds smaller seminar events, as well as producing journals and other publications. In addition, the Association's Executive Committee represents the interests of the membership in communication with other professional and academic bodies. The annual SPA awards are presented at the conference, including a lifetime achievement award and best newcomer award. There is also a thriving SPA postgraduate network with a dedicated annual postgraduate conference and regular seminars. More information is available at [www.social-policy.org.uk](http://www.social-policy.org.uk).

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## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Autumn 2010 of *Policy World*. In this issue we report on the summer conference in Lincoln and celebrate 2010 award winners, as well as continuing discussions on the Research Excellence Framework and research funding. Elsewhere we report on SPA grant-funded events held in Leeds and Paris and introduce a new section – Policy People – devoted to members' news. Finally, with the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review now published and the Coalition Government's social policy positions explicit, your ideas for contributions to *Policy World* on relevant issues are especially welcome - so please do get in touch.

Best wishes

**Chris Blunkell, Editor**

## CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION CAROLINE GLENDINNING



First of all, I would like to restate my grateful thanks to those members of the Executive Committee whose terms of office ended in July this year. Sadly, Tess Ridge resigned from her role as Secretary because of work pressures; we will miss her efficiency and enthusiasm and struggle without her encyclopaedic institutional memory. Chris Holden's term on the Executive also ended, although he will continue for a further year as *Social Policy Review* Editor. Chris has consistently promoted the SPA's international profile and fostered our links with similar organisations around the world. We are also sad to lose Simon Prideaux, who was responsible for the social policy jiscmail list, relationships with UK learned societies and the British Festival of Science; and Catherine Palmer, who was responsible for liaison with the ESRC. In their places, I would like to introduce and welcome the new members of the SPA Executive – Tina Haux, who has taken over from Tess as Honorary Secretary; Alex Collis, Kate Bradley and Nicola Moran.

Our priorities this year are to continue developing SPA's public profile: by trying to develop closer links between SPA and policy-makers, and by identifying opportunities to promote and publicise the work of our members. Members have already been offered opportunities to contribute to *Public Servant* magazine, which is widely read by policy-makers.

We are also planning to revive the SPA's database of members' interests, which will

make it easier for journalists and others to identify people with relevant knowledge and expertise for expert comment.

During the coming year we will maintain a watching brief over plans for the Research Excellence Framework (REF). The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has already announced the configuration of REF subpanels; as in previous Research Assessment Exercises, Social Work and Social Policy will constitute a subpanel within one of the four main panels. If patterns of submissions are similar to those for the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), Social Work and Social Policy is likely to be one of the larger subpanels within this panel grouping. In the meantime, the SPA has been invited to nominate the social policy members of the subpanel. We await with interest the results of the pilot projects to assess research impact (see the article by Peter Taylor-Gooby on p.5).

A major issue for all our members this year will be the coming public spending cuts. These are likely not only to affect our jobs and the quality of the environments within which we teach and research, but also to have profound effects on the public sector welfare state that is the traditional core of social policy. We will be liaising closely with other learned societies through organisations such as the Academy for Social Sciences and the British Academy in responding to these developments. As ever, though, we welcome suggestions and ideas from members on activities and actions.

Finally, some potentially disastrous news. Some of you may have heard that the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) at the University of New South Wales, Sydney was devastated by fire in September. Many SPA members will have visited SPRC, which has taken a lead in establishing the Australian Social Policy Association (with SPA help). Fortunately no one was in the Centre at the time and no one was hurt. Although many original paper documents were destroyed, most research data was not lost. Temporary accommodation has already been found, despite the University having dithered for two years about relocating the Centre to a permanent new home. According to Professor Peter Saunders, morale remains high, not least because of the messages of support that SPRC has received from all over the world (including from the SPA).

# INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL RESEARCH TRAINING

**The Social Research Association (SRA) has made a second successful bid for funding from the ESRC under its Researcher Development Initiative (RDI). In the fourth round of the RDI, the SRA received an award in partnership with the Centre for International Studies at the London School of Economics to develop a series of training modules for international social research.**

The proposal to the ESRC drew on the findings from a survey of SRA members in 2009 designed to capture their interest in the provision of training for international work. The RDI project aims to raise the quality of international social research across academic and non-academic sectors by building the capacity of researchers from different national backgrounds who are undertaking the study of social phenomena in more than one socio-cultural setting.

The training programme was launched at an event in May 2010 designed to strengthen awareness of the importance of the international dimension in social research and to identify training needs. These have now been fed into the training modules scheduled to run from December 2010 to February 2011 (see [www.rdi.ac.uk](http://www.rdi.ac.uk) for details).



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Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd January 2011

The training programme encompasses a number of key methodological and practical aspects:

- enhancing methodological skills and knowledge for research in international settings;
- designing, conducting and managing international comparative studies;
- raising awareness of the epistemological, methodological and practical issues involved when undertaking systematic comparisons across different societies, countries or cultures using the same research tools;
- improving the quality, and professional and ethical standards of international research;
- raising levels of confidence among UK social researchers when bidding for and participating in international social research;
- fostering links between UK social researchers and the international social research community; and
- developing sustainable provision in the area of international research.

The training workshops will be delivered, initially, in London and then offered over the next two years in the regions and abroad. The programme is being developed by Professors Julia Brannen and Linda Hantrais and will be supported by web materials to ensure longer term sustainability.

**Application deadline:  
Tuesday 9 November 2010**

For further information contact:  
[admin@the-sra.org.uk](mailto:admin@the-sra.org.uk).

**For free tickets e-mail:  
[townsend-memorial@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:townsend-memorial@bristol.ac.uk)**

One of the many seminal contributions Peter Townsend made to science was a paradigm shift in poverty measurement methodology in the 1968/69 Poverty in the United Kingdom Survey. This free 1½ day memorial conference will examine the current state of the art of poverty measurement around the world. Many of the world's leading researchers will explain the latest advances in poverty measurement methodology for policy purposes in their own countries and regions. This conference is being funded by the

## REF DEVELOPMENTS TOUCHING PITCH WITHOUT BEING DEFILED?



**Continuing the debate on approaches to measuring impact for the Research Excellence Framework (REF), Peter Taylor-Gooby considers the case for participating in the pilot assessment exercise and suggests that there is little alternative to engagement if the full range of activities across the social policy community is to be supported.**

Hartley Dean argues that HEFCE's approach to measuring impact for the REF is flawed. He continues: "by participating in the pilot assessment exercise the social policy academic community may have become complicit in legitimating a form of assessment that will... ensure mediocrity" (*Policy World*, Summer 2010). The academics currently engaged in the exercise spent some time considering such issues. So what is the case for supping with the devil?

Most commentators would agree with Hartley that it is hard to demonstrate precise linkages between research and policy outcomes, that the longer-term benefits of research that contributes to the general climate of ideas may be equally valuable but less obvious than small-scale immediate impacts, and that research of high quality which happens to be critical of current policies may be brushed aside in favour of more mediocre but complaisant work.

ESRC as part of a Large Grant on Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK (<http://www.poverty.ac.uk/>). Each session will include time for discussion.

### Speakers will include:

- Aya Abe (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Japan)
- Petra Böhnke (WZB, Germany)
- Julio Boltvinik (El Colegio de México)
- Jonathan Bradshaw (University of York)
- Madior Fall (INSEE, France & Afristat, Mali)
- David Gordon (University of Bristol)
- Björn Halleröd (University of Gothenburg, Sweden)

Social policy research is valuable in many ways. It is a continuing challenge to anyone seeking to assess impact to acknowledge the range of possible contributions, including those that don't lead immediately to an identifiable policy measure. There is a further aspect to the value of our research that we need to bear in mind.

One of the strongest contributions of academic social policy is in inclusiveness. Our work reminds the powerful of the impact of their activities on the weakest and most vulnerable groups in the UK and elsewhere, even when they would prefer not to know. It is also inclusive in the sense of building a broad academic community that includes institutions funded through different mixes of private and public resources.

'Impact' entered the research assessment agenda as a result of Treasury interest in the return from public investment in university research. The distribution of public money in higher education is always open to question. However the fact that it is available makes it possible for the range of institutions that currently do so to contribute to the critical understanding of social policy. There is little alternative to engagement with the impact agenda if we wish to support the full range of activities across the social policy community.

Hartley is also right to point out that "an essential element of the impact that social policy research should have lies in the challenge it may pose to mainstream policy debate". This is a real challenge in assessing impact, and was recognised as such by those participating in the pilot. Simply withdrawing from any involvement may not be the best way to get that work recognised and supported financially. If social policy academics are not involved, who will make the case for the awkward research that calls the assumptive world of policy makers into question?

- Daniel He-chiun Liou (Asia University, Taiwan)
- Ruth Levitas (University of Bristol)
- Brian Nolan (University College Dublin)
- Bryan Perry (Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand)
- Veli-Matti Ritakallio (University of Turku, Finland)
- Pedro Sáinz (UN Expert Group on Poverty Statistics, Rio Group, Brazil)
- Melissa Wong (University of NSW, Australia)



# RESEARCH FUNDING PRIORITIES

**SPA representative Rachael Dobson reports on the British Academy event Research Funding Priorities, held on May 20th 2010 as the second of a series of twice-yearly forums for Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) learned societies and subject associations.**

The purpose of this event was to bring together learned societies as part of a broader consultation strategy, in order to respond to the Coalition Government's plans for a spending review. The day provided opportunity for discussion and dialogue, as well as confronting delegates with the 'realities' of future cuts. Representatives from 40 learned society organisations discussed the following themes:

- national priorities: identifying the national challenges that draw heavily on HSS contributions, and recording what would suffer if funding was withdrawn;
- international competitiveness and collaboration: understanding the UK's ability to both work, and compete, with others, and the importance of sustaining investment in UK HSS research; and
- implications for future 'capacity', with specific reference to early career scholars, and the ability of the research community to address national priorities.

Professor Adrian Smith, Director General for Research and Innovation, invited the Academy, alongside the Royal Society, the Royal Academy of Engineering, the Council for Science and Technology, the Government Chief Scientific Advisers' Committee and CBI, to submit formal advice to him about strategic issues regarding the funding of UK research. This consultation exercise would help inform decisions about allocations to government departments. Guiding principles for consultation included:

- the scale of research funding necessary to meet national needs,
- the case for and balance within dual support,

- the distribution across disciplines within quality-related research funding (QR),
- the distribution across the research councils,
- funding by disciplines versus funding by 'national challenges', and
- the balance between funding for people (e.g. fellowships and studentships) and funding for facilities and projects.

The urgency of this exercise was made particularly clear by a set of figures concerning spending cuts. The general outlook for research funding looks bleak. For 2010-11 English universities will have £449 million less than they expected, with a further £600 million of cuts proposed for 2012-13. An analysis from the Institute for Fiscal Studies, commissioned by Universities UK, predicted that the universities budget would need to be reduced by a further 6.4% over 2011-12 and 2012-13, and that public spending will not increase in real terms until 2018.

## The event

The event established that the academic community should focus their minds on promoting the vital contribution that HSS research offers. Key examples include the high quality of UK HSS research (second only to the US); the need to maintain and advance excellence in UK HSS research; the contributions made by UK HSS research to the UK's economic, social, policy and cultural well-being; and the importance of research-based teaching.

Speakers such as Professor Lisa Jardine (Queen Mary, University of London) stressed that the HSS academic community, perhaps contrary to their traditional approach, must be willing to argue their case. A couple of key points were made. Whilst the science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects are currently successful in terms of government allocations, it was noted that these activities take place within an ethical and social context that HSS research uncovers.

Professor Jardine warned that although politicians including David Willetts (Minister for Universities and Science) were making supportive noises with respect to the aspiration to maintain 'blue skies' research, the academic community should be aware of the difficulties ahead. In light of tough choices, the sector would have to sharpen their ideas about the purpose and principles of research, which

could lead onto tough decisions about whom or which institutions should receive government funding.

Finally, it was noted that the sector should avoid the potential for naivety about the importance of government funding for future research practice. The comment that universities or research councils would pick up the bill in the absence of state allocations fails to recognise that government can exercise a level of control over the purse strings in connection to both of these sources.

## Conclusions

The Academy proposed to emphasise the need for a set of recommendations, guided by four principles: a 'long term vision for research'; a 'review of total public research spend'; 'diversity, breadth and funding'; and 'people'. Moving forward, it would call to:

- maintain QR as part of flexible institutional block grants within the dual-support system for research, and ensure an appropriate balance between QR funding and project funding for HSS research;
- strengthen the capacity of UK researchers to address major national challenges (e.g. economic recovery, climate change, security, ageing, technological change and civil society). Responding to major challenges would involve building up appropriate research capacity within the UK, but also keeping the UK engaged with the best research overseas;
- recognise how much the major challenges faced today require multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches, and the extent to which they are dependent on HSS insights and expertise; and
- maintain the health and excellence of HSS disciplines over time.

Overall, the day provided delegates with an important opportunity to draw together a set of ideas about the future of UK HSS research, whilst supporting representatives to take seriously the challenges that lie ahead.

A summary of the full report, Investing in Excellence: The Needs and Contribution of the UK Research Base, Advice from the British Academy can be found at <http://www.britac.ac.uk/policy/Investing-in-excellence.cfm>.

# Journals from The Policy Press



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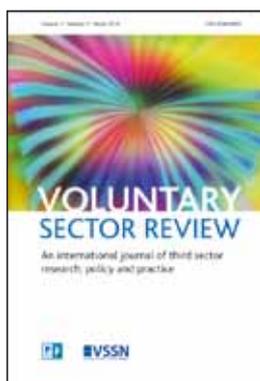


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# CONFERENCE REPORT



by Hugh Bochel

**Having previously hosted the SPA in 1997 and 1998 the University of Lincoln welcomed delegates again in 2010. Following on from the successful conferences in Edinburgh in 2008 and 2009, interest in the conference remained high, with over 230 delegates, and more than 170 papers given with eight parallel sessions in seven time slots. The relatively recent innovation of symposium sessions at the conference, with a number of papers around a common theme, also saw a significant increase in the number of such sessions.**

Although the conference took place as the UK experienced its first change of government since that 1997 conference, and whilst the creation of a new coalition government in the UK was certainly a talking point, it far from dominated the event. Indeed, in both the plenary sessions and the papers there was a strong international element, and the continued growth in the numbers of overseas delegates was very welcome. The inclusion of a year's membership of the SPA as one of the conference registration packages proved popular, with 70 delegates choosing that option.

Given the upheavals in the world economy in recent years, and the general uncertainties in terms of social policy (as well as the general election result and the generally unanticipated formation of a Coalition Government in the UK), the conference theme 'Social Policy in Times of Change' was certainly apt.

### Plenary sessions

The three plenary sessions reflected the extent of change. In the first, Peter Dreier from Occidental College, Los Angeles, argued in his presentation 'The Obama Presidency: The Promise and Peril of Hope and Audacity' that in the United

States, despite significant achievements during the first 18 months of the Obama presidency – the stimulus bill, and financial and healthcare reform – it is too soon to say whether this represents a turning point or merely a brief interlude in an otherwise conservative era. He identified a need for grassroots, 'outsider' activism, in order to help Obama be an effective, progressive president. The second plenary speaker was Branko Milanovic, from the World Bank. His topic was 'Global inequality: new results and implications for 21st century policy', which he pursued by pointing out that contrary to the orthodox view that income distribution in poor countries should get better as a consequence of global trade, inequalities have grown in most countries. He went on to suggest ways in which the differences between returns on citizenships might be reduced and warned that any global redistribution must not see money end up in the pockets of rich elites. For the final plenary session Ruth Lister used her address, 'The age of responsibility: social policy and citizenship in times of change', to demonstrate that social citizenship has become "increasingly conditional, exclusive and selective"; has taken on "a more overtly disciplinary quality"; and risks further disadvantaging the socially and economically marginalised. She reasserted the case for universalism as a vital element of citizenship in both expressing and strengthening the common bonds of equal citizenship.

As well as the plenary and paper sessions there were a number of other interesting and informative sessions. These included 'Meet the Funders', with representation from the Economic and Social Research Council (ERSC), the Government Social Research Unit, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the

Today our incomes are determined significantly by our citizenship rather than any effort we might make as individuals, and we have to ask whether this is ethically acceptable."

– Branko Milanovic



Nuffield Foundation, and a discussion of the REF impact pilots, with significant and useful contributions from Graham Rosenberg from HEFCE, and Peter Taylor-Gooby of the University of Kent.

#### Postgraduate activities

A new feature of the 2010 conference was the integration of postgraduate activities into the programme, which undoubtedly contributed to encouraging 37 postgraduates to attend the conference. As a result, there were specific paper sessions (see p.15-16) and networking opportunities for postgraduates, while some chose to present papers as part of the traditional paper sessions.

Another innovation was the decision to place the conference papers on the SPA website, rather than those of host institution. Adam Whitworth was instrumental in making this possible, and the change means that, in future, decisions about how long to keep these available will be made by the SPA rather than being at the whim of previous host universities. As a result the full depth and breadth of work encompassed by the papers should be more accessible by a greater range of interested parties.

One of the most remarked about features of the conference was the student helpers, who were universally praised for their almost ubiquitous presence and their helpfulness. Life for delegates was also aided by the fairly compact nature of the Brayford Pool campus - with accommodation and

conference sessions on the same site - and the proximity of the city centre and the railway station, which meant that delegates did not have to spend much time travelling between venues (although those who made the walk up Steep Hill to the area of the city that is home to the castle and the cathedral will testify that not all travel around Lincoln is easy).

Whilst the University itself is relatively young,

We will look back on the so-called emergency budget of 2010 as a turning point as significant as the 1980 budget and social security legislation.

— Ruth Lister

some of the conference venues reflected Lincoln's past. Preceded by a reception and journals event for The Policy Press, the Annual Dinner and SPA Awards were held in the Engine Shed. Now part of the Students' Union, the Engine Shed was until recently a derelict railway shed which, like the adjacent University library, has been sympathetically renovated to make an interesting venue for such events. On the second

evening of the conference delegates were able to attend a reception, sponsored by the publishers, in the Chapter House of Lincoln's cathedral – the City's most prominent historic building.

We now look forward to again welcoming familiar and new faces to the 2011 conference in Lincoln.



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The job of progressives now is to build a movement that will make it easier for Obama to be an effective president, a progressive president, even a transformational president. Activists must help their allies on the inside to be more effective, and those allies must help the 'outside' activists figure out strategies for making their voices heard by the President and Congress.

— Peter Dreier

LINCOLN 2010

2010 Award Winners L-R: Award winners Jan Pahl, Ruth Lister, Helen Dickinson and Karl Wilding.



# SPA AWARDS 2010



## Lifetime Achievement Award

The 2010 awards ceremony saw two Lifetime Achievement Awards made – to Jan Pahl, Professor Emeritus of Social Policy at the University of Kent; and Ruth Lister, Emeritus Professor of Social Policy at Loughborough University.

This award is made annually to a member (or members) of the SPA the judges feel has:

- made persistent contributions to research and organisation that has raised the external profile of the subject;
- achieved recognition by non-academics with interest in social policy - journalists, campaigners and lobbyists, activists, user communities;
- an acknowledged international reputation, as measured in terms of translations, citations, projects, academic posts;
- made contributions to professional bodies and associations;
- had an impact on political process/discourse; and
- achieved esteem measured in terms of journal editing/establishing, promotion of social policy within other social sciences, membership of research councils or similar bodies.



The 2010 SPA Awards were sponsored by Cambridge University Press and Policy Press, and made at by SPA President, the FT journalist Nick Timmins, at a special gala dinner.

## Jan Pahl



**Jan Pahl's Award was made in recognition of her contributions to the study, understanding and practice of social policy. These include her research on domestic violence, which has had**

**impacts on national and international social policy. She advised the House of Lords Grand Committee on the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill; influenced police practice towards domestic violence; acted as consultant to the World Health Organisation; and represented the UK at a UN Expert Group meeting on Violence within the Family.**

Her research on the control and allocation of resources within the family has proved equally influential, particularly in the ways that it has challenged the tendency to treat the household as a single economic unit. Subsequently, her research in this area has shaped national and international research into the economic situations and well-being of households and families. It has achieved widespread international recognition and has had far-reaching applications in many areas of social and fiscal policy. Her more recent research has focused on the impacts of social security individualisation policies, financial exclusion, micro-credit, money advice and electronic financial services.

Active in the SPA for many years, where she was also co-Editor of the *Journal of Social Policy*, Jan has made significant contributions to the academic discipline of social policy. These include consistently supporting the development of younger generations of social policy researchers; taking a leading role in the commissioning and conduct of social policy research; and making a major contribution to the development of a formal Research Governance Framework in the field of social care.

Accepting her award, she told guests: "I attended my first SPA Conference in 1979, which in some ways is comparable to today in that Margaret Thatcher had just been elected, and there was some pessimism as to the ability of social policy academics to shape policy. But papers given at that 1979 conference had a profound effect, so academic researchers should feel encouraged - change in our field takes time, but it does happen. Good research, well disseminated, can make a real difference."

## Ruth Lister



**Ruth's award honoured one of the best-known and most highly-regarded social policy academics in the world. In particular, her scholarship in gender studies, poverty and citizenship has**

**had a major national and international impact on the development of theory, research and policymaking in these and other areas. Overall her contribution to, and promotion of, the academic development of the subject has been remarkable.**

Her work and vigorous campaigning have helped to shape the agenda of policy debates and had much influence on policy. Her engagement with the wider community began at the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), which she directed through a particularly demanding period, and has continued in many ways including active membership of bodies such as the Commission on Social Justice, the Fabian Commission on Life Chances and Child Poverty and the National Equality Panel.

Her lectures, participation and advice are constantly sought by leading academics, Ministers and other politicians, administrators, journalists and many voluntary organisations and bodies locally, nationally and internationally, yet she remains accessible and warmly supportive to her own and many other students, researchers and colleagues.

Ruth's contributions across all the criteria are outstanding and have been recognised in many ways including the CBE, Fellowship of the British Academy and election as a founding member of the Academy of Social Sciences by a vote of the SPA membership. Her influence upon a wide range of audiences has been disseminated by the ESRC as exemplary practice for researchers.

"Proud and honoured" to receive her award, she told guests: "I look at the social changes ahead with a sense of foreboding. Despite a genuine concern within government about poverty and inequality, it is my fear that we will see both increase. Academics now have a responsibility to use the tools, knowledge, skills and evidence to counter how government is framing the situation. I like to think of myself as an academic-activist, but I suspect the balance may go more towards the activist part over the next few years post-'retirement'."

LINCOLN  
2010



## Outstanding Contribution from a Non-academic

### Karl Wilding and the NCVO Research Team



**This award is granted to an individual or organisation who in the opinion of the judges has made a significant and lasting contribution to the field of social policy – either through campaigning, lobbying, service provision, fundraising, journalism, funding of research, dissemination of research**

**(particularly to practitioners and other non-academic audiences) or other non-academic means.**

The 2010 Award for Outstanding Contribution from a Non-academic was made to Karl Wilding and the NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations) Research Team.

Karl is Head of the Research Team, which plays a critical role in conducting, supporting and disseminating research on the third sector, and has become the major source of information and analysis for practitioners and policy makers.

The team's work covers analysis of policy and practice, disseminated through a range of media to reach a wide audience. This includes research carried out by the team and published by NCVO; briefings, guidance and foresight scanning available through an active website ([www.3s4.org.uk](http://www.3s4.org.uk)); and collaboration with other agencies and academics (e.g. currently with Skills – Third Sector and the Third Sector Research Centre [TSRC]).

The Research Team's most important contribution has been the development of the NCVO's annual Almanac - a major research undertaking, involving analysis and presentation of complex information from a range of major datasets. The Almanac has become 'the Bible' for third sector researchers, policy makers and practitioners and is quoted by Ministers, newspapers and campaigners. It is regarded as an outstanding example of how to produce policy research for a wide range of non-academic audiences, without sacrificing rigour or reflection.

Karl commented: "NCVO has always strongly supported research that informs policy and practice, so winning this award is a real honour, especially as previous winners include CPAG. I would like to thank all those who have worked with NCVO Research over the years to build the evidence base for civil society."



## Best Newcomer Award Helen Dickinson



**This award - made to a lecturer/researcher who is within five years of their first post-graduation post, and who is judged to have made a significant early contribution to the field of social policy - was presented to Helen Dickinson of the Health Services Management Centre (HSMC) at the University of Birmingham.**

Helen began her full-time academic career only four years ago - as a Research Associate at HSMC, University of Birmingham - during which time she has also completed her PhD. The award recognised an extensive and impressive publications record, her

record in securing external research income and her developing research leadership role, her teaching and administration roles.

She has co-authored seven books and 20 articles and has contributed to numerous research reports and practitioner journals, and has secured nearly 200K external research funding. She also leads the health and social care component of the service delivery research stream for the TSRC. As well as being recently appointed as HSMC's Director of Teaching, Helen is responsible for several HSMC MSc modules targeted at practitioners and managers and leads the organisation of the international conference in Organisational Behaviour in Health Care.

Helen said, "I'm incredibly proud of this award though I don't consider this to be a solo effort - rather, it is a testament to the support I've received at HSMC in the School of Social Policy. Being an early career researcher can be challenging, but I guess I'm really lucky. I'm in a Department and a School that is really supportive, and there's something about early career researchers supporting each other that has been really helpful. You can't underestimate the importance of networking."

# SOCIAL POLICY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 2011

## University of Lincoln

Following the successful 2010 event the SPA conference is returning to Lincoln from lunchtime on Monday 4 July to lunchtime on Wednesday 6 July. All sessions will again take place on the University's main campus on Brayford Pool. Postgraduate activities will again be integrated into the conference.

The conference dinner and the SPA awards will be held on the evening of 4 July, with a drinks reception on the evening of 5 July. There will be three plenary presentations in addition to the paper and symposium sessions and the other events that form part of the conference. Paper proposals should be submitted in the form of an email attachment of 300-400 words by Friday 28 January 2011 and decisions on acceptance will be made by the end of February.

Further information and online booking will be available at:  
[www.lincoln.ac.uk/conferences/spa2011](http://www.lincoln.ac.uk/conferences/spa2011).



LINCOLN  
2010

# WELCOME



**Welcome to the postgraduate pages of *Policy World*. In this edition we include reports from postgraduate-focused sessions at this summer's SPA conference. These include the 'special interest' group for postgraduates – a gathering that has provided the SPA with a vital source of information with regards to members' experiences and needs. Rebecca Johnson from the SWAP subject centre also**

**reports on some of the 'teaching and learning' issues faced by postgraduates who teach social policy. We also have contributions from early career scholars - Regine Paul (University of Bath) and Hannah Zagel (University of Edinburgh) - who contributed to conference streams and offer their insights about what the event gave them as doctoral researchers.**

First, a little background about the role that the postgraduate community played in this year's SPA conference. In previous years the postgraduate conference took place immediately after the main annual conference. After last year's event, it was proposed that the postgraduate SPA conference be integrated into the main event, with postgraduate sessions to form a parallel stream running alongside other sessions. The stream would host a series of workshops, symposiums and presentations around themes relevant to the postgraduate experience, with opportunity for postgraduates to participate as presenters, audience members and active participants.

A key objective was to ensure postgraduates would feel that they were accessing a supportive and inclusive environment. The SPA identified that this could be achieved through networking events and through formal recognition of a strong postgraduate presence. However, postgraduates were not expected to attend postgraduate streams only, and the postgraduate sessions would be open to all conference delegates with the exception of one 'networks' event. Also, postgraduates who applied to present at the conference would not have to submit an abstract to the postgraduate stream only, or identify themselves as postgraduates.

The decision was made to diversify presentation options in order to meet the needs of postgraduates at various stages of the doctoral experience. Fresh options included shorter sessions that aimed to promote dialogue and reflection amongst presenters and those attending a session. For the first time delegates could offer a poster presentation of any aspect of their research.

Feedback from early career scholars who attended the event indicated strong support for the integration of postgraduates. However, providing an inclusive and supportive environment which accounts for the individual needs and wishes of a diverse postgraduate community requires sensitivity and care. Delegates who attended the 'special interest' meeting for postgraduates provided comments and insights that will be used for the ongoing review of the annual conference.

Planning is now underway for SPA events 2010-2011. If you would like to contribute to plans, or if you have any suggestions for events, please me at [r.dobson@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:r.dobson@leeds.ac.uk)

**Rachael Dobson**

Postgraduate representative, SPA

# FEEDBACK



**Regine Paul organised a successful symposium at the SPA annual conference and enjoyed the various postgraduate activities. Regine is a PhD candidate at the University of Bath. Her research scrutinises labour migration regimes in Europe from a comparative political economy and welfare state perspective.**

I very much enjoyed the experience of attending the SPA conference in Lincoln. I was pleased with the wide range of postgraduate activities initiated this year, and I was excited about the opportunity of organising an event – a postgraduate-led symposium on 'Actor-centred perspectives on the governance of social policy'.

I think that the emphasis the SPA has put on creating a postgraduate realm throughout their annual conference convinced many doctoral students and early career researchers to attend even if they felt they could not present fully polished article drafts. This focus on encouraging and cultivating a critical but also supportive environment for exchange and dialogue in early career research appears crucial to me and should be strengthened in the future.

Just like main conference panels and streams, we had to cope with some problems before the event: presenters and discussants dropped out and had to be substituted and we were afraid of attracting too few attendees or of not being able to run a stimulating discussion. But thanks to the great commitment of the three presenters Hannah Durrant, Jenny Harlock and Sarah Morgan-Trimmer; a spontaneously available chair, Dr. Emma Carmel (University of Bath); but most of all due to the great discursive and supportive environment created by the many attendees; the event became a success and obtained good feedback.

Having this space to experience (and also experiment with) the organisation of conference events is a great opportunity for early career researchers and the support from the SPA has been very helpful in that respect. I believe that the diverse postgraduate activities at the conference – including workshops on methodological concerns in PhDs or issues with teaching – have also been a hub for more sustained networking activities among doctoral researchers. For example, the postgraduate symposium was organised under the umbrella of the Postgraduate Governance Research Network (PGRN), established by postgraduates at the University of Bath). This network successfully recruited new members during the SPA conference and is planning more events in the future.

For further information on the network see <http://www.bath.ac.uk/soc-pol/postgraduate/PGRN/index.html>.

# CONSULTATION WITH SPA POSTGRADUATE MEMBERS

**The SPA conference provided an important opportunity for the learned society to engage with members' needs and wishes for future activities. Every year a series of 'special interest' groups are held, which enable individuals to meet and discuss a series of issues that connect to their specific experiences. This year a postgraduate special interest meeting took place.**

The event, chaired by doctoral researcher Ruth Patrick, highlighted a series of challenges and provided constructive suggestions for how the SPA could better respond to members' needs. Some of these ideas are detailed below, under four distinct categories – strengths of the conference, areas for improvement, feedback especially relevant to postgraduates' experiences, and broad feedback about the SPA from a postgraduate's perspective.

The comments and feedback can be regarded as a genuine effort to capture views at the 'grassroots', and the experiences of those fresh to academic conference proceedings.

## Conference – strengths

The atmosphere at the conference was agreed to be generally friendly and supportive. The discount offered by the SPA to postgraduate members was greatly appreciated. Facilities at the University of Lincoln were thought accessible. Those who presented felt that this was a positive experience and not the potentially intimidating encounter that it might have been. Support from colleagues was welcomed.

## Conference – areas for improvement

Areas of improvement were perhaps connected to broad challenges facing conference organisers and presenters. There was sometimes short notice when presenters dropped out at the last minute. Some sessions were felt to be a little too 'packed', especially when presenters had much to discuss. Occasionally, the substantive themes within a conference session lacked coherence when compared to those with a strong intellectual connection between presentations.

Members asked that conference sessions with similar themes should not be timetabled in parallel streams, to enable interested members to attend both sessions. Some requested more

time to read conference papers before the event, and asked for consistent standards (e.g., for authors to provide a full list of references and contact details). It was suggested that a template for visual presentations would make presentations more accessible, especially for delegates with visual impairments. Finally, delegates identified that the SPA should provide an information stand about the learned society at the conference, so that people could discover more about the organisation.

Some commented that further networking opportunities would be welcomed, perhaps in the form of an early social meeting with other postgraduate researchers, to enable better orientation to the conference. This was especially the case for those who didn't know others at the event, and whose colleagues didn't attend. Furthermore, opportunities for networking around substantive themes – post-conference – were also discussed.

There were calls for a broader and more balanced set of subject areas with respect to substantive themes that formed presentations in the conference streams, to ensure that some areas aren't oversaturated and others barely represented.

## The postgraduate conference experiences – areas for improvement

Feedback indicated that all of the sessions available to postgraduates (the networking session, special interest group, poster presentations and postgraduate conference stream) should be better promoted to members both prior to and during the event. Members welcomed opportunities for dialogue prior to the conference, in order to facilitate ideas for symposia and joint conference submissions. The merging of postgraduate sessions with the broader timetable was welcomed, although it was felt that topics in some sessions didn't flow. Members concluded that full integration into the conference programme would address this issue.

Members requested information about conference etiquette for first-time delegates. For example, was it appropriate to dip in and out of sessions in order to catch papers across themes?

Whilst there were mixed feelings about being marked out as postgraduates, members called

for further networking opportunities with a focus around a social event such as a postgraduate conference dinner.

## Broad feedback about the SPA

It was suggested that the SPA could do more to enlighten members about their activities as a learned society. The SPA website was seen as a prime opportunity for information sharing about the SPA's links to other learned societies and subject areas (both national and global), and the Postgraduate Small Grants Scheme. On a practical note, it was considered unclear whom members should contact with regards to administrative issues.

## Recommendations for the SPA

Members provided a series of suggestions for improving the SPA's commitment to the postgraduate community. People wished to get involved in the society's activities and wanted to find out more about how to contribute by representing postgraduates. There were some interesting ideas about how the SPA website could be better used, including a weekly jobs bulletin via email, a forum to discuss members' research interests, and the opportunity to link between members' institutional profiles and the SPA website.

## Moving forward

The SPA has much to gain from engaging with postgraduate members' views. Individuals' experiences provide an important source of knowledge and point of review for the learned society. The next edition of *Policy World* will include feedback and comments about how the SPA expects to take the above comments forward. In the mean time, if any members wish to become involved with representing postgraduates, please contact me at [r.dobson@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:r.dobson@leeds.ac.uk).

## Rachael Dobson

Postgraduate representative, SPA



# FEEDBACK



**Hannah Zagel is a Doctoral Researcher at the School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh.**

The SPA Conference 2010 has been my first conference experience since commencing the PhD. It provided an excellent opportunity for me to get insight into the world of academia, to attend talks on research in my research area and to develop contacts with colleagues in the field. The postgraduate events included in the conference programme offered an ideal framework for me to talk about my PhD topic in a new but supportive environment. Displaying a poster on my research at the conference felt like I was able to address a wider audience for the first time. Although not all participants seemed to be familiar with the postgraduate poster forum, most experienced researchers showed interest when approached. The SPA conference experience made me look forward to attending more conferences. It definitely motivated me to submit papers for presentation, and share my research with the social policy research community.

## WEB RESOURCES supporting postgraduates who teach

### Web resources EvidenceNet

Hosts current evidence relating to teaching and learning in higher education. Includes resources, details of events and networks. <http://search3.openobjects.com/kb5/hea/evidencenet/results.page?qt=postgraduates>

### Graduates who teach

The Higher Education Academy's support page. <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/supportingindividuals/newacademics/graduateswhoteach>

### SWAP

Resources for new staff and educational developers <http://www.swap.ac.uk/resources/teaching.html>

### In focus – Supporting new academic staff – learning from experience

The third edition of SWAP's newsletter *In focus* showcases some of the teaching experiences of academics new to social work degree teaching as well as an interview with SPA postgraduate representative Rachael Dobson about her experience as a social policy postgraduate teacher. The edition includes tips, 'things we wished we'd known', and strategies for dealing with some of the unexpected issues facing teachers new to higher education.

<http://www.swap.ac.uk/news/newsletter.html>.

To request a hard copy please contact [swapteam@soton.c.uk](mailto:swapteam@soton.c.uk)

**Inclusion of the sites on this list does not constitute a recommendation in relation to the quality or currency of resources or information found on them.**

## SUPPORTING LEARNING AND TEACHING

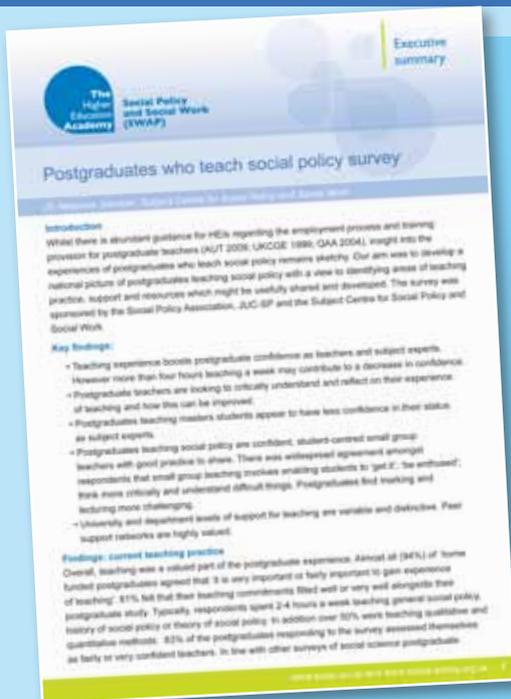
### Teaching and learning symposium, SPA conference, 2010

The main aim of the 'teaching and learning' session for postgraduates teaching social policy was to offer a forum where postgraduates could exchange ideas and issues surrounding their own teaching as well as hearing the findings of the recently completed 'Postgraduates who teach Social Policy' survey.

For those attending the session the experience of teaching had raised a distinctive set of challenges. These included sourcing their own teaching materials, matching materials with levels of study and marking first year students' work for the first time. In addition, teaching experience undertaken beyond the confines of the

postgraduate student's home department can bring its own additional issues. In one case a postgraduate's first teaching experience was with older mature students on a continuing education programme, raising the question of which department should take the lead in supporting the student and how best this could be done. The students themselves contributed to a subsequent guide.

Despite the startling newness of teaching for the first time and the range of challenges it posits, postgraduates delegates still felt that it was important and valuable to gain teaching experience. This is a message which is also echoed in the 'Postgraduates who teach Social Policy' survey. Overall the survey suggests that teaching is a valued part of the postgraduate experience, with almost all (94%) of home-funded full time students agreeing with the statement: "It is very important or fairly important to gain experience of teaching".



# POSTGRADUATES WHO TEACH SOCIAL POLICY SURVEY

A literature review of graduate teaching suggests that the postgraduate perspective on subject specific teaching in social science is somewhat restricted to single universities and faculties. Our aim was to develop a national picture of postgraduates teaching social policy with a view to identifying areas of teaching practice, support and resources which might be usefully shared and developed. This small-scale survey was sponsored by the SPA, the Joint University Council Social Policy Committee (JUC-SP), and the Subject Centre for Social Policy and Social Work.

The survey consisted of structured questions supplemented by free text qualitative data. All responses were anonymous and there was good geographical spread of higher education institutions, with every UK country and region represented. In total 55 replies were received, with the majority of replies coming from home, full-time funded postgraduates from pre-1992 universities. The survey provides some insight into the experience of a particular section of the postgraduate population – UK home students funded predominantly by research council or institutional scholarship.

## Key findings

Of particular note is that 81% felt that their teaching commitments fitted well alongside their postgraduate study. This may be in part due to the fact that respondents typically spent two-to-four hours a week teaching. This compares well with other subjects - psychology postgraduates, for example, spent between nine and 33 hours teaching.

Over 50% were teaching qualitative and quantitative methods. Other popular areas included general social policy, history, and theoretical approaches to social policy. Within these fields the three most common teaching

activities respondents undertook were running tutorials, marking, and facilitating small group teaching. The preponderance of small group teaching dovetails with Park and Muzaka's findings that graduate teaching assistants in sociology, politics and English mostly led seminar and discussion groups.

What comes across strongly from the survey is that small group teaching can be a rewarding experience. Survey respondents appreciated the scope to develop their own confidence in the subject as well being responsive to individual learner needs when tackling difficult topics.

***"It went well because I had the time to gain an understanding of the students' particular learning styles."***

*Survey respondent*

Issues raised included fear of failing to engage students and decreasing confidence in knowledge levels when teaching masters students.

Marking and lecturing can be far less rewarding. Survey respondents found the time taken up by marking difficult to come to terms with as well as the fact that students did not seem to absorb feedback. In addition, inexperience and uncertainty about how to mark was a clear source of anxiety. Interestingly, respondents were uncertain about wanting more help with assessment-related issues (almost a 50:50 split). Help with curriculum design- and module-related issues were considered more important, suggesting that postgraduate teachers may benefit from a more holistic understanding of why they teach and how it fits into the broader picture.

An executive summary of the key findings of the postgraduates who teach social policy survey can be downloaded at [www.swap.ac.uk](http://www.swap.ac.uk) and [www.social-policy.org.uk](http://www.social-policy.org.uk).

## Further support for postgraduates teaching social policy

Activities have been planned for the year 2010/11 in response to the survey and feedback collected from postgraduate events and mailing lists:

- a workshop and symposium for postgraduates teaching social policy: an opportunity for postgraduate teachers to work with academic authors of key student text books, the day will be focused on thinking about why we teach as well as what we teach.
- the creation of subject specific information and helpsheets to share and support common postgraduate teaching topics, methods and practices (e.g. key resources for specific subject areas, and pointers and examples on specific teaching methods).

## EVENT FUNDING

**Do you have an idea for an event related to the learning and teaching of social policy? SWAP has funds available to support institutions to host regional workshops or similar events. Visit [www.swap.ac.uk/getinvolved/host.html](http://www.swap.ac.uk/getinvolved/host.html) for more details.**

# YOUTH POLICY & YOUTH POLITICS IN THE UK & FRANCE TODAY



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## 16TH-17TH SEPTEMBER 2010 UNIVERSITE SORBONNE NOUVELLE – PARIS 3, PARIS, FRANCE BY SARAH PICKARD

Social policy as it applies to young people was one of the two main themes of a French-British conference held in Paris on 16 & 17 September 2010, supported by a small grant from the SPA and organised by three SPA members - Sarah Pickard (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3), Corinne Nativel (Université de Franche-Comté, Besançon) and Fabienne Portier-Le Coq (Université Paris 13 - Villetaneuse).

'Youth Politics & Youth Politics in the UK and France Today' took place within the CREC/ CREW (Centre de Recherches en Civilisation Britannique) research group of the Institut du Monde Anglophone (British Studies Department) at the Sorbonne Nouvelle University (Paris 3) in France. The two main interests of the research group are contemporary politics and public policy in the UK.

The conference was held over two days at the ESIT - the Sorbonne Nouvelle University's

interpreting school. This saw the conference benefit from the interpreting services of three professional interpreters, as the school is equipped with simultaneous translation booths. Thus, two working languages for the conference – English and French – allowed the speakers and members of the audiences to fully appreciate the papers given and to interact during discussion sessions. Over the two days nearly 100 academics, youth workers, third sector workers and other delegates attended the conference.

Altogether, there were 20 French and English speakers with varied academic backgrounds ranging from sociology and social sciences to law and political sciences. Two SPA members Nathan Hughes (Lecturer in Social Policy at the School of Social Policy, University of Birmingham) and Linda Milbourne (Lecturer in Social Sciences at the School of Social Sciences, Birkbeck College, University of London) gave papers - "Antisocial Youth and Asocial Communities:

are our youth intolerant or intolerable?", and "Youth Matters in Social Justice: are UK policies generating new spaces for young people's voice and participation?" respectively.

The two days were divided into five separate but interlinked sessions:

- Young People as Political Actors,
- Young People, the third sector and social participation,
- Public Policies to promote Youth Autonomy and Mobility,
- Youth Policy and Local Policy, and
- Young People and Youth Justice.

Each session was chaired by one of the three organisers, who are grateful to the sociologist and Senior Lecturer Dr Vincenzo Cicchelli, (Université Paris-Descartes, Paris, France) for chairing the Thursday afternoon session. He provided eloquent commentary on the topics covered, and added his own enlightening thoughts to the afternoon. Indeed, the bicultural and interdisciplinary nature of the conference led to rich exchanges and went some way to expanding horizons among academics and non-academics working with young people in France and the UK.



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### Common themes

By the end of the conference, several common themes had emerged. First, we lack a clear definition of 'youth'. Purely chronologically, the age ranges encompassed by the term vary depending on the policy area - for example, transport, housing, work, sexual health, delinquency, and criminal responsibility. There are also distinct differences between the UK and France on this point - in particular as regards criminal responsibility and the burden of guilt, as neatly pointed out by Elizabeth Gibson-Morgan (Senior Lecturer in Legal English at the Université François Rabelais, Tours) in her comparative paper 'The Handling of Youth Offending in England and in France'.

Second, young people are generally depicted by politicians and policy makers to be a problem, untrustworthy and dangerous. Such a negative attitude to youngsters may be explained by a lack of dialogue between the two groups, and indeed be responsible for the third common theme - the sentiment among young people that they are not being listened to. Various speakers mentioned that the young people dealt with in their research felt that they did not have a voice. For example, from England, Linda Milbourne raised the issue in her paper as did, from France, Veronique Bordes (Lecturer in Education Sciences at the Université Toulouse 2 Le Mirail). An exception to this rule was illustrated by Tom Cockburn (Lecturer in Applied Social Sciences at the Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Bradford) in his paper 'Young People's

Involvement in Democratic Structures in England'. He pointed out that outreach work and listening had proven successful in engaging young people in Bradford.

This lack of listening on the part of politicians may go some way to explaining the fourth common theme which stood out in the conference - that politicians do not pay enough attention to views and needs of young people during and outside election campaigns. Rather than trying to harness the youth vote via youth-orientated policies, more attention is paid to putting across a youthful image - as proposed by PhD student Guillaume Clement (Université de Rennes) in 'Labour's Appeal to Young Voters since the Blair Era' (as pictured) and Professor Agnes Alexandre-Collier (Université de Bourgogne) in 'David Cameron and the Conservative leadership: Rejuvenation from the top-down?'. With this tendency to use young people - characterised as being modern - rather than engaging with them, it was concluded that it is not surprising that the turnout rates in elections on both sides of the Channel are so low.

### Differences

Two differences between the UK and France did stand out in the conference. First, the lack of a joined-up youth policy in France, compared to a drive in the UK over the last decade to have a more inter-ministerial coherent youth policy. Second, that young people are more involved in extreme-left wing politics in France than in the UK, where single-issue organisations are increasingly popular and where membership of political parties among young people has nosedived. One point much more prominent in French discussions on youth is the phenomenon of 'déclassement' - a young person finding

himself/herself in a lower socio-economic class than that of his/her parents. This, in part, is due to the devaluing of academic qualifications, as mentioned by the youth policy researcher Bernard Roudet (Institut National de la Jeunesse et de l'Éducation Populaire INJEP) in his paper 'The Values of French Youth'.

In brief, whereas in post-war Britain and France youth was considered to be a national asset, young people these days seem to be portrayed more as a burden. More than one speaker mentioned that policies can be seen as a way of punishing or controlling young people and this, according to Ross Fergusson, within a neoliberal context of social control via social policy. We cannot thus be surprised to see an increase in abstentions at elections.

Most abstracts are available on the webpage of the conference housed on the Université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3 website: [www.univ-paris3.fr/youthconf2010](http://www.univ-paris3.fr/youthconf2010) along with a more detailed programme.

The organisers would like to thank the French and English sponsors of the conference whose generosity enabled the conference to take part in two languages and thus be more accessible: the SPA, The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Association, la Caisse nationale des allocations familiales - Cnaf, the Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire - Injep, the Direction de la recherche, des études, de l'évaluation et des statistiques - DREES, the Mission de Recherche - MiRe, the Centre de recherches en civilisation britannique - CREC, the Centre for Research on the English-speaking World - CREW, the Conseil scientifique and the Relations Internationales of the université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3.

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## NEW TERRITORIES IN CRITICAL WHITENESS STUDIES POSTGRADUATE CONFERENCE



L-R: Back row: Richard Tavernier, University of Leeds; Barbara Samaluk, Queen Mary, University of London; Noémi Michel, University of Geneva. Front row: Shona Hunter, Madeline-Sophie (Maddy) Abbas, Say Burgin, all University of Leeds; Jennifer Dulek, University of Illinois; Dieuwertje Dyi Huijg, University of Manchester.

## 18-20 AUGUST UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

BY MADELINE-SOPHIE ABBAS AND SAY BURGIN

As part of its efforts to foster future research leaders within the field of critical whiteness studies, the White Spaces Research Network, led by Dr Shona Hunter (University of Leeds), has launched a postgraduate arm. The postgraduate network is semi-autonomous to the broader White Spaces network and is run by and for postgraduate students. It aims to create a graduate community grounded in an understanding of the specific pressures, constraints, and opportunities facing postgraduates working in the area. Central to the network is its promotion of international collaboration between members to advance this evolving field into new territories through the use of innovative technologies to share information and develop research partnerships.

The postgraduate network held its inaugural 'New Territories in Critical Whiteness Studies Postgraduate Conference' over 18-20 August at the University of Leeds, with financial support from the SPA (small grant), the Economic History Society, the Leeds Humanities Research Institute, the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN), and both the School of History

and School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Leeds. 'New Territories' provided an opportunity for postgraduate students engaged in the field to present their research and develop the direction of the new postgraduate arm.

More than 20 postgraduate delegates from six different countries attended the conference, including participants from the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, the UK, the United States, and Canada. In addition, the conference's keynote speaker, Dr Cath Ellis (University of Huddersfield) added to the conference's international scope through insightful contributions on her native Australia. The participation by a number of European delegates from outside of the UK was an especially exciting feature considering the lack of attention that critical whiteness studies has paid to this part of the globe.

### A range of disciplines

Research presented by conference delegates confirms that postgraduate students today are pushing critical whiteness studies into new territories. Contributors presented research from a range of disciplines – music, sociology, history, political science, English literature, education and beyond. Participation also represented the full spectrum of postgraduate academic experience, with MA students presenting research alongside doctoral students that had either just begun or were in the final stages of their research. Delegates presented 15 different papers under five

conference themes - the racialisation of English spaces, challenges to national identities, white anti-racist projects and problems, white privilege, and methodological challenges in critical whiteness studies.

Taking a cue from the larger White Spaces network and its inaugural conference in 2009, the 'New Territories' conference included an opportunity for 'Dialogue and Debate'. This session provided an open space to think through various debates and discussions that had arisen throughout the conference and how these issues/challenges/debates might be carried into the postgraduate network. During this session, delegates in one group concentrated on the question 'What is whiteness?' They discussed why this concept proved to be so slippery for scholars and the different ways in which it was understood and utilised by conference delegates and other critical whiteness scholars. Participants in another group focused on the connections and disconnections between critical whiteness studies in the academy and collective struggles for racial justice taking place outside of academia. A number of delegates from both groups expressed concern over the lack of impact of the field outside of the academy, and they considered how the postgraduate network might position itself in order to more directly engage with anti-racism efforts and practitioners. As with the 2009 'White Spaces' conference, this session provided an important moment for deeper and more candid reflection on recurring challenges within the field.

### Career development

Reflecting the postgraduate network's aim to assist the career development of postgraduates, the conference provided two strong training components. Dr Ellis's address, 'Teaching and Unlearning: Critical 'Race' Pedagogy and Online Learning Environments', asked delegates to reflect on their current and future teaching roles. Dr Ellis argued that on-line learning environments prove useful in the instruction of critical race theory and that they may offer less embodied ways in which to discuss race issues that may enable more candid, reflective thinking that distils some of the emotional burdens that can accompany classroom discussions. As a non-traditional teaching format, Dr Ellis argued that e-learning can be a "catalyst for change" since it encourages teachers to re-think their teaching practices and may be a move towards destabilising normative approaches to teaching critical race studies.

Tamsine O'Riordan, senior commissioning editor for Zed Publishers, talked on a very different subject but one pertinent to all postgraduates – the challenges of academic publishing. In terms of opportunities for future collaborations, the demand of publishing for academics against a somewhat bleak outlook of available opportunities presents some concerns to all early career academics. Tamsine nonetheless provided invaluable advice for postgraduates trying to get a foot into publishing including: know your publisher and audience, network for edited collections, contact publishers with your book idea before giving up your life to write it and, finally, should you be lucky enough to secure a contract don't make an enemy of your publisher! These points provided us with some ammunition for the difficult road ahead.

### Building the Network

The central goal of the conference was to map out future directions of the postgraduate arm. As a research group within the WUN, this organisation has provided a great deal of assistance in creating sustainable mechanisms by which the White Spaces

network can promote and develop international collaborations. To move the postgraduate arm forward, Kirsty Mattinson (Leeds WUN representative), and Louise Heery, (WUN general manager), introduced WUN-supported options and opportunities, including different technologies that support innovation in research and education globally through interdisciplinary collaboration, exchange and e-learning. Kirsty and Louise highlighted a couple of innovative collaborations developed by postgraduates through WUN, including a postcolonial studies e-journal, a virtual seminar series and an on-line information sharing system. These initiatives were presented as vehicles through which the network might sustain itself and extend its reach.

Following WUN's presentation, delegates ended the conference with an in-depth discussion on the postgraduate arm's future and the best mechanisms and resources at our disposal to achieve this aim. Participants decided on four different development strands:

- E-mail list: as our on-going communication tool for resource and information sharing on events and funding.
- Blog: with the aim of providing a platform for bringing critical whiteness issues to a wider audience - both academic and non-academic - through thought-pieces, responses to current events, and interactive comments. The blog will provide opportunities for peer review on articles and an outlet for ideas, as well as a collaborative enterprise that can respond to issues and debates in the field in a dynamic and thought-provoking way.
- Virtual seminar series: to facilitate ongoing empirical, methodological, and theoretical discussions as well as 'masterclasses' within critical whiteness studies that can be accessed by participants internationally.
- Future conference: planned for 2012 to serve as a benchmark for reflecting on the work achieved by the postgraduate arm and how it has developed, and deciding on new

directions for the network and its contribution to the field of critical whiteness studies.

The discussion surrounding how to proceed with the network's development raised many questions pertinent to most research endeavours. One key question was how to present the identity of the network. Here, interestingly, was the crux of the debate of whiteness itself - how should the network locate itself within the debates of whiteness? How should issues of power and hierarchy be negotiated when establishing and maintaining a network? How should the network promote social change? And, in this role, what is the network's relation to the 'real world'? All of these debates, which have their parallels in the field itself, were raised by delegates. Since no right or wrong approach could easily be found, these debates will continue to provide food for thought on the future of the network and serve to demonstrate the vibrant and complex nature of the field.

In response, the network provides a dynamic, challenging, and critical space in which to debate these issues and open up dialogue within the field of critical whiteness studies and beyond. The conference provided a space to explore the diversity of perspectives, both ideologically and geographically, and the personal engagement that all our delegates brought to the task of researching whiteness and white ethnicities. The network aims to build on this engagement and to reflect the debates, challenges, and developments in critical whiteness studies, and with the collaborative efforts of all delegates, it proposes to be an exciting and ongoing enterprise. Dr Ellis summed it up well in her exiting remark that the future of critical whiteness studies is in "great hands". We hope that the network will be a testament to Dr Ellis's affirmation.

*The network is now live at <http://www.wun.ac.uk/research/white-spaces-network>. Anyone interested in becoming involved in the postgraduate arm of the network should contact Say Burgin ([hy08snb@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:hy08snb@leeds.ac.uk)) or Maddy Abbas ([ss08msna@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:ss08msna@leeds.ac.uk)).*

#### Large Grants Scheme

The SPA is pleased to announce the launch of its Large Grants Scheme - designed to help fund one-off conference events dealing with research, policy & practice and/or learning & teaching in a way that is of benefit to the social policy community and SPA members. During 2011, we will prioritise applications that demonstrate clear policy maker/practitioner links. The maximum award for an individual event is £3000. The scheme will open on 1st January 2011.

#### Small Grants Scheme

The SPA invites applications for its Standard and Postgraduate Small Grants Schemes, designed to help fund seminars and workshops dealing with research and/or learning & teaching in

a way that is of benefit to the social policy community and SPA members. The focus should be on activities that will benefit a group or network rather than individuals. Applications for awards to support events with an international focus and/or to facilitate attendance from overseas, are particularly encouraged.

Funds will be made available in two rounds of applications over the year. Round one runs from 1st January to 30th June and round two from 1st July to 31st December. Applications are welcomed at any point within each award period, and funds are allocated on a first-come first-served basis. Each award offers a maximum of £500.

Full terms and conditions for both schemes, as well as information on how to apply, are available on the SPA website. For enquiries contact the SPA Grants Officer: **Majella Kilkey** [M.M.Kilkey@hull.ac.uk](mailto:M.M.Kilkey@hull.ac.uk)



# POLICY PEOPLE

Welcome to Policy People – a new section for *Policy World* – devoted to SPA members and their news. The Association is of course keen to welcome policy makers, postgraduate students and international members to our ranks, and so it makes perfect sense to welcome and celebrate our new colleagues. Policy People is also a useful forum for us all to update colleagues on our movements and successes and, as here, to pay obituary tribute. If you are new to the SPA and would like to introduce yourself, or have other news you'd like to share – of an award, a job move or appointment (to a committee or editorial board etc.), or the loss of a colleague – please do get in touch at [s.a.pemberton@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:s.a.pemberton@bristol.ac.uk).

Simon Pemberton

## APPOINTMENTS

### Nick Ellison

The *Journal of Social Policy* (JSP) will have a new Chair of the Editorial Board from January 2011. Nick Ellison, currently Professor of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Leeds, takes over from Professor Jane Millar, University of Bath. Nick commented: "Jane will be a very hard act to follow, and all members of the Board - past and present - are extremely grateful for all the time, commitment and guidance Jane provided during her time as Chair." He is keen to build on Jane's legacy by acting as a 'bridge' between the editors and the wider community of social policy academics, whom the Journal serves and on whose commitment (to writing and peer reviewing) its reputation ultimately depends.

Nick is keen to support the editors, and the Board as a whole, in three ways. He explained: "First, despite excellent progress in recent years, it remains important to extend JSP's international reach. Second, in view of the JSP's position as arguably the leading social policy journal, it is essential that the Chair and the Editorial Board work with the editors to explore the legitimate boundaries of social policy as an increasingly significant subject area. Finally, the Board and editors recognise the need to optimise the Journal's peer review process to ensure that JSP carries articles that provoke interest and make a genuinely significant contribution to knowledge."



### Nicola Moran

Nicola Moran joined the SPA Executive in 2010, and hopes to "contribute to the promotion of social policy nationally and internationally and encourage a closer relationship between social policy research and actual social policies." A Research Fellow at the Social Policy Research Unit

(SPRU) at the University of York, Nicola is currently working on a study looking at transition to adult services for young people on the autistic spectrum. She is also a member of the editorial board of *Journal of Social Policy*. Nicola will be on maternity leave from December 2010 to September 2011.

### Kate Bradley

Kate Bradley has joined the SPA Executive Committee, shadowing Majella Kilkey as Grants Officer before taking over the role. Kate joined the University of Kent as a Lecturer in Social History and Social Policy in October 2007, with research interests in the historical dimensions of welfare and civil society in Britain. Her

book, *Poverty, Philanthropy and the State: Charities and the Working Classes in London, 1918-1979*, was published in 2009 by Manchester University Press. She is currently working on a new project around the history of 'anti-social behaviour' in 20th and 21st century Britain.

### Tina Haux

Tina Haux is delighted to have been elected to the SPA Executive Committee as Honorary Secretary which, she says "provides me with the opportunity to be actively involved in the academic social policy community." Tina is currently working at the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of

Essex on the development of a simulation tool to compare the tax and benefit systems in the EU27 countries. She recently completed a PhD at the University of Bath on lone parents and work activation, having worked in government and the voluntary sector prior.

# MOVING ON



## Chris Holden

Chris Holden has moved from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) to take up a post as Lecturer in International Social Policy at the University of York, although he remains an Honorary Lecturer in Global Health at LSHTM. Despite having reached the end of his elected term of office on the SPA Executive Committee, Chris remains on the committee for another year in his capacity as lead editor of *Social Policy Review*. He has also been elected to the editorial board of *Journal of Social Policy*.

# OBITUARY TRIBUTES

## Peter Kaim-Caudle

Peter Kaim-Caudle, who died on May 18 aged 93, was one of the longest serving members of the SPA. Peter was a German refugee from the Nazis (most of his family died in the Holocaust) who came to the UK in 1933 and studied Economics and Business Administration at the LSE. He was interned as an enemy alien for 15 months during the war. Although called to the Bar he became an academic first at Dundee then from 1950 in Durham from which he retired as Professor of Social Policy in 1982 continuing as an active Emeritus Professor for many years.

Peter was one of the pioneers of comparative Social Policy with his 1973 10 country study *Comparative Social Policy and Social Security*. He did not confine his work to the North East, although he participated for many years in the activities of the Workers Education Association and the educational programme of the Durham Miners' Association. He was a pioneer of social policy studies in Ireland spending two periods at the Economic and Social Research Institute in Dublin and publishing *Social Policy in the Irish Republic* in 1967. He also worked in Fiji and in Sierra Leone, with his last book published in 2005 dealing with *Social Policy and Development in Sierra Leone and Post-War Britain*. In 2002 he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Literature degree by the National University of Ireland and was described as: "... by education and training a statistician, an economist, a lawyer" and thereby able to: "... transcend artificial boundaries between subjects". That is exactly right. On a personal note may I add that when I was appointed as a very junior lecturer in Durham in 1970 I was warned he was difficult to deal with. My own experience was the exact opposite. He was helpful, supportive and kind and the best sort of colleague in every way.

**David Byrne**



## Susan Sinclair

Susan Sinclair, who taught social work and social policy at Edinburgh University for almost 40 years, died on 21 May at the age of 87. In her prime, she was a force to be reckoned with in the classroom, in the university at large and on the many public bodies on which she sat. Due to her strong personality and impressive integrity, people invariably listened to and took note of what she said.

Although originally appointed to teach social work, Susan found herself out of sympathy with the prevailing psychodynamic orientation to social work training and subsequently devoted herself to teaching social policy. Her teaching focused on health and the personal social services, and she had a special interest in mental illness and mental handicap.

Susan was a founder member of the SPA and a stalwart of early SPA conferences. She cut an impressive figure – she was formidable without being intimidating, proud of her Scottishness but an internationalist at heart, socially-committed and, at the same time, immensely civilised. Her colleagues and her students loved her and many people sought and benefited from her advice. She was a tremendous supporter of younger colleagues, many of whom became her close friends. For several years, she was a very effective Head of Department, her exceptional hospitality making the Edinburgh Department a wonderful place to work in.

Although she did not produce a great corpus of published works, Susan undoubtedly left the world a better place than it would otherwise have been.

**Michael Adler**

## Professor Kathleen Jones

Kay Jones, a former Chair of the SPA and one of the founders of social policy, died on 13 October aged 88. She wrote a three volume history of the mental health services while a research assistant and lecturer in the Department of Public and Social Administration at the University of Manchester between 1951 and 1965 (with a break at the University of Singapore). She then founded the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at the University of York in 1965 where she continued to write about mental health services. Richard Titmuss commissioned her to write *The Teaching of Social Studies in British Universities* (1965) and she served for a critical ten years on the University Grants Committee as the social policy and social work representative visiting every department in the UK and defending the subject in the Thatcher years. She was editor of the *Yearbook of Social Policy* and the Routledge Library for Sociology and Social Policy and wrote a variety of more general social policy books. She was a Chair of the Mental Health Commission and served on the Gardiner Commission which ended detention without trial. She retired in 1988 and revised her history of the mental health service and wrote a history textbook *The Making of Social Policy*. Then she published a series of books on Saints arguing that this was a natural subject for a social policy academic.

**Jonathan Bradshaw**

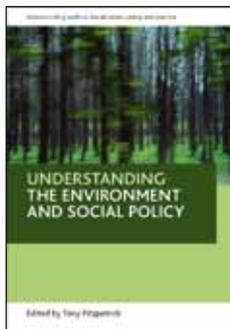
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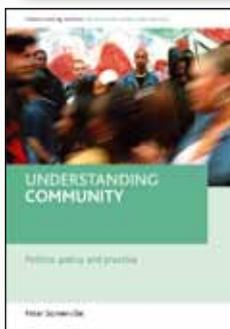
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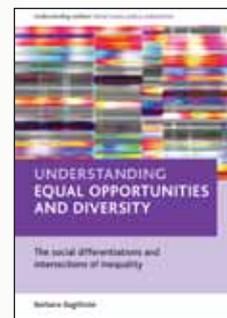
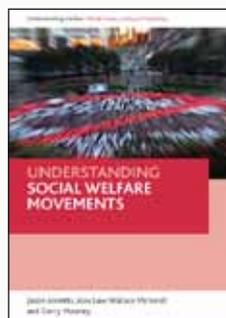
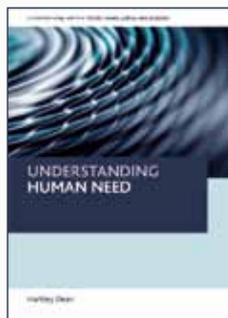
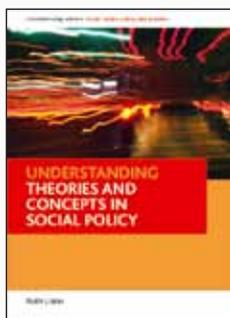
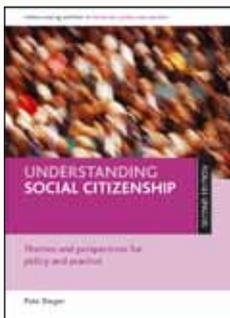
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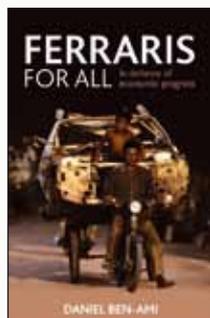
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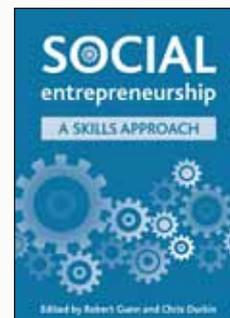
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