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NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIAL POLICY ASSOCIATION

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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 – presented at the conference – include a Special Recognition award and Best Newcomer award. There is also a thriving SPA postgraduate network which holds with regular events and participates in the annual conference. More information is available at www.social-policy.org.uk.

PolicyWorld

Policy World is published three times a year. Letters, opinions, suggestions and contributions for future editions are welcomed. Please contact the Editor for more information.

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Welcome to what is the final edition of *Policy World* in its current form. We publish a number of interesting pieces here – Peter Taylor-Gooby on the Welfare State in Crisis and 'reasons to be cheerful', Malcolm Torry on the changing benefits system, Gerry Mooney on Scottish independence and Rosalind Edwards et al on investigating Peter Townsend's *Poverty in the United Kingdom*. You can also catch up with the latest reports from the Executive Committee about last year's conference, postgraduate activities, membership fee changes and so on – all in all, a worthy 'goodbye' to *Policy World* in its hard copy guise.

Turning to substantive matters, those of you who attended the AGM last year will have sat through a seemingly endless account from myself and our Treasurer, Ann Brunton, about the need for a period of austerity in order to ensure the SPA's financial security. I made the obvious references to our esteemed current Chancellor and now weirdly find myself continuing in this vein because I can report that the SPA's financial fortunes continue to mirror those of the wider UK economy as we 'return to growth'. Actually, I'm not at all sure that the UK really is returning to any sustainable growth – but the SPA most definitely is. Thanks to the austerity measures detailed in the last edition of *Policy World* and, most importantly, thanks to the contribution from last year's SPA conference, the Association's finances are looking healthier. There is a little way to go, but it is now possible, for example, to make small grants available to members wanting to engage in small projects – and we can also look towards a series of 'policy summits' to run from the Autumn of this year through to after the General Election in 2015. We are planning three mini-summits and a final post-election larger summit. In each case key think tank personnel, policy makers and academic experts will be asked to consider and debate the future of key areas of welfare with a view to producing a series of policy recommendations. The final structure of the summits will be reported to the AGM in July.

Members can support these initiatives – and others – by ensuring that they are up to date in payment of membership fees. As most of you will know, fees for 2014-15 were raised for the first time in 10 years as part of the financial measures that we had to take to preserve the Association. We also moved to Direct Debit in order to ensure a more reliable membership funding structure – although the transition has not been quite as smooth as originally hoped. My heartfelt plea, as ever, is to ask you to ensure that your Direct Debit arrangements are in place (if Direct Debit really doesn't work for you please get in touch with our membership secretary, Harriet Churchill).

As to the future of *Policy World*, many of you will know that the Executive reported to the 2013 AGM that the publication in its current format has effectively run its course. This decision was taken partly on financial grounds but also because the Executive is highly aware that preferred methods of communication have moved on-line. Blogs, Twitter postings and on-line newsletters are 'the future' and the SPA is updating its communications policy accordingly – this update will include the launch of a new website in July. So, *Policy World* will now be produced as an on-line newsletter that will appear at regular intervals on the Association's website, giving information about grant opportunities, upcoming events, membership matters and so on. More substantive information about the SPA, events, etc, will also be found on the website. Meanwhile, commentary on, and discussion about, social policy issues is available in the new BSA/SPA on-line joint publication *Discover Society*. *Discover Society* launched last Autumn and has been well received by the social science community. One thing though – there is indeed a policy presence in the copy to date, but we must ensure that policy issues continue to be well represented. If you wish to write something for *Discover Society*, contact the editors – John Holmwood and Sue Scott – and provide a 'short pitch' (their words not mine!). You can contact them at: <http://www.discoverociety.org/contribute/> Do this today.

AGM AGREES CHANGES TO SPA MEMBERSHIP FEES

Prompted by the financial situation of the SPA and recognition that membership fees had not changed for 10 years, the 2012 SPA AGM agreed that the Executive Committee would review the Association's membership fee structure. The Executive proposed a range of approaches to an increase in fees at the 2013 AGM, with the various proposals calculated on the principles of income related fee levels and minimal fee increases – enough to generate a fee income that would return the SPA financial reserves to previous levels. The AGM unanimously supported increases in Types 1-4 membership fees (see table).

SPA membership runs for the year January-December, meaning that members will by now have received letters inviting them to renew membership for 2014. In early 2012 the Executive Committee introduced a Direct Debit payment system for 2013 membership renewal – to reduce administration costs, to make it easier for members to renew on an annual basis and to allow for more effective financial planning. Therefore, members who have not already set up a Direct Debit arrangement for SPA membership fees will have been asked to do so in December 2013.

Harriet Churchill, SPA Membership Secretary 2013/14.

Simon Pemberton, SPA Membership Secretary 2012/13.

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NEW JOURNAL EDITORS

Patricia Kennett and Misa Izuhara, University of Bristol have recently taken over the editorship of the *Journal of Social Policy*. Patricia is Reader in Comparative and International Policy Studies at the School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol, UK. Her research interests intersect the fields of social policy and urban and transnational studies. Currently, she is particularly interested in exploring the interrelated dynamics of scale, power and policy and embedding global and transnational dynamics within the everyday life of places and people, drawing on comparative, historic and qualitative methods. Recent publications include *A Handbook of Comparative Social Policy*, 2nd Edition (ed., Edward Elgar, 2013) and a Special Issue on Global Policy Paradigms and Gender Justice (*International Journal of Comparative and International Social Policy*). Misa is Reader in Comparative Policy Research and the Head of the Centre for Urban and Public Policy Research at

the School for Policy Studies. She has been undertaking research extensively, both nationally and internationally, in the areas of housing and social change, ageing and intergenerational relations, and comparative policy analysis. Her recent research includes cross-national comparative research on Housing Assets and Intergenerational Dynamics in East Asian Societies funded by the ESRC. She is the author of *Housing, Care and Inheritance* (Routledge, 2009) and the editor of *Handbook on East Asian Social Policy* (Edward Elgar, 2013).

The new editors of JSP invite authors to submit high quality articles on all aspects of social policy in an international context. The journal places particular emphasis upon articles which seek to contribute to debates on the future direction of social policy, to present new empirical data, to advance theories, or to analyse issues in the making and implementation of social policies.

SPA POSTGRADUATE ACTIVITIES



SPA postgraduate representatives
Lorenza Antonucci and Daniel Edmiston

It was another great year for postgraduate and early career researchers attending and presenting at the SPA Annual Conference. For this issue, though, we'd like to focus on the career intentions and outcomes of social policy PhD graduates. In the last issue of *Policy World* we briefly discussed the climate of pessimism that often surrounds this topic – many are worried about their job prospects upon completion of their thesis. Here, we explore the career trajectories of social policy PhD graduates in a little more depth, and discover that things aren't all bad!

Vitae has undertaken research on the career intentions and aspirations of doctoral students. Of those social science PhD students with a definite career in mind, 58% wanted to pursue a career in academia, be that in research or teaching in higher education (HE)¹.

Drawing on data from HESA and the Labour Force Survey, it is possible to explore the career trajectories of PhD graduates three and a half years after completion in 2010. If we look in more detail just at social science PhD graduates: only 2.6% were unemployed. Of those in employment:

- 71.1% were working in the education sector,
- 58.7% were employed as university lecturers or researchers in an HE setting: 44.1% as university lecturers and 14.6% as researchers,
- 5.2% were employed in the health and social work sector, and
- 4.7% were employed in public and social security administration.

Between 2008 and 2010, there was a rise in the number of social science PhD graduates employed on fixed-term contracts from 16.3% to 22.5%. There was also a concomitant drop in open-ended contracts from 77.9% to 68.0%. Nevertheless, Vitae suggests that "doctoral graduates have generally fared better during the early years of the economic downturn and therefore may be regarded as more 'recession-proof' than those with masters or good first degrees"².

Overall, then, it would appear that there is a relatively good match between the career aspirations and outcomes of social science PhD students. This is encouraging, of course, but this data was collected prior to massive shifts in HE funding. Perhaps following on from this we might expect there to be a worsening of prospects for social policy PhD graduates.

To find out whether this was the case, we approached www.jobs.ac.uk (the primary UK recruitment site for academic employment) and obtained three years of data on social science academic positions advertised between 2009/10 and 2011/12. In 2010/11, there was a significant reduction in the number of social science and social policy positions advertised. However, there has been a marked recovery since then.

Between 2009 and 2012 there was an increase in the number of social science positions advertised, and a 14% increase in the number of social policy positions advertised. Positions advertised on a fixed-term contract basis also decreased by 4% during the same period. This is of course by no means comprehensive or conclusive, but it does give a sense of the number and sorts of jobs available to social policy PhD graduates³.

Whilst there are still and potentially expanding career options for social policy PhD graduates, there are also other significant shifts to consider. Alongside an expansion in undergraduate and taught postgraduate numbers, there has also been a sizeable increase in the number of PhD students. As such, there is increasing competition for employment in academia. The person specification for entry level academic positions has changed dramatically, even over the last 10 years. These developments mean more and more is expected from social policy PhD students. It is now not uncommon for HE employers to expect a good thesis, teaching experience, a publication record, illustration of the capacity to secure funding, and so on. Despite rising expectations placed on PhD students, they are also expected to finish within three years. The notion of 'over time' has also become increasingly common in the

vernacular of the PhD process. This invariably has a significant impact on the well-being of PhD students but also on the quality of output that is possible within such a period.

Whilst it is of course necessary to problematise such developments, it is also important to offer opportunities and support to social policy PhD students that have to operate and succeed within such an environment. As such, a number of opportunities has been planned.

- A Workshop on Mixed Methodologies and Impacts of Social Policy Research was held in December 2013. This workshop was designed specifically for postgraduate and early career researchers. Please visit the workshop website at www.spapostgraduates.wordpress.com for further details and presentations of the day. Alternatively, see an account of the event on Storify: <http://bit.ly/Ma7cXh>.
- The introduction of a placement scheme with the journal *Social Policy and Society*. This will offer postgraduate researchers the opportunity to familiarise themselves with and better understand the peer review and publication process.

"It would appear that there is a relatively good match between the career aspirations and outcomes of social science PhD students."

In 2014 we will run another event to facilitate mutual exchange between the social policy postgraduate and early career communities, and from this event we will explore the possibility of a publication. If you have any particular suggestions or would like to get involved, please do get in touch.

In the meantime, be sure to follow @SocialPolicyUK on Twitter and 'like' the SPA Facebook page. We regularly post information on events, research findings, funding and publication opportunities.

If you'd like to contact us directly please email: spa.postgraduates@gmail.com.

Lorenza Antonucci and Daniel Edmiston

ENDNOTES

1 Vitae (2012) *The career intentions of doctoral researchers*, Careers Research and Advisory Centre: Cambridge

2 Vitae (2013) *What do researchers do? Early career progression of doctoral graduates 2013*, Careers Research and Advisory Centre: Cambridge

3 We have excluded all postgraduate studentships/funding advertised to explore academic employment opportunities in isolation.

THE WELFARE STATE IN CRISIS: REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL

The welfare state has been in crisis since the mid-1970s, but this time it's different argues Peter Taylor-Gooby of the University of Kent.

The 2010 government's spending cuts are more severe and precipitate than any comparable exercise since the early 1920s. At the same time virtually every area of social provision, from disability benefits to local government finance, from social housing to the NHS and from benefit uprating to the work programme is undergoing profound restructuring. These reforms are intended to save money, simplify provision and make services more responsive. They will also privatise much state welfare, entrench and accelerate inequalities, reinforce stigma and seek to ensure that it is hard for any pro-welfare government to reinstate comprehensive and inclusive social provision.

This story has been told a number of times (an excellent summary is the SPA's *In Defence of Welfare*). Let's be optimistic. The view that the reforms will be entrenched permanently is based on ideas about social division. Incomes are getting steadily more unequal, most people view the poor with suspicion, and advantaged and disadvantaged groups are living increasingly separate lives. It is easy for the Right to promote misleading imagery of outsiders and harder for most people to feel any empathy for them.

While much social science, social psychology and political science research supports these claims, it is also possible to paint a more optimistic picture. There are perhaps three reasons why the new, shrunken, divided welfare state will not survive.

People value the welfare state

First, from a political science perspective: a number of previous governments have proposed cut-backs on a scale approaching that of the Coalition. In most cases round about half of the proposed savings have been achieved but spending has reverted to previous levels within five years. The cases most frequently discussed are the Geddes Axe, which proposed 8% GDP cuts in 1921-2, the National Government's austerity package of 5%

in 1931, the planned 5% cuts after the 1975 IMF loan and Thatcher's 'rolling back the state' programme of 8% GDP in the early 1980s. In practice the cuts achieved by these programmes were about 5, 2.5, 1.5 and 5.4% respectively. Geddes and Thatcher were the most successful in cutting the state. However, in all cases, public spending had reverted to trend within eight years of the implementation of Austerity. Public spending is resilient because people value the welfare state (and especially the highest spending areas of state welfare). It is possible for a government with a loyal parliamentary majority to institute cuts, particularly at the beginning of its term of office. It is much harder to stick to them through elections (for details see Taylor-Gooby 2013²).

Misjudging the mood

Second, from the perspective of social psychology: the government has got the public mood wrong. Lying behind the current programme is the assumption that divisive policies that favour specific groups and impose the harshest cut-backs on those on low incomes, especially women and families, will be sufficiently attractive to assemble electoral support. The tactic of representing the poor as unemployed and attacking them as undeserving shirkers worked at the time of the election. In fact as most readers will be aware, the majority of those on benefits are in working households and earn their poverty³. The real problem is that wages at the bottom are too low.

There is increasing evidence that, as living standards fall, people are now becoming aware of the extent of inequality and hardship. Probably the best evidence is the high-quality British Social Attitudes survey. The proportion saying the gap between rich and poor is too large, which had been falling since the early 1990s, is now starting to rise, from 76% in 2007 to 82% in 2012. The proportions in favour of tax-and-spend redistribution, of spending more on welfare benefits and believing that unemployment benefits are too low and cause hardship have also started to rise after falling or flat-lining over a period of years.

Austerity and competitiveness

Thirdly, from the perspective of political economy: the coalition believed that the new model of a slimmed down low-tax, highly flexible economy would be attractive to capital and would be economically successful. This is to miss the point that the quality as well as the cost of labour contributes to growth. Current policies have succeeded in cutting wages and in delivering tax cuts, especially for the higher paid. However it is not obvious that skill levels are improving in a way comparable with competitors. People have to believe that there is going to be a good return, to engage in training and to gain qualifications. In general current policies raise barriers to improving skills by raising costs and cutting back support for providers. The outcome is that neither employers nor workers are keen (or can afford) to invest in better skills. As a recent study shows, participation in training in Britain rose in the late 1990s, flat-lined in the early 2000s and from 2006 fell back to roughly the 1995 level⁴.

One indicator is productivity. The chart below shows annual percentage changes in productivity and in GDP from the OECD database. In the previous (mild) recession of 1991, productivity followed a common pattern. The weakest enterprises went to the wall first. Productivity increased rapidly, to fall back as the economy expanded. It then remained roughly constant. In the 2007 recession and subsequent stagnation, productivity (surprisingly) fell and thereafter follows growth rates closely. The Coalition programme is not enhancing the long-term competitiveness of the UK economy.

The problems are also reflected in the OECD Foreign Direct Investment statistics. The attractiveness of the UK to overseas investors improved steadily through the 1990s and early 2000s (with a one year blip in 2002), but collapsed from its 2008 high and has not since risen above the 1990 level. It is not obvious that others believe the small-state/ freer market option is a good place to get a return.

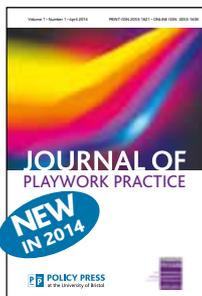
There is a lot to be gloomy about, especially if we focus on state welfare. Things can't last for ever. The track record of previous governments, the shifts in public opinion and the failure of the Coalition programme to improve training, productivity and foreign investment all indicate that precipitate cuts are not viable. Of course, it would be more fun to be focusing on the welfare state contribution to an inclusive, knowledge-based economy, but that may have to wait.



ENDNOTES

- 1 Nicola Yeates, Tina Haux, Rana Jawad and Majella Kilkey, Social Policy Association 2011
- 2 *The Double Crisis of the Welfare State and What We Can Do About It*, Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2013
- 3 DWP (2013) *Households Below Average Incomes 1994-95 to 2011-12*, Table 5.5ts.
- 4 Green, F., Felstead, A., Gallie, D., Inanc, H. and Jewson, N. (2013) *What Has Been Happening to the Training of British Workers?*, published by the Centre for Learning and Life Chances in Knowledge Economies and Societies at: <http://www.llakes.org>

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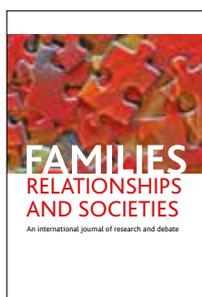


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CONFERENCE REPORT

Social Policy Association Annual Conference 2013, 'Social Policy in Challenging Times', 8-10 July 2013, Department of Sociological Studies, University of Sheffield.

By Zoë Irving and Kevin Farnsworth,
Conference Organisers, Sheffield 2013.

The 2013 conference theme was 'Social Policy in Challenging Times', and as a host location the city of Sheffield was ideal with its historical tradition of radical municipal responses to hard social and economic times. It was also fortuitous that, countering the myth of the grimness of 'the North', the weather was kind to delegates, with soaring temperatures and sunshine throughout the conference: a challenge for the air conditioning systems, but a bonus for those who wished to take their discussions outside.

The conference was held in the University's purpose-built conference facility at The Edge student village rather than in the main teaching areas, and so although delegates may have missed some of the University's more historic buildings (including the Department of Sociological Studies' own building, originally a college of glass technology) they were also spared the everyday hillwalking that is part of Sheffield life, although some did choose to incorporate this into their fitness regimes regardless!

Sheffield has been at the forefront of the internationalisation of social policy in the UK, and the conference team was therefore very pleased that the conference attracted so many delegates from outside the UK. We welcomed guests from more than 15 different countries – Finland to Australia, Mexico to Japan. The programme of over 200 papers and symposia presentations reflected this diversity of interests and perspectives, and demonstrated the outward-looking and broad-ranging focus of contemporary social policy scholarship.

Presentations reflected on the challenges of and responses to Austerity in local, national, and international contexts; growing inequalities and the social divisions of welfare, and how these are being experienced and reconfigured; and the changes implied by challenging times for relationships between states and citizens, within families and across states.

The first plenary by Michael Hill entitled 'Better to satisfy the coroner than the auditor' provided historical reflections on social policy development and analysis of current and future directions, drawing on his vast experience of both the practice and academic

study of policy in action. Michael's descriptions and commentary were challenging and thought-provoking in relation to the current climate of cuts and exclusion in British welfare delivery. Although the talk could easily have been depressing given the current state of social policy, it was delivered with humour and was ultimately upbeat, reminding delegates of the difficult storms that British social policy has successfully weathered in the past. The second plenary, delivered by Julia O'Connor, focused on the increasingly pressing issues around employment in Europe and the implications for gender equality. Julia provided much food for thought on achievements to date, current challenges and the scope for reform. The final plenary (fittingly given the weather) turned delegates' attention to climate change and the role of social policies in contributing to tackling the problems of climate in a way that doesn't increase carbon emissions. The answer lies primarily in utilising social policy in order to aid in the rebalancing of paid work, unpaid work, leisure and sustainable consumption and investment.

In addition to the plenaries a number of special sessions were also offered to delegates, including a special symposium chaired by Alan Walker on 'Tackling inequality in Sheffield'. This symposium included several contributions from policy makers and civic representatives associated with the Sheffield Fairness Commission, a working group convened in order to establish a framework through which city initiatives can tackle the range of inequalities exacerbated by Austerity and the contemporary challenging times. A Meet the Editors and Publisher session (see P.9), designed to provide support for postgraduate and early career researchers, was very well attended and allowed delegates the opportunity to quiz several social policy-related journal editors and Alison Shaw, Director at The Policy Press, on a range of publishing issues.

Extra-curricular activities

In addition to the intellectual provision, two drinks receptions were held – the first hosted by Taylor and Francis publishers to launch the *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, and the second combining a book launch hosted by The Policy Press with the prize-giving for the *Social Policy and Administration* Early Stage Career Researcher award. The publisher's reception was followed by a barbecue on the terrace.

The conference dinner was held in the auspicious surroundings of The Cutler's Hall where delegates were entertained by a student string quartet, employed from the University's Department of Music. The SPA awards ceremony saw the award of prizes (see p. 10-11), and ended with a speech by the SPA President that provided interesting and amusing insights into the inner workings of policy-making in Whitehall – especially Sue's description of her dramatic exit from a fractious meeting.....into a cupboard!

Following the official close of the conference, delegates were invited to Bob Deacon's retirement lecture, book launch reception (hosted by The Policy Press) and distinguished scholar round table event.

Looking forward – 2014 and beyond

Judging from the feedback received, the conference was a huge success. It stimulated further debate on the full range of issues raised by the theme, and delegates found the University of Sheffield a convivial place in which to begin new discussions and continue those of old. As you would expect from a critically aware stock of delegates, we also have a few 'critical friends' and we hope that next year they will notice our taking on board of their suggestions for things we can do better. We look forward to welcoming delegates back in July 2014. The dates for your diary are Monday 14th to Wednesday 16th. We can't guarantee good weather but we'll do our best to provide enough intellectual sunshine to make your return worthwhile. And the barbecue will definitely be rolled out again, come what may.

Finally, for those considering becoming SPA conference hosts in the future – is organising the annual conference one of the top ten experiences recommended for social policy academics? Well, it certainly tests your 'transferable' and 'interpersonal' skills and is 'character-building' in that respect. At the time of writing, mid-way between the two conferences we agreed to organise, we are still feeling a warm glow of success (according to our own measures) and would say yes, it really has been an honour and a privilege to host the 'main event' of our professional association. We have had enormous support from administrative and academic staff and students in our department, whose willingness to devote time and energy well beyond the call of duty was more than appreciated. If we are all still speaking to each other this time next year then you'll know it's something to put on your 'to do' list.

See you in the summer

Zoë and Kevin

EMPLOYABILITY SESSION: MEET THE EDITORS AND PUBLISHER

Social Policy Association Annual Conference, 2013



By Sarah Brooks-Wilson

Over the last three years, the employability concerns of postgraduates and those in early career have become increasingly clear, with numerous SPA-led discussions revealing the importance of funding, networking and work placements. Nonetheless, the obtaining of peer-reviewed publications has maintained prominence. The need for a more comprehensive focus in this area was further confirmed by the overwhelming popularity of Tania Burchardt's publications session at an SPA employability workshop in 2012. Subsequently, we created an opportunity to 'Meet the Editors and Publisher' at the 2013 SPA Annual Conference, with the aim of providing information and guidance in support of positive publications outcomes.

Discussion

Chaired by Nick Ellison, six experienced panellists imparted their knowledge to a group of around 30 delegates. In terms of formatting and content, Hartley Dean (LSE, *Journal of Social Policy*) discussed some characteristics of a good quality journal submission. In particular, the importance of referencing and a demonstration of key literature knowledge was recommended. A clear writing style was described as essential, with a summary of article content (rather than structure) suggested within an abstract. Usefully, it was described how Internet searches should be considered when deciding on abstract and key word terminology. Hugh Bochel (University of Lincoln, *Social Policy and Society*) also emphasised the importance of journal formatting and the need to make a case for originality. It was recommended that article modification advice should be seriously considered, even after an article has been rejected. Aside from the peer review process promoting article refinement, submissions to alternative journals could still be reviewed by the same academic. The production of a variety of publications was also strongly

advised, as very similar material has the potential to be discounted in terms of the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

In considering the importance of a clear research strategy, portfolio development was highly recommended by Ian Greener (Durham University, *Social Policy and Administration*). Ian advised against shortening conclusions to remain within word counts, and the use of informal reviewers or 'critical friends' prior to any submission was highlighted as important. When asked whether to prioritise a PhD or publications, a clear and committed PhD focus was suggested. However, the securing of a publication in the third year was also considered useful for viva preparation, in terms of ideas testing. Placing the publications process within a wider context, David Taylor (University of Brighton, *Critical Social Policy*) provided an explanation of the REF, highlighting longer-term changes such as the inclusion of open access publishing within the

Press) extensive knowledge of the book publications process allowed delegates to reflect on their longer-term strategies. For a first book or PhD conversion, a restriction to hardback and digital formats was described as commonplace. When seeking a publisher, approaching those with a body of work in the same area of interest was recommended, before making it clear how a book proposal could fit within this existing material. In terms of expectations, it was considered important for editors to hand-hold authors through the book publications process, while maintaining an active engagement with the written material in question.

Dissemination and follow-up activity

Despite a healthy session turnout, it was considered important to share these useful publication discussions with those who were unable to attend. As this short article does not allow a comprehensive exploration of all of the topics that were included, session footage will become available through the SPA's main website, with notification provided through email and social media in due course.

Postgraduates and those in early career have also asked a variety of pertinent questions about the accessing of research funding. As a result, the conference organisers at Sheffield have very kindly agreed to accommodate a follow-up session in 2014, based on this theme. This is expected to be useful for those considering their own funding applications, with ample opportunity for questions hopefully resulting in another lively and engaging session.

L-R: Ali Shaw, Hartley Dean, Hugh Bochel, Ian Greener, Kirstein Rummery, David Taylor and Nick Ellison



2020 evaluation. When deciding on a journal, its ranking was described as an important consideration, with positive publication outcomes connected to a familiarity with journal priorities. This was made especially clear when discussing the political commitment of the *Critical Social Policy* editorial collective.

Kirstein Rummery (University of Stirling, *Social Policy Review, Policy and Politics*) broadened things further by considering the merits of different types of publication such as a journal article, book, or chapter in an edited collection. When appropriately pitching a piece, clear consideration of the audience was recommended. However, she cautioned about 'salami slicing' as multiple, similar publications could heighten the risk of self-plagiarism. Alison Shaw's (Policy

Acknowledgements

This session was wholly dependent upon the time and goodwill of all involved, so the input of Hugh Bochel, Hartley Dean, Kirstein Rummery, Alison Shaw, David Taylor and Nick Ellison should be gratefully acknowledged. The willingness of the conference organisers Zoë Irving and Kevin Farnsworth to accommodate this session was also appreciated. Particular thanks should also be given to Majella Kilkey who provided helpful organisational support throughout.

Are you involved in any publications processes or do you have any experiences that you would like to share with others? We would love to hear from you and continue the discussion on twitter. Tag us into your comments: @SocialPolicyUK

SPA AWARDS 2013

The 2013 SPA Awards ceremony was held during the Association's Annual Conference dinner, hosted by the University of Sheffield, with awards presented by the SPA President, Sue Duncan.

By Nicola Moran

There were five winners across three categories. Winners of the Special Recognition Award were Professor Peter Taylor-Gooby FBA OBE, Professor of Social Policy at the University of Kent; Professor Ian Gough, Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics and Emeritus Professor of Social Policy at the University of Bath; and Professor Bob Deacon, Emeritus Professor of International Social Policy at the University of Sheffield. The winner of the Best Newcomer Award was Dr. Christopher Deeming, Senior Research Fellow at the University of Bristol; and the winner of the Best Postgraduate Paper award was Emilie Whitaker, Doctoral Researcher at the University of Birmingham. Congratulations to all our winners and many thanks to all those who nominated.

Opening the awards ceremony, Sue Duncan stated "I'm a firm believer in encouraging both emerging talent and recognising achievement. I think it's a very important way for any organisation to have a sense of what it is, and what's important, and I think it's very important to acknowledge those people who've gone the extra mile. So I think this is a very good thing the Social Policy Association does, and I'm very pleased to be part of it."

Special Recognition Award

The Special Recognition Award – made to SPA members who have retired, are due to retire, or hold an Emeritus position – marks contributions in the field to research, teaching and learning, impact on political process and discourse; and recognises the esteem in which the recipient is held. Introducing the winners of this award, Sue Duncan said: "Special Recognition Awards are for those who have had a distinguished career in social policy. The winners of these awards have made a sustained contribution to research and research impact, to teaching and developing the subject, and generally by acting as good citizens and ambassadors for the discipline – for example, by serving on editorial boards and committees and the like".

Peter Taylor-Gooby



Presenting the award, Sue Duncan explained: "Peter has made a very significant contribution to research, teaching and, importantly, to the development and standing of the discipline of social policy. He has given generously of his time to the social policy community, and anybody who has been associated with the REF or its predecessor, the RAE, will recognise the huge contribution he's made there. His research contribution has also been considerable, covering among other things human needs approaches to state welfare and the role of structural constraints on social actions. His comparative work has made a contribution to social policy across Europe. He has been a key player in political debate on social policy and has lectured widely both here and abroad, and he is a deserving recipient of the Special Recognition Award."

Receiving the award, Peter responded: "Thanks very much for the award – I'm delighted! I was always told that OBE stands for 'Other Buggers' Efforts', so it is perhaps appropriate to mention some of the people with whom I've collaborated over the years, including Jonathon Bradshaw, Jen Dale, Ian Gough, Raymond Plant, Paul Beadle, Stefan Svallfors, Elim Papadakis, Ken Judge, Vic George, Robin Lawson, Ray Pahl, Hugh Bochel, Chris Pickvance, Ian Gordon, Hartley Dean, Mike Calnan, Sue Silvester, Graham Manley, Giuliano Bonoli, Anne Daguerre, Trine Larsen, M. Munro, G. Parker, Andreas Cebulla, Johannes Kananen, Charlotte Hastie, Jens Zinn, Andrew Wallace, Rosemary Martin, Steffen Mau, Ann Power, Andrew Gamble, Pat Thane, Tariq Modood, Gerry Stoker, Andrew Gamble, Ed Waite, Trude Sundberg, Francis Green and, of course, the RAE 2008 and REF 2014 panels and many, many others. Thanks to all of you!"

Ian Gough

Presenting the award, Sue Duncan said: "Ian's work has been described as being at the cutting edge of social policy for four decades, and has led social policy thinking in areas as diverse as the political economy of welfare, human needs, global and comparative social policy, and social policy in developing countries. He is one of the most frequently cited scholars, both here and abroad, and his work *The Political Economy of the Welfare State* has sold over 25,000 copies. He has provided advice to a list of policy makers too long to mention, including the World Bank and various government departments. His current work on social policy and climate change is again informing thinking internationally."



Receiving his award, Ian said: "This means a lot to me, so thank you very much for this award. I was at the first meeting of the Social Administration Association in Nottingham in 1967 – I was sitting there by myself, and Richard Titmuss came up to me and introduced himself. We talked for 20 or 30 minutes and it was very inspiring, and I hope that some of that spirit lives on in the Association today. How much has changed since then? Social policy is both an area of government and practice, and it's also an area of study. If we look at it as an area of government and practice, today's outlook in the West looks bleak (I know this isn't the case across the world – in East Asia and Latin America this is a period of optimism in social policy). This is a period of transition and crisis, which is pretty much unpredictable. For social policy as a study it is a very exciting time, and my view is that it should start to get more integrated with economic policy and with environmental policy – only that way can we really get to grips with the challenge we face. I was very glad to shift from economics to social policy. My first experience was in economics and the appeal of economics is great, but I was so pleased to move into social policy which was much more ethical and flexible and messy – just like life itself. So I'm very pleased to be here to receive this award today."

Bob Deacon



Presenting the award, Sue Duncan observed: "Bob has made an important contribution to the field of social policy over four decades. He's been described as a conviction academic who has worked to combine policy analysis with practice and to internationalise the outlook of social policy. He influenced social work practice through writing and editing a radical social work journal and was a founding editor of *Critical Social Policy*, which threw the user and activist perspectives into social policy, and was well ahead of its time. He pioneered the study of communist and post-communist social policy, global social policy and more recently world regional social policy, and has published widely in all these areas. He has also made a significant contribution to the discipline, for example through teaching and developing students."

Receiving the award, Bob said: "I was taught by Professor Titmus in 1965 and shared his commitment to welfare. Ever since then I've primarily defined myself as a social policy scholar, and therefore to be awarded a recognition by my own discipline is indeed the highest honour. My claim to fame might be not so much more recent involvement in the SPA, but in its history. I was at the founding meeting of the Social Administration Association which predated it". Professor Deacon then pulled out a set of foolscap minutes from the 1968 meeting of the Association and drew attention to a debate around journal content and orientation. He continued: "Really the debate about journals and their content and their orientation is really quite important. *Critical Social Policy* did inject the importance of political economy to understanding social policy, *European Social Policy* injected a broad comparative approach into the subject matter, and *Global Social Policy* has begun to develop the argument that if you want to understand the limits and possibilities of national social policy you have to understand the constraints that global economy frame that within. My hope is that the upcoming generation of social policy scholars understands the importance of global political economy as both creating constraints upon, and possibilities for,

the realisation of Titmus' commitments to welfare."

Best Newcomer

The award for Best Newcomer is made to a lecturer/researcher who is within five years of their first postgraduate post, and who is judged to have made a significant early contribution to the field of social policy.

Christopher Deeming

Presenting the award, Sue Duncan commented: "I firmly believe that the SPA needs to nurture its rising stars. The winner of this award graduated from Bristol with a PhD in 2008. Since then he has made a strong contribution to the field of social policy – he has published more than 15 journal articles, and produced some important and thought-provoking work on the link between welfare and well-being. This has been groundbreaking both intellectually and methodologically. Again, he has challenged the way we think about an important issue, and on top of that he has also found time to be an active member of the SPA and so has also acted as an ambassador for his discipline. Social policy analysis needs people like this."



Receiving the award, Christopher said: "I am very pleased to receive this award from the SPA. I obviously do so in difficult circumstances for the state of social policy with, it seems, neo-liberalism on the rise, getting stronger after the global financial crisis. There also appears to be a crisis of social democracy, perhaps within social policy itself, certainly with the erosion of social welfare services serving the human good. Also worrying, obviously, is the change of public attitude to welfare as well, particularly in this country. Going forward, I think I would say there is some grounds for optimism, particularly with collaborative working across disciplines and between countries. I think this is a good thing, and I think there needs to be more unity in social policy and across the social sciences to actually challenge some of these normative assumptions about welfare, and to take on the New Right. So my research interest is looking at the determinants of well-being within nations, and between nations,

and that's what I am going to keep plugging away at over the next few years."

Best Postgraduate Paper

Emilie Whitaker



This award was won by Emilie for her paper presented at the 2012 SPA Conference in York entitled *Finding Aristotle on the frontline: Phronesis and social work*

SPA President Sue Duncan, said: "The winning paper caused some controversy among the judges – not because we disagreed about the merit of the paper but because it stimulated thinking. We didn't all fully agree with the analysis but we did agree that this was an original and valid theoretical reflection. The paper sets out to apply the concept of phronesis and sense-making to how social workers make decisions. Social policy needs people who can look at the world differently, and we don't all have to agree with them all of the time. We need people who can stimulate debate and take our thinking forward. The judges were unanimous in their view that the paper showed great promise."

Receiving the award, Emilie thanked the judges and her supervisors before saying: "Three friends, including myself, had an interest in the notion of a phronetic social science. We were looking for a supportive yet safe outlet to have those kinds of discussions. Supported by our department, we found out about the SPA conference and the fact that they run a postgraduate stream, which we felt was absolutely perfect for us – an enabling space – so we put in and we were successful. The panel itself was wonderful – I do feel these exploratory theoretical discussions when you're a postgrad, in terms of meeting people from outside your own department, your own university, can really only happen when you've got enabling creative spaces. So I just really want to say to the SPA please continue to do that – I got a lot out of it, it really built my confidence and I really met some great people. So thank you very much."

Photographs courtesy of the Sociological Studies Department at the University of Sheffield.

A NEW POLICY WORLD FOR THE BENEFITS SYSTEM

MONEY FOR EVERYONE

WHY WE NEED A CITIZEN'S INCOME

Malcolm Torry



*Means-testing is deeply embedded in the UK policy psyche with pernicious results, argues **Malcolm Torry** in a new book published by Policy Press. The radically simple alternative in the area of welfare benefits, he says, is a Citizen's Income – unconditional, nonwithdrawable and made to every individual as a right of citizenship.*

At the 2010 Conservative Party conference the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed withdrawing Child Benefit from households in which at least one individual was earning enough to pay higher rate Income Tax. He found that it would not be possible to administer his proposed means test (because whilst information exists on who means-tested benefits claimants are living with, the government does not have such information in the same way for the wealthy), and so instead the value of Child Benefit is withdrawn through the tax system for anyone who pays higher rate tax and lives in a household receiving Child Benefit. The outcome is the UK's first ever tax on children.

In a speech on the 6th June 2013 Ed Miliband said that a future Labour government would not seek to change this, and he also committed a future Labour government to stop "sending a cheque every year for Winter Fuel Allowance to the richest pensioners in the country". Either the Winter Fuel Allowance will have to be means-tested – that is, claimants will have to declare their income and living arrangements on a claim form, and the higher their household income the less Winter Fuel Allowance they will receive – or its value will have to be withdrawn from pensioners through the tax system.

Means-testing would appear to be deeply embedded in our psyches. We have been means-testing for so long that it is difficult for us to imagine a world in which we don't do it, or in which we reduce the number of benefits subject to means-testing. We know that means-testing divides our society into those who are means-tested and those who are not; that means-testing is (therefore) stigmatising; that high marginal deduction rates make it less likely that individuals will seek employment, or will seek better or additional employment; that

"We have means-tested so long that it is difficult to imagine a world in which we don't do it, or in which we reduce the number of benefits subject to means-testing."

changes of circumstances can cause chaos to household budgets so either they are not reported or people seek not to change their circumstances; and that the cohabitation rule attached to means-tested benefits means bureaucratic interference in the intimate details of people's lives. All of this and more we put up with in the cause of means-testing.

Money for everyone – a radical alternative

Now a new book called *Money for everyone: Why we need a Citizen's Income*, published by Policy Press on 27th June 2013, proposes a radical alternative to the existing benefits system: a Citizen's Income – an unconditional, nonwithdrawable income for every individual as a right of citizenship. The book relates the history of the UK's benefits system, and particularly of universal Child Benefit; it asks why some reform proposals succeed and some fail (an important factor appears to be the number of civil servants who might lose their jobs); it asks how we might implement a Citizen's Income; it describes experiments with a Citizen's Income or with benefits similar to it; and it constructs a list of criteria for an ideal benefits system and evaluates both a Citizen's Income and the current system against those criteria. The question 'Would people work?' is answered in the affirmative; the ways in which a Citizen's Income would tackle poverty, inequality and injustice are discussed; and the relationship between a Citizen's Income and citizenship is explored. Chapters discuss a Citizen's Income's affordability and its political feasibility, a chapter is given to alternative reforms, the penultimate chapter asks what a Citizen's Income could *not* cope with, and the final chapter offers a brief summary.

In the course of evaluating the feasibility and the desirability of a Citizen's Income, the discussion bumps into two interesting questions: First, 'How should we construct the questions that we put to a proposed reform?' and, second, 'Which social context should reform proposals address?'

When we discuss reform proposals our natural tendency is to allow the current system to set the questions that we address to a reform proposal. So, for instance: means-tested benefits pass this test: 'Are we only giving money to people who need it most?' A Citizen's Income does not pass that test: but the test might not be a sensible one. As the tax system takes from those with higher incomes more than

they would receive in their Citizen's Income, it is irrelevant that those who do not need to receive a Citizen's Income will receive one along with everyone else. We should not be asking whether a Citizen's Income passes the test that the current system passes, but should instead study any new idea on its merits rather than ask how it compares with what we do now, particularly as we have already recognised that what we do now is far from ideal. Then, if the new system looks useful, we might choose to ask how the current system compares with the new system. Maybe the proposed reform should set some questions for the current system to answer. A Citizen's Income passes this test: 'Do the rich end up paying more to the government than they receive from the government?' This is in fact the same question as the one we discussed above, but differently organised: and, worded like this, both a Citizen's Income and the current system pass the test. Take another test: 'Is the benefit as simple as possible to administer?' A Citizen's Income passes that test, but the current system does not. And to take another question: 'Does the system encourage risk-taking in household employment patterns?' The book shows that a Citizen's Income passes that test more convincingly than the current system does. If the new idea generates the questions, and the new idea passes the tests and the current system does not, then we might be a bit closer to comparing the two systems in relation to their respective merits; and, as we have seen, when the old system's tests are reworded a little, a Citizen's Income passes those tests as well.

Future-proofing social policy

As for the social context against which we should evaluate reform proposals: The means-tested and contributory benefits system currently running in the UK is essentially the system proposed in Beveridge's 1942 report *Social Insurance and Allied Services*. Beveridge's proposals assumed that each household contained a male working full time in stable employment, a woman whose paid employment and earnings were less significant, and children. The proposals assumed that the

“The question is not: ‘How can we design social policy relevant to our social, economic and labour market situation today?’ but rather: ‘How can we design social policy that will be relevant whatever our society, economy and labour market are like in the future?’”

household unit would remain stable. The assumptions were already out of date when the report was published, and they are far from relevant today. This raises an important question: Should reform proposals be designed to serve the employment, economic and social contexts of today, or of five or ten years' time, or what? Given the accelerating social, economic and labour market change that we shall continue to see as our society and its markets

become ever more global, the only answer is to design social policy that is future-proof. The relevant question is not: 'How can we design social policy relevant to our social, economic and labour market situation today?' but rather: 'How can we design social policy that will be relevant whatever our society, economy and labour market are like in the future?' Only radically simple policy instruments will be likely to pass this test; and, in the benefits field, this suggests a system based on a Citizen's Income.

Money for Everyone is a discussion of a particular social policy: a Citizen's Income. But it is also an education in policy making in the modern world, and the questions that it asks, and the responses that it offers, will be relevant in a wide variety of social policy contexts.

Money for everyone: Why we need a citizen's income by Malcolm Torry was published on 27 June 2013 price £24.99 paperback (ISBN 978 14473 11256). It is available to buy from <http://www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781447311256> at 20% discount, or from Marston Book Services, P O Box 269, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4YN Tel: 01235 465500 plus £2.75 postage and packing.

Dr. Malcolm Torry is Director of the Citizen's Income Trust; he has first degrees in Mathematics, Theology, Philosophy, and Economics and Management; and higher degrees in Social Policy and in Theology. He is a Senior Visiting Research Fellow at the London School of Economics. He is Vicar of Holy Trinity, Greenwich Peninsula.

SCOTLAND'S CONSTITUTIONAL FUTURE: TOWARDS A SCOTTISH WELFARE STATE?



The question of Scotland's constitutional future dominates political and public debate in Scotland today, and of particular interest for readers of Policy World is the ways in which that debate has come to be linked with issues of social welfare and the future of the welfare state. The Independence debate is about the kind of welfare state that Scotland should have and how this is to be achieved, argues Gerry Mooney of The Open University in Scotland.

In September 2014 voters in Scotland will be balloted on Scotland's constitutional future. While at the time of writing in late 2013 the polls indicate that the proposal for full Independence for Scotland will be defeated, irrespective of the outcome of the ballot, Scotland – and the rest of the UK – will be a very different place. That a ballot is being held at all reflects a rapidly changing political landscape in Scotland, one that has undergone profound transformation since the introduction of devolution in 1999. Few could have predicted that within 15 years of devolution, such a ballot would be held. Likewise, few would have foreseen in 1999 the election of an SNP-led Scottish government, a majority government,

something that devolution itself was designed to rule out. This changing landscape in no small part also reflects UK political change, not least the election in 2010 of a Conservative Liberal Democrat Coalition UK government, a government that commanded relatively little support in Scotland. As it has been since the late 1970s, the political environment in Scotland is markedly different from the rest of the UK, and in particular with the picture that exists in England, with the SNP and Labour by far the most popular political parties.

Not surprisingly the question of Scotland's constitutional future dominates political and public debate in Scotland today. However, the Independence debate has come to be a debate not about a UK state or a Scottish state, but about the kind of welfare state that Scotland should have and how this is to be achieved. There are a number of different but interrelated factors that would account for this. UK government welfare reform has been seized upon by the SNP and the Yes for Independence campaign to claim that only full Independence would protect Scotland from such policies. Before 2011/2012, arguments for Independence rarely highlighted social welfare matters. Therefore, this marks a significant change. The unpopularity of UK government policies has been given political expression in the Scottish Parliament. In December 2011, for example, SNP and Labour MSPs voted to withhold legislative consent for the UK Welfare Reform Bill. While the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh cannot prevent the UK government changing the benefits system, such a move meant that these reforms are out of step with Scottish laws and necessitate the Scottish Parliament introducing its own legislation. That this was the first time that the Scottish government had withheld legislative consent for a UK government bill highlights once more the increasingly central role of welfare in Scottish politics.

Political and policy divergence

The Scottish Parliament is largely a social policy making parliament; the majority of powers devolved to that Parliament relate to matters of social policy. However, key social policy areas such as most taxation,

benefits and employment policy, remain under the control of the UK government and it is the devolution of these areas, or their incorporation in a *Scottish welfare state* in the context of an Independent Scotland (or a Scotland with *more* devolution) which is becoming central to the constitutional debate. The political debate in Scotland around social welfare is distinctive. In part this emerges not so much from what is happening in Scotland – but developments taking place in England. There is, for example, no privatisation of the NHS in Scotland – a process that appears to be developing apace in NHS provision in England, and no academy schools, and higher education funding is also very different. Differences in other aspects of social policy making and in criminal justice policy means that the policy landscape of Scotland and England appear increasingly different – as do the debates which these policy landscapes reflect, and to which they give rise.

This is the context in which arguments around social welfare have become increasingly central, both to the Independence debate and to the future of Scottish society. UK government welfare reforms have been criticised by the SNP as out of step not only with the wishes of voters in Scotland but also as seriously at odds with 'Scottish values'. Much of this is related to other claims that Scottish voters and the wider public in Scotland is less hostile to benefit recipients and is more egalitarian inclined. While the evidence to support such is weak, it is notable at least that much of the Scottish press are less prone to the moralising and punitive tone that often accompanies welfare reporting in England. But support for welfare has received strong political expression in Scotland. Since late 2012, First Minister Alex Salmond and Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon have

focused on welfare as a key factor in advancing the case for an Independent Scotland. At the March 2012 SNP Conference, the Deputy First Minister argued that "Only Independence can put a stop to heartless Tory welfare reforms that will punish the vulnerable and the disabled. And only Independence will give us the tools we need to rid Scotland of the poverty and

"UK government welfare reforms have been criticised by the SNP as out of step not only with the wishes of voters in Scotland but also as seriously at odds with 'Scottish values'. Much of this is related to other claims that Scottish voters and the wider public in Scotland is less hostile to benefit recipients and is more egalitarian inclined"

deprivation that still scars our nation and create the jobs and opportunities that will get people off benefits, not for Tory reasons, but for the right reasons.”

In subsequent speeches Scottish Ministers continued in similar vein speaking of Scottish values and attitudes underpinning social policy and equity, promising a Scottish welfare

system that would be driven by social justice and social democracy. There was also an added dimension to such claims – that the UK government’s welfare reforms were not only ‘eroding the social fabric’ of society but also marked a radical departure from the foundations of the post-war British welfare state. Alex Salmond had previously argued such in his Hugo Young Lecture in London in January 2012. Here he claimed that “...anyone who accepted the union partly because of the compassionate values and inclusive vision of the post-war welfare state may now be less keen on being part of a union whose government is in many respects eroding those values and destroying that vision... And looking at the problems of health reform now, I thank the heavens that Westminster’s writ no longer runs in Scotland on health issues. But the looming issues of welfare reform exemplify why Scotland needs the powers to make our own policies to meet our own needs and values.”

The SNP has been only too willing to seize on UK welfare reforms to advance the case that only an Independent Scotland with a distinctive Scottish welfare state is true to the foundations of the post-war UK welfare state. This leaves the nationalists open to counter claims that Independence for Scotland will further erode what is left of that welfare state, introducing competing notions of citizenship and entitlements for different parts of the UK. The claim made here is that more devolution or full Independence leaves not only the population in England vulnerable to further erosions in welfare entitlement – but would diminish trans-UK systems of benefits and social security. It is also important to acknowledge that some of the proposed alternatives to full Independence, Devo-Plus and Devo-Max, also advocate the transfer of further powers over welfare spending to Scotland. In part this also reflects the provisions of the Scotland Act (2012), which paved the way for the transfer of further

“UK government welfare reform has been seized upon by the SNP and the Yes for Independence campaign to claim that only full Independence would protect Scotland from such policies. Before 2011/2012, arguments for Independence rarely highlighted social welfare matters.”

Questions for a Scottish Welfare State

The Scottish government has yet to fully cost a Scottish welfare system and this has left the SNP open to attack by opponents. However, work has begun on developing proposals for a Scottish welfare state. Scottish government Ministers have set out their vision on welfare in an independent Scotland in *Your Scotland, Your Voice and in Working for Scotland: The Government’s Programme for Scotland 2012-13*. The Deputy First Minister established an Expert Working Group on Welfare in January 2013 to review the cost of benefit payments upon Independence and the delivery of those payments in an Independent Scotland. In May 2013 the Group claimed that Scotland could afford to meet its welfare commitments under Independence – and that the infrastructure is already in place in the shape of UK government departments based in Scotland which would transfer to Scotland with Independence. However, it is also acknowledged that it would take several years for the benefits system of an Independent Scotland and the rest of the UK – or whatever it comes to be termed – to be completely disentangled with implications for the shaping of a new Scottish welfare system. Important questions remain. How would a Scottish tax regime generate more income for Scotland on a more equitable basis? What might a Scottish welfare state look like? What sorts of social provision could be developed with a higher tax base? How could this be used to promote greater equality for Scotland as a whole?

There is as yet from the SNP or Scottish government (or from any of the opposition parties in the Scottish Parliament, with the exception of the Greens) no argument for a major redistribution of wealth and income, or of an assault on vested interests and privilege. Against this there are other arguments that fairness can only come about through challenging the major inequalities, and sources of inequality, that exist within

fiscal powers to Scotland. Therefore the future state of welfare across the UK is likely to be characterised by even more divergence and complexity, but again this is also being driven by developments in England as much as it is by proposals for further devolution to Scotland.

Scotland itself, for example, inequalities in and at work, through improving the rights of workers and so on. This will bring challenges to all the main political parties in Scotland and it remains an issue to which, as yet, they have not faced up. There is considerable uncertainty over the vision for a Scottish welfare state that will emerge over the next few years. Might this be a Scandinavian model of social welfare – or a system which represents a more residualised form of welfare?

The debate around what kind of welfare state Scotland should have is of course a debate around the kind of society people wish Scotland to become. That this debate is directly linked with the question of Scotland’s constitutional future is clear. But it is not a debate that is limited by constitutional matters alone. During 2012 and 2013, the notion of ‘Common Weal’ as the basis of a distinctively Scottish welfare system has risen to prominence. In a series of papers published by the Jimmy Reid Foundation, proponents of the Common Weal have advocated a far-reaching vision of Scotland as a fairer, progressive and more sustainable society. Looking to some of the fairest economic and social policies in the Nordic countries, it advocates an attack on entrenched inequality and wealth by a completely revamped taxation system that would enable better quality, well-funded public services. Social goals would drive economic development, not the pursuit of profit. A new set of principles would underpin a Scottish welfare state, in the form of contract between people in Scotland delivered through the state. Greater participation in all forms of governance would remove corporate political and policy making influence.

That there is a debate around the future of Scotland’s welfare system which is leading to new thinking around social welfare is entirely positive, but at the same time there is also recognition that it is not Independence or any other future constitutional arrangement in itself which will deliver a fairer welfare system but a political commitment to creating a new type of society. These are the issues that are rightly now informing the Independence debate.

The Open University has freely available learning resources on the Scottish Independence Debate on its OpenLearn website at: <http://www.open.edu/openlearn/society/politics-policy-people/politics/the-debate-on-scottish-independence>

Gerry Mooney is Senior Lecturer in Social Policy and Criminology, Faculty of Social Sciences, The Open University.

MEETING EMERGING GLOBAL POLICY CHALLENGES:

Reflections on recent SPA and Development Studies Association joint initiatives

Stefan Kühner and Joe Devine (DSA)

One year after exchanging the first emails in which an interest to nurture a closer working relationship was expressed, the first joint conference of the SPA and the Development Studies Association (DSA) was held at the University of Bath on 26th-27th April 2013¹. Eleven invited speakers met to discuss with around 40 participants from across the UK what the two learned societies can learn from each other in light of persistent poverty and inequality in lower middle income countries where the majority of the poor live today, but also across the high income world – particularly in the wake of the financial crisis and Austerity programmes rolled out in many countries.

In his opening message to conference participants, Geof Wood, President of the DSA, suggested that “both (social policy and international development studies) address the social consequences and distributional outcomes of changing economic systems, with concerns about the boundary between public and private action regarding employment, entrepreneurialism and social protection, and rights overall”, while Charles Gore, UNCTAD, saw a “disciplinary recluster of economists, which have left them as an almost extinct species within

“A convergence of the intellectual distinction of development and social policy is increasingly tangible and provides fertile ground for mutual learning and inspiration between the two learned societies.”

the Development Studies Association, which is now dominated by sociologists, anthropologists, social policy analysts and public administration specialists”. SPA Chair Nick Ellison responded to these observations by stressing that at a time of shifting ideas and arguments around international aid, global interdependence and social protection on the one side, and increasing evidence for a dualisation, even precariatization, of labour on the other, a convergence of the intellectual distinction of international development and social policy is increasingly tangible and provides fertile ground for mutual learning and inspiration between the two learned societies.

Close proximity

Indeed, contributions at the conference spanned a range of substantive and methodological issues, straddling the redistributive and health impacts of social protection systems in developed and developing countries, the social constitution of human development, as well as – more generally – the impact of global trade, welfare production and governance regimes; all of which underlined the close proximity of the two fields of inquiry.

In the first session, loosely labelled ‘Poverty’, Sarah White, University of Bath, introduced the notion of inner well-being to explore the impact of food security policy in rural India as an alternative to more traditional subjective measures. Francesca Bastagli, ODI and CASE, followed with an in-depth analysis of the distributional outcomes of social protection in high- and low-income contexts and argued that higher inequality in the latter is largely contingent on the lower tax base and generally lower welfare effort in these countries. Mike Noble, University of Oxford, concluded the first session with a discussion of subsistence-based poverty lines versus the ‘socially perceived necessities’ approach in South Africa.

The second session on ‘Interdependence and Global Processes’ started with a call for an inclusion of global inequality reduction goals in the upcoming post-2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by Charles Gore, while Chris Holden,

University of York, focussed on the way in which transnational tobacco companies have often managed to ‘open markets’ thus aggravating the emerging tobacco-related morbidity and mortality crisis in low- and middle-income countries. The notion of the ‘market imperative’ was then taken up by Theo Papadopoulos, University of Bath, in his discussion of ‘well-being’ as a possible bridge between development and social policy discourses, before a dinner reception hosted by Jane Millar, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, University of Bath, concluded the ‘official’ part of the conference programme for the day.

The second day of the conference started with a presentation by Naila Kabeer, SOAS, who shared her findings of a policy document analysis of international conferences to trace the growing importance given to social policy concerns in the development context. Robert Walker, University of Oxford, revisited the social protection floor debate, and the significance of social floors in particular, to come to the conclusion that there is an “irresistible case” for their implementation, even to the point where they should be incorporated as a new post-2015 MDG. Focussing on empirical evidence from the WHO database on Ghana, Mexico and South Africa, Professor Lloyd-Sherlock, University of East Anglia, added that investment in the expansion of pension and health insurance coverage should go hand-in-hand with adequate education, screening and service provision to effectively prevent health conditions such as hypertension.

The two final presentations were then delivered by Ian Gough, LSE, and Sarah Cook, UNRISD. Ian Gough reminded participants that the twin challenges of global warming and inequality have not been adequately met by global governance structures. Particularly, interactions between climate change and social policies – although hinted at in some UN climate change reports – have not been giving due attention and, given persistent skews in the global carbon emission distribution, may further aggravate global inequalities in the medium and long terms. Finally, Sarah Cook shared preliminary findings of a wider research programme at UNRISD, which aims to uncover key historical determinants of welfare state development in the West in order to contrast these experiences with more recent evidence on welfare expansion in East Asia and Latin America. This work highlighted significant gaps in knowledge and a need for new research methodologies to further explore the applicability of policy learning across the globe – both findings that very much echoed the rationale of the conference.

“A broad consensus emerged that questions of respective knowledge lineages and research methodologies in international development and social policy should be revisited in future joint events.”

It is hardly surprising that it was not an easy task to clearly demarcate the two fields of inquiry during the conference, given that the speakers were carefully chosen by the conference steering committee from a pool of academics and professionals that have routinely addressed both audiences. Interestingly, the concluding panel raised a suspicion – at second glance – that important differences continue to persist between international development and social policy, and that some important concepts such as, for instance, gender and power, would have deserved more immediate attention. What all participants could easily agree on was that while it is easy to start a conversation between two learned societies, it is typically more difficult to sustain it in a meaningful way. Thus, a broad consensus emerged that questions of respective knowledge lineages and research methodologies in international development and social policy should be revisited in future joint events.

Concrete initiatives

Looking forward, there are two concrete initiatives in which SPA and DSA have already begun to take this momentum forward. First, a joint panel was submitted to the annual DSA Conference, November 16th, University of Birmingham². This panel aimed to review the evolution of both social policy and development studies in order to reconsider their changing boundaries with other fields and, ultimately, appraise the dynamics of their mutual relationship more systematically.

Second, both SPA and DSA have been involved in the formation of a new Indian Social Policy Association and will co-host its inaugural event at the Jindal Global Law School, India, on 24–25 March 2014. This training workshop will bring together academics, practitioners and government officials working on emerging social policy issues in India and the UK. While its primary



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aim is to provide participants with an answer to the questions ‘What is Social Policy?’ and ‘Which are its key theories and research methodologies?’, the workshop will discuss of the relevance and applicability of social policy research to lower middle income economies more generally.

We look forward to reporting back to SPA members our experiences from both of these events, and invite suggestions for additional attempts to connect with our peers across the globe. SPA members who are interested in receiving more regular updates on the SPA’s internationalisation agenda and related events are invited to join the jiscmail-lists of the International and Comparative Social Policy Special Interest Group ICSP or the Indian Social Policy Association

SOCIALPOLICYINDIA. The DSA has its own newsletter which SPA members can sign up to – please see: <http://www.devstud.org.uk/events/news/> for more details.

ENDNOTES

The event was made possible due to shared funds by the Social Policy Association and Development Studies Association, but also the Department of Social and Policy Sciences, University of Bath and the Department of Social Policy and Social Work, University of York, who acted as co-hosts.

For more details on this annual event and the full abstract for the panel see: http://www.devstud.org.uk/events/conference/2013_dsa_annual_conference-47.html

WHAT I DID LAST SUMMER

Report on The European Group for Public Administration conference, Bergen, Norway, September 2012

By Jay Wiggan, School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh

Before I regale you with how beautiful Bergen is (very – you should go, but take an umbrella), and how expensive Norway is to visit (it's very expensive, start saving), allow me to set the scene for how I came to attend a conference which many in the social policy community may not have attended, or considered attending before. I have attended the European Group on Public Administration (EGPA) conference twice now, the previous time when working in a business school where the research I was engaged in focused on changes to administrative structures of public policy. On moving to the School of Sociology, Social Policy & Social Work at Queen's University, Belfast, I maintained an interest in issues of policy implementation and governance reforms, especially in employment services. The most recent manifestation of this includes research with colleagues at the University of Potsdam and Aalborg University into the evolution of mechanisms of delivery and accountability in public employment services following marketisation in Germany, Denmark and the UK. Thinking it would be useful to gain critical feedback on our work we decided to submit our paper to the EGPA conference. In part, this was due to existing contacts within EGPA, the focus of the paper and past experience of the conference, which is structured somewhat differently to other policy and sociology conferences. It was also an attempt to build and maintain cross-disciplinary relationships to support existing research interests and promote the SPA to a non-social policy audience, but one whose work is often salient for social policy scholars.

Study group format

The EGPA is the European regional grouping of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences, and incorporates 18 permanent study groups organised around various aspects of public policy and administration. The paper we submitted was to Study Group 6: Governance of Public Sector Organisations. The nature of the EGPA study groups means the conference operates somewhat differently from the SPA conference with its changing paper 'streams'. Rather than move between streams the implicit expectation is that you generally attend presentations within the study group, though there is no rule on this, and I did attend other study groups (Study Group 13: Public Policies). The study group format certainly has the benefit of providing clear, concise feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the core content/concepts used in your paper. Sessions in Study Group 7, for example, were organised as a 10 minute presentation, followed by a 10 minute detailed response to the paper from a nominated 'discussant' and then 10 minutes for general comments and questions from the audience as a whole. The discussant plus audience model seems a useful way to ensure the detail/nuance of a paper is engaged with, whilst ensuring there remains space for more wide-ranging and responsive contributions from the floor. For us the experience helped identify where we needed to rethink our understanding of accountability and the organising framework of the paper, which guided our revision of the paper prior to journal submission.

For this reason alone the conference was worth attending, but it was also an opportunity to make contacts with others

working in similar fields (I became aware of a pan-EU project on Public Employment Service reforms) and find out about contemporary theoretical and empirical public management research of relevance for social policy. Many of the papers in Study Group 7, for example, addressed coordination in multi-level governance and the challenge of accountability in public services. Given the intensification of contracting out and the plurality of providers across the public, private and third sector involved in delivery of social policies, improving our understanding of such issues is increasingly necessary. Other study groups also covered important social policy topics including 'street level bureaucracy'; indeed, Michael Hill gave an excellent talk on the future potential of this form of research in Study Group 13.

As to the location of the conference, Bergen is a beautiful historic port city, and although it rains a lot (and I say that as someone who lives in Belfast) is well worth a visit. I would recommend a ride up the Funicular into the mountains. When the weather clears you have a stunning view of the city and surrounding country and can take a leisurely stroll back down into the city. This takes just enough time to work up an appetite for dinner (try Pygmalion, a reasonably priced eatery with good food). If you would prefer a lighter bite to eat and liquid refreshment then Pingvinen has the best butter popcorn I have tried and an excellent atmosphere.

My attendance at the EGPA was assisted by support from the SPA International Support Scheme, which aims to strengthen links with scholars and learned societies outside of the UK. Although there were a smattering of attendees from the UK and Ireland, the majority of participants seemed to be drawn from Norway, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands (reflecting the EGPA itself) making it a good conference to network with academics from mainland Europe. I intend to return to the EGPA conference in future, and would encourage other social policy analysts to also consider doing so. Hopefully some of those attending EGPA will consider visiting the SPA's annual conference in future.

One final thing I will say about attending overseas conferences, and indeed conferences in the UK, is that travel offers an excellent opportunity to catch up on reading. If like me you struggle to read for extended periods on a laptop/ tablet screen and care little for carrying about a bag full of papers then I would highly recommend picking up a cheap e-reader (see my comments on experiences with the Kindle over the last year).

INTERNATIONAL INTERPRETIVE POLICY ANALYSIS

Report on the 8th International Interpretive Policy Analysis conference, University of Vienna, Austria July 2013

By Ellen Stewart, University of Edinburgh

The 8th International Interpretive Policy Analysis conference took place at the University of Vienna from 3rd to 5th July 2013. From niche beginnings this conference has grown rapidly to become a firm fixture in the calendars of policy scholars interested in interpretive approaches, broadly defined. The conference was first held at the University of Birmingham in 2006 and attracted around 50 participants. This year Vienna proved a perfect venue to attract a broad range of participants and papers from around the world, with 420 participants from over 30 countries.

Interpretive policy analysis can be understood as a developing community of like-minded researchers, clustering around key texts such as Yanow's 1996 book *How Does a Policy Mean? Interpreting Policy and Organisational Actions* and Wagenaar's 2011 book *Meaning in Action: Interpretation and dialogue in policy analysis*. The approach is a broad church attracting a wide range of scholars turning a constructivist lens on policy. The conferences reflect this diversity, but also these community-minded origins; with panels and events consistently friendly and eclectic. The rapid growth of the conference over the last seven years has been aided by a well-regarded one day course on interpretive methods offered immediately preceding the conference, this year covering interpretive research design, interviewing and discourse analysis.

The 2013 conference drew on the specialisms of its host institutions (the Departments of Political Science, Science and Technology Studies and Life-Science-Governance at the University of Vienna) in choosing as its theme the intersection between interpretive policy analysis and science and technology studies (STS). This was developed in the conference title 'Societies in conflict: experts,

publics and democracy', and questions of authority and evidence loomed large across the programme. Perhaps because of this, the processes of policy formulation, including the role of publics and non-governmental actors, seemed particularly prominent. Energy and environmental policy were particularly well represented this year, as befits the STS emphasis but, as is usual at the IPA conference, the vast majority of panels crossed policy areas. This makes for unusual and interesting juxtapositions of social policy issues such as health, education and employment policy alongside other areas of policy we might engage with only rarely. The panel I took part in (convened by Kathryn Tonkiss and Chris Skelcher from the University of Birmingham) included contributions on a diverse group of arms' length bodies including the UK Audit Commission, German and British food safety agencies, high-speed rail, and telecoms regulators, as well as my own paper on directly-elected Health Boards in the Scottish NHS. The knowledge contests these agencies engage in for legitimacy and survival have clear relevance for anyone interested in the contemporary welfare state, as well as for broader theoretical questions around expertise and democracy.

Keynote lectures were provided by John Law from the Open University and Deborah Stone

from Dartmouth College. Professor Law offered a lively masterclass in the application of Actor Network Theory to questions of policy, taking as a case study 2001's foot-and-mouth outbreak in the UK. His comments on the risks of Actor Network Theory becoming a 'new orthodoxy' were particularly thought-provoking. Professor Stone offered a warm, witty and typically insightful discussion of the presence (and absence) of emotion within interpretive studies of policy. Drawing on references to research conducted on topics as diverse as Somalian refugee camps and Canadian asylum tribunals, she pointed to issues both in researching emotions, and in working with our own emotions as researchers.

The Interpretive Policy Analysis conferences have experimented over the years with new session formats. As well as 67 conventional panels (many of which ran in streams over several days) and plenary sessions, this year's programme offered 'Author Meets Critics' sessions exploring prominent new texts from Ruth Wodak and Hugh T. Miller, and valuable methodology workshops in which three early career researchers present their developing projects for focused methodological discussion and constructive critique from senior scholars. Practice panels bringing together researchers and policymakers (this year debating topics including forest governance, traffic policy and street prostitution) are an especially unique component of the programme, and a welcome connection to the 'real world' of policy. A lively social programme - including a conference reception and dinner at Vienna's beautiful nineteenth century City Hall, and a more informal gathering at a traditional Viennese 'Heuriger' wine tavern - ensured a most enjoyable three days.

Next year's conference returns to the Netherlands - a happy hunting ground for interpretive scholars of policy - to be hosted by Wageningen University on the 3-5 July. The conference theme is Knowledge, Technology and Communication in a Globalising World; see <http://www.ipa2014.nl/> for details. Meanwhile the 2013 programme is still available at <http://ipa2013.univie.ac.at/>.



Professor Deborah Stone delivers her keynote address

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION: CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON COALITION GOVERNMENT POLICY

Report on the Social Futures Institute (SoFI) annual conference, Teesside University, Middlesbrough, July 2013.



By Dr Lucy Grimshaw,
Senior Lecturer in Social
Policy, Department
of Social Work and
Communities, Northumbria
University (formerly
Research Fellow at SoFI,
Teesside University)

The Social Futures Institute (SoFI) conference provided a timely exploration of the themes of social justice and social exclusion in relation to the UK's Coalition government policies. Half way through its term in office the Coalition government's reforms of public services, welfare reform and public expenditure cuts continue to reconfigure the relationship between individuals and the state. The conference aimed to critically examine the current policy context and confront likely future scenarios for social justice. Papers, delivered in two parallel sessions, reflected on the impact of the Coalition government in a range of policy areas including criminal and youth justice, health, welfare, employment and education.

The conference attracted a range of participants from across the UK. In total, 70 academics, practitioners and policy makers attended the one-day conference, which also attracted SPA members who travelled up from Sheffield following the SPA Annual Conference. The event was sponsored by the SPA through a Small Grant.

The opening plenary speaker Tess Ridge, Professor of Social Policy, University of Bath, drew on her extensive research on childhood poverty and explored the impact of Austerity and Coalition government policies from a childhood perspective. Questioning Cameron's pledge that 'we are all in this together' she highlighted how recession, austerity policies and welfare cuts can have significant and often hidden consequences for Britain's poorest children.

Many papers took up this theme exploring the impact of policies on some of the most marginalised groups in society. Papers focused on homelessness, child poverty, families with parental mental illness and the unemployed. Tracy Shildrick and Rob MacDonald of Teesside University presented their recent research on family poverty which questions the notion of 'intergenerational cultures of worklessness' which has permeated government policy regarding welfare reform. A presentation from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation outlined its programme of research, evidence gathering and consensus building which will result in an Anti-Poverty Strategy for the UK.

Papers by Stephen Crossley and Rod Hick explored the conference theme of 'social justice' in detail and explored the related notion of 'fairness' and the government's (mis)appropriation of these terms. These and other papers highlighted the Coalition's tendency to categorise groups into 'deserving' and 'underserving' in relation to welfare reform.



A selection of papers focused on particular groups of individuals who are marginalised by the government's policies. Gary Craig argued that 'race' has disappeared from government policy agendas. Focusing on criminal justice and gangs, Hannah Smithson and Rob Ralphs discussed the implications of current policy for Black and Asian Minority Ethnic young people.

Papers also focused on shifts in the delivery and organisation of welfare and the increasing privatisation of services. Lorenzo Antonucci discussed this in relation to her research in higher education and highlighted the growing normalisation of debt amongst students. Philip Whitehead of Teesside focused his paper on the government's drive to improve service delivery through a system of payment by results within the criminal justice system.

The impact of austerity on the voluntary sector was outlined by John Clayton et al. with a paper which focused on research in the North East of England. He highlighted the 'emotional toll' placed on frontline workers as a result of austerity measures, reduced funding and increased demand for services. A selection of papers took up the theme of the role played by frontline workers in policy implementation. Papers by Scott Yates et al, Sarah Alden, Donald Simpson and Eunice Lumsden outlined the current challenges for frontline workers in the fields of mental health, housing, early years. Donald Simpson and Eunice Lumsden presented research on the expectation placed on early years professionals to support the governments' Child Poverty Strategy and stressed the role academics have to play in developing critical practitioners.

Risk and criminalisation

The second plenary speaker Peter Squires, Professor of Criminology and Public Policy, University of Brighton, also reflected on the role of academics through his exploration of the redistribution of risk and criminalisation. His contribution reflected on the practices within the welfare state and the marketisation of security over the last 30 years, both globally and nationally. He drew attention to the increase of understanding of crime and inequality underpinned by Left Realist criminology but called for more attention to be paid to 'offender' identities, experiences.

SPA GRANTS SCHEMES



On behalf of the Executive Committee of the SPA I would like to notify members of changes to its Grants Scheme and issue a call for applications for awards in 2014 for both the Standard Grants Scheme and Postgraduate Small Grants Scheme. The Executive has decided to suspend the Large Grants Scheme until further notice.

The Executive decided that from 2014 the previous 'first-come, first served' approach to applications for the Standard Grants Scheme and Postgraduate Small Grants Schemes would be replaced with a new bi-annual competitive application process. This will allow more applicants an opportunity to apply for funding at a time when demand and inquiries are increasing and the Association is facing budget constraints.

For 2014, the Association will fund a total of four awards under both the Standard Grants Scheme and Postgraduate Small Grants Scheme. These awards will be issued in two tranches: in Spring and Autumn. The maximum payment for both awards is £500.

The Association has issued a call for applications to either scheme to be submitted 21st March 2014. Awards under both schemes are intended to help fund seminars or workshops dealing with research and/or learning and 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. Recipients of awards will be expected to:

- Publicise their seminar/workshop as widely as possible, including through SPA channels;
- Write a short report after the event for the SPA website;
- Use this as an opportunity to advertise the SPA to potential new members (including marketing via other channels, distribution of SPA leaflets, use of SPA logo, etc.);
- Make the seminar/workshop as inclusive as possible (attendance need not be limited to SPA members); and
- Raise the profile of the SPA to external agencies (government, independent sector, research centres, etc.) in the UK and other countries as appropriate.

Applications should take the form of a letter (maximum two sides A4)

and contain an outline description of the aims, rationale and nature of the proposed event. Applications should clearly demonstrate how it meets each of the above criteria, and must include a provisional budget providing a breakdown of anticipated costs, indicating how the award will be spent, and specify whether additional funding from other sources is being sought or has already been secured. Applications should include as much detail as possible about plans to ensure that the award will benefit SPA members.

Applications to the Postgraduate Scheme require confirmation (signature and stamp) from a departmental postgraduate tutor or head of department that a host institution would be able to raise an account to hold funds transferred by the SPA (administered by the SPA Treasurer).

Applicants to either scheme must be members of the Association.

The SPA reserves the right to pay the award in more than one instalment if this is appropriate. It also reserves the right to reject applications from those who have failed to fulfil SPA Grant award conditions in the past.

Applications should be submitted in the first instance by email to me as Social Policy Association Grants Officer to the address below. All eligible applications will be forward to the SPA Executive Committee, which is responsible for funding decisions.

Further reminders of these deadlines and the application procedure will be issued through JISCmail periodically, and the new arrangements also appear on the SPA website shortly - <http://www.social-policy.org.uk/grants.html>

Please address any further inquiries to me at the address below.

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The final discussant, Professor Beverley Skeggs, Head of Department of Sociology at Goldsmiths, London, who received an honorary doctorate from Teesside University in November 2012, summarised the proceedings of the conference. She ensured the conference drew to a close with a lively discussion which focused on her exploration of the reconfiguration of the state, labour and capital and the increasing commodification within all policy areas. She highlighted the increasing role of deregulation and marketisation. Drawing on her own research and the conference papers she argued that Coalition policy adds further to the deligitimisation and demonisation of particular groups of people – the 'troubled families', the unemployed, those not looking after themselves or paying for themselves. She emphasised the significant impact this process has on those groups, as Tess Ridge demonstrated in relation to children.

She reminded participants that the stigmatisation and pathologising of the poor was seen as central to the Coalition's approach to welfare reform and that this culture of demonisation also impacts on the decisions and policies made by frontline workers delivering services. Professor Skeggs expressed admiration and concern about the number of papers during the conference which had 'fleshed out' the adverse impacts of the Coalition's policies on individuals, groups and workers. She also reminded us that the papers also highlighted attempts to resist and fight the prevailing Coalition discourses.

Based on the conference papers a special edition of the *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* (Volume 34, Issue 7/8, 2014) will be edited by Professor Georgios Antonopoulos, Teesside University.

More information about the Social Futures Institute can be found at http://www.tees.ac.uk/sections/research/social_futures/.



PETER TOWNSEND'S POVERTY IN THE UK STUDY – A METHODOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

By Rosalind Edwards, Dave Gordon and Ann Phoenix¹

Peter Townsend's *Poverty in the United Kingdom* study is one of the research jewels in the crown of the discipline of social policy in Britain. Fieldwork for the study was carried out in 1967-68 (although it was not finally published until 1979²), and the research marked a key intervention in approaches to defining and itemising poverty. Its significance is both substantive and methodological. Townsend argued that deprivation should not be seen only in terms of material deprivation but also in the social exclusion from 'the ordinary patterns, customs and activities' of society. Rather than relying on 'objective' measures of basic needs, he developed a methodology that related income to indicators of respondents' ability to live in ways that reflected accepted standards of consumption and participation. This methodology has been both influential and debated. Yet the means by which this pioneering survey was carried out – the research process and people involved – has received less attention.

In a unique collaboration between the National Centre for Research Methods (Southampton), the Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research (Bristol) and the NOVELLA NCRM

node (Institute of Education), the ESRC cross-investment project 'Poverty in the UK: Advancing Paradata Analysis and Open Access' is working to illuminate the research process and to enable other researchers to work with the data. It is conducting an analysis of written marginalia in the 'Poverty in the UK' survey booklets, digitising the booklets for wider access and reuse through the UK Data Service, and providing unique insights into the process of the survey through conducting video interviews with some of the original researchers and fieldworkers (see <http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/research/hub/poverty.php>). In this brief article, we outline some of the significant issues in the 'Poverty in the UK' research process and ask for your help in tracing some of the people involved.

Survey booklets
There are 3,566 'Poverty in the UK' survey booklets stored at the UK Data Service as part of the Peter Townsend Archive.



The households were drawn (using a three-stage stratified sample) from 61 areas across the UK, including additional interviews in four 'special areas' showing high unemployment and early school-leaver rates. In contrast with most current practice, Townsend put together his own team of fieldworkers to conduct the survey (including advertising in *The Times*), only employing market research agencies in two of the special areas. In the front of each booklet there is the space for entering the name of the interviewer, and we have identified just under 60 people working on the survey as part of the Townsend team; a few of whom acted as supervisors and

or took responsibility for 'converting' refusals. Other members of the team include the checkers, coders and administrators back in the office.

Each booklet is about 33 x 27 centimetres in size and one centimetre thick, with plenty of margin space around the questions. Peter Townsend encouraged the fieldworkers to provide comments in a

“On the latter, for example, one fieldworker noted tucking up in bed the elderly lady she had just tired out with her survey questions, while another went out and bought some beer and returned to share supper and a drink with a lonely respondent. Such acts may be beyond the conception of contemporary survey researchers, as indeed might be seen as conveying a politicised stance.”

space on the final page of the booklet headed 'Please write in any additional notes'. As well as making use of this space, some of the fieldworkers wrote extensive observational comments amplifying coding information, justifying the coding decisions made, explaining substantive background, evaluating the character and claims of respondents, and debriefing comments and messages about the research process to the core research team. These marginal notes play their part in the *Poverty in the United Kingdom* text. Dennis Marsden (who has his own work archived in the UK Data Archive, including research material from his 'Poverty in the UK' - linked study, *Mothers Alone* - and who also acted as a fieldworker for a few of the survey interviews)

“Proactive intervention was built into the project as a whole too, with a fund to make grants to needy cases. For example, funds were sent to a single mother of a young child, Mary, who the fieldworker found had, amongst other things, “gone a whole day in past fortnight without a cooked meal” and who had told the fieldworker, “I feel guilty when I eat, I always think that it’s Mary’s next dinner I’m eating”

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their academic careers: Hilary Land on large families, Dennis Marsden on fatherless families, Adrian Sinfield on the unemployed and John Veit-Wilson on disabled people. Sally Sainsbury and Michael Humphrey each undertook pilot studies on disabled people, while Alan Walker joined Townsend for the analysis and writing up of the survey. The advisory committee was chaired by Richard Titmuss and included David Marsh - the first two professors of social administration in the UK. We are in the process of conducting video interviews with several of those involved, asking what they can recall about recruitment and working practices, and team ethos and dynamics on the 'Poverty in the UK' survey. We



commented that Townsend was “reduced to” searching the margins of questionnaires for qualitative material to bring greater immediacy to *Poverty in the United Kingdom*’.

Fieldworkers’ notes

The marginalia also comprises fieldworker ‘standpoint’ comments on the wider social and political context as well as personal acts beyond the fieldworker role. On the latter, for example, one fieldworker noted tucking up in bed the elderly lady she had just tired out with her survey questions, while another went out and bought some beer and returned to share supper and a drink with a lonely respondent. Such acts may be beyond the conception of contemporary survey researchers, and indeed might be seen as conveying a politicised stance. In a 1968 progress report Townsend noted that they were aiming to “recruit interviewers who were (a) experienced, (b) genuinely interested in participating in the research ...”, and partiality was evident for some of the ‘Poverty in the UK’ fieldworkers. For instance, one wrote against the answer to the question about any single payments for exceptional need that a respondent may have received from the Supplementary Benefits Commission, “presumably based on the costs of living index for 1899!” Proactive intervention was built into the project as a whole too, with a fund to make grants to needy cases.

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Materials are being made available to support reuse of the survey marginalia. A spread sheet of all the survey booklets is under production, providing metadata detailing the booklet number (which also identifies the geographical area), fieldworker’s name, number of calls to obtain and complete the household survey, and date/s and length of interview. The booklets themselves are being digitised and will be available through the UK Data Service. So far, around 70 booklets have been digitised in full, and any booklet pages that contain marginalia are in the process of being copied along with their identifiers for the remainder. We are also making available the written-in answers to the open questions on ‘What would you describe as poverty?’ and ‘If there is poverty what do you think can be done about?’ for the full data set.

Personal commitment

The personal commitment to the research topic evident among the ‘Poverty in the UK’ team led to many on the core research team continuing scholarly work in the poverty studies field. Several noted, active figures in social policy worked with Peter Townsend and Brian Abel-Smith on the in-depth pilot studies of poverty for the ‘Poverty in the UK’ survey early on in

are grateful for their help. Once the material has been edited and agreement obtained from the participants, it will be made available via the poverty.ac.uk website.

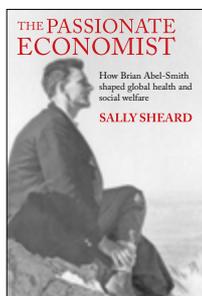
In addition to the interviews we have already organised, we would like to hear the stories of those who worked in the field and as checkers. If reading this jogs your memory and you have contact details for anyone who worked with Peter Townsend or Brian Abel-Smith on the Poverty in the UK study, we would be grateful: ... Grace Benton, Peter Collier, Andrea Cordani, Jim Gatt, Michael Faherty, Rhoda Fraser, Ian McCannagh, Sam Seaman, Keith Travis, Susan Viner, Janet Williams, Mrs. Worgan, Joan Worthington ... to name but a few.

ENDNOTES

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Peter Townsend’s *Poverty in the United Kingdom* (1979, Allen Lane and Penguin Books) is available to download for free at <http://www.poverty.ac.uk/free-resources-books/poverty-united-kingdom>.

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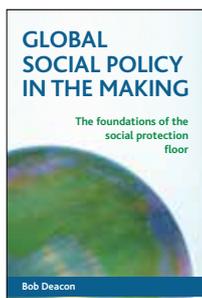
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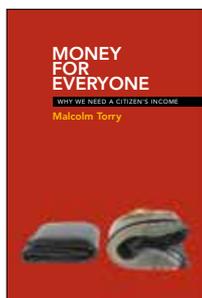
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