

Editors: Dr Melanie Channon and Dr James Robards

The British Society for Population Studies Newsletter

Editorial

“Another year over. Where do they go to? It’s a mystery.”¹ Well, 2016 will probably head straight into the history books for its defining roll in post truth politics. When I last edited the newsletter a year ago, I couldn’t have imagined that we’d be facing down 2017 having voted in favour of both Brexit and President Trump (though I suppose not many individuals voted for both).

Memorably, Michael Gove proclaimed that people “have had enough of experts”. As someone who conducts research for a living I frequently experience this distrust of “experts”, as I’m sure do many of you. In the UK, this distrust seems to be particularly heightened for anything related to number or statistics. The phrase “lies, damned lies, and statistics” seems to have become a stick to beat you with if you dare to quote any numbers at people. Of course, it’s perfectly possible to lie using statistics, either by misrepresenting them or by simply making them up. I’m sure we all remember the abandoned £350m-a-week to the NHS message writ large on the side of a bus. When senior politicians publicly disregard evidence and experts, you know it’s time for change, but we are now into an era of outright lies.

Last month, as Trump won the election [I wrote a blog post](#) about my frustration with a culture that finds it accepta-



ble to disregard evidence and lack basic statistical literacy. I was heartened by how many people agreed with my frustrations. Though, a primary school teacher also mentioned that the government is removing most statistics from the curriculum, potentially leaving the next generation with an even lower standard of numeracy. I have no answers, but know that BSPS members will continue to produce the best quality research and evidence that they can. Perhaps, along the way, we can change some of the negative attitudes surrounding statistics and experts.

This is my first newsletter back after maternity leave. I am still joined by Dr James Robards, who has been doing a wonderful job in my absence. Please feel free to contact us if you have any ideas about the newsletter. We’re always keen for people to get involved.

I hope to see many of you in 2017. In the meantime, I hope you all have a very merry Christmas!

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¹Mini quiz: which festive advert features this song?

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Postgraduate Student Representative: Alina Pelikh

For those who are used to seeing Ridhi Kashyap's lovely face in this section, I would like to take the opportunity to introduce myself as the new BSPS postgraduate student representative. I took over from Ridhi in September at the BSPS conference in Winchester where I enjoyed meeting many of you.

For those I have not met yet, I'm a third-year PhD student at the University of Liverpool. My project looks into the transition to adulthood in Britain during the last two decades. More specifically, I investigate cohort and gender differences in spatial mobility, school-to-work trajectories and partnership choices, using the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) and Understanding Society (UoS). Currently, I am doing a four-month internship with the Social and Demographic Statistics Section of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in Geneva, where I am learning how the organisation develops statistical tools and guidelines for using population statistics to improve our understanding of current demographic change and be prepared to face the consequences on an international scale.

Besides academic interests, I enjoy playing tennis, hiking, yoga, and eating fondue (when in Switzerland...)

As the new student rep it is my pleasure to introduce you to the exciting research of Ewa Batyra about fertility and contraceptive behaviour in Latin America ('Spotlight on Research' section, p. 14). Ewa is a PhD student at London School of Economics (LSE) and a prominent BSPS student member. I have seen Ewa present at various conferences such as PAA in Washington, EPC in Mainz and already twice at BSPS. Last year Ewa won the BSPS student poster

prize in Leeds and this year was already chairing a session in Winchester. Well done, Ewa and keep up the research!

As one of last year's organisers of the 24th Annual Postgraduate Population Studies Conference (widely known as PopFest) in Manchester, I would also like to take the opportunity to highly encourage everyone to submit abstracts for the next year's PopFest in Stockholm. More details can be found at <http://www.sociology.su.se/english/collaboration/conferences/popfest-2017>.

Don't hesitate to contact me at alina.pelikh@liverpool.ac.uk with ideas on how the BSPS can better engage with student concerns, events you'd like to see organised at the BSPS conferences or suggestions for BSPS day meetings. Additionally, if you have not already done so, join the BSPS Student Members' Facebook page here: www.facebook.com/groups/300124886760445/

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a productive start to the New Year!



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Call for innovative session and strand proposals for BSPS Conference 2017

University of Liverpool, 6-8 September 2017

Members and non-members are invited to suggest ideas for special Conference sessions or strands (the research topics we use to organize the call for papers) for the 2017 Annual Conference. Special sessions might focus on a particular methodological or substantive topic or a specific data set. Although our standard session format comprises a 90-minute session with 3 – 4 research presentations, special sessions need not follow this model. Innovative formats such as panels, forums, training sessions, sessions with discussant, discussions, workshops, or sessions aimed at a particular constituency (such as postgraduate students or local authority participants) would be very welcome.

Please be as specific as possible when filling in the proposal form and include any evidence you have that a particular session would attract enough submissions to be viable. Please also indicate whether you would be willing to chair a proposed session or lead proposed training session at the Conference.

All suggestions will be considered by BSPS Council at their mid-January meeting, after which we will get in touch to let you know the outcome. If your proposed session is accepted for the Conference, it will be allocated to one of our strand organizers. The call for papers will be issued in January 2017 & all submissions will be via the online submissions site. After the close of the call for papers, strand organisers take overall responsibility for selecting suitable papers, within sessions, for oral or poster presentation. They would liaise with session organisers as appropriate.

Please complete the proposal form at:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/Researchcentresandgroups/BSPS/annualConference/Home.aspx> & return to pic@lse.ac.uk as an attachment by 10 January 2017

BSPS Low and Middle Income Countries Initiative 2017: Call for proposals

The BSPS Low and Middle Income Countries Initiative has reserved up to £2,000 per annum for activities that encourage collaboration between population demographers in the UK and low and middle income countries. This initiative sponsors an annual visit by a demographer from a low or middle income country who gives a presentation at the BSPS Conference, where they also get the opportunity to meet and develop contacts with UK demographers. The overall aim is to encourage long-term collaboration and joint projects, and it is anticipated that contacts will already exist between the person to be funded, and a UK institution or UK demographers, & that other appropriate meetings will be arranged by the UK contact during the visitor's stay in the UK.

The World Bank classification will be used to exclude applications from those working in High Income countries. See: <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>
Criteria to judge between applications will be the country's average income, the potential to encourage collaboration between that country's demographers and demographers in the UK, the potential for long-term collaboration and joint projects, the existence of links that can be built on, and the fulfilment of budgetary and other guidance provided by BSPS.

Suggestions for the use of part or all of the Low and Middle Income Country funding for the year 2017 should be made by FRIDAY 20 JANUARY 2017, to pic@lse.ac.uk for consideration by the BSPS Council at their next meeting in late January. Suggestions would be best supported by a single typed sheet with a draft budget and a note of how the visit would encourage collaboration Bids should also include a detailed timetable of the proposed activities, and should come from the UK-based sponsoring individual or institution only.

Call for Papers: PopFest 2017, Stockholm

31 May – 2 June, 2017

The 25th Annual Postgraduate Population Studies Conference (PopFest) will take place in Stockholm May 31st - June 2nd 2017. The call for papers is now open.

PopFest is an annual Population Studies conference for PhD students organized by fellow PhDs. It provides an excellent opportunity to bring together researchers from various Social Science disciplines such as Demography, Sociology, Human Geography, Politics, Urban Planning, Social Anthropology, Social Statistics and other related fields.

PopFest aims to provide a relaxed and supportive environment for students to come together to present their work and discuss ideas. This is a great opportunity to network with fellow students, practice presentation skills and get feedback from peers.

In addition, renowned keynote speakers and panel members will address the most recent topics in the field of population studies and discuss policy implications. Furthermore, professional development workshops specifically targeting the needs of postgraduate students are going to be organized as well as social events, and a conference dinner.

Location

PopFest is traditionally organized in conjunction with the British Society for Population Studies (BSPS). For the second time in its 24-year-long history, PopFest will leave the UK and take place in Stockholm, Sweden. PopFest 2017 will be hosted by Stockholm University's Demography Unit (SUDA), the Department of Sociology, the Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI), and the Department of Human Geography.

Submission

Abstracts of papers for both oral presentations and posters focusing on – but not limited to – the following topics are welcome:

- Family & Fertility
- Policy, Welfare & Politics
- Migration & Mobility
- Ageing, Health & Mortality
- Urban Sociology & Urban Planning
- Social Stratification & Inequality
- Data & Method
- Ethnicity, Belonging & Identity
- Labor Market Outcomes

Please upload your contribution in form of a short abstract (200 words), and optional an extended abstract (2-3 pages) via the submission page by February 3rd 2017. Author notifications will be sent by mid-March. For oral presentations a paper draft should be submitted to a discussant by May 12th 2017.

If you are interested in chairing a session, please indicate this during the submission process as well as preferred topic(s).

A limited number of student bursaries will be available. To be considered for a student bursary, please add an extra 150 words outlining the reason(s) for your bursary application.

You can find more information on submissions, registration, accommodation, travel details, and on our sponsors on our webpage: <http://www.sociology.su.se/popfest2017>

In case of any questions feel free to contact us at: popfest2017@sociology.su.se

We look forward to welcoming you to Stockholm in May 2017!

PopFest 2017 Organizing Committee

Population studies in Latin America: the ALAP Congress in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil

ALAP's seventh congress since it was founded in 2004, was held jointly with the Brazilian Population Studies Association (ABEP) and attracted 615 delegates at the time of writing. The topics were wide-ranging as one might expect, with some emphasis on themes of particular regional interest – including emigration, adolescent fertility and non-natural causes of death. All very interesting, and good filling between tropical fruit breakfasts and evening caipirinhas.



Veronica Montes de Oca, Mexico, President of ALAP 2017-2018

A new team was elected for the next two years leading up to the next congress in 2018 – very possibly in Mexico as ALAP's new president Veronica Montes de Oca is from Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

One of the interesting plenary sessions addressed whether population policies had improved human rights and living conditions. Suzana Cavenaghi, a previous ALAP president and a member of our Royal Society's panel People and Planet in 2011, outlined the progress made by the United Nations but its difficulty in reaching decisions, such that the current attempt to 'Leave no-one behind' meant that the consensus agreements were weak and far less than were needed. The struggles for reform of the UN are equally difficult to resolve, given that some want it to have means to enforce its agreements while others want it to restrict itself to humanitarian matters. The USA position of 'reform or die' has been an unhelpful contribution.

Jacqueline Pitanguy from the Cepia organisation emphasised the positive that had been achieved from the Cairo conference of 1994, the first mention of women's and reproductive rights as human rights, in the face of considerable opposition. Pressure had been needed to implement it, for example to recognise those rights in the Brazilian constitution, and it was still a battle – for example to recognise reproductive rights in the face of the zika virus whose secondary effects were now becoming clear – the aims are to prevent the disease, to ensure women's choice to interrupt a pregnancy, and to find technical means to manage living with the impact of the virus.

Jaime Nadal from the Latin America and Caribbean office of UNFPA gave an alternative focus, emphasising the Agenda 2030's sustainable development goals, noting the challenges for measurement and that there are more goals than years to achieve them. These UN goals were subject of several sessions and round tables in the conference.

In his summing up of the last two years for ALAP's general assembly, the outgoing president Enrique Pelaez of Cordoba, Argentina, gave his 'SWOT' analysis. Strengths of ALAP were its firm establishment with diverse membership across the region, and its reputation and insertion in global institutions. Its weaknesses reflected low levels of demographic skills within certain countries, and the language barrier to communicate beyond the continent that an English version website might address. The sustainability agenda was the main opportunity that he saw, while the threats were financial and political instability of this decade, a conservatism which made international events more difficult to organise.



Panel on the impact of population policies, chaired by IUSSP president Anastasia Cage

Population studies in Latin America: the ALAP Congress in Foz do Iguazu, Brazil



Leandro Gonzalez, due at BSPS 2017, and Ludi

As far as we know, we were the only UK-based BSPS members at the conference. Ludi organised a pre-congress event to present work on sub-national demographic trends, focusing on convergence and predictability, to which 7 presentations were made and 35 attended. He led a projections software event based on POPGROUP through which Edge Analytics supported the conference financially, and he gave a presentation on projections and planning using an example of Departmental projections within Cordoba, Argentina. Ewa presented her PhD thesis work about unintended childbearing and contraceptive use behaviour in Colombia and Peru.

Foz do Iguazu means Big Waterfalls in a mixture of Portuguese and Guaraní. They are certainly big, and are now one of UNESCO's seven natural wonders of the world. They are close to where Brazil meets both Argentina and Paraguay. There can't have been many delegates who didn't see the falls from one side or another.

BSPS had its first stream of Latin American and Caribbean demography in 2016, and we hope it will have another in 2017. It can count on the presence of Leandro Gonzalez, who will be visiting from CIECS (Economic and Social Science Research Centre) of Cordoba, part of CONICET whose research interests include social vulnerability, teaching demography, and demographic projections.

Ludi Simpson (University of Manchester) and Ewa Batyra (London School of Economics)

Iguassu Falls, from the Argentine side



Report of 2016 BSPS Annual Conference

In 2016, BSPS again returned to the University of Winchester, a venue where the sun always seems to shine on BSPS! As well as being a pleasingly compact venue, the session rooms are particularly suited to the format of a BSPS Conference, the accommodation is a very short walk away, and the Winchester staff are as helpful as they were on the first BSPS visit there in 2014.

Over the course of the two days, spread over three days with the Conference beginning with lunch on Monday and ending before lunch on Wednesday, over three hundred attended. With strands on ageing & the life course, Health & mortality, fertility & reproductive health, ethnicity & religion, Families & households, historical demography, migration, demography & policy, Latin America & the Caribbean, & innovative data, methods & models, there were also special sessions from ONS on integrated Census & administrative data outputs & measuring the impact of demographic statistics & research. In 47 sessions, with six running simultaneously, 166 submitted papers were presented. Additionally, there were well-attended training sessions on Using QGIS & CartoDB for population research, Visualizing time series data using QGIS, and An Introduction to the UK Longitudinal Studies, plus a workshop on Transparency in social science research.

The poster session on Monday evening saw over 50 posters on display, with their presenters in attendance to discuss their posters. This was in conjunction with the reception. The second evening, after the BSPS AGM, saw a book launch for ***Population Change in the United Kingdom***, edited by Tony Champion & Jane Falkingham & with contributed chapters from many BSPS members. See:

<http://www.rowmaninternational.com/books/population-change-in-the-united-kingdom>. The book documents the

fundamental transformations of the UK's population that have major implications for the economy, society, politics and environment & was conceived by Tony Champion as a follow-up to the landmark volume edited by Heather Joshi 25 years ago, which was part-sponsored by BSPS. All royalties from the sale of the new book have been donated to BSPS by the editors.

Two plenary sessions had been planned, from Professor Pearl Dykstra and Dr. Katherine Rake. In the event, Dr. Rake had to cancel her attendance at the last minute. The BSPS President, Jane Falkingham, confronted with this unfortunate turn of events, fearlessly stepped into the breach with a talk that she had planned to give at the EPC Conference a couple of weeks earlier. Delayed on that occasion by disrupted air travel, the talk had not gone ahead, so EPC's loss was BSPS's gain. Reports of the plenaries follow.

Plenary 1 – Professor Pearl Dykstra - “Demographic Change: Policy challenges for Europe”

The first plenary talk at this year's BSPS conference in Winchester was given by Prof Pearl Dykstra of Erasmus University Rotterdam. Prof Dykstra dedicated her speech to the crucial matter of bringing academics and policy makers together in times when demographic issues are of high civic and political concern. As academics we are being constantly looked at and followed by social media, which brings along the challenge of packaging the complex findings in such manner that non-academics can understand and use it, said Prof Dykstra.

Prof Dykstra was recently elected as a member of the European Commission's new Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM) also known as High Level Group which replaced the single-headed role of chief scientific adviser last year. The Group, nicknamed the “Magnificent Seven” or “Brigade of Seven” by Robert-Jan Smits, the commission's director-general for research, is made up of 7 researchers from a range of disciplines, countries, and ages, where Prof Dykstra is serving as the only expert in Social Sciences. The Group focuses on science for policy and not the other way around, highlighted Prof Dykstra. They provide evidence reviews in order to guide policy makers through the ambiguousness of science. The Group is reporting only to the Commission, but not to a government, has no ties with the EU Parliament or Council of Europe. Prof Dykstra also pointed out that all communication are transparent and stakeholders have the option to comment on findings before the finalisation of reports.

Prof Dykstra discussed which strategies population scien-



@CPCpopulation: “CPC members are looking forward to sharing their research today at the bsp conference @bspsUK #bsps2016 @_UoW”

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tists should adopt vis-à-vis media and policy makers and which pitfalls must be avoided. In order to strategically engage with policy makers as researchers we should try to build links with the demand side (how/where can science help), lead consultation (create a request), and transmit scientific knowledge (create a customer). In practice that would also mean, academics should stick to the evidence, not speak about topics outside their own area of expertise, avoid politisation of research and by no means reveal not-yet published findings while developing a conversation with the engaged parties, said Prof Dykstra.

Prof Dykstra drew attention to the existing good practices of translating research to the policy makers such as Population Europe (which will be soon affiliated with BSPS), Public policy exchange, local initiatives such as Access Research Knowledge and others. Another good example of making data meaningful is try to come up with a visually friendly and memorable image, such as an “Elephant” showing the winners and losers of globalisation process produced by Branko Milanovic of World Bank in 2012 and which went ‘viral’ in 2016 .

Prof Dykstra reminded the audience that scientific advice is only one of the resources used by policy makers as input. The rest include public opinion, political ideology, electoral contract, fiscal obligation, and international obligations. Scientists, therefore, should identify how the policy process works and seek to influence it on that basis, overcoming the influence of values. Although there is no better approach than scientific, scientists tend to be better at identifying problems than at finding good solutions, stated Prof Dykstra. How research is undertaken and presented will impact on whether it is trusted. So that the only way to make scientific advice more effective is for scientists and policy makers to work in a consultative way.

To make her speech more memorable Prof Dykstra concluded the talk with the words of European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science Carlos Moedas – “Enhancing trust in science through public engagement and open, transparent research is vital if we are to avoid descending into a ‘post-factual’ society”. Keep calm and research wisely!

Plenary 2: “Population change and the need for ‘life course sensitive’ policy: additional reflections post Brexit” – Professor Jane Falkingham

Stepping in for Dr. Katherine Rake, BSPS President Jane Falkingham (ESRC Centre for Population Change, Univer-

sity of Southampton) delivered the second plenary. Her presentation examined the special role that demographers have in thinking about ‘life course sensitive’ policy. Professor Falkingham structured her plenary in four parts, starting with a conceptualization of ‘life course sensitive’ policy.

Conceptualizing ‘life course sensitive’ policy requires conceptualizing ‘the sequence of events from birth to death or cradle to grave.’ Over time, initial views of a linear approach to the life course (e.g. parenthood proceeding marriage) have changed, with demographers now thinking of the life course as fluid processes more than fixed stages. Whilst the ways in which scholars conceptualize the life course has changed over time, so has the timing of life course transitions. Some transitions in the life course do not appear chronologically, such as the timing of the transition out of paid employment and parenthood extended into retirement. Through micro- and macro-level lenses, demographers can add value to these conceptualizations.

What’s the role of ‘life course sensitive’ policy? Such policy can play a role with redistribution between rich and poor individuals in given period (social assistance), redistribution across cohorts, and redistribution of individual resources (e.g. time, money) across the life course (social insurance). ‘Life course sensitive’ policy may also play a role intervening to alter the life course (e.g. education, health) and intervening to mediate the impact of life course events and processes.

Professor Falkingham then discussed population change and reshaping the life course. She focused on three key trends: increasing longevity, changing working lives, and changing family lives. She illustrated how these factors have ‘life course sensitive’ policy implications using an ex-



@tizianaleone: “That’s how you do breakfast #bsps2016 style”

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ample of research from the ESRC Centre for Population Change. Improving mortality is lengthening the life course and changing meaning of “old age.” For men in England and Wales, 62 is the new 50 and 84 is the new 75! Cohorts of men are now entering the labour market later and leaving it earlier, having lower overall participation than previous cohorts. For women, the picture is even more dramatic. While the reproductive years impacted women’s labour force participation in older cohorts, recent cohorts do not show an impact. Such trends have implications for designing a pension policy, for example. The third big shift, changing family lives, shows that family life is being extended. More mid-life individuals, especially women, are caring for aged parents AND have kids at home AND are working.

How well are we balancing work and care in mid-life? Using data from a 1958 cohort study in UK, Professor Falkingham presented data on a caring trajectory variable from ages 46 and 50. The results show that mid-life is demographically dense and requires attention. The longer people serve as carers, the more likely they are to reduce or withdraw from employment. Caring intensity also matters, as people providing more than 10 hours of care per week are also more likely to reduce their employment. Female carers are less likely to have reduced or stopped employment, which may imply they are more likely to juggle both responsibilities. These findings have numerous policy implications such as the costs of juggling both work and family life; the need for flexible working policies; and stigma and promotion penalties that act to perpetuate gender inequalities.

In the third part of her presentation, Professor Falkingham turned to the unexpected shock from Brexit. She suggested that the winds of change will bring a period effect with demographic and social policy implications. Brexit data reveal a demographic divide across age groups with a clear age gradient in support of leaving EU. Young people were more likely to vote ‘remain’, and older people were more likely to vote ‘leave.’ This age gradient also appears in voter turn-out, with older people more likely to vote.

Given those findings, do young people feel cheated by the referendum outcome? Young people will have to live with the outcome for much longer than those who voted overwhelmingly in favour of leaving. Had the votes been weighted by years of life remaining, the referendum could have had a different outcome. Professor Falkingham then posed questions for the audience. What does Brexit mean for demographers’ future research agenda? How will Brexit alter the life course both

for those who remain in the UK and for those who leave? How will Brexit change shape and composition of UK? Will the UK’s decision to leave the EU change migration flows into the UK?

Professor Falkingham concluded the plenary by discussing future research agendas. She encouraged the audience to think about inequality between and within generations, intergenerational relations, the possibility of welfare entitlements (including British citizens residing in EU countries), the UK’s social care workforce of whom many come from new EU countries, and the implications of Brexit for British citizens overseas. Whilst two years might not be enough time, it is possible that these issues and the repercussions of Brexit could be on the agenda at the 2020 BSPS Annual Conference.

Thanks to Alina Pelikh (University of Liverpool) for the plenary report on Pearl Dykstra, and to Sam Latoff (London School of Economics) for the plenary report on Jane Falkingham.



@CPCpopulation: “Population change & the need for life course sensitive policy; period effects of Brexit @FalkinghamJane #bsps2016”

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BSPS Conference Poster Prize 2016

The judges for the 2017 poster prize were Professors Pearl Dykstra and Tony Champion. Both commented on the high standard of the posters on display. After much deliberation, the Prize was split between two postgraduate students' posters: **Sam Latoff (LSE)** for her poster *Mothers on the move: Maternal health among female migrants in Ghana* and **Paul Ayernor (Oxford)** for his poster *Trends in living arrangements of older adults in Africa, 1976-2011*. Congratulations to both winners.

BSPS Prize 2016

The BSPS Prize is awarded annually for the best Masters dissertation on a demographic topic in the previous year, from those entered for the prize competition. Two or three judges assess the entries independently, and their individual results are then averaged out to give a winner or winners.

The winner of the 2016 Prize was announced at the BSPS Conference: **Jonathan Bland (University of Leeds)** for his dissertation *Developing a framework to produce a deprivation index from administrative resources relating to worklessness and low income*. Comments from the judges included: *This was a well-written and well-organised piece of work with a clear and well-justified methodology. The introduction set out clearly the motivations for creating deprivation indices based on administrative data, and the problems inherent in creating such indices. The new index created was well-described, and the methodology for its creation was set out very clearly. The author combined geographical GIS and statistical methodologies to apply the index to the north-east of England, and provided a clear description of the method used to account for boundary changes. The comparison of the new index with previous indices was good but could have been improved by clearer references to figures and tables in the text, and more informative labelling of tables and figures. Overall a very competent and well-written piece of work.*

Congratulations to Jonathan, who has received a cheque for £300.

Again, the judges commented on the high standard of most of the entries, whose authors should also be commended.



@CPCpopulation: “New book detailing latest knowledge on population change in the UK <http://tinyurl.com/zep62uc> @bspsUK @FalkinghamJane”

Spotlight on Research:

Ewa Batyra, LSE

I am a third year PhD student in Demography in the Department of Social Policy at the London School of Economics and Political Science. My thesis examines fertility and contraceptive behaviour in Latin America. In the first part of my research I study the relationship between unintended childbearing and contraceptive use. The second part of my PhD focuses on examining changes in the timing of motherhood in the region.

This research has been inspired by two facts. First, Latin America is a setting with relatively low fertility and high contraceptive prevalence, but at the same time one of the highest levels of unintended childbearing in the world. In spite of this, little is known about the contraceptive use dynamics there. Secondly, although the total fertility rate in Latin America has fallen close to replacement level, and in some countries is already below 2.1 children per women, few studies so far have focused on examining recent changes in the timing of childbearing in the region.

Currently, I am studying whether the experience of an unintended birth is associated with the contraceptive use behaviour change in Colombia and Peru. For that purpose I am using the reproductive calendar data of the Demographic and Health Survey. These provide nationally representative and longitudinal histories which allow for a detailed analyses of the contraceptive method choice in relation to important reproductive events. Through this research I aim to contribute to the knowledge about the determinants of contraceptive use. Although a substantial body of research exists on the topic, studies usually examine contraceptive behaviour at one point in a woman's reproductive life. Consequently, little is known about the factors which influence contraceptive use behaviour change throughout the life course. Moreover, by comparing two countries, I examine how these processes are related to the family planning policy and cultural setting.

My next project is to study changes in the timing of transition to first, and higher order births in Latin

American countries that experienced a fast fertility decline since 1950s. This year I visited the National University of Colombia and the National Statistical Office in Bogota to work with the Colombian Population and Housing Census data for the purpose of this study. In the future, I aim to extend the analysis to other countries in order to enhance the understanding of the regional patterns in timing of childbearing in Latin America.

Before starting my PhD, I completed a BA in Quantitative Methods in Economics at the Warsaw School of Economics. I also hold an MSc in Population and Development and an MSc in Social Research Methods from LSE. My studies at LSE have been possible thanks to the support of my supervisors Dr Tiziana Leone and Professor Mikko Myrskylä, as well as scholarships from the Jeremi Króliczewski Educational Trust and the Economic and Social Research Council.

For more information, visit my web page: <http://personal.lse.ac.uk/batyra/> or email me: e.batyra@lse.ac.uk



Population Ethics: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Birth and Death: Colloquium

This one day colloquium took place on a lovely autumn morning at Cumberland Lodge in Windsor Great Park. [Cumberland Lodge](#) is an educational foundation which, as part of its role, runs cross disciplinary conferences. This conference brought together economists, philosophers, political theorists, a lawyer and a few demographers. As well as BSPS, the colloquium was supported by the [Royal Economic Society](#), the [Society for Applied Philosophy](#) and the [Centre for the Study of Existential Risk](#)*.

After a slight rearrangement of the agenda as one of the speakers was unable to attend (more of that later), the meeting opened with a welcome from Owen Gower, the programme Director of Cumberland Lodge and Simon Beard, who had organised the day. Simon reminded us of the correspondence [between Babbage and Tennyson](#), where Babbage picks the young Tennyson up for assuming in a poem that as one is born one dies and points out that births are greater than deaths. The speed of population growth and the relationship to the environment continues to be an important challenge.

The colloquium then consisted of four sessions and then a keynote speaker. The organisation of the sessions was somewhat different to usual academic conferences as after two presentations in each session we split into two groups and discussed the presentations, before coming back together to pose questions to the presenters. This ensured all were engaged and also perhaps led to a wider range of more considered questions – an alternative format to think about for BSPS day meetings.

The first session featured Silvia Milano, an LSE Philosophy PhD student who had conducted a critical review of why some people claim that the world is overpopulated. Is it a static or dynamic concept and what are the academic and political arguments used about overpopulation? She noted that there were both deontic (what we should do) and axiological (what is good, how is it good) arguments in play and often articles seemed to have a deontic view without really defining the supporting axiological arguments. She also noticed that philosophers and social scientists are often 'talking past' each other. There is a question as to whether they are looking at the same facts. Even when looking at the same facts, are they making the same judgements? This work was ongoing. The second presentation was by Martin Kolk covered classic issues around Malthus and Boserup. Pointing out the obvious issues around continued exponential growth, and making an important point – made later in a different context -

that size effects are lagged, he argued that while feedback loops constraining population size operated in pre-industrial societies they are much less obvious in post industrial societies and other factors might be more important for population growth.

In the second session Isabella Triffan argued that there was not clear moral reason as to why the costs of children should be shared between parents and non-parents. Much of this hinged on whether children were a true public good as opposed to social goods – in that people tend to have children for their own pleasure and fulfilment. Also there are no rules that govern parental actions and if there is no restraint of liberty then parents could be said to be free-riding. She finds that fairness does not provide a strong case, although other considerations such as reducing gender inequality or meeting children's rights may provide some reasons for supporting parents. This led to an interesting discussion about whether non-cyclists should support cyclists! One might argue that in a society where pension provision is predominately on a pay-as-you-go basis, as children's taxes will be supporting both the parents and the childfree in old-age there must be a case of the childfree to support children. Greg Bognar then considered how we value longevity by considering the moral implications of different ways of measuring 'lost' mortality sometimes termed "the harm of premature mortality in the population". This matters as depending on the computation you may give equal, greater or lesser weight to a 20 year old gaining 20 years of life or a 60 year old gaining 20 years of life. He demonstrated how under different assumptions you would get different results. A good presentation which provided some moral underpinning for the approach taken by the World Health Organisation, who use a synthetic 'ideal' mortality schedule based on overall Japanese mortality and the best age specific rates from each country. The presentation was necessarily simplified and discussion centred on the need to look at quality of life as well as length.

After lunch (at which there was a most excellent cheese board), I chaired a slightly chaotic session (not all my fault!) on the right to procreate. Luara Ferracioli had been unable to travel but attempted to give her presentation by skype. This did not work as the connection was too poor and Simon Beard then summarised her views to the meeting. She argued that many apparently reasonable theories about the value of procreation would imply that people should not have children if adoption would get us much closer to environmental and social justice. Similarly

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other reasonable theories about the value of parenting would imply that a child should morally be parented by the best possible parent, even if this was not their birth parent. To avoid these unattractive implications of other theories Laura was working on the idea that there was a non-trivial value in creating one's child such that it was sufficient to block both the above views. Karin Kuhleman then cogently argued that since the Cairo population conference anti-natal policies had been off the world agenda. She felt that this ignored the interplay of human rights, where if we properly considered risk we would be more actively engaged in policies to limit population. One key point was that population was slow to change – so even if we took a decision that population growth was too great population momentum continues for a considerable period of time.

In the final session Elizabeth Cripps Argued that population had to be considered in conjunction with wider environmental considerations and questions of global justice. She discussed how there was difference between hard choices (disadvantaging one set of children relative to others, interference with the family) and tragic choices (rights-violating coercion, failing to protect children's basic interests, or expecting parents to sacrifice theirs). Her concern was that even basic justice might not be possible without worsening climate change. This was followed by an excellent and passionate talk from an African perspective by Beatrice Okyer-Manu. She argued that Hardin's '[lifeboat metaphor](#)' was, from an African perspective: harsh; indifferent; and, not the appropriate response to the overpopulation and environmental change discourse. Using examples of African proverbs, she explained that for Africans they consider "more" is better. However, the more is better because of the contribution to the community as a whole, providing greater sharing of risk and burden. Further the west had in the past generally spread the idea that more is better – giving the example of missionaries who encouraged procreation. So poverty does not come from the size of the population, and the communitarian view suggests the lifeboat metaphor only arises because of the dependence on differential political power between richer and poorer nations.

After the sessions the chairs briefly summed up their thoughts on the conference. One view that all the chairs shared is that there was little on the ethics around death/end of life – a possible consideration for another colloquium.

The day closed with an excellent presentation from Partha

Dasgupta, who through using economic and ecological data, taken from a number of places, including the [Global Footprint Network](#), to argue that not only are current levels of consumption unsustainable, but their distribution across such a large population is economically suboptimal as well. We are consuming at a rate of 1.6 earths, but global population is probably over 2.5 times what would be optimum for promoting human welfare. Professor Dasgupta also took up the theme of whether population ethics could be dealt with as a matter of reproductive health alone, and argued that in such a situation this was clearly inadequate, and that the environmental externalities of population growth and overconsumption demanded a wider public debate. Whilst not enough is currently being done to meet known reproductive health needs in the developing world, Professor Dasgupta argued that the true need for family planning was certainly much higher than this and we should expect and encourage greater reductions in fertility in the future.

Overall this was an excellent and thought provoking day and credit to BPS for providing support. It would have been good to see a few more demographers there. We often talk about silos in government whereby those working in their own area don't engage with others. The day demonstrated that this can be true in academia as, for example, people working in the LSE philosophy dept did not seem to have talked to people like Tim Dyson and Mike Murphy in the Social Policy department – both of whom could usefully add to the discourse.

Steve Smallwood, Office for National Statistics

(with thanks to Simon Beard and Eva Natamba for their contributions to this write up)

*One assumes they are particularly hot on ensuring they have continuing funding! (Although Simon comments "its just that when we stop applying our funders tend to ask if we know something they don't!")

Links

Official colloquium report: <http://www.cumberlandlodge.ac.uk/learning-resources/>

Videos made as part of the colloquium can be watched on Vimeo - <https://vimeo.com/187311287> (Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta's keynote presentation) & <https://vimeo.com/187209977> (public/policy makers video)

Work, Learning and Wellbeing Conference 2017

The Work and Learning Programme of the What Works for Wellbeing Centre is having a conference on 12th January in Norwich.

Confirmed speakers are:

- Dr Paul Litchfield OBE, Chair of the What Works for Wellbeing Centre and Chief Medical Officer at BT
- Prof Kim Burton OBE, Spine Research and University of Huddersfield
- Peter Kelly, Health and Safety Executive
- Laura Adelman, Department of Work and Pensions
- Mark O'Hagan, co-CEO, East of England Co-Op

The Work and Learning Programme will also be presenting the first findings of its evidence reviews on wellbeing in work, adult learning and worklessness and there will be a roundtable discussion featuring Nancy Hey of the What Works Centre, Prof Christina Victor of Brunel University, Prof Rhiannon Corcoran of University of Liverpool amongst others.

There is a an attendance fee of only £30.

Please see: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/work-learning-and-wellbeing-conference-2017-tickets-28225449078?ref=estwenivtefor001>

Call for Papers: Understanding Society Scientific Conference, 11-13 July 2017

Understanding Society, the UK Household Longitudinal Study, has launched the [call for abstracts](#) for its Scientific Conference, to be held at the University of Essex from 11-13 July 2017.

The [Understanding Society Scientific Conference](#) provides an international forum for the exchange of research based on longitudinal household panel studies. We particularly welcome abstracts that focus on:

- Research using Understanding Society, the British Household Panel Survey or other household panel studies
- Health, education, employment, family and household, ethnicity, income, wealth, consumption and survey methodology
- International comparative studies of longitudinal survey data
- The team is also keen to showcase innovative statistical methods and research that is policy relevant.

The abstract call closes on 13th February 2017.