

Society NOW



ESRC RESEARCH MAKING AN IMPACT
SUMMER 2015 ISSUE 22



Going for growth Discovering the secrets of SME success



IFS: The challenge of being balanced



Economics: The ESRC's fifty-year heritage



Voices: Charlie Jeffery on devolution and impact

Welcome

to the Summer issue of *Society Now*, the ESRC's regular magazine which showcases the impact of the social science research we fund.

This issue is focused on economics, business and enterprise. For fifty years the ESRC has been funding economic research. What has it discovered and where has the research had an impact?

Experts from the Enterprise Research Centre explain what their research has found and what can be done to stimulate growth in SMEs.

Following the 2015 General Election IFS Director Paul Johnson looks at why the centre's research was so widely quoted by all political parties and the particular challenges of remaining impartial.

Members of the British Election Study team examine why the pre-General Election polls were so inaccurate. Did voters change their minds, lie about their intentions or was the polling methodology flawed?

And ESRC Impact Champion Charlie Jeffery talks about his career, his research and what's next.

I hope you find the magazine enjoyable and informative.

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Professor Charlie Jeffery is announced 2015 ESRC Impact Champion for his long-term commitment to maximising the impact of his and colleagues' research.



Council housing residents let down by PFI schemes

THE PRIVATE FINANCE Initiative (PFI) has no place in public housing regeneration schemes, says researcher Dr Stuart Hodkinson. His three-year in-depth study of refurbishment and new build PFI housing schemes in Lambeth and Islington highlights a catalogue of problems reported by residents of council estates and properties. “Our study aimed to understand council housing tenants’ and leaseholders’ experiences of regeneration schemes in England that use PFI,” says Dr Hodkinson. “Many of those we interviewed told us that experience was shocking.”

Introduced by the Conservative Government in 1992, PFI combines the short-term construction and/or refurbishment of existing or new public buildings and other infrastructure with their long-term management and maintenance in contracts awarded to private sector companies, lasting between 10 and 60 years. “The promise of PFI in housing regeneration schemes is that superior private sector expertise, large government subsidies, and financial penalties for poor performance should ensure a high standard outcome for residents,” Dr Hodkinson states.

In reality, project researchers heard about residents facing an array of unresolved problems with standards of workmanship and completion of work. “Some people told us the work

“Some people told us the work was so chaotic they had been left with no hot water or heating for days, weeks and even months”

was so chaotic they had been left with no hot water or heating for days, weeks and even months,” he says. “Others said they had no confidence that major work such as electrical rewiring was actually safe.”

One key problem, Dr Hodkinson explains, concerns robust monitoring of PFI building work and contractual standards. “The work is all sub-contracted, meaning dozens and dozens of contractors working on site,” he says. “The PFI companies report their own performance, but this does not always reflect the kinds of residents’ experiences we were told about. Local Authorities lack the resources to check what’s happening and often do not address individuals’ problems.”

Crucially, researchers found no evidence that Local Authorities are

taking proper advantage of their powers to penalise contractors for poor performance. “In one scheme, where residents expressed huge dissatisfaction, the PFI contractor has so far received

just £2,000 in penalties,” he says. “No local authority wants to take on these PFI companies – often subsidiaries of powerful global corporations – for fear of unaffordable legal disputes and contractual breakdown.”

Researchers highlight the need for urgent independent evaluation of all PFI housing schemes with input from industry experts, tenants and academics. “Given concerns about monitoring and sign-off, the danger is that major problems for these properties are lying in wait,” Dr Hodkinson concludes. ■

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IN BRIEF

PARTY MEMBERS

Grass roots political party members have a significant role to play in a healthy democracy. A survey undertaken in mid-May 2015 of the members of the UK's largest parties, Labour's potential trade union-affiliated members and citizens who are not members of a party, will enable researchers to discover more about members' social characteristics, attitudes, activities and their reasons for joining or leaving their party.

ESRC grant number ES/M007537/1

CROSS COHORT STUDY

Data from four cohort studies managed by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS) will form the basis of a new three-year research programme that aims to improve understanding of the inter-generational transmission of economic and health inequalities in the UK. Researchers will focus on two themes: healthy lifestyles across the life course and the processes and consequences of social mobility.

ESRC grant number ES/M008684/1

TYPHOON RELIEF

How effective were relief efforts in building sustainable routes out of poverty following typhoon Yolanda's devastation of the Philippines in 2013? Researchers aim to explore urban population risk, vulnerability to disasters and resilience in the aftermath of such shocks. Lessons learned will be highly relevant to post-disaster reconstruction efforts in low-income countries, specifically within densely populated urban areas.

ESRC grant number ES/M008932/1



Mounted units boost public trust in policing

MOUNTED POLICE UNITS on neighbourhood patrols can boost levels of public confidence in the police, according to the first in-depth study of the use of horses in policing. While the number of mounted sections across England, Scotland and Wales fell from 17 in 2012 to 12 in 2014, a joint research project with support from the Association of Chief Police Officers finds clear evidence that mounted police units make a 'demonstrable and measurable impact'.

During an 18-month study, researchers assessed the impact of mounted units in different roles. "We examined public reactions to mounted units on neighbourhood patrols, at a music festival, and at football matches and public demonstrations," explains researcher Dr Chris Giacomantonio of RAND Europe. "While it's often assumed that mounted police are primarily a resource for crowd control, in reality they spend more time and appear to have substantial value elsewhere, particularly in neighbourhood policing."

Increased visibility of officers is a primary benefit of using mounted units in neighbourhood patrols. In trials police on horseback generated around six times more public interest than foot patrols. "In community settings, the horse and rider combination appears to act as a sort of ambassador and 'ice-breaker' for the police," says Principal Investigator

Dr Ben Bradford. "People come up to make a fuss of the horse before having a quick conversation with the officer. Most people react positively to greater police visibility in their neighbourhood, and we believe this translated into higher levels of trust and confidence in the areas where there were mounted patrols."

Findings also highlight the unique role played by mounted units at crowd events where disorder is likely. "Police on horseback appear able to intervene when other resources, such as police on foot or in vehicles, would be ineffective or even risk aggravating the situation," Dr Giacomantonio says.

The study estimates that mounted police cost approximately £6,550 a year more than other operational support roles such as dog or armed police units. Three mounted officers, it suggests, cost roughly as much as four neighbourhood officers. But in terms of overall UK police spending, mounted police expenditure represents only 0.0002 per cent of the total. Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables must decide whether to retain mounted units in times of fiscal austerity. "This research provides a solid evidence base to help inform their thinking," says Dr Bradford. ■

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Database on world top incomes

THE PUBLICLY AND freely accessible World Top Incomes Database (WTID), part funded by the ESRC, provides online data on the long-run development of economic inequality.

Beginning with the research of the long-run distribution of top incomes in France, a succession of studies has constructed top income share time series over the long-run for some thirty countries to date.

The WTID draws on tax data from incomes dating before the Second World War, and in some cases into the 19th century. More than 30 contributing authors helped construct the database, which currently provides

information on the distribution of top income groups for 31 countries worldwide. A further 45 countries will be added in future.

During 2015, the WTID will become the W2ID, the World Wealth and Income Database, and will include statistical information on inheritance, aggregated wealth and its distribution. ■

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Barriers restrict East Africa's connectivity gains

BEFORE 2009, THERE wasn't a single fibre-optic cable connecting East Africa to the rest of the world. After millions of dollars of investment, increased internet connectivity has not proved as transformative as some anticipated.

Over a three-year project, researchers focused on the impact of connectivity on three key sectors of production in East Africa: business process outsourcing, the tea sector and the tourist industry. Findings highlight some of the key ways that ICTs were used in these three sectors. For instance, that most benefits are being accrued upstream in value chains, and that better connectivity was most often successfully used to tap into local markets rather than international ones.

But the study revealed few cases in which changing connectivity was a key driver of significant economic change, particularly among small or

medium firms. Even for large firms, systematic and global-scale barriers could not be overcome by increased connectivity alone.

"While better connectivity does enable tangible benefits, clear regulatory policy that pays attention to value-for-money and moves beyond hype is required to boost firms' attempts to make the most of new forms of connectivity," researcher Dr Mark Graham states. "Policy that focuses on the wider socio-technical limitations – skills, finance, and systems – which prevent East African firms from taking advantage of online opportunities, is also important." ■

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IN BRIEF



MEDIA AND ELECTIONS

The 2015 British election media study aims to tackle pressing issues concerning the frequently disputed effects of the media on governance and elections. Researchers will also gather high-quality data on media coverage during and after the 2015 British general election. The study brings together investigators with expertise in traditional and social media content analysis as well as statistical modelling skills.

ESRC grant number ES/M010775/1

EFFECTIVE WRITING

The effective use of grammar is central to good writing. Using computer-aided analysis of a large, systematically-collected body of student writing, researchers aim to increase understanding of grammatical development, generate a publicly accessible body of grammatically-annotated student writing designed to support further studies of literacy development, and offer a set of recommendations to inform both national and international curriculum policies.

ESRC grant number ES/M00967X/1

DESIGNS FOR DEMENTIA

People with Alzheimer's Disease (AD), the most prevalent form of dementia, often have difficulty knowing where they are and how to get to places. Researchers aim to identify the features of buildings that make them relatively harder or easier for people with AD to navigate. The project will help create dementia-friendly architectural guidelines to improve the design of residences for people with AD.

ESRC grant number ES/M009254/1

IN BRIEF



ATTITUDES TO THE EU

There is little robust, impartial evidence on public opinion towards Britain's relationship with Europe. Researchers aim to develop a website that brings together existing survey and polling evidence on attitudes to Britain's relationship with Europe, accompanied by independent commentary. Researchers will also develop briefings for policymakers and the interested public.

ESRC grant number ES/N003969/1

CRIMINAL FACTORS

A partnership between criminologists, data scientists, and a criminal justice charity will improve understanding of the factors affecting crime, social justice and social harm. Researchers will develop a tool that assembles/collates data on social and economic conditions and relates them to crime and criminal justice statistics. By making data accessible, the project aims to improve decision-making in criminal justice and policy.

ESRC grant number ES/M010295/1

BIOMARKER MEASURES

Objective health measurements known as biomarkers (such as blood pressure and blood samples) included in the longitudinal Understanding Society study will contribute to new scientific knowledge about the relationship between people's social, economic, environmental circumstances and their health. Researchers will investigate the value of, and capacity for, collaborative projects using biomarkers together with genetic, social and economic data.

ESRC grant number ES/M008592/1

New psychology A-level resource

A FREE ONLINE service developed at the University of Glasgow is helping A-level students to better understand cognitive psychology and enabling them to design and run their own psychological experiments. "There are more than 150,000 post-16 psychology students in the UK, as well as their teachers," says researcher Dr Gijbert Stoet. "Our online learning system has given schools access to psychology resources that were previously not freely available."

In this project, researchers developed their online-learning tool, PsyToolkit (an open-access software package for creating and running

psychological experiments) to make it more accessible. "We believe that our tool will make cognitive psychology a more exciting and therefore interesting topic for A-level students, which ultimately will benefit the quality of cognitive psychological research in the UK and beyond," says Dr Stoet. ■

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Travel costs increase exclusion

LOW-INCOME URBAN dwellers can be at risk of social exclusion due to unaffordable travel costs, according to a recent University of Leeds study of the relationship between transport poverty and social disadvantage. "One solution to the problem of transport poverty is to ensure that the concessionary travel that is currently offered to transport poor Londoners is made available on the same basis to people outside the capital," says researcher Dr Karen Lucas.

In a two-year study, Dr Lucas explored ways to incorporate the issues of transport-related social exclusion into the transport models used at national and local level. Based on national travel survey data, the study shows that people on low incomes make shorter and fewer trips than average income earners. "At a national level, it was clear that low-income groups were forgoing discretionary trips – for example, visiting their family and friends – which are arguably the trips that are most important for maintaining their social support mechanisms," says Dr Lucas.

Further exploration of low-income groups in the city of Liverpool and the Wirral highlights the transport disadvantages of even densely populated, but peripheral urban locations. For those living in Liverpool, closely connected to a variety of services, low income did not seem to affect travel adversely. In contrast, those living on the Wirral travelled less often and experienced more constraints in terms of accessing services and social support.

"The crucial point is that the Wirral is not a rural area where considerable transport poverty could be expected," says Dr Lucas. "Rather, it is a dense but peripheral urban area. And it's clear that for many low-income groups – even those living in dense urban areas – the costs of travel are a source of social disadvantage and exclusion." ■

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British Asian marital breakdown increases

ONE-PARENT FAMILIES are rising among British Asians, says recent research which challenges the stereotype of British South Asian families as 'flying the flag' for traditional family life.

While British Asians still have lower rates of divorce compared with the wider British population, marital instability is growing. "Since the statistics were last analysed in the mid-1990s, there have been signs of a trend towards increasing marital breakdown and divorce among British Asians," explains researcher Dr Kavari Qureshi. Twenty years ago, just four per cent of British Asians who had ever married were divorced or separated compared to nine per cent of White British and 18 per cent of Black Caribbean adults. Today, 10 per cent of ever-married Pakistani Muslim and Indian Sikh adults are divorced or separated.

"In all ethnic groups, marital breakdown has doubled since the 1990s," says Dr Qureshi. "So rates of marital breakdown continue to be lower for British Asians than the rest of the population, but change has occurred just as quickly for British Asians as for everyone else. Moreover, the percentage of British Asians who are now in single parent families (11 per cent for Pakistani Muslims, nine

per cent for Indian Sikhs and 15 per cent for Bangladeshi Muslims) is now very similar to the 13 per cent for White British people."

Interviews with 63 East London British Asians whose marriages had broken down highlighted less stigmatisation and greater support for separation and divorce than may have been assumed. Moreover while arranged marriages were conventionally seen as safer than love marriages, both young people and their parents may now be viewing arranged marriages as riskier. "In an arranged marriage that brings family approval but not personal fulfilment, young people are increasingly supported to divorce and remarry, with a greater degree of personal say in spouse selection," Dr Qureshi explains.

The recent rise in marital instability has placed increasing demands on community and faith-based organisations which are struggling to meet the need for marriage counselling and mediation services, and to respond to associated problems of mental wellbeing and welfare for single parent families, the study concludes. ■

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Long-term coma resource

A NEW ONLINE resource featuring families sharing their experiences of having a relative in a vegetative or minimally conscious state is providing information and support to family members as well as legal and medical practitioners.

"The healthtalk.org online resource provided information and support to more than 4,000 visitors in the first few months after launch," says researcher Professor Jenny Kitzinger. Training sessions based on the resources have been delivered in hospitals, rehabilitation centres and care homes, and informed training for legal professionals.

The online resource was developed after previous research revealed that many families with relatives in prolonged vegetative or minimally conscious states struggle with feelings of isolation, guilt and confusion and are provided with incorrect legal guidance, poor information and inadequate support.

"The highly personal experiences and thoughts described by family members in this resource are proving key to helping people cope with, and feel proud of, how they are managing a very difficult situation," says co-researcher Professor Celia Kitzinger. "It also helps inform and challenge health care professionals working within this field." ■

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 Celebrating Impact Prize winner – see centre pages for more information



Understanding fatherhood post-separation

WHO ARE TODAY'S fathers and what are they like? Using data from three large-scale UK and European surveys, researchers provide a comprehensive study of men as fathers, their contribution and role in the family as well as their employment patterns, economic activity and involvement in childrearing.

Estimates suggest that five per cent of British men have a non-resident dependent child. Analysis also shows that these 980,000 non-resident fathers form a heterogeneous group in terms of their socio-demographic profile and family behaviour. The study identifies four distinct groups of non-resident fathers: 'Engaged' (46 per cent), 'Less Engaged' (28 per cent), 'Disengaged' (16 per cent) and 'Distance' (11 per cent). The majority of 'Disengaged' fathers have no contact, and only a minority are providing child support. In contrast, the 'Distance' fathers provide financial support but geographical distance limits other forms of involvement in their children's lives.

"We conclude that legislation and policy concerning fathers in post-separation families needs to be sensitive to variation as well as commonality in socio-economic conditions and family lives and situations," says researcher Dr Svetlana Speight. ■

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Childhood bullying worse than adult maltreatment

BULLYING BY PEERS adversely affects children in later life more than being maltreated by adults, according to new research from the University of Warwick.

Based on longitudinal data from the US and UK, researchers explored reports of maltreatment, bullying and mental health outcomes for more than 5,000 children. "The mental health outcomes we were looking for included anxiety, depression or suicidal tendencies," says researcher Professor Dieter Wolke. "Our results showed those who were bullied were more likely to suffer from mental health problems than those who were maltreated."

These findings add to Professor Wolke's growing body of evidence highlighting the long shadow cast by childhood and sibling bullying on mental and physical wellbeing in later life. Evidence suggests that 20 per cent of children and 12 per cent of adolescents report bullying at school. Sibling bullying is also found in up to half of all UK households with adolescents.

"While the influence of parenting on child outcomes has received plenty of attention, many fail to appreciate that by the age of 18 children have spent far more time with peers and siblings than their parents," says Professor Wolke. Time spent with peers, if characterised by aggression and systemic abuse of power, is likely to increase the risk of poorer physical and mental health, wealth and social relationships in adulthood.

"Being bullied is not a harmless rite of passage or an inevitable part of growing up; it has serious long-term consequences," explains Professor Wolke. "It is important for schools, health services and other agencies to work together to reduce bullying and the adverse effects related to it." ■

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Schools tackling domestic violence

EDUCATION AIMED AT preventing domestic violence should be mandatory in schools, according to a study into why some boys become domestic abuse perpetrators.

A survey of over 1,200 school children aged 13-14 found that over half had some direct experience of domestic abuse, whether as victims, witnesses or perpetrators. Preventative relationship-based education programmes could change attitudes, say researchers.

"Building skills and capacity in the provision of relationship education will take time, resources

and a commitment to continuity at the level of government policy," says researcher Professor David Gadd. "Such investment is justified given the number of teenagers who have experiences of domestic abuse by the age of 14." ■

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Poverty erodes the dignity of lone mothers

DIGNITY IS A foundational value in South Africa's Constitution. A recent study of lone mothers' experiences of social security in South Africa highlights lone mothers' views that poverty erodes dignity, and negatively affects their sense of self-esteem, worthiness, autonomy and self-respect.

In interviews with 200 low-income lone mothers, many also stated that some of the strategies they adopted in an attempt to survive poverty undermined their sense of dignity, particularly begging, demeaning work, and transactional sex.

"Lone mothers in South Africa face multiple challenges yet are often neglected by policy," says researcher Dr Gemma Wright. The Child Support Grant (CSG) is paid for children in low-income families, yet many lone-mother

recipients of the CSG reported dignity-erosive aspects of the grant including laborious application process, the small amount of the grant, and perceived negative social attitudes towards them.

"In South Africa there is no social assistance for low-income working-age adults in their own right, unless they are disabled," says Dr Wright. "Findings suggest that in parallel with job creation schemes and affordable high-quality childcare, social security should be extended to include low-income adults of working age, irrespective of caregiver status." ■

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IN BRIEF



WELSH POLICY LEVERS

The Welsh Government does not currently have the same powers and responsibilities as the Scottish Government or many comparable regions/small countries in Europe. Researchers will analyse the powers and policy levers used by governments in comparable countries/regions and assess the implications of this evidence for policymakers in Wales, and consider what, if any, additional powers would assist Welsh Ministers to achieve their policy objectives.

ESRC grant number ES/M00745X/1

POVERTY PATHWAYS

Led by the Chronic Poverty Advisory Network, a new collaborative project aims to improve understanding of how people's escape from extreme poverty and deprivation can be sustained over time. The study is based on three East African countries (Ethiopia, Rwanda and Tanzania) characterised not only by high poverty levels but also the experience of significant political and institutional change over the last decade.

ESRC grant number ES/M009351/1

TACKLING INSTABILITY

Based on a study of social media in Kenya, Sierra Leone and Tanzania, researchers aim to explore how social media could be used by the authorities responsible for community safety to reduce the risks and impact of violence and instability. The study will also examine how social media could serve as an early warning of tensions that threaten security.

ESRC grant number ES/M008983/1

A question of economics

Economics is one of the most high-profile social sciences, with connections to the worlds of politics and business. It has been a central concern for the ESRC and its predecessor, the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), since establishment in 1965

THE SSRC REALISED from an early stage that economics, and related areas such as business and innovation, were going to need substantial investment. The subject has been the focus of major investment over the past five decades – the box at the end of the article shows some of the many programmes and centres in which this work is concentrated.

Sir Christopher Pissarides is Chair of the ESRC Centre for Macroeconomics and Associate of the ESRC Centre for Economic Performance (CEP), both at the London School of Economics, and in 2010 won the Nobel Memorial Prize for Economic Sciences, making him arguably the UK's top economist. He says that the biggest advance in economics of the past 50 years is our growing knowledge of the way incentives influence people and markets. This awareness has influenced thinking in areas such as monetary policy and contract theory, as well as his own work on employment. Sir Christopher says: "We now know how to design systems, for example of company taxation and of unemployment insurance, that encourage employers to create jobs and which create an incentive for unemployed people to accept them."

“There is far deeper insight into economic issues than was possible 50 years ago”

This approach, he says, has involved economists going beyond traditional concerns such as the maximisation of reward, and addressing factors such as peer group influence that also affect economic choices.

Perhaps unexpectedly, Sir Christopher adds that the reputation damage that economics suffered from the global financial crisis of 2008 was undeserved. He says: "We know that people will cheat if they can get away with it. The economist's approach to this problem is first to stop them, and then to create incentives not to cheat. In 2008 the banks were selling junk securities as if they were a solid investment, and full information on what was happening only became available once the banks went under. Economics tells you this will happen. It's the fault of regulators, not of economists."

He is also in no doubt that the link between economics and politics is going to remain important. He says that all parliamentary debates, and all actions by prime ministers and presidents, are

influenced by one economist or another. As he sees it: "Economics is what wins or loses the election. In addition, it is the area of policy where politicians can do the most harm or good with their actions most quickly. Economic decisions, say on a tax rate that makes a firm decide to locate here rather than in Ireland, have a far more immediate effect than decisions in areas such as technology policy."

The national importance of issues such as tax rates is one reason for the ESRC's continuing support of the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS). The IFS has been a key player in the UK economic debate since 1969, known for its Green Budget and other publications intended to provide independent analysis of the public finances.

IFS director Paul Johnson says: "It's extraordinarily hard to assess the impact of our work, but I think it is large. We both hold politicians to account and inform the public. Over time, our ability to do this has improved as tools, data and methods have got better. But there is still a long way to go and there is still important data that the government refuses to release." At the same time, he adds, the number of economists in the UK has grown dramatically, "for better or worse," and with it the nation's capacity to produce econometric analyses. So there is far deeper insight into economic issues than was possible 50 years ago.

The IFS has grown into a major provider of analysis for the UK media and political system, and in academic circles. Johnson adds that relations with business are less deep, but there is certainly business interest in areas such as pensions and tax.

Johnson points out that IFS has long had a strong interest in green issues. This is an area in which the UK is influential, notably with Lord

Sir Christopher Pissarides says that economics is what wins or loses elections.





Stern's 2006 review of the economics of climate change. IFS has also adapted to new political realities such as devolution, with extra ESRC resources to research topics such as the economics of Scottish independence. He hopes in the near future to address issues arising from inequality (such as taxing higher earners, or reducing the incidence of low pay) and the chronic issue of low UK productivity.

Building successful businesses

The ESRC has long appreciated the need for research into business to accompany its work on economics, and from 1994 to 2004 funded the Centre for Business Research, now part of the Cambridge Judge Business School. Its current director, Professor Simon Deakin, is a lawyer by background, with a strong interest in the rule of law in business transactions, and in places in the world where it is replaced by corruption and bribery. As he says, "The UK has a great advantage through being one of the nations whose economy does not have to bear the huge cost of corruption. But it is very hard to create the rule of law where it does not exist, and we are interested in how this might happen in emerging markets. People need to see the value of honest legal and commercial systems, rather than accepting the dangerous view put forward about some BRICS nations that the rule of law is an unnecessary cost."

Professor Deakin says that over time, business research has emerged as a genuine discipline with its own data, methods and journals. The

Green issues is an area in which the UK is influential, notably with Lord Stern's 2006 review of the economics of climate change.

precipitous growth of business as a university degree subject, especially the MBA, has helped to drive its development. New areas of interest include gender in business, which Deakin regards as "a key issue in public discourse". He adds that because of the influence of US approaches and US journals, the methods of business research have become globalised. This applies even in the global South, where business issues form part of the ESRC Rising Powers programme.

Rachel Griffith, professor of economics at the University of Manchester and Co-Director of the ESRC Centre for the Microeconomic Analysis of Public Policy, agrees that we know a lot more than we did 50 years ago about key concerns such as the ways in which businesses respond to tax systems and to regulation. She praises the ESRC's role in backing this research.

Griffith points out that while 'regulation' can be a boo-word for politicians, most people are in favour of regulating food safety, or indeed the banking system. What people oppose is heavy 1970s-style regulation, for example of prices. Griffith says that we now know much more about the way to regulate in a more subtle and market-driven way.

She adds that an important current challenge is to learn more about how "less tangible" firms work as economic actors. Companies in fields such as software and e-business, she says, do not respond in the same ways as a traditional manufacturer with a large immobile factory. "A key question for the UK is how you tax and regulate these businesses," she says. "The UK is an open ►



► economy and these firms are major wealth creators for Britain. We don't want to lose them, but we have very little experimental knowledge of why they might choose to move elsewhere.”

Beyond the linear model

Linked to this concern is the related academic study of innovation. David Wield, professor of innovation and development at the Open University and co-director of the Innogen Institute at the OU and the University of Edinburgh, points out that innovation has always been “a hybrid and interdisciplinary subject”, involving scientists and engineers as well as social scientists. He adds that UK players in this area, such as Innovate UK, are informed users of the rich research knowledge that now exists in this area.

Wield thinks that the key finding in 50 years of innovation studies has been the realisation that the “linear model”, by which discoveries in the laboratory are adopted for commercial use and turn into products for business, is a massive oversimplification and rarely happens in practice. Instead, he says, “Innovation can come from push or pull”, in other words via ideas for new and innovative technology, or from an awareness of possible demand.

“ Innovation can come via ideas for new and innovative technology, or from an awareness of possible demand ”

At the same time, he adds, we now have a growing awareness that “innovation can happen in networks as well as in firms.” Wield points to the example of global vaccine development. Here, he says, companies, governments, and non-profit bodies and NGOs such as the Gates Foundation, have found ways of working together effectively.

But Donald MacKenzie, professor of sociology at the University of Edinburgh and formerly Research Associate at the ESRC Centre for Analysis

Despite our growing awareness of the sheer complexity of economic systems, we may still be underestimating their ability to surprise us.

of Risk and Regulation (2000-2010) warns that despite our growing awareness of the sheer complexity of economic systems, we may still be underestimating their ability to surprise us.

He says: “The discipline of economics needs things you can model, and it tests those models with quantitative data. But if you speak in a more anecdotal way to people involved in areas like high-frequency trading [the use of algorithms to trade over millisecond or even microsecond timescales], you find big unknowns. On the one hand, the main techniques are common knowledge in the industry. But different firms’ algorithms can interact with each other in unpredictable ways. The result could be that the probability of a systemic crisis is higher than examination of routine trading data would lead one to imagine.” ■



Economic, business and innovation investments

- Centre for Competition Policy: competitionpolicy.ac.uk
- Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy: www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/research/centres/cage/
- Centre for Economic Performance: cep.lse.ac.uk
- Centre for Macroeconomics: www.centreformacroeconomics.ac.uk
- Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity: www.cusp.ac.uk (CUSP)
- Credit and Labour Market Foundations of the Macroeconomy: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/economics/news/current-news/esrc-large-grant
- Enterprise Research Centre: www.enterpriseresearch.ac.uk
- Institute for Fiscal Studies: www.ifs.org.uk
- Spatial Economics Research Centre: www.spatial-economics.ac.uk
- Systemic Risk Centre (SRC): www.systemic-risk.ac.uk
- Tax Administration Research Centre (TARC): tarc.exeter.ac.uk
- UK-Innovation Research Centre: www.uk-irc.org

By Martin Ince, principal of Martin Ince Communications. Martin is a freelance science writer and media trainer.



Shifting demographics

How has the white British majority responded to immigration in local areas? By Professor **Eric Kaufmann**

THE RESULTS OF the 2011 census revealed striking ethnic changes which made headlines on their release in December 2012. The share of non-European minorities in Britain rose from nine to 14 per cent in the 2000s even as the European immigrant population soared. In London, the White British share of the population fell from 58 to 45 per cent. How has the White British majority responded to these demographic shifts? This is the question Gareth Harris and I set out to answer in our ESRC Secondary Data Analysis project.

Unlike many studies, we focus not on the British nation, but on the English ethnic majority. We consider three possible responses to ethnic change which we term 'exit', 'voice' and 'accommodation'. In other words, White British could choose to either 'fight, flee or join' ethnic outsiders. We find evidence for the first and third, but not the second, response.

First, the ethnic majority is attempting to combat ethnic change by expressing disquiet to pollsters and politicians and voting for anti-immigration parties. The increase in concerns over immigration expressed in letters to MPs and in Ipsos-Mori polls broadly tracks the rise in actual net migration and became the most important issue for people for much of the 2000s until the economic crisis. As the crisis waned, immigration rose back to top spot. Meanwhile, in 2014, the UK Independence Party (UKIP) came first in the European elections, winning almost 30 per cent of the vote.

Using 2012 local election data, we found that the British National Party (BNP) vote was significantly higher in wards which experienced the largest increase in minority population during 2001-11 – even after controlling for other ward properties such as deprivation. In Barking and Dagenham, for instance, the White British share fell from 81 per cent in 2001 to 49 per cent in 2011. During this time, 12 BNP councillors were elected on the 51-person council, though these were later defeated due to a concerted, high-profile anti-BNP mobilisation. Analysis of the Home Office Citizenship survey confirms that White British individuals who lived in the fastest-shifting wards were more likely to favour lower levels of immigration.

On the other hand, we found that the effect of rapid ethnic change fades after a decade. Indeed, wards with a higher established share of minorities had less anti-immigration sentiment and lower far right voting than whiter wards. This suggests that accommodation takes place as white residents become habituated to minorities' presence and experience direct contact with them.

Yet this local effect does not scale up. Quite the opposite: though whites in diverse wards are relatively pro-immigration, whites living in white patches or fringes within diverse Local Authorities are more anti-immigration and more likely to vote for the populist right than whites living in heavily white LAs. This aligns with the literature on ethnic threat which suggests the presence of minorities in adjacent locales increases hostility to diversity in remaining white areas. The strength of both the BNP and UKIP in outer East London and Essex may be an example of what some scholars term the 'halo effect' of high ethnic threat in the white zones ringing diverse cities.

“ We found that the effect of rapid ethnic change fades after a decade ”

Of course the bifurcated pattern of more liberal attitudes in diverse wards coexisting with less liberal views in adjacent zones may simply be the result of 'white flight', with less tolerant whites leaving diverse areas for whiter places nearby. Using data from Understanding Society – the world-leading longitudinal study – we refute this argument. We found that whites do choose whiter wards to move to than minorities originating from the same area. This helps explain dramatic shifts such as London's loss of 600,000 White British and gain of 1.6m non-White British people in the 2000s, which was repeated in many other urban areas of England. On the other hand, whites who dislike immigration or vote for the BNP or UKIP were no more likely to move to a whiter area than other whites. Local diversity really does seem to soften white attitudes to immigration and this is not because of white flight.

Does this mean that more diversity in the future will lead to more tolerant attitudes and less populist right voting? Not necessarily. The growth in local diversity should lead to greater acceptance of immigration over a decade in some places, but the rise in diversity in neighbourhoods also affects the whiter areas 'next door' and fuels media and personal reports about the scale of change. This may well affect more people than those mollified by experiencing local diversity, which could spur further increases in anti-immigration sentiment. ■



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www.sneps.net/research-interests/whiteworkingclass

Going for growth

The Enterprise Research Centre works to discover what drives the growth of SMEs. What makes them successful, who are today's entrepreneurs and what can government and providers of finance do to make more SMEs more successful? By **Martin Ince**



THE ENTERPRISE RESEARCH Centre's (ERC) website declares on its front page that it was established in February 2013 to answer one central question. What drives SME Growth? And unlike most academics, its director, Professor Stephen Roper, can answer the question in one word. It is "Ambition."

He explains that while many entrepreneurs are keen on making money, they can have a range of other motivations, including a desire for work autonomy, or to make the most of a specific invention or business opportunity. Ambitious entrepreneurs, those interested in significant growth, operate in a wide range of industries from high technology to carpet retail, and all over the country from London to Northern Ireland. But they share one feature – a strong desire for success.

And while the entrepreneurial spirit is in evidence across the country, the same is broadly true of the ERC. It is a distributed organisation, with its main base at Aston and Warwick business schools and other staff based at Birmingham and Strathclyde universities and at Imperial College. Roper, who is Professor of Enterprise at Warwick, is quick to point out that the ERC shares many of the characteristics of a small business drawing on a range of sources of funding. "It involves 28 academic and support staff and is costing £1 million a year between 2013 and 2016," he explains. "ESRC is paying half of that." The other half is coming from BIS, the government department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and from the four big banks via the British Bankers' Association.

ERC has attracted this broad base of support because of official enthusiasm for new, growing businesses as the key to British economic success. ERC is adding to our knowledge of these firms, especially by a detailed study of the 250,000 UK companies founded in 1998. They were 15 years old when ERC was launched. Says Roper, "60 per cent of these firms no longer exist, and most of the rest have stayed small. But one really interesting group of 1,200 of these firms started with fewer than five staff each, and have created a quarter of the UK's net new jobs in the following 15 years."

Politicians would love to know how to make more businesses like these. Professor Roper thinks that when set against major economic factors such as the recession, changing exchange rates or reforms to employment legislation, it is hard for government assistance to small business to be a decisive factor. But we do know some measures that work, such as grant support for innovation, and we know that companies that make use of the external support that is available perform better in the long term.

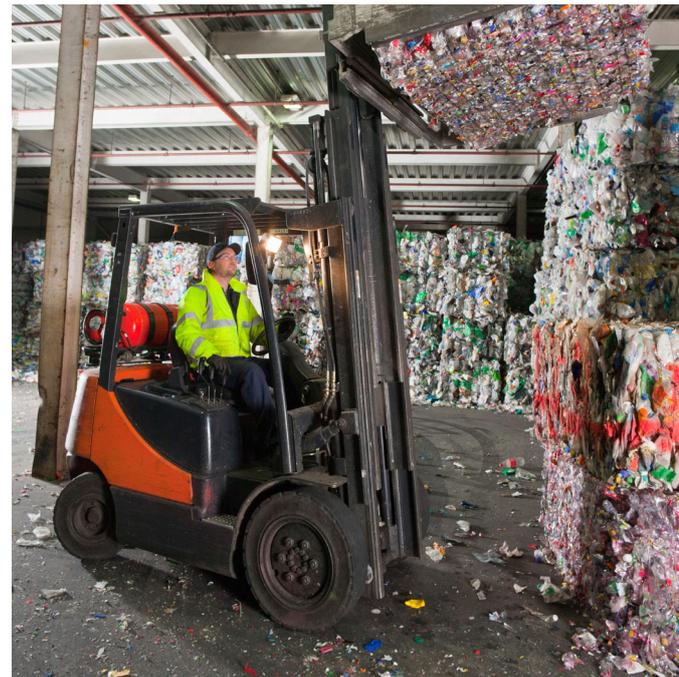
Professor Roper adds that these companies do worry about issues such as labour shortages, especially of skilled engineers, and about the difficulty of importing skilled overseas labour. But their number one concern is with the internal workings of a growing business. He says: "Their

biggest set of issues are linked to leadership, strategy and management, especially how to run a business as it gets bigger, or how to take key decisions. Is it better to invest in advertising, or in new machinery? These are questions that are sometimes less pressing for bigger businesses, because they have an internal resource of skilled management, and stronger financial resources".

“ The fastest-growing small businesses tend to become international at an early stage ”

Professor Mark Hart, deputy director of ERC and based at Aston University business school, says that the Centre is closely involved in communicating these messages to government, the banks and other key interest groups. For example, he says: "Our research indicates that the fastest-growing small businesses tend to become international at an early stage. So we are telling the banks that it is important to look after small businesses that are starting to trade internationally."

Activities of high-growth companies from the 1998 cohort include waste management and recycling as well as fish processing.



He adds that around 2,000 high-growth companies that emerged from the 1998 cohort of micro-enterprise start-ups are still continuing to grow rapidly. Professor Hart says: "These companies now average 55 staff and a turnover of £8.5 million. They are in all sectors of the economy and include such activities as waste management and recycling as well as fish processing. Our research shows that 400 of them are adding turnover faster than their jobs growth, in other words that they are increasing their labour productivity." This is of national importance because of the well-recognised problem of low productivity in the British economy. ▶



Professor Hart is especially interested in management development for these businesses, and for the UK companies participating in the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses programme. Run from five universities in the UK, including Aston, this project is part of a global initiative by Goldman Sachs in small company and entrepreneurial development, which he jointly leads in the UK. It has involved around 1,000 British companies to date. He says: “Our aim is to develop a programme which changes the dynamics of these firms. It works via an intensive four-month process of peer-learning to develop management and leadership skills. The emphasis is on mutual learning and community building. This type of learning is far more valuable to these businesses than simply listening to academics.”

Hart adds that the story of these businesses: “is not a London story and is not a digital story.” They exist all over the country, in rural locations as well as city centres. But there are some interesting clusters, such as automotive-related companies in the Midlands and caravan manufacturers around Hull. He also points out that Belfast has the highest proportion of start-ups from 2011 to have reached at least £1 million turnover by 2014. The reason, he thinks, is that Northern Ireland has had a stable business support system while the rest of the UK has “flip-flopped” through a series of changes, most recently the abolition of the Regional Development Agencies and the associated Business Link support offer. He says: “Our evaluation evidence of business support is too thin on the ground to tell us exactly what works, so the best advice is to leave the structures we have alone, resource them adequately and

let them get on with it, with a close eye on monitoring and evaluation.”

Professor Sara Carter, deputy principal of the University of Strathclyde and associate director of the ERC, says that the Centre has focused on mining existing underexploited material, and has collected relatively little new data. An example from her own work is the link between diverse households and small businesses. This research has shown that the household within which an enterprise is based has an unexpectedly large influence on its ambitions for growth and on its business strategy. The household’s abilities and desires, says Professor Carter, can often be key to the way the enterprise grows.

She has also done work on support for ethnic minority businesses, with a view to unlocking mechanisms that can help them grow. Professor Carter says: “One aim of this work is to put these businesses in touch with bankers, and with people in charge of corporate and local government procurement. These are the people who hold the keys to business growth.”

The ERC is also looking at women entrepreneurs, and at the reasons why women

““ The story of these businesses is not a London story and is not a digital story ””

are less likely than men to start a business. Here it seems that government support can be beneficial. Official programmes to boost female entrepreneurship, developed in Scotland and elsewhere, have a measurable positive effect.

She adds that although people start businesses for many reasons, including the desire for autonomy, control and an agreeable lifestyle, it would be foolish to discount the financial rewards that can accompany this decision. Professor Carter says: “we did work in which we extracted the entrepreneur households in the UK Wealth and Assets Survey. They had an average household wealth of £475,000, twice the figure of £246,000 for households led by employees. More than half of the entrepreneur households are in the top three deciles [the top 30 per cent] for household wealth. It may be true that wealthy people are more likely to become entrepreneurs, but the evidence is clear that entrepreneurship itself drives personal and household wealth.” ■



The Enterprise Research Centre (ERC) was established in February 2013 to answer one central question, ‘What drives SME Growth?’

The Centre’s research is divided into six main research themes – Ambition, Business Demography, Diversity, Finance and Governance, Innovation and Exporting and Leadership.

The Centre aspires to become the international focal point for research, knowledge and expertise on SME growth and entrepreneurship.

Web www.enterpriseresearch.ac.uk/about

@ERC_UK



On 24 June the ESRC hosted its third Celebrating Impact Prize, in partnership with SAGE. The prize is an annual opportunity to recognise and reward the outstanding contributions that ESRC-funded researchers make to business, policy and societal wellbeing in the UK and internationally.



With ten winning entries across six categories, the ESRC Celebrating Impact Prize highlights some truly exceptional work this year, ranging from supporting reform in the Nigerian Police Force to challenging violence against women and tackling inequality in prisons. Each winner has undoubtedly made a real difference to the world we live in, through changing perceptions, informing debate, shaping policy and driving action. Without the work of individuals like these,

social and economic science might simply be some words in a journal.

The prize-giving ceremony was hosted by BBC Radio 4's Laurie Taylor, and attended by over 150 delegates, including university Vice Chancellors, policymakers, ESRC Council members, MPs, Lords and many more. With speeches from Jane Elliott, Chief Executive of the ESRC, Ziyad Marar, Global Publishing Director at SAGE, Kate Allen, Director of Amnesty International UK, and Kelvin Hopkins MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Social Science and Policy, the evening was full of valuable insights into the world of social and economic research and how it affects the policy and practice that shapes our lives. Many thanks to all those who attended the ceremony and congratulations to this year's winners.



Dr Jennifer Doyle, Trafford Housing Trust

Outstanding Early Career Impact

Winner: Dr Jennifer Doyle, Trafford Housing Trust



In her PhD research, Dr Jennifer Doyle found that improving housing stock alone is not enough to transform a deprived community. In addition to a well maintained house, people need a whole range of support – from debt advice to help finding work. Now, in her role as Customer Intelligence Officer at the Trafford Housing Trust, Dr Doyle is ensuring research changes social housing developments for the better.

Dr Doyle's research has led to a shift in thinking, particularly among social housing organisations, towards

ensuring that social benefits and impact are considered at the design stage of future investments. And, by close collaboration and knowledge sharing among the wider social housing sector, she is working to explain the value of a 'social impact' approach to other organisations and policymakers.

Runner-up: Dr Oliver Owen, University of Oxford

Dr Oliver Owen's study is providing unique evidence for reforms aimed at improving performance, effectiveness and accountability within Nigeria's Police Force. By working closely with over 130 police officers based in north-central Nigeria, Dr Owen explored the world of policing from the officers' points of view, gaining insights into the potential for reforms.

Reforms advocated by Dr Owen are already being implemented and he has been invited to participate in future implementation of reforms. In addition, the Inspector General of the Nigerian Police Force has based a review on Dr Oliver Owen's report into policing, asking national heads of departments to make written responses on its recommendations.

Outstanding Impact in Business

Winners: Professor Colin Mason, University of Glasgow and Professor Richard Harrison, University of Edinburgh

Research by Professors Colin Mason and Richard Harrison over the past 25 years has played a crucial role in stimulating business angel investment worth £750 million a year in the UK. Their initial study published in 1990 was the first to identify business angels, who are typically wealthy individuals with an eye for investment, as a key source of finance for new and growing ventures.

The research team influenced new policy measures to increase the supply of angel finance, notably through tax incentives and the establishment of 'business angel networks'. Their research also highlighted a lack of 'investment readiness' among many of the businesses seeking finance, which led to the creation of an Investment Readiness programme in 2001.



(l-r) Professor Colin Mason, Professor Richard Harrison and Dr Alan Gillespie, ESRC Chair



Dr Jane Dyson, University of Oxford

Outstanding International Impact

Winner: Dr Jane Dyson, University of Oxford

For over 12 years, Dr Jane Dyson has been conducting research in north India on young people, education, and unemployment. Now, her unique documentary on the challenges facing young people in the Indian Himalayas is reaching school children, students and policymakers worldwide. The film 'Lifelines' and the accompanying teaching pack now feature on the Welsh National Curriculum and are used in several universities in the US, Canada, UK and Australia.

As well as providing a valuable teaching resource and being selected for several international film festivals, the film has inspired government officials in the region to tackle youth issues and change their thinking on education and unemployment. Lifelines has also inspired a US business entrepreneur to commit funding for a new educational non-governmental organisation in the village of Bemni.

Runner-up: Professor Ian Scoones, University of Sussex

In 2000, President Mugabe forcibly removed many of the 4,500 white owners of Zimbabwe's farms from their land. It was fully expected that the handover of these farms would devastate Zimbabwean agriculture, but research led by Professor Ian Scoones offers some surprising insights into the consequences of the radical land reform.

Professor Scoones' research has changed the terms of debate, encouraged an evidence-based appraisal of the land reform and inspired a wider public and policy debate – notably through the weekly blog *ZimbabweLand*. He has also inspired a new cohort of researchers, both in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Southern Africa, where the inheritances of colonialism and apartheid have meant that the challenge of redistributive land reform remains high on the political agenda.

Outstanding Impact in Public Policy

Winner: Dr Aisha K Gill, University of Roehampton

Dr Aisha Gill's pioneering research on violence against women has helped to shape local, national and international policy on the issues of forced marriage



Dr Aisha K. Gill, University of Roehampton (left) and Kate Allen, Director of Amnesty International UK

and ‘honour’ crimes (violence towards those accused of shaming a family or community).

The NHS, Department for Education, and numerous third sector organisations have used Dr Gill’s research to develop good practice guidelines, improving their engagement with victims, their families and perpetrators. In 2011, Dr Gill was invited by the Crown Prosecution Service to provide expert evidence in the Shafiea Ahmed murder case. Her expertise contributed to the conviction of the victim’s parents for murder in August 2012. Through her groundbreaking perspectives, she has brought the issue of violence against women and girls in black, minority ethnic and refugee communities out of the shadows.

Runner-up: Dr Victoria Lavis, University of Bradford

Dr Victoria Lavis’ innovative six-year research programme on equality and diversity in prisons has helped shape a new national equalities policy framework in the UK. The work has resulted in the development of local and national guidance for the care of transgender prisoners as well as best practice guidelines to help staff respect diversity when searching prisoners’ cells.

Dr Lavis and her colleague Professor Malcolm Cowburn began exploring the fairness and respect afforded to prisoners in 2009. Using a new research approach called ‘Appreciative Inquiry’, which is based on identifying good practice, the researchers examined how prisoners with minority identities such as faith, disability or ethnicity experienced prison. Their findings then enabled the development of guidance and training to ensure that prisoners are treated with fairness, respect and decency.

Outstanding Impact in Society

Joint winners: Professor Jenny Kitzinger, Cardiff University and Professor Celia Kitzinger, University of York

In 2009, when Professors Jenny Kitzinger and Celia Kitzinger embarked on research into the support available for relatives of patients in a coma, vegetative or minimally conscious state, they found many relatives struggling with feelings of isolation, guilt and confusion as well as incorrect legal guidance. In response, they developed an online resource, which now provides information and support to more than 4,000 visitors including families, solicitors, clinicians and health professionals.

Training sessions based on the resource have been delivered in hospitals, rehabilitation centres and care



(l-r) Professor Jenny Kitzinger, Cardiff University, Dr Hester Parr, University of Glasgow and Professor Celia Kitzinger, University of York



Professor Charlie Jeffery, University of Edinburgh, Impact Champion of the Year

homes, improving communication and decision-making between professionals and family members. In addition, the research findings directly informed recommendations by the House of Lords Select Committee on the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and led to the inclusion of specific guidelines on the family's role in decision-making and guidance on the law.

Joint winner: Dr Hester Parr, University of Glasgow

In the UK, one person goes missing every 90 seconds. How police treat missing people once they are found matters hugely in how they cope with the experience and the likelihood of them going missing again. A unique study led by Dr Hester Parr has improved the way UK police officers relate to missing people and transformed policing guidance on the handling of missing persons and their families.



Dr Sara Miller McCune, co-founder and Chair of SAGE Publications (left) and Professor Jane Elliott, Chief Executive, ESRC

Dr Parr interviewed 45 former missing people to provide unique evidence about what happens to them when they are absent. The research material now reaches one in four police officers in England and Wales via training interventions from the UK College of Policing. Additionally, police operational guidance for Scotland, England and Wales now incorporates research recommendations in its best practice guidelines.

Impact Champion of the Year

Professor Charlie Jeffery, University of Edinburgh

With his long-term commitment over successive research initiatives to maximising impact opportunities for his own research as well as for colleagues and collaborators, Professor Charlie Jeffery, ESRC Impact Champion of 2015, is a model of leadership in the social sciences.

As Director of the ESRC Devolution and Constitutional Change Programme (2000-07), Professor Jeffery ensured the impact of 150 researchers by establishing relationships of confidence and trust with key research users. He has advised the Commission on Scottish Devolution (2008-09), the Scotland Bill Committee of the Scottish Parliament (2011-12), and served as a member of the McKay Commission on the West Lothian Question (2012-14).

As the 2014 Scottish Referendum approached, Professor Jeffery and his research team of the ESRC Future of UK and Scotland programme provided impartial analysis and political commentary to more than 430 news outlets, reaching an audience tens of millions strong – an achievement underpinned by more than 25 years' experience in maximising impact opportunities. ■

To view videos of the prizewinners, see www.esrc.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/celebrating-impact-prize/prize-winners-2015.aspx



Religious literacy

Greater religious understanding is vital to produce effective, long-term responses to radicalisation. By Professor **John Wolffe**

CONCERN ABOUT HOME-GROWN violent radicalisation linked to Daesh (the so-called 'Islamic State' in Iraq and Syria) is understandably high on the agenda of politicians and the security services. While immediate countermeasures – such as gathering intelligence of plots and questioning individuals when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting them – are obviously crucial, longer term strategies need to be more nuanced and wide-ranging. In particular, recent discussions drawing on the research of academics linked to the Partnership for Conflict Crime and Security research has highlighted the dangers of relying on a simplistic definition of 'religious extremism' as a basis for identifying potential violent radicals.

Academics themselves are not always comfortable defining or analysing religion. Their unease in this respect is shared by non-specialist journalists, who are liable either to ignore religious factors or to stereotype them, and by secular politicians who, in Alastair Campbell's words, 'don't do God'. But quite independently of personal belief or non-belief, it is vitally important to promote greater understanding of religion in such quarters, for the following reasons.

First, there is a need for leadership in addressing the widespread popular perception that religion is 'the problem', leading to divisive Islamophobia in Britain, as well as to attacks on Christians elsewhere. Religion can be a useful emotional and rhetorical tool for those whose underlying motivations are actually political or territorial. It may be helpful here to ponder the analogy with Northern Ireland in the later 20th century where although republican and loyalist paramilitaries were respectively nominal Roman Catholics and nominal Protestants, and some of their rhetoric had religious resonances, there is general acceptance that their underlying motivation was political rather than religious.

Second, it is important to appreciate that much perceived 'religious extremism' endangers no-one except, arguably, the individuals who identify with it. Indeed some can be 'extreme' in opposing rather than advocating violence. Those who follow rigorous Islamic practice and some forms of Christian and Jewish fundamentalism may seem at odds with wider social mores, but provided they do not seek aggressively to impose their values on others, they should be tolerated in a free society without fear of being regarded as potential terrorists. To do otherwise risks reinforcing alienation and becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Third, it needs to be better understood that Islam – like all major religious traditions – has enormous internal diversity. Such awareness is important in underlining the unrepresentativeness of violent radicals; at the same time it highlights the need for caution in identifying spokespeople who may in fact be representative only of very limited constituencies.

“ Islam – like all major religious traditions – has enormous internal diversity ”

Finally, there needs to be a long-term commitment to enhancing religious literacy across society, and especially in the education system. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 imposes a statutory duty on schools and universities to identify those at risk of being drawn into terrorism, which they will not be equipped to do equitably without the tools to inform sometimes quite subtle judgements about individuals. In particular, definitions of 'non-violent extremism' are highly problematic and require a considerable degree of interpretation and contextualisation. Moreover young people who lack an informed understanding of their own and other religious traditions are highly vulnerable to those who propagate distorted and confrontational interpretations.

For several centuries after the Reformation, the Protestant states of northern Europe and North America perceived themselves to be threatened by violence inspired by Roman Catholicism, despite the continuing presence of peaceful Catholic minorities in their midst. Like contemporary fears of Daesh and its sympathisers these suspicions had some basis in reality, but in retrospect appear grossly exaggerated. Attitudes were slow to change, but the ultimate solution lay much more in acceptance than in suppression. While the comparison is not, of course, an exact one, it does highlight the importance of taking the long view, promoting positive steps to enhance inter-communal and religious understanding, and evaluating short-term measures to ensure that they will not eventually be counterproductive. ■



John Wolffe is Professor of Religious History at The Open University and an RCUK Global Uncertainties Leadership Fellow. His Religion and Security report, co-authored with Gavin Moorhead, is downloadable from www.open.ac.uk/arts/research/religion-martyrdom-global-uncertainties

Balancing act

Paul Johnson, Director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), explains to *Society Now* how the IFS gained its reputation for independent research, the difficulties of being critical yet remaining scrupulously impartial, and the big economic issues of the future

How did the IFS become so influential for fiscal policy debate, as seen in the run-up to the General Election? How did you get there?

Paul Johnson: The most important thing to understand about being influential is that you can't get there overnight. A really important part of the IFS's success in recent years has been the track record of trust that it has built up since it first started working in similar areas over 30 years ago.

Over that whole time we have aimed at achieving a combination of absolute political independence, both actual and perceived, high-quality empirical work, and a focus on carefully communicating what we do to policymakers and the wider public through the media.

“Neither I nor my colleagues blog or tweet on policy issues because it is very hard to get that right all the time”

In doing that I think we make use of four advantages over university-based departments or institutes. First, we have continuity. Our data and models are developed over long periods by successive generations of staff. Second, we can provide incentives for staff to build careers in which academic publication is important, but other forms of work and engagement are also invested in and rewarded (we would have scored very high in the REF exercise as well). Third, as an independent organisation we can build a culture among our staff in which all these things are valued, and care and independence in public utterances are expected. Finally, being small and not part of a bigger institution, our brand and our reputation are our own.

In the recent general election we followed the usual rules we apply to our work. We only produced analysis in those areas in which we have expertise and we were incredibly careful to ensure that what we did was well founded, rigorously independent and carefully communicated.

Being perceived as completely impartial is fairly rare. How do you keep this challenging balancing act?

I think there are three aspects to that.

First, and probably most important, is that issue of culture again. The need not just for actual independence but for great care in public utterances is instilled in researchers here from the moment they start work. The need for impartiality is in all our DNA.

Second, we stick to what we know. We probably turn down more requests for comment than we accede to. And we are somewhat helped by our subject matter: when talking about public finance, or tax or pensions, it is facts and objective analysis that are seen as important.

Third, in terms of process, we have a set of internal rules and checks and balances. Unusually neither I nor my colleagues blog or tweet on policy issues because it is very hard to get that right all the time. When we put out press releases, articles and reports they are always read and checked at a senior level. And we do that quickly.

I would also say that, personally, having worked in public policy and in government for a long time, I don't find it hard to see that there are rarely approaches and policies that are completely right or completely wrong. Independence, in my view, goes quite naturally with experience and a natural scepticism.

Importantly none of that means we are never critical. We frequently are. But our criticism tends to be measured, based in analysis and never about the aims of policy. It is not our job to tell government that it should be more or less redistributive, should spend more or less on health etc. What we try to do is set out the consequences





There are many more issues, not least what will happen in the Eurozone and how that will affect the UK economy and the UK referendum

of policy actions and test whether they sit well with expressed aims.

Of course to be independent we need independent sources of funding. That is a continuous struggle for us as a small charity with no assets. The ESRC has been absolutely vital to us in that context over a long period, but it remains very difficult to secure funding for genuinely independent policy-related research.

What are the economy issues you feel are likely to be the most prominent ones into the autumn and next year?

The big issue for the government, and for us, in the Autumn is likely to be the spending review. The Chancellor will have to set out how he will reduce spending over the next few years. Our analysis is that if he is to keep to manifesto commitments that will require some really big additional cuts in all those areas not expressly protected: transport, business, local government, police etc. These decisions will have long-lasting economic and social effects.

The big economic issues look likely to centre around what happens to productivity and to earnings and what, if anything, the government can do to support them after a really dreadful period for both since the recession. If productivity starts to grow again in a sustainable way then we can

expect living standards to start rising and economic growth. If it doesn't then the rather miserable period of stagnant living standards seen recently will continue and the period of austerity likely to be extended once more.

There are many more issues, not least what will happen in the Eurozone and how that will affect the UK economy and the UK referendum of course. But I'd like to pick one final one which I think is vital both economically and socially – what happens in the housing market. High prices and lack of supply will have big effects on both our capacity to grow and on social and intergenerational equity. ■

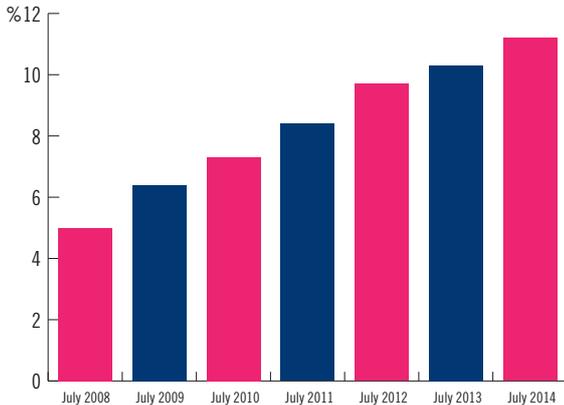
i The Institute for Fiscal Studies was founded in 1969. Established as an independent research institute, the IFS was launched with the principal aim of better informing public debate on economics in order to promote the development of effective fiscal policy. Today, the IFS is Britain's leading independent microeconomic research institute. Its research remit is one of the broadest in public policy analysis, covering subjects from tax and benefits to education policy, from labour supply to corporate taxation. The IFS is host to the ESRC Centre for the Microeconomic Analysis of Public Policy and the ESRC Centre for Microdata Methods and Practice.
 Web www.ifs.org.uk
www.cemmap.ac.uk/centres/cpp

THE UK BY NUMBERS CONSUMER SPENDING

We present an at-a-glance overview of the key issues in Britain today. In this issue our focus is on consumer spending. All statistics are from the ONS Retail Sales Statistical Bulletin unless otherwise stated

Online spend

Average weekly spending online in May 2015 was £791.3 million, an increase of 7.4% compared with May 2014 and the lowest year-on-year increase since November 2012. Value of internet sales as a proportion of all retailing (excluding automotive fuel, seasonally adjusted)



“Whoever said money can’t buy happiness simply didn’t know where to go shopping” Bo Derek



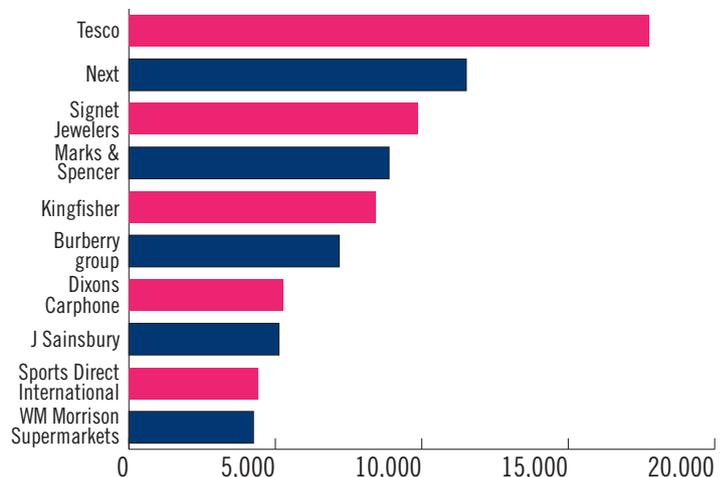
“Consumerism has a religious day called Black Friday” Jarod Kintz

- 4.6%** Continuing year-on-year growth, the volume of retail sales in May 2015 is estimated to have increased by 4.6% compared with May 2014
- 2.7%** In May, average store prices (including petrol stations) fell by 2.7% year-on-year – the 11th consecutive month of year-on-year price falls
- 12%** The amount spent online accounted for 12.0% of all retail spending, excluding automotive fuel, compared with 11.5% in May 2014

In May 2015, the quantity bought in the retail industry (volume) increased by 4.6% compared with May 2014. The amount spent (value) increased by 1.8%. In May 2015, non-seasonally adjusted data show that the prices of goods sold in the retail industry (as measured by the implied price deflator) decreased by 2.7%. In the four-week reporting period during May 2015, the amount spent in the retail industry was £28.3 billion (non-seasonally adjusted). This compares with £27.8 billion in the 4-week reporting period for April 2015 and £27.8 billion in the 4-week reporting period for May 2014.

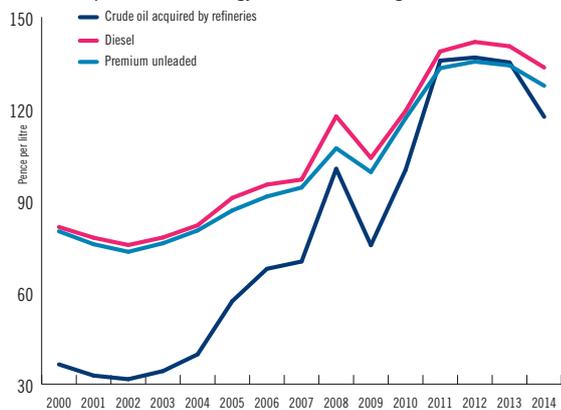
Biggest British retailers

Tesco ranks top of British retailers with a market capitalisation of £17.75 billion, followed by Next at approximately £11.52 billion. Top 10 British retail companies in the UK as of 17 July 2015 (in million GBP), by market capitalisation - Source: Google Finance - Yahoo Finance - MSN Money



Fuel prices

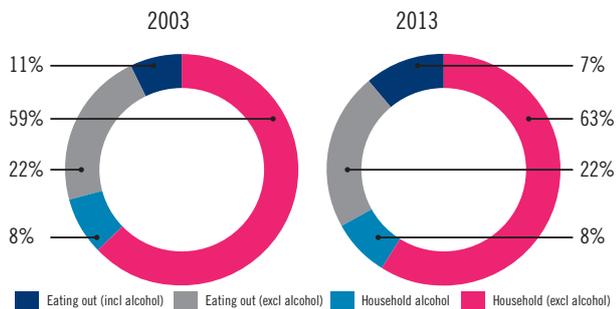
The start of the Iraq War in 2003, hurricane damage to US refineries in 2005, conflict in Lebanon in 2006, increased demand from emerging economies, geopolitical tensions, and the weak dollar in 2008 have all led to crude oil price increases. Prices of fuels and index of crude oil prices - Source: Department of Energy & Climate Change



“Formula for success: rise early, work hard, strike oil”
J. Paul Getty

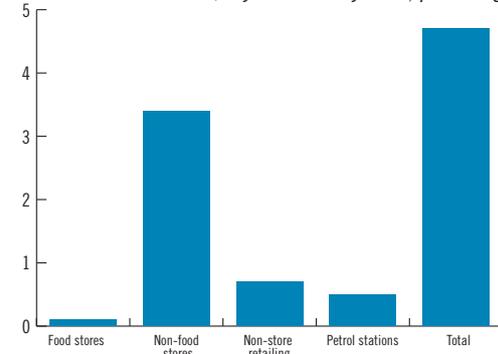
Household shopping and eating habits

In the UK an average 11.4 per cent of all household spend went on food in 2013. For the lowest 20 per cent of households by equivalised income it was 16.5 per cent. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs - Family Food 2013



Contribution to growth

In May 2015, all four main retail sectors saw an increase in the quantity bought (volume). The largest contribution came from the non-food stores sector. Contributions to year-on-year volume growth from the four main retail sectors (May 2014 to May 2015, percentage points)



Retail sales

The volume of retail sales in April 2015 was 11% higher than it was in April 2013, corresponding to an average annual growth rate of 1.1% Growth in the volume of retail sales: three months to April 2015



Polls apart

Why didn't the opinion polls before the 2015 General Election predict the actual election result? **Jon Mellon** and **Chris Prosser** of the British Election Study team examine some of the possible causes of the polling miss and what polling companies can do to prevent it in future

THE POST-ELECTION wave of the British Election Study (BES) Internet panel allows us to take a closer look at possible causes of the polling miss during the recent General Election. In this article we outline the evidence we have gathered so far to test five possible explanations: 1) 'don't knows' shifting, 2) a late swing among voters, 3) Shy Tories, 4) problems achieving a representative sample and 5) differential turnout.

Late swing and 'don't knows'

The post-election data immediately casts doubt on two of the theories. In our campaign wave, seven per cent of people said that they 'don't know' who they would vote for. In the post-election survey (when we can see how undecided respondents ended up voting), we find a very small edge for the Conservatives among previously undecided voters. However, 'don't knows' only contribute around 0.05 percentage points towards the polling gap so it is unlikely to have been a major factor. Similarly, there is no difference between the proportion of respondents supporting the Conservatives in the campaign wave and the post-election wave, making it unlikely that there was a late swing.

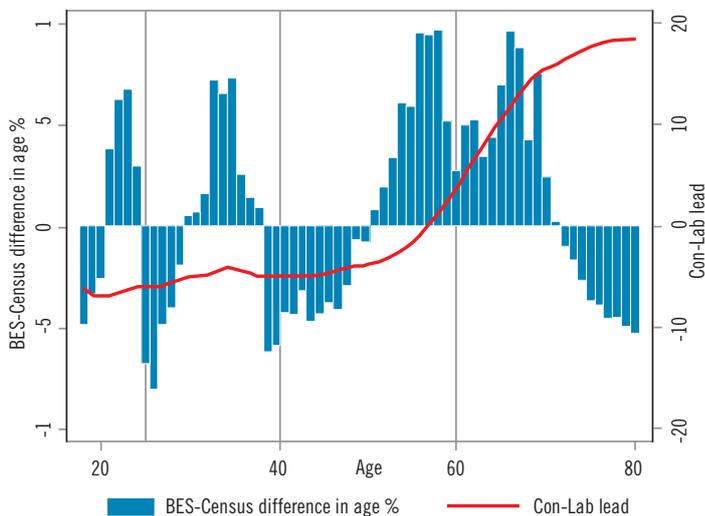
Shy Tories

We also have evidence against the Shy Tories theory. We can examine the Shy Tories theory by considering where there is likely to be social pressure on Conservative voters. For example, it seems unlikely that Tories would need to be shy

“ It seems unlikely that Tories would need to be shy in the heavily Conservative Shires ”

in the heavily Conservative Shires but it is more plausible that they would be shy in traditional Labour heartlands like Sunderland. We actually observe the opposite pattern. The deviation between the proportion of BES respondents saying they voted Conservative and the actual proportion of voters who did is highest in strong Conservative areas where we would expect the least social pressure against voting Conservative.

There is also no apparent evidence for another aspect of the Shy Tories theory. Several pollsters have suggested that placing the vote intention question later in a survey makes respondents more willing to admit that they plan to vote Conservative. In the first three waves of the BES we randomised the placement of the vote intention question to be



Deviation in proportion of respondents of each age compared to census (left axis). Vertical lines designate the age boundaries of the weighting age groups. The red line is a LOWESS regression of Conservative-Labour lead against age among BES respondents in wave 6 (right axis).

either at the start of the survey or at the end after all other questions and the question placement makes no difference to the proportion of respondents intending to vote Conservative. Taking these findings together, we are doubtful whether Shy Tories were a major contributor to the polling miss.

Representative samples

We also have more evidence about the representativeness of polling samples used before the election. One possible source of non-representativeness could be the groupings used for weighting by polling firms. For instance, do the age groupings used for weighting (both by YouGov and many other polling firms) hide variation within those groups? The red line in the graph above shows the lead in share of the vote that the Conservatives have over Labour by age. The vertical lines represent the breakpoints between the standard age bands used for weighting. The bars show the difference between the percentage of BES respondents of a particular age and the percentage of the 2011 population of the same age (eg, positive bars mean that an age is over-represented in the BES). The most important deviation is the oldest age group, where younger (less Conservative-leaning) respondents are overrepresented whilst older (more Conservative leaning) respondents are underrepresented. The net effect of this difference is to dampen the Conservative lead. This problem



is even greater for the oldest respondents in the sample – those over age 80 make up 5.1 per cent of the population, but only 0.5 per cent of the BES. This evidence suggests there is some pro-Labour bias due to the age groupings used, but this might yet be cancelled out by other parts of the weighting scheme. We will need to examine all the weighting variables before we can draw conclusions about the contribution of non-representative samples to the polling miss.

Differential turnout

There is also new evidence for the differential turnout theory. Ninety-one point six per cent of our respondents claim to have voted compared with 66.4 per cent in Great Britain as a whole. While this partially reflects the fact that polling respondents tend to be more politically interested than the general population, we also have considerable evidence that respondents overstate their turnout: 20 per cent of respondents in areas without local elections claim to have voted in them in 2015; 3-6 per cent of respondents in the campaign wave claim to have voted by post before the postal ballots were actually issued and 46 per cent of respondents who we have confirmed were not registered to vote in June 2014 claim to have voted in the 2014 European Elections. In all of these cases, the fibbers lean significantly more toward Labour than other respondents.

We look at the impact of overstated turnout more precisely by building a predictive model of turnout based on the validated vote in the 2010 BES face-to-face survey. The model accounts for a respondent's stated likelihood of voting prior to the election, turnout in previous elections, their age, marital status, household income, unemployment

Why did the General Election result contradict the majority of pre-election opinion polls?

and trade union membership, as well as several constituency factors, including the overall turnout in their constituency in the previous General Election. After accounting for these factors, we estimate that our respondents' turnout is likely to have actually been around 73.4 per cent. Importantly, we can look at how vote intention differs among respondents who have different predicted probabilities of voting.

The Labour lead among unlikely voters grew hugely between 2010 and 2015, suggesting that differential turnout is an important factor in explaining the polling miss: considerably fewer of those saying they were going to vote Labour are likely to have actually turned out to vote. Reweighting our respondents according to their predicted probabilities of voting explains about

“ The evidence suggests there is some pro-Labour bias due to the age groupings used ”

25 per cent of the gap in the Conservative lead between the pre-campaign wave of our survey and the actual election results.

The evidence in the BES suggests that the reason for the increased impact of differential turnout is not due to a change in the relative enthusiasm between Labour and Conservative supporters since 2010. Eighty-four per cent of Labour supporters in 2015 said that it was 'very likely' that they would vote, compared to 86 per cent of Conservative supporters, while in 2010 the figures were 87 per cent and 90 per cent respectively. Rather the data suggest that the increase in the turnout gap between Labour and the Conservatives can be explained by shifts in party support amongst those who are actually less likely to turn out to vote, even if they say they will. This evidence strongly suggests that differential turnout was a major factor in the polling miss.

If differential turnout is the primary cause of the polling problems, this is relatively good news for pollsters. It should be possible for pollsters to fix many of their surveys by using turnout weighting that accounts for the wider set of factors we have identified.

Our analysis of the post-election BES data makes us much more sceptical about late swing, 'don't knows' and Shy Tories. By contrast, we are leaning very strongly towards differential turnout as an explanation and think that it's likely that sampling and weighting played at least some role. ■

i The British Election Study 2015 is managed by a consortium of The University of Manchester, The University of Oxford and The University of Nottingham. The Scientific Leadership Team comprises Professors Ed Fieldhouse, Jane Green, Hermann Schmitt, Geoff Evans and Cees van der Eijk. The team is supported by researchers Dr Jon Mellon and Chris Prosser and also by BES 2015 consultant Professor John Curtice (University of Strathclyde).
www.britishelectionstudy.com

Masters of the universe?

Management consultancy is becoming the victim of its own success as managers in large public and private sector organisations take on consulting practices as their own. Professor **Andrew Sturdy** explains how new management resembles traditional consultancy

MANAGEMENT IS CHANGING. It is becoming less explicitly hierarchical and more market- and change-oriented. But this is not a simple move away from departmental silos and hierarchical control. Management might be less bureaucratic in some respects, but it is more so in others. It is neo-bureaucratic.

This change has been happening for some time, through various mechanisms, such as flattening organisational hierarchies and the rise of formal management education. But one key

“If management groups take on a consulting identity, they risk becoming dispensable”

way in which it is accelerating is by organisations internalising a model of management based on external management consultancy. We call this management as consultancy.

This is achieved in three main ways. First, large organisations are increasingly recruiting former external management consultants into management positions, especially favouring those from blue-chip consulting firms. These highly trained individuals help promote change and a particular approach to managing, using analytical change tools and project working for example.

Second, management groups within organisations such as those in information technology (IT), accounting and human resources (HR) are taking on consulting roles and identities. This was already the case with external accounting and IT firms who boosted their income through consulting services. But now the aim is to enhance or maintain occupational status internally by borrowing from the prestige of external consultants. As one re-fashioned HR manager claimed: ‘I’m not sitting behind a desk in an ivory tower, hidden... I’m very mobile, so if I need to be in another location, the car is under the building and I move, so I’m mobile and truly like a consultant.’ Of course, this can sometimes go wrong as there is stigma as well as status attached to the management consultant identity.

The third way in which management is taking on a consulting form is the development and extension of what were once termed internal consulting units. These long represented the less

fashionable side of consulting although large organisations often found them effective. They are now changing, with new titles such as ‘programme management’ and ‘performance delivery’. They may still have a precarious existence, subject to the whims of new CEOs or waves of cuts. As one consultant manager we interviewed outlined: ‘we don’t actually have proper jobs. If they abolished us tomorrow, what would change?’ Despite such pessimism, these units can thrive for years and even if they are cut, they often re-emerge in different parts of the organisation.

The result of these changes is an emerging group of consultant managers in large public and private sector organisations. They formed the focus of our research, one of the largest ever studies of management consulting. Drawing on data collected in the UK and Australia, we found various characteristics of management as consultancy, each giving rise to different organisational dilemmas. These included the traditional problems of control and co-ordination, but also new ones such as





maintaining the identity of an ‘outsider within’ as consultant managers were often both within the hierarchy of line managers and beyond it.

The research reveals some important implications for the future of management. For example, if management groups like human resources take on a consulting identity, they risk becoming dispensable. Also, while some managers may appear more professional in such a role, they can lose accountability, much like external consultants. Can all managers, then, become like consultants in their approach? Finally, although management consulting has long taken different forms (some resembling counselling more than management), we found that the model adopted tended to be at the ‘harder’ end of the spectrum, focused on the short term and using analytical, often mechanistic tools such as those taught on MBA programmes. Other, less masculine, approaches to management may then become marginalised.

And what of the implications for external management consultancy? Will it be replaced by this new breed of manager? An article in the *Harvard Business Review* (October, 2013) outlines the North American context and identifies various disruptive threats to the industry. Although it echoes some of our findings, with seemingly ‘small armies of former consultants’ being hired by US organisations, it is mostly focused on threats from new types of consulting firm and other professional services. Our research offers a different take, one that does not see consulting simply as an elite

profession or ‘masters of the universe’. Rather, consulting is shown to be an integral part of an emergent management form, organised in other occupations or specialist units and under continual threat of reorganisation.

If management as consultancy continues to develop, then external consultancy does risk both substitution and de-mystification. It would be as if the success of consultancy has paradoxically led to the demise of the external consultant. But the consulting industry is likely to respond in various ways to this and other threats, as it has in the past. For example, it could focus more on projecting its expertise as a rare commodity and on its existing ‘outsider’ role of providing managers with reassurance or legitimation which consultant managers would find more difficult given their insider status. Whatever the outcome, management consultants should no longer be seen simply as influential outsiders, but as part of the management mainstream. ■

i Professor Andrew Sturdy is Head of the Department of Management at the University of Bristol. The research reported here was conducted with Professor Christopher Wright, University of Sydney and Dr Nick Wylie, Oxford Brookes University and was partly funded by the ESRC. It is the subject of a recent book – *Management as Consultancy* (2015, Cambridge University Press). See also Blog on The Conversation (theconversation.com/the-successful-slow-death-of-management-consultants-37400) and two minute vodcast (www.youtube.com/watch?v=8x600YaTK-o&feature=youtu.be)
 Email andrew.sturdy@bristol.ac.uk
 Telephone 01179 288606
 Web www.esrc.ac.uk/my-esrc/grants/RES-000-22-1980-A/read

Impact champion

For over a decade UK devolution has been Charlie Jeffery's main research focus. In 2015 he was announced ESRC Impact Champion for his long-term commitment to maximising impact opportunities for his own research as well as for colleagues and collaborators

The ESRC Future of the UK and Scotland initiative was a valuable resource on a timely issue. What other topics or events do you think might benefit from such a comprehensive programme of research?

Perhaps the most obvious is the question of the UK's membership of the EU, now we know we will have a referendum most likely some time in 2016. And ESRC's UK in a Changing Europe initiative has been set up to bring expert analysis from some of the UK's leading EU experts to help illuminate that debate. This kind of approach – bringing key academics together to apply their accumulated expertise to inform a major social issue in 'real time' – works well for referendums, adding perspective and nuance to debates which inevitably become polarized. It's a form of 'crowd-researching' which can be valuable to protagonists on either side of a referendum debate, but also

“ Voting 'No' clearly wasn't a statement of approval of how Scotland is governed now ”

for ordinary voters looking for information and analysis that hasn't been filtered through a campaign lens. But there's no reason an ESRC model of 'crowd-researching' couldn't work for other issues which have resonance both for policy communities and for citizens. There is a real opportunity, especially with on-line communication methods, to build public engagement at scale into social science research and analysis. So why not a 'crowd' initiative on inequality, or immigration, or housing policy, or online privacy?

What do you think might be the long-term outcomes of the referendum result and subsequent General Election result? How will relations between Scotland and the rest of the UK fare with the rise of SNP?

The referendum has changed the way Scots think about how they are governed. Voting 'No' clearly wasn't a statement of approval of how Scotland is governed now. The No vote disguised a deep disenchantment with government at and from Westminster, and shifted the allegiance of many from Labour to the SNP. The decimation of Labour in Scotland at the last UK election was the outcome. There will continue to be a drive to strengthen decision-making powers in Scotland. But what the referendum debate also did was harden opinion in England about how England

is governed. While the Prime Minister's plans on English Votes on English Laws were in part a tactical manoeuvre to limit the voice of Scottish MPs (an obvious enough move if you only have one of them), it was also a response to a still rather unfocused but increasingly potent demand for some kind of self-government for England. So one of the long term outcomes will be a gradual hardening of the boundaries between what is now a clearly distinct Scottish political system, and a nascent English one.

How does working in a controversial/divisive area (in this case Scottish independence) affect your work? Is there a risk of being drawn into a partisan 'bun fight' one way or another, even if stressing that one is strictly neutral?

That risk was ever-present during our work on the Scottish referendum, and we had to work hard to keep the Scottish and UK Governments, and the Yes and No campaigns informed about our work, so they understood what we were doing. It's not quite accurate to say that we were 'neutral', because some of the findings of our work resonated directly with one side or the other. What was important was that all sides recognised that however the findings 'landed' in the debate, they had been reached through robust methodology. It was the social science that was neutral. And it worked. Neither side liked all that we published, but both of them praised how we went about it.

What advice would you offer early career researchers on achieving impact? How do you approach impact differently if you want to reach different sections of the public – how do businesses, policymakers, community groups and others respond differently?







► You have to want your work to have resonance outside of the academy, you have to communicate appropriately to whichever audience you are working with, and you have to work hard at building goodwill and trust. All that applied at the outset of my career when (it has to be said through serendipity and coincidence) I became a trusted insider in the dense committee structures through which the German federal system operates, and it applied just as much last year when – alongside the engagement with governments and campaigns – we engaged on a quite unexpected scale with the general public. That too was about appropriate communication and building

“ The biggest challenge has been finding enough time for all the things I’ve wanted to do ”

trust. And most of it was online: presenting our expertise crisply and accessibly, building a reputation for our analysis as authoritative and above the political fray, and developing real engagement that met a need, not just supplying analysis for people to read or hear.

What challenges have you faced in your career and how did you overcome them?

The biggest challenge has probably been finding enough time for all the things I’ve wanted to do. I’ve written far fewer books than I’d intended, and I’ve had more ideas for new avenues of research than I’ve found the time to pursue. One way of overcoming these limitations has been to collaborate. I’ve been fortunate to work with inspiring people throughout my career with whom I’ve written more, carried out more research projects, and achieved more impact than I ever could have working alone.

The referendum has changed the way Scots think about how they are governed.

What’s the value of social science to society?

The value is to know ourselves better as individuals, groups and communities so we can open up knowledge about our shared interests and how we can better pursue them than we do now. My own field has been about how we govern ourselves, and how social science can offer both analysis and challenge so that we might govern ourselves better. The fact that we are now about 20 years into a constitutional reform programme that shows no sign of finding a conclusion suggests there is plenty more to keep us occupied.

What’s next for you after the Scottish Referendum?

The Scottish Referendum was not the end-point of Scotland’s debate about how to govern itself, or of debates elsewhere in the UK it set in motion. We are now seeing all this unfold in the UK Parliament as Scottish MPs press for more powers for the Scottish Parliament, and the UK Government tries to introduce ‘English Votes for English Laws’. But then there is also the EU referendum, which intersects with these internal debates because people in Scotland and England seem increasingly to think – and may vote – differently when it comes to our continued membership of the EU. So I was delighted to get one of the small projects in the UK in a Changing Europe initiative to look at how public opinion on EU membership evolves in different parts of the UK. ■



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News briefs

CELEBRATING THE IMPACT OF ESRC-FUNDED RESEARCHERS

The winners of the ESRC annual Celebrating Impact Prize, in partnership with SAGE, were announced at an awards ceremony held at Central Hall Westminster on 24 June.

The prizes were awarded to researchers whose work has had a substantial impact on society, from helping victims of violence to securing funding for UK businesses.

The winners were awarded £10,000 to further the impact of their research. Second prize-winners received £5,000, also to invest in impact activities.

Professor Jane Elliott, Chief Executive of the ESRC said:

“I would like to thank all those researchers recognised at this year’s

Impact Prize Awards ceremony for their important work. In the ESRC’s 50th anniversary year, they have reminded us of how much social science research can contribute to transforming our society for the better.”

Universities and Science Minister Jo Johnson said:

“From changing the way dementia is treated to improving living standards, economic and social science has made a huge difference to the health and wellbeing of our society over the last 50 years. The ESRC’s Celebrating Impact Prize rightly awards some of the greatest contributors to this field. My congratulations go out to all this year’s winners.”

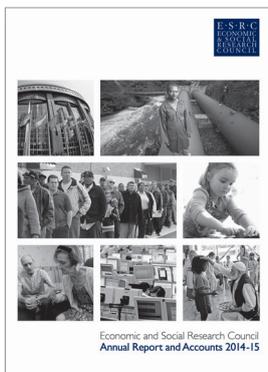
The evening was hosted by BBC Radio 4 broadcaster Laurie Taylor, and prizes were presented

by speakers including Ziyad Marar, Global Publishing Director at SAGE, Dr Alan Gillespie, Chair of the ESRC Council, Paul Grice, Clerk and Chief Executive of the Scottish Parliament, Kate Allen, Director of Amnesty International UK, Kelvin Hopkins, MP for Luton North and Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Social Science & Policy, and Professor Jane Elliott, ESRC Chief Executive. ■

For more information on the prize-winners see the centre pages of this issue of *Society Now*



ESRC ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS PUBLISHED



Our Annual Report provides information on the ESRC’s activities during the previous financial year, including a commentary on the year’s activities, and an analysis of our research and training expenditure, and our research portfolio.

The Annual Report is published and laid before Parliament annually. It covers our activities from 1 April to 31 March, a review of the year from the Chair and Chief Executive, outstanding features of the year and facts and figures at a glance. It also contains the ESRC’s full accounts for the year.

To download a copy of the report, see: www.esrc.ac.uk/news-and-events/publications/annual-report/index.aspx

BRITAIN’S FORGOTTEN SLAVE OWNERS

A cutting edge two-part BBC documentary has examined the abolition of slavery in Britain and the choice by the government of the day to compensate slave owners for their loss of ‘property’.

In ‘Britain’s Forgotten Slave Owners’ historian David Olusoga teams up with UCL to bring to light the findings of two major research projects funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the ESRC, which have been delving into these archives to examine for the first time the ‘True Legacy of British Slave Ownership.’

Using the records of the millions of pounds paid in compensation to slave-owners for the loss of their ‘property’, the Legacies of British Slave-ownership project has documented over 46,000 individual claims and awards made to those who either owned slaves or benefited indirectly from ownership.

Legacies of British Slave-ownership is the umbrella for two projects based at University College London tracing the impact of slave-ownership on the formation of modern Britain: Legacies of British Slave-ownership was funded by the ESRC and Structure

and significance of British Caribbean slave-ownership 1763-1833, which runs from 2013-2015 is jointly funded by the AHRC and the ESRC.

For more information on the programme, see www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b063db18

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE FELLOWS

The ESRC has announced new Constitutional Change Knowledge Exchange (KE) Leadership Fellows who will maximise social science contributions to debates following the General Election, through the development of a number of knowledge exchange and public engagement activities. The fellows are: Professor Nicola McEwen, University of Edinburgh and Associate Director, ESRC Centre on Constitutional Change; Professor Richard Wyn Jones, Cardiff University; Des McNulty, Professor Adam Tomkins and Professor Duncan MacLennan at Glasgow University; Sir Bernard Crick Centre, University of Sheffield

Fellows will facilitate opportunities for researchers to contribute to debates about the future of the UK in local, national and international contexts, maximising the impact of quality social science research. ■

People

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS 2015

A number of prominent social scientists and ESRC grant holders have been honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours list. We are pleased to offer our congratulations to everyone honoured.

Knights Bachelor Knighthood

Professor Sir Stephen Nickell CBE FBA, economist and former member of ESRC Council. For services to Economics.

Order of the British Empire Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire

Professor Dame Victoria Bruce, Vice-President for Public Engagement, British Academy and the Head of the School of Psychology, Newcastle University. Former Chair of ESRC Research Programmes Board and ESRC grant holder. For services to Higher Education and Psychology.

Dame Frances Cairncross FRSE, lately Rector, Exeter College, University of Oxford. Former Chair of ESRC. For services to Higher Education and Economics.

Commander of the Order of the British Empire
Professor Rachel Griffith, FBA CBE, Professor of Economics, University of Manchester and ESRC grant holder. For services to Economic Policy.

Officer of the Order of the British Empire
Professor John Beath FRSE OBE, Emeritus Professor of Economics, University of St Andrews. Former member of ESRC Council, Chair of the ESRC Research Grants Board and Training and Skills Committee and the Advisory Group for the Future of the UK and Scotland research programme, as well as a former member of the ESRC Evaluation Committee. For services to Economics.

Professor Jane Falkingham OBE, Dean, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, Southampton University and Director of the ESRC Centre for Population Change. Also Director of the ESRC Centre for Population Change and ESRC grant holder. For services to Social Science.

Member of the Order of the British Empire

Professor Debra Myhill MBE, Director, Centre for Research in Writing and Subject Leader for Secondary English, University of Exeter. Winner of an ESRC Celebrating Impact Prize in 2014 and ESRC grant holder. For services to the Social Sciences.

BIG DATA NETWORK PHASE 3 PROJECTS ANNOUNCED

The ESRC has announced £750,000 funding for four Civil Society Data Partnership Projects, part of the Big Data Network Phase 3. These projects establish and build upon relationships between academic researchers and civil society organisations to develop data infrastructures, enabling the partner organisations to more effectively collect and analyse their data.

The successful projects are:

Utilising Big Data in the Practice of Torture Survivors' Rehabilitation

This collaboration between the University of Essex and the human rights charity Freedom from Torture (FfT), seeks to explore how the data FfT collects and holds can be restructured and cleaned to make it suitable for research and analysis.

A Profiler for Crime, Criminal Justice and Social Harm

The project is led by the University of Salford in partnership with the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies. It aims to prototype the development of a 'Profiler' that can enable civil society opinion formers to better understand factors affecting crime, criminal justice and social harm.

Data Resource Construction: Open Data, Grantmaking Data, and the Organisational and Financial Base of the Third Sector

This partnership between the University of Birmingham's Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC) and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) seeks to provide comprehensive data on the contemporary population of third-sector organisations in the UK, map the landscape of grant-funding to these organisations, and create an accessible data source to assist a broad range of organisations in better understanding the sector.

Developing the Use of Administrative Data on Scotland's Civil Society

The project is a collaboration between the University of Stirling (lead institution), the University of St Andrew's and the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO). The project will build capacity for civil society organisations to collect and more effectively use their data, using standardly collected local-level data about civil society organisations and employing data linkage.

SOCIAL SCIENCE INFORMING AMR REVIEW

Two reports commissioned by the ESRC provided evidence for the independent Review on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), which published its recommendations in the report *Securing new drugs for future generations: the pipeline of antibiotics*.

Antimicrobial resistance means that illnesses and operations now considered to be minor could become life-threatening. The review sets out proposals to overhaul the way antibiotics are developed over the next ten years, as currently available drugs are losing effectiveness against resistant bacteria.

The report looks at how regulation can inhibit or encourage development of antimicrobial drugs, and reviews different incentive strategies.

The development of new drugs is only part of the solution. Resistance is a natural phenomenon, and when new drugs are created it will continue to increase. There is a need to understand how antibiotics are used 'on the ground', and social science research is central to increase our understanding in this area – issues such as how health services can adapt to the pressures posed by AMR, regulation around livestock production and how it affects antimicrobial development, public perceptions of how antibiotics work and how this plays out in GP surgeries.

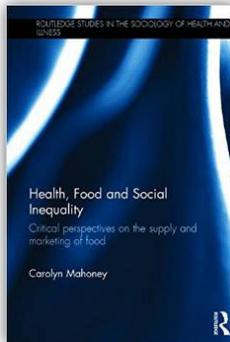
ESRC-funded research will increase understanding of these issues, the effect of human behaviour on the spread of AMR, and the best ways of changing behaviour in a variety of settings. ■

Publications

Health, Food and Social Inequality: Critical Perspectives on the Supply and Marketing of Food

This book investigates how vast amounts of consumer data are used by the food industry to enable the social ranking of products, food outlets and consumers themselves, and how this influences food consumption patterns. Shifting the focus from individual behaviour to the food supply and the way it is developed and marketed, the book discusses what is known about the shaping of food behaviours by both social theory and psychology. ■

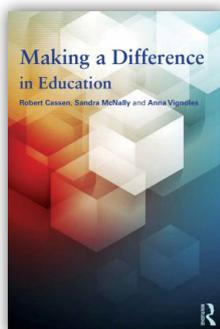
Health, Food and Social Inequality: Critical Perspectives on the Supply and Marketing of Food by Carolyn Mahoney. ISBN 978-1138801295, (hardback), 286pp @ £85.00. For more information see: www.routledge.com/products/9781138801295



Making a Difference in Education

Making a Difference in Education discusses whether education policy has really been guided by the evidence, and explores why the failings of Britain's educational system have been so resistant to change, as well as the success stories that have emerged. It looks at schooling from early years to age 16 and entry into Further Education, with a special focus on literacy, numeracy and IT. Reviewing a large body of research, the authors examine teacher performance, school quality and accountability, and the problematically large social gap that still exists in state school education today. ■

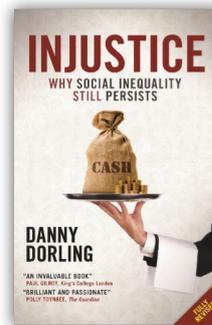
Making a Difference in Education by Robert Cassen, Sandra McNally and Anna Vignoles. ISBN 9780415529211, (hardback), 200pp @ £95.00. For more information see: www.routledge.com/products/9780415529228



Injustice: Why social inequality still persists

Since the first edition of *Injustice* there have been massive increases in poverty, hunger and destitution in the UK. Globally, the richest 1% have never held a greater share of world wealth, while the share of most of the other 99% has collapsed in the last five years, with more and more people in debt, especially the young. This fully rewritten and updated edition revisits Dorling's claim that Beveridge's five social evils are being replaced by five new tenets of injustice: elitism is efficient; exclusion is necessary; prejudice is natural; greed is good and despair is inevitable. By showing these beliefs are unfounded, Dorling offers hope of a more equal society. ■

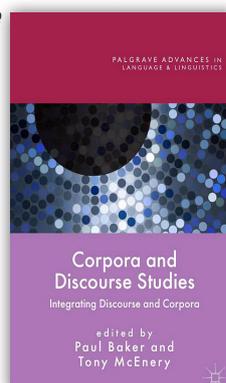
Injustice: Why social inequality still persists by Danny Dorling. ISBN 978-1447320753 (paperback), 484pp @ £9.99. For more information see: www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781447320753



Corpora and Discourse Studies

The growing availability of large collections of language texts has expanded our horizons for language analysis, enabling swift analysis of millions of words of data, aided by computational methods. This edited collection contains examples of such contemporary research which uses corpus linguistics to carry out discourse analysis. Authors examine a range of spoken, written, multimodal and electronic corpora covering themes which include health, academic writing, social class, ethnicity, gender, television narrative, news, Early Modern English and political speech. ■

Corpora and Discourse Studies by Paul Baker, Tony McEnery (eds). ISBN 9781137431721, (hardback), 320pp @ £63.00. For more information see: www.palgrave.com/page/detail/corpora-and-discourse-studies-paul-baker/?K=9781137431721



EVENTS

27-28 AUGUST

Social cognition: From evolution to applications – 2015 workshop

This workshop aims to encourage and continue interdisciplinary discussion of social cognition. It welcomes comparative psychologists, developmental psychologists, social neuroscientists, and psychologists working in clinical and applied domains, and challenges attendees to reflect on how their work relates to other academic and applied disciplines. sonicsocialcognition.weebly.com/2015-meeting.html

14 SEPTEMBER

Collaborative Housing and Community Resilience, Seminar 4/6

This event focuses on the challenges and opportunities in collaborative housing for supporting mutual self-reliance and providing specialist care (whether directly or by communities as commissioning entities). This draws attention to a continuum of need (ageing, disability, isolation) and different models. collaborativehousing.net

17-18 SEPTEMBER

The '5 Safes' of secure access to confidential data

This one and a half day workshop organised by the UK Data Service will introduce what is involved in setting up a secure research facility and the principles to support international best practices for providing safe and secure access to confidential and sensitive microdata via secure remote access. The 5 Safes: Safe People, Safe Projects, Safe Settings, Safe Outputs, Safe Data. ukdataservice.ac.uk/news-and-events/eventsitem/?id=4058

8 OCTOBER

Making it easier to use administrative data

This event introduces the work of the Administrative Data Research Network to researchers and data custodians and shows how it can ease the path to using administrative data. The programme includes: Administrative data - an exciting opportunity for research; how the Network can help; current research using UK administrative data; the RSS Data Manifesto; and strategic partnerships. www.esrc.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/34700/making-it-easier-to-use-administrative-data.aspx

Making sense of society



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

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

To subscribe to the magazine, please send an email including your full name and address to: societynow@esrc.ac.uk



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