

Research at LSE

'Community Factors Affecting Rising Caesarean Section Rates in Developing Countries: an analysis of six countries', by Dr Tiziana Leone, LSE Health, in *Journal of Social Science and Medicine* 67 (2008)



Western women are often branded 'too posh to push' when it comes to birthing choices and the rising number of caesarean sections. But does this phenomenon stretch to their poorer counterparts in the developing world or is something else at play?

Based on her experiences and research in Brazil, Dr Leone noted women's choice was one of the reasons for the increase in c-sections, but another, more worrying, reason was doctors pushing for surgery. If unnecessary, Caesareans create a further burden on already stretched health systems in developing countries.

She explained: 'Although research has shown that richer women in developing countries are opting for caesarean births, evidence also

points to an increasing number of doctors pushing for this form of delivery as it is easier for them to control and it is better for them to pre-empt than need emergency surgery following complications.'

The research, a collaboration with Southampton University, showed that if women discussed birthing options with someone other than a doctor, they were better able to choose a birthing method with the lowest risk (unless there are medical complications).

As a specialist in reproductive health in developing countries, Dr Leone is aware of the dangers of both publishing and commenting on this topic. Women in developing countries are still dying because they are delivering in a rural setting without any medical support. Researchers have a responsibility to not add to the existing fear of some women – if they deliver in a hospital they will be forced to have a caesarean – an operation that carries a stigma in some areas. She and her colleagues stress the need to provide women with appropriate information that would empower them to make an informed decision.

Analysing volatility

An Institutional Theory of Momentum and Reversal by Paul Woolley and Dimitri Vayanos, Paul Woolley Centre

Until now, irrational exuberance has been the usual explanation for stock market bubbles and their aftermath. This paper provides a rational explanation for the damaging volatility of stocks, bonds, currencies and commodities. This distinction is important because it is only with a better understanding of the causes of volatility that we can properly assess the problem and seek possible remedies.

Conventional wisdom has always held that competition among investors will drive the prices of financial securities to reflect the best estimate of their worth in light of all information. Otherwise, rational

investors would profit by stepping in to correct the mis-pricing. This principle also became enshrined in academic theory with the efficient market hypothesis. Dr Woolley said: 'This view of financial markets has remained largely unaltered despite the accumulating evidence of price distortions in the form of systematic mis-pricings, periodic bubbles and crashes, and levels of volatility vastly greater than the underlying dividend streams. Much of the volatility arises from the trends that develop in prices over periods of, say, three months to three years. Such trending is usually termed momentum when the bubble is inflating and reversal when prices return to normal.'

The paper is rooted firmly in the mainstream of economics by assuming that investors act rationally. However its principal departure from conventional analysis of asset pricing is to understand better what happens when investors delegate responsibility for investing to professional agents, such as money managers, mutual funds or hedge funds.

To download the paper, see: www.lse.ac.uk/collections/paulWoolleyCentre/publications/dp621PWC1.pdf



Thinking communication

LSE's media think-tank POLIS organised a symposium on *Humanitarian Communication in the Global Media Age* on 21 November. The event, which was co-sponsored by the Copenhagen Business School, brought together leading scholars from the disciplines of media, law, business, and philosophy to debate, critique and offer research insights on humanitarian communications.

and cultural implications they may have on the formation of contemporary global polity. Dr Fenton of Goldsmiths College pointed out the challenges faced by NGOs participating in mainstream news production and campaigning practices. He argued that this may not only create further divisions between 'resource rich and poor' organisations, but may also have damaging implications for the project of advocacy itself.

Professors Luc Boven, Philosophy, and Lilie Chouliarakis looked at the ethical implications regarding the visibility of suffering in photojournalism and in the popular iconography of recent humanitarian appeals.

While Professor Bovens drew distinctions between the sensationalisation of human vulnerability and the desire to maintain the dignity of sufferers, Professor Chouliarakis discussed the idea of a 'post-emotional humanitarian style of communication'. This style bypasses the traditional notions of solidarity and empathy thereby engaging the public in a more transactional relationship with humanitarian organisations.

Instigated by POLIS research director Profesor Lilie Chouliarakis (left), the symposium was the last in a series that combined scholarly insight with stakeholder expertise to open up discussion on different aspects of humanitarian communication: ethics, global politics and the cosmopolitan imagination; changing communication practices of NGOs and corporations;

crisis reporting, representations and mediatisation of suffering.

The symposium aimed to debate the challenges of humanitarian communications with a particular focus on the moral, political



Academics abroad



Last month, Professor Michael Cox, International Relations, was invited to join the fifth international conference of the Spanish Confederation of Directors and Executives (CEDE), which took place in Zaragoza.

In his speech, Professor Cox addressed the issue of the economic crisis and analysed future challenges for the newly-elected Obama administration and affirmed that this crisis heralds the end of the Regan/Thatcher era. 'Governments', Cox said, 'are neither the answer nor the problem, but the belief that markets are completely self-sufficient has now been discredited.' In this sense, Cox claimed that the US's democratic administration is probably in a better position to respond to the crisis than a republican one would have been.

In an interview for a local newspaper, Professor Cox warned that, even if the crisis ended soon, the effects would be felt for two more years. Asked about the international tests the new democratic president will have to face, he emphasised issues in Afghanistan and Iraq.

However, he seemed confident that the new administration could quickly restore American international leadership in world affairs, so damaged during the Bush presidency. 'The multilateral approach of the Obama administration', Cox stated, 'will help to overcome future international challenges.'



Dr David Lane, Management, gave the opening talk, *On The Linkage Between Operational Research and System Dynamics*, at a joint meeting of German operational researchers and system dynamicists in Frankfurt, 13-14 November.

The meeting was organised by the German OR Society (GOR: the Gemeinsamen Fachtagung der Gesellschaft für Operations Research) and the German Chapter of the System Dynamic Society (DGSD; der Deutschen Gesellschaft für System Dynamics).

The aim of the meeting was to improve communications and to explore research collaborations between the two fields. GOR officers Professors Thomas Spengler, Brigitte Werners and Dirk Mattfeld attended along with some 40 others drawn from across Germany, including universities and companies such as Daimler, European Centre for Aviation Development, Fraport AG and PA Consulting. The meeting was sponsored by GOR, DGSD and PA.

Dr Lane was invited to attend because of his extensive work exploring the history and methodology of OR and System Dynamics, and his administrative work on the professional bodies of the two fields, all of which have significantly reduced the barriers between them.



Richard Macve, Professor of Accounting, together with Xiaoli Chen, research assistant, will present a paper on *Profit, the Environment and the Equator Principles* at the seventh Australasian Conference on Social and Environmental Accounting Research.

The conference, which is being held between Sunday 7 and Tuesday 9 December at the University of South Australia, is hosted by the Centre for Accounting, Governance and Sustainability, School of Commerce in the Division of Business.

For more information on the conference, see: <http://csear.econ.usyd.edu.au/2008/>



Media bites



'The current downturn in tax revenues and big increase in Government borrowing makes it even harder for the Government to fund the pension promises made in good times...The increase in life expectancy and changes in the pension age mean that a person needs to save around a third more now than they would have done 30 years ago, just to get the equivalent of the minimum wage.'

Tim Leunig, *easier.com*, 2/12/08

Debates free and unticketed unless otherwise stated

Hellenic Observatory

PROFESSORS RAY BARRELL AND NICOS CHRISTODOULAKIS

Does the Euro-Zone Experience Show 'One Size Fits All' Has Been a Failure?
Wednesday 10 December, 6.30-8pm, U8

The debate will explore the contribution of the common currency for the divergent performances within the euro-zone with regards to economic competitiveness, current account deficits and inflationary pressures.

Ray Barrell is senior research fellow at the National Institute of Economic and Social Research. Nicos Christodoulakis is National Bank of Greece senior research fellow at the Hellenic Observatory and professor at Athens University of Economics and Business, Greece.

Public seminars

Centre for Civil Society

BRIAN DOHERTY

The Relationship Between Strategy and Identity in a Transnational Environmental Network: the case of Friends of the Earth International

Thursday 11 December, 12.30-1.45pm, NAB 1.14

Brian Doherty is a senior lecturer at Keele University. He is a member of the Centre for Research on Environmental Action and Thought (CREATE), and the Centre for Politics and International Studies, which are part of the Keele Research Institute for Law, Politics and Justice.

Kuwait Programme on Development, Governance and Globalisation in the Gulf States

DR STEFFEN HERTOOG

Sustainable Development and State Capacity in the Gulf

Wednesday 11 December, 4-5.30pm, H216

Dr Steffen Hertog is based at the School of Government and International Affairs, University of Durham.



noticeboard

Call for submissions

LSE Arts is inviting entires to this year's LSE Photo-Prize Competition. The chosen work, selected by art professionals, will be printed and displayed as part of an exhibition to be held in the Atrium Gallery, Old Building, 23 February-20 March. Prizes will be awarded to three works included in the exhibition. All LSE staff and students are eligible to enter and can submit up to five photographs (300dpi or A3). Application forms can be downloaded at: www.lse.ac.uk/arts Deadline for submissions is 5pm on Monday 12 January. For more information, email: arts@lse.ac.uk The photo featured above is *David* by Jas Ellis, one of 2008's four winners.

Podcasts

Don't forget, podcasts of past lectures can be found at: www.lse.ac.uk/resources/podcasts/publicLecturesAndEvents.htm So, if you missed a lecture, you can catch it here.

Christmas carols

This year's concert of Christmas Carols will take place in the Shaw Library on Thursday 11 December at 5.30pm. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served after the concert. Free and unticketed.

Student media awards

Of the four LSE students who were shortlisted for the Guardian's 2008 student media awards, Stuart Powell won the Student Travel Writer of the Year award and Will Joce received the runner up in the same category

Changes for Finance

The Finance Division's office is being reorganised over the weekend of Friday 12 December and will be closed on that Friday to allow for furniture and equipment reorganisation and generally settling down. This might not be completely finished by Monday morning (15 December), so please bear with us. All access arrangements and staff contact details: telephone extensions, fax number, email addresses and opening hours remain the same. Any queries, please email: financecomments@lse.ac.uk

Lunchtime concert

Alina Ibragimova (violin) will play Bach Partita for Solo Violin and Sonata for Solo Violin on Thursday 11 December, 1.05pm, in the Shaw Library. Alina has played with leading world orchestras and made her Proms debut in 2007. Her performances are universally greeted by outstanding press reviews.



Small ads

To rent: attractive Chalk Farm flat, close to tube and direct buses to LSE. Living/bedroom, sunny kitchen/diner, shower/separate WC. Fully furnished, well decorated, c/h.£260 p/w includes all bills except phone. Suit couple or single. N/S only. Contact: 020 7482 0158, email: r.fitzgerald@alumni.lse.ac.uk

Rapid transcriptions: an accurate and confidential academic transcription service for over ten years. Acronyms no problem. Any format: digital recordings, minidisc, tapes, video. Transcripts to suit different budgets. Secure file transfer. Contact Alanna Ivin, tel: 07801 569045, email: Rapid.Transcriptions@pobox.com See: www.rapidtranscriptions.co.uk

To rent: one bedroom flat in St James's. Dark wood floors throughout, air conditioning, stylish modern kitchen and large flat screen TVs in living room and bedroom. High ceilings and plenty of natural light. Available furnished for a long let. Reduced for LSE to £400/pw. Contact: Ben on 020 7955 5328 or email: b.swinley@lse.ac.uk.

Training opportunities at LSE

Academic, personal and professional development courses are available for all LSE staff and students. Courses on offer this month include:

Tuesday 9 December <i>Moodle: basics training</i> (staff) 10am <i>HTML: formatting and layout</i> 10am <i>An Introduction to Copyright</i> 12.15pm	<i>Word 2003: long documents – referencing</i> 2pm
Wednesday 10 December <i>Access 2003: designing related tables and forms</i> 10am	Thursday 18 December <i>Staff IT Training Workshop</i> 2-4pm
Thursday 11 December <i>Excel 2003: advanced functions</i> 10am <i>Moodle: next steps training</i> (staff) 10am	Friday 19 December <i>PowerPoint 2003: creating a presentation</i> 2pm
Friday 12 December <i>FrontPage 2003: website images</i> 10am	For further details and a full listing of what is available, including booking information, see: www.lse.ac.uk/training
Monday 15 December <i>Access 2003: creating queries and reports</i> 2pm	For training in: European information , please email Maria Bell at: m.bell@lse.ac.uk Business information , please email Barbara Humphries at: b.humphries@lse.ac.uk US Government publications , please email Clive Wilson at: clive.wilson@lse.ac.uk UK Government publications , please email Ken Gibbons at: k.gibbons@lse.ac.uk
Tuesday 16 December <i>Word 2003: format your PhD thesis</i> 2pm	
Wednesday 17 December <i>Moodle: basics training</i> (staff) 10am	

Lincoln's Inn Fields forever

The Mayor of London's campaign, Help a London Park, aids London's most needy parks. He is giving 10 grants of up to £400,000 to the parks that get the most votes from Londoners. Camden needs your vote for Lincoln's Inn Fields. While Lincoln's Inn Fields is an important historical site, it was laid out by Inigo Jones in the 17th century, it also has the potential to become a haven for London's wildlife. An oasis in central London, Lincoln's Inn Fields needs work to restore its original character and to contribute to the biodiversity of the area. If Camden receives the grant, then, with the help of English Heritage and the Friends of Lincoln's Inn Fields, the park can be upgraded and restored to its former glory. For more information, and the history of Lincoln's Inn Fields, see: www.camden.gov.uk/parks. Lincoln's Inns Fields is becoming more and more important to LSE – the School was a founding member of the Friends of Lincoln's Inn Fields – It's

our nearest green space and the New Academic Building (NAB) fronts onto it. There is to be a new corner entrance to the park opposite the NAB. There is some stiff competition so Camden really does need as many people as possible to vote. The simplest way to do this is via the web at: www.london.gov.uk/parksvote/region/north/lincolnsinn.jsp to fill in the form with your name and a valid London postcode. It would be really good if you could also encourage as many people as you can to join in this vote If you have any questions, please contact Karen Hall, communications and projects officer for parks and open spaces, tel: 020 7974 8815, email: karen.hall@camden.gov.uk





Courses

AN INTRODUCTION TO COPYRIGHT (staff only) *Tuesday 9 December, 12.15-1.45pm*

This course will provide staff with an overview of copyright law in the UK and the limitations that apply when copying published materials. It will give an overview of several licences that the School holds and which allow certain categories of materials to be copied for teaching purposes. Focusing on practical issues, the course will provide an opportunity for staff to ask about specific copyright issues they might encounter.

This session will focus on copying printed materials for distribution in class although it will briefly outline copyright issues related to digital materials. Staff are also advised to attend the follow up session *Copyright, the i-Internet and Teaching Online*. For bookings, see: <http://tlcevents.lse.ac.uk> or email tlc@lse.ac.uk

Diary

Open to all unless otherwise stated

Tuesday 9 December
6-7.30pm. A607. Anthropology of Africa seminar. Susan Drucker-Brown: *Custom and Chronology in Northern Ghana: singing the names of Mamprusi kings*.

Wednesday 10 December
12.45-2pm. R505. CASE Welfare Policy and Analysis seminar. Eleni Karagiannaki: *Health, Wealth and Consumption Among Older People*.

4-6pm. A607. Culture and Cognition seminar. Stafana Broadbent: *The Evolution of Mediated Communication*.

6-8pm. A607. Law and Anthropology lecture. Ugo Mattei: *Plunder and Current Global Transformations*. Professor Mattei's book, *Plunder: When the rule of law is illegal*, co-written with Laura Nader, is on discounted sale at LSE's Waterstones bookshop.

Thursday 11 December
5-7pm. H102. BIOS seminar. Maurizio Meloni: *Naturalism as an Ontology of the present: a continental view*.

Friday 12 December
10.30am-12.30pm. Anthropological Theory research seminar. Birgit Meyer: *'There is a Spirit in that Image.'* *Protestantism and Mass-produced Pictures of Jesus in*

Library news

VACATION OPENING HOURS
From Saturday 13 December until Sunday 11 January – except during the Christmas period (* see below) – the Library will be open Monday to Friday, 9am-8pm and Saturday, 10am-8pm.

Staffed services are open Monday to Friday, 9am-8pm. During unstaffed opening hours, access is for existing cardholders only and the Library will be staffed by security.

***** In line with School closure dates, the Library will be closed from 8pm on Tuesday 23 December until 9am on Monday 5 January.

For details of Archives opening hours please visit the website at www.library.lse.ac.uk.

EXTENDED LOAN PERIODS OVER CHRISTMAS VACATION
Over the Christmas period, many books can be taken out for longer than usual. For details of extended loan periods go to: www.lse.ac.uk/library/news/christmasloans.htm

PEACE, FREEDOM AND PROSPERITY EXHIBITION
The Foyle Foundation Project aims to bring to life the social and political history of the 20th Century. Over the last three years, eight political archives held at LSE have been catalogued. The individuals and organisations involved played, or continue to play, a significant role in British social and political life, and many participated in both European and world politics. This exhibition in the Library foyer displays some of the highlights of the collections, including a letter from Denis Healey, an invitation to the Congress of Europe and material published by the Federal Union.



Talent search

The School is looking for musical talent to take part in a concert to be held in the Shaw Library on Thursday 12 February. The concert will showcase student and staff performances of (mainly classical) piano, song, instrumental solos, duos, trios, quartets etc, and own compositions. The concerts have been a great success over the past three years and have drawn very large audiences. This is an ideal opportunity for anyone at LSE to share their performing gifts with appreciative music lovers. All we seek is musical quality and commitment. Informal auditions in the Shaw Library from 5.30 on Thursday 15 January. If you are interested, please email Nigel Rogers, music co-ordinator, at: n.rogers@lse.ac.uk or Jumpei Satomi, secretary of the Music Society, at: j.satomi@lse.ac.uk outlining what you could perform. Pieces should be anything from three to ten minutes. Don't hide your talents, FLAUNT them! And get practising in the vacation.

