

BSPS CONFERENCE 2010

The 2010 BSPS Annual Conference will be held at the University of Exeter from 13-15 September. Plenary speakers are confirmed as: Dr. Ties Boerma (World Health Organization), Professor Bob Woods, University of Liverpool, and Dr. Tomas Sobotka, (IIASA, Vienna). The call for papers has now been sent out and can also be accessed at:

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/BSPS/annualConference/2010/2010%20Exeter.aspx>, where you will also find the link to the online submissions system.

Attendance at BSPS Conferences has been steadily increasing over the past few years, and the Conference itself is widely seen as a lively, thought-provoking, and possibly unique mix of presentations from academics and practitioners from local government and NGOs.

A booking form and provisional programme will be available in May. This year's venue is particularly attractive, with stunning views over the Exe Valley.

BSPS CONFERENCE 2011

Advance notice for your diary: the 2011 BSPS Annual Conference will be held at the University of York from 7 – 9 September 2011.

FORTHCOMING BSPS DAY MEETINGS

THE DEMOGRAPHY OF LONDON

Provisional date and venue: 7 July 2010 at City Hall, London. The meeting will cover both historical and contemporary material and is being organised by Eileen Howes. If any member would like to volunteer a contribution or suggestion, please contact Eileen at Eileen.Howes@london.gov.uk

NOTICES

BSPS 2010 subscription dues

BSPS 2010 subscription dues are now due, and prompt payment would be appreciated. Membership subscriptions are the backbone of the Society's income, and, in particular, enable a wide variety of day meetings to be organised.

Many members pay their annual subscription by standing order, and BSPS is keen to encourage this method of payment. If you would like a standing order form, please email pic@lse.ac.uk.

For members who prefer to pay annually by cheque, please access the renewal form here:

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/BSPS/Home.aspx> then choose 'membership renewal form' from the menu on the left. Annual rates remain the same as in 2009. Please note that corporate membership entitles the member organisation to send two representatives to the Annual Conference at the members' registration rate.

BSPS NEWS

The Newsletter was edited until recently by Lynda Clarke from the Centre for Population Studies, LSHTM, a role which Lynda willingly undertook for many years. Lynda resigned from this role at the 2009 AGM, held during the 2009 Annual Conference. BSPS would like to put on record its heartfelt thanks to Lynda for her most valuable work on *BSPS News*. It would not have carried on without her.

And now the apology: you may have noticed that *BSPS News* did not appear in 2009. (Shame on you if you did not.) This was due to a combination of circumstances: pressure of work at the Secretariat and, more specifically, a lack of content during the first nine months of the year. Time-dated and urgent material was sent to members in the form of email circulations and this method of sending out time-dated items will continue. However, from the next issue, *BSPS News* will be edited by Amos Channon at the University of Southampton, assisted by Emily Freeman from LSE. The Newsletter relies very heavily on BSPS members to contribute content and is always grateful for information likely to be of interest to members, such as details of forthcoming meetings from other bodies and reports of meetings held by others. If you have ideas for new features, please contact Amos at arc101@soton.ac.uk,

or Emily at E.Freeman@lse.ac.uk.

BSPS PRIZE 2010 - ENTRIES INVITED

Entries are invited for the 2010 BSPS Prize.

This is awarded to the entry judged to be the best MSc. Dissertation on a demographic topic during the year 2009 (which would normally be at or around distinction level). Applicants should supply four copies of their dissertation, which do not need to be bound – electronic submissions can also be accepted.

Please note that all entries should be **submitted by the institution** awarding the degree, or by the supervising academic, and not by the authors themselves. A maximum of two entries per institution will be accepted. A word limit of 12,000 words per entry is encouraged, on the basis that it is very difficult to judge and compare entries of vastly differing lengths. However, longer dissertations may also be entered, **with a section not exceeding the given word limit being nominated for judging.**

A cash prize of £300 is offered, which will be increased to £400 if there is a tie for first place and the Prize is split between two winners. The winner(s) will be announced at the BSPS Conference in September.

For the purposes of this prize, demography is defined as

1. the scientific study of human populations, especially with reference to their size, structure and distribution
2. the scientific study of the determining processes, such as fertility, mortality and migration, and
3. the relationship of these with the social, economic and cultural context within which they exist.

Entries should be received by 30 April 2010 at the BSPS Secretariat, PS201, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE, or pic@lse.ac.uk

BSPS LEDC INITIATIVE 2010 - CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The BSPS Developing Countries Initiative has reserved £1,500 per annum for activities that encourage collaboration between population demographers in the UK and developing countries. This initiative sponsors an annual visit by a demographer from a LEDC, who gives a presentation at the BSPS Conference where they get the opportunity to meet and develop contacts with UK demographers. The overall aim is to encourage long-term collaboration and joint projects, and it is anticipated that contacts will already exist between the person to be funded, and a UK institution or UK demographers.

Previous awards have been made to visitors from Cuba and Brazil. In 2005, Sonia Catusus Cervera, from the University of Havana visited, and in 2006, Consuelo Martin, also from Cuba, visited. In both instances, they were also supported by the University of Manchester to visit that institution. In September 2007, a visit by Andre Caetano from the University of Minas Gerais (Belo Horizonte Brazil) was funded, to further work with colleagues at the London School of Economics and the University of Southampton. Seminars were held at the London School of Economics and the University of Southampton during the visit. The 2008 LEDC visitor was Niveen Abu R'Meileh from Birzeit University, and in 2009 Dr. Dilip visited from India.

Suggestions for the use of part or all of this fund for the year 2010 should be made by 30 April 2010, to pic@lse.ac.uk for consideration by the BSPS Council at their next meeting. Suggestions would be best supported by a single typed sheet describing how the money might be budgeted and spent and in what ways this would encourage collaboration. Bids should also include a detailed timetable of the proposed activities, and should come from the UK-based sponsoring individual or institution only.

OBITUARY

It is with great sadness that the Tees Valley JSU report the death of Steve Turner, aged 62, after a retirement inversely proportional to that deserved and to an illness of such brevity that we were all deeply shocked by its virulence.

Steve Turner studied Mathematics at Leicester University and then took a masters in Statistics at Newcastle. He worked for one year at the Central Electricity Generating Board before entering into Local Government where he worked for the remainder of his working life from 1972 with Teesside County Borough, through the entire existence of Cleveland County Council with Research and Intelligence from 1974 to 1996 and then for the remainder of his career with the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit as Assistant Director, co-ordinating, developing and managing the statistical and information needs of the Tees Valley.

He was a statistician at heart and kept Government departments on their toes through his work on several liaison and working groups over the years, with his desire not only to read every single paper but to understand them and then highlight weaknesses and suggest alternatives. In particular, his role on the Census liaison groups and his contribution to the ground-breaking work on dual system estimators for post-census coverage have led to improvements that will benefit not only the statistical world but also the Local Government community through improved census information and better population estimates.

He was a member of BSPS for over 30 years and was a regular at conferences through the 1980s and early 1990s and also followed developments and new ideas

through LARIA and BURISA.

He was a keen cyclist, clocking up thousands of miles each year for 25 years was the common denominator in the mid-summer bike rides around the hostelrys of North Yorkshire.

He was already missed, following his early retirement, but his legacy remains with the many staff he managed, trained, advised and guided and who will forever appreciate the time he gave and benefit from the knowledge he was always happy to pass on.

Piers Elias

RECENT DAY MEETINGS

In spite of the dreadful weather, the recent day meetings in Leeds and London on *ONS changes to mid-year estimates: adding it all up* went ahead. Thank you to all the speakers who braved the conditions and battled through, with special thanks to Piers Elias who organised the meetings and made it to both venues. BSPS hopes to include reports of both meetings in the next Newsletter. In the meantime, presentations from the London meeting, which was jointly organised with the Local Government Association, can be accessed at:

<http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pageId=1095307>

The Leeds meeting was jointly organised with the University of Leeds Department of Geography. Thanks to Dr. Paul Norman and Calum with the run-over foot.

BSPS also jointly sponsored a meeting at LSE in December on *Living arrangements in Europe*, which a number of members attended. *BSPS News* hopes to have a report of this meeting shortly although many of the presentations from this meeting can now be accessed from the BSPS website. .

BSPS 2009 CONFERENCE REPORT

The 2009 BSPS Annual Conference was held at the University of Sussex from 9-11 September and was again very well attended, with over 190 participants over the course of the three days. In addition to the three plenary sessions from invited speakers, Professor John Cleland, Professor Ron Lesthaeghe, and Professor Nyovani Madise, there were two special sessions honouring the work of the late John Hajnal.

The first plenary was given by **Professor John Cleland** of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine which addressed '**Reproductive Change in Sub-Saharan Africa: Cause for Concern**'. The plenary set out how Africa is different from the rest of the world as the demographic transition has abated rather than accelerated there. This is of course of grave concern for the prospects of development within the region and also because of the growing threat of climate change. Climatic stability is dependent upon the absolute population size and sustained high fertility clearly will result in a larger future global population.

Professor Cleland described three sets of indicators for measurement of the potential for fertility decline; whether the populace was ready, willing and/or able. The first set of indicators looking at being 'ready' for fertility decline considered the demand for delaying and reducing family size. 'Willingness' considers the approval of family planning methods, intentions to use such methods and whether there had been discussion of using contraceptives within the household. Finally 'ability' examines whether individuals are knowledgeable about specific family planning methods and if they knew of a source from where to obtain them. Macro level results from Demographic Health Survey data was then presented for 13 west African and 11 eastern and southern countries. These results clearly highlighted that there is a growing divide between western Africa and the rest of the region. Particular barriers in west Africa are the attitudes towards family size limitation and inadequate access to contraceptive *material*. In light of this the current UN forecasts for fertility decline in the western African region may well be highly optimistic.

Professor Cleland concluded that for both policy makers and academics there has perhaps been too much focus in recent years on reproductive health, at the expense of explicitly reducing fertility. He highlighted that for Niger there had been more meetings looking at sexuality and old age than at fertility. High fertility needs to be viewed as a problem in of its own right, and it was argued that opinion was swinging back towards this viewpoint. In questions One reason for the divergence of western Africa maybe its colonial legacy. As these countries are largely francophone, cultural diffusion of reproductive norms is possibly somewhat harder than elsewhere. Similarly French international donors have not seemed to be as supportive of family planning programmes as other international agencies. It was noted that the environmental case for fertility limitation was not limited to climate change. At the micro level, population pressure can act as a powerful casual factor in local environmental degradation. As a final point it was acknowledged that there is an inter-correlation between the three sets of indicators and it is important to consider fertility demand as very much a latent concept.

An excellent second plenary was delivered by **Professor Ron Lesthaeghe** of the Belgian Academy of Sciences on '**The American spatial pattern of the Second Demographic Transition and the Presidential Elections**'. Ron first summarised the theoretical background of the concept of the Second Demographic Transition, and examined previous work on linking demographic and political behaviour. The earliest work of this type was carried out by Julius Wolf in early twentieth century Germany. Subsequently Massimo Livi Bacci had shown strong associations between geographical variations in the timing of the first demographic transition in Italy and voting on divorce considerably later. Otherwise, apart from the recent work of Ron and his collaborators, the field had subsequently been little explored. Ron then turned to geography of Second Demographic Transition behaviours in the contemporary USA population and illustrated the wide divergences between the North Eastern seaboard at one end of the spectrum to

Utah at the other. In previous analyses of state and county variations in summary factor scores of these behaviours, Ron and colleagues had demonstrated that these variations were strongly associated with voting behaviour in the 1994 US Presidential elections. In this plenary he presented new results showing continuing, or indeed even stronger associations in the most recent US presidential election. Strong loadings on second demographic type behaviours at state or county level were strongly negatively associated with voting for Bush, or later McCain, even after control for a range of structural and other characteristics. The only one of these which changed the strength of the association in any substantial way was religion. In his conclusion Ron noted that these results, in conjunction with other research, illustrated the importance of lifestyle and attitudes and values in shaping demographic behaviour. Time for questions was restricted but lively debates on the lecture continued less formally over lunch and coffee breaks.

The final day of the conference began with a very thought provoking plenary address by **Professor Nyovani Madise** (University of Southampton) titled 'Lives hanging in the balance: motherhood in Africa'.

Maternal Mortality Matters

Nyovani began her presentation by relating some of the phrases and terms she had heard during her childhood in Malawi which refer to the state of pregnancy. Terms like 'in between' referring to being in a state between life and death, reveal how pregnancy is seen as a considerably risky time and a pregnancy is not celebrated until it concludes with a safe live birth. She then went on to outline some key statistics to demonstrate why maternal mortality matters. These highlighted that among the Millennium Development Goals, Goal 5 to improve maternal health is the area where the least progress has been made. Also made clear were the regional disparities in progress in maternal health with sub-Saharan Africa being the area where the problems remain greatest. The maternal mortality ratio for sub-Saharan Africa as a whole was estimated at 940 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 and this decreased only slightly in the 15 years to 2005 to 920 per 100,000.

What are the Issues?

Nyovani then discussed some of the key issues in sub-Saharan Africa contributing to the high maternal mortality rates. She stated that the biggest challenge was access to healthcare, especially for rural and urban slum populations. Another problem is the quality of the care that is available. She noted that it is often the case that services such as clinics and health personnel that exist 'on paper', for example in a DHS, in reality often do not live up to the quality of services they are assumed to be providing. Unmet need for contraception also has a key role in maternal mortality with women being exposed to risk from unwanted pregnancies. Nyovani also presented data showing a significant correlation between percentage of births attended by a skilled attendant and maternal mortality ratio. Other less direct factors in maternal mortality are socio-economic indicators such as GDP, lack of investment in female education and gender inequality.

Strategies with Limited Success

The presentation went on to introduce some of the interventions to improve maternal health in sub-Saharan Africa which have

been met with limited levels of success. The two main strategies discussed were antenatal risk screening and traditional birth attendants. Nyovani defined some of the individual risk factors of maternal mortality as being maternal age, parity, spacing of births and wantedness of pregnancy. However she went on to explain that antenatal risk screening is not always an effective strategy due to the unpredictable nature of many deaths. She illustrated this point with data on leading causes of maternal deaths which include unpredictable causes such as bleeding and obstructed labour. The training of Traditional Birth Attendants has also been ineffective in reducing mortality rates primarily due to quality of care issues and the lack of a supporting referral system and the associated infrastructure for when complications arise.

What is working?

Having discussed the strategies with limited success Nyovani then went on to talk about what is working to improve maternal health. This includes:

- Strategies following the principle of a continuum of care, beginning at home and following through to a healthcare facility
- The use of skilled professionals as birth attendants
- Strong health systems and an established referral system, which uses traditional birth attendants to provide referrals rather than to attend deliveries
- Access to safe abortion

Finally Nyovani highlighted the need for good data in order to accurately measure maternal mortality and monitor progress, and she cautioned against over reliance on hospital data.

The presentation was followed by some questions from the audience. One question raised the issue of caesarean section and whether or not this could play a role in reducing maternal mortality in Africa. Nyovani responded that she did believe that lack of access to caesarean sections was a significant problem. She noted that access to this type of service was highly uneven and in rural areas women are dying for lack of access to this level of care. She also pointed out that an aspect of this problem is the challenge of employing and retaining skilled and qualified health personnel in rural areas.

John Hajnal sessions:

The list of presenters at the sessions to celebrate the life and work of John Hajnal say much for his impact on the world of demography (and beyond), and also the high respect in which he was held.

In their presentations, Richard Smith, Tony Wrigley, Ron Lesthaeghe, Maire Ni Bhrolchain, Mike Murphy and Chris Langford all recognised the quiet and considered influence of John across a vast range of demographic and statistical fields. In two seminal articles (1965, 1982), John had described the distinctive marriage pattern evident in North West Europe — relatively high ages at first marriage, relatively high proportions of the population not marrying. He also hypothesised why and when the pattern developed. In this first presentation Richard Smith focused on these articles and on John's insight on the importance of understanding marriage patterns. Richard also highlighted John's habit of

continually questioning his ideas (and the ideas of anyone and everyone else!). Indeed, the development of his work on marriage patterns between his original paper in 1965 and the 1982 paper is a clear example of this trait.

Much of what Tony Wrigley discussed in the second session came out of John's 1982 paper. Focussing on average household size, Tony spoke of the relationship between the economy, household size and marriage patterns from the Early Modern Period until the Industrial Revolution and the move from sexual maturity as a control of marriage to economics as a control of marriage.

Consideration of economic control of marriage was taken onwards by Ron Lesthaeghe. Using evidence from Flanders and Brabant 1450 – 1789, along with a lovely selection of artwork, Ron described how moral controls were used to bring about economic controls in marriage during times of economic downturn.

Maire Ni Bhrolchain progressed from marriage to fertility. Citing three main pieces of John's work in this field (a study of birth statistics in the first edition of *Population Studies* in 1947, The Royal Commission on Population 1944-48, a study of fertility and reproduction for Millbank in 1959) Maire explained how observations made by John more than 60 years are still relevant in the study of fertility today. The debate on which measure of fertility is most appropriate to use in population projections is as active today as it was when John raised the issue in 1947. In addition to John's work on fertility, Maire emphasised how we might all learn a great deal from the considered way in which John handled limited data.

Mike Murphy carried on with John's role in changing how population projections were carried out. He described how John was pivotal in the move from logistic growth models to cohort component models. The longevity of John's insight was demonstrated yet again, as Mike noted how John's observations on the population projections are as manifestly relevant today as they were when he made them in the 1950s.

In the final session Chris Langford concentrated on John's work for the Royal Commission on Population. Chris described how John's input into this immense piece of analysis was incredible not only because of the lack of technology, but also because John was just 19 years old when he joined the commission.

These sessions were very personal. They emphasised the positive impact of John on both the demographic world and on the individual lives of those of us who knew him.

In addition to the invited sessions, 106 contributed papers were also presented in strand sessions spread over the course of the Conference. The abstracts for all papers can be found on the BSPS website at www.bsps.org.uk, together with some of the presentation themselves, accessible via the hyperlink in the title of the abstract.

BSPS again expresses its gratitude to the Galton Institute for their valued financial support for the Conference.

Thanks to Paul Mathews, Emily Grundy, Claire Bailey and Briony Epstein for their reports of the plenary and Hajnal sessions.

REPORTS OF THE 2009 LEDC VISIT

Report on activities completed under the LEDCI Grant

2009 instituted by the British Society for Population Studies

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I arrived in Southampton on 31st August, where my academic partner for this visit Dr Sabu S Padmadas had already fixed up a set of meetings with senior demographers located in various institutions. On 1st September I met Mrs. Christina Thomson of the University of Southampton who allotted me a workstation equipped with excellent computing facility within the Statistical Sciences Research Institute, University of Southampton. I started the pre-planned work on household health expenditures in India with Dr Padmadas by exploring the raw data files. The Southampton leg of the visit enabled me to interact with renowned academics like Jane Falkingham, Nyovani Madise, Pedro De Silva, Zoe Mathews, Andrew Hinde. Also had a nice interaction with other faculty members in this department; James Raymer, Yves Berger and Andrew Channon. I gave a seminar on "Health Expenditure in India: Evidence from National Health Accounts" on 4th September to staff and students at the University.

Dr Padmadas and I were able to clean the mammoth National Sample Survey Dataset for our research. It was computationally intensive to restructure the data into a user friendly format. We conducted preliminary analysis of the data and the outcome of this analysis was the presentation "Sources and Uses of Household Expenditure in India" which was presented at the 2009 BSPS Conference. We are currently revising the work incorporating feedback from the conference audience. We will gratefully acknowledge the BSPS LEDCI grant in our peer-reviewed publications. Participation in the BSPS conference gave me a good opportunity to interact with number of demographers in UK. In addition, during the BSPS I came across one of the renowned Social Anthropologists Dr Filippo Osello at the IDS, University of Sussex who is well known for his work in Kerala/India.

The BSPS experience was highly motivating for a demographer like me. In addition, its simplicity is something which makes it distinct from other population conferences, which I had attended in India and abroad. Firstly the participants were asked to report at the conference venue at the lunch time. Participants checked in at the accommodation allotted, had lunch and directly proceeded to the parallel sessions in conference halls. I saw the BSPS President making a paper presentation at one of the parallel sessions. We normally don't see this in other conferences, where presidents and senior professors normally present papers only in plenary sessions. In BSPS some of the plenary session speakers had papers in the parallel sessions. This is something which I feel the rest of the population associations could follow. In the evening we

had a wine reception. Most of the sessions, which I attended were interesting and thought provoking.. Conference sessions were over by noon on the final day. I see this as a good example which the rest of the world can follow to reduce conference expenses. I am also grateful for the support received from the BSPS Secretariat in arranging the details of my attendance and travel. Of course, I am also most grateful to the BSPS itself for making the visit possible.

On return from BSPS, I continued my work with Dr Padmadas for a couple of days on developing new papers and proposals on areas that are of mutual interest. As planned we had a visit to the LSE Health and the Asia Research Centre on 15th September. We had a brainstorming session with the Co-Director Dr Ruth Kattamuri on developing potential proposals on themes relating to Population Growth and Climatic Change. In the afternoon, we had been to LSE Health to meet Dr Tiziana Leone to discuss strengthening our research collaboration. The two meetings at the LSE were quite resourceful and I am currently working from India to take the actions forward.

To conclude I regard the LEDCI Grant sponsored academic visit to UK as a milestone in my future career in terms of initiating new research collaborations with researchers from the UK and strengthening the existing ones.

T R Dilip

**REPORTS OF THE BSPS & MPIDR
WORKSHOP - FERTILITY DECLINES
IN THE PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE:
WHAT WE DON'T KNOW & WHAT
WE NEED TO KNOW**

University of Cambridge 15-17th July 2009

The aim of this meeting was to gather an inter-disciplinary and international group of researchers to discuss what is known about fertility decline, what remains unknown, and how might the unknown become known and better understood. Speakers, discussants and participants were chosen to span the different 'strands' of fertility decline research, historical, contemporary developed and contemporary developing, and the different disciplines working on this problem, including demographers, economists, evolutionary biologists and anthropologists. The workshop was attended by 60 active researchers in the field of fertility research, who listened to 17 papers; 9 discussants added their comments to the proceedings. The organisers, Eilidh Garrett, Rebecca Sear and Mikolaj Szoltysek would like to extend their grateful thanks to the sponsors of this meeting, the *British Society for Population Studies*, Joshua Goldstein and the *Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research*, the *Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure* and the *Galton Institute*; to Anne Shepherd, Alison Harvey and Brigit Moeller for their invaluable administrative support; and to Richard Smith for hosting the conference in the Department of Geography, University of Cambridge.

By way of introduction Mikolaj Szoltysek set out the reasons

why he believed a more reasoned theoretical structure was necessary for fertility declines past, present and future, in effect the *raison d'être* of the conference. The key debate, that would run through out the following presentations and discussions was established here; whether there is greater utility in academic endeavour working towards a general theory and framework within which all fertility declines can be located, or in rejecting this approach to focus more on detailed specific declines with their own unique sub-narratives.

Dirk van de Kaa opened the first session with his paper on 'Demographic transitions'. He made two key arguments. First, there does not appear to have been just a single demographic 'revolution.' Indeed the phrase 'revolution' is misleading, implying a transition from one period of stability and equilibrium to another. Fertility change is perhaps best seen as a continual process of change, within which there have been two fairly discrete components: the First Demographic Transition (FDT) and the Second Demographic Transition (SDT). Secondly, he argued that it is necessary to maintain an overarching demographic perspective so that if research focuses just on at the middle-range demographic processes of fertility, mortality or migration, this may well produce a misleading picture.

Simon Szreter's paper on 'Questions, questions, questions! The expanding universe of research on fertility declines' argued that a broad theoretical framework was not needed. It further argued that a general theory of fertility has been a 'teleological drug' with substantial intellectual opportunity costs. Instead of searching for a general theory, research should be conducted acknowledging the three principles of the historical method: i) difference, both within the past and between the past and the present ii) context and iii) process. Whilst data has been most easily collected at the level of national and sub-national administrative units, Szreter considered 'communication communities' to be more important social units. In the discussion which followed it was noted that one reason a teleological general theory has been so 'addictive' to researchers is that the audience for their arguments is often comprised of policy makers and a more simplistic overview resonates well within an action-oriented policy world. However, arguments were set out that whilst there always remains some variance at the different stages of the fertility transition broadly there is still a transition between high and low fertility states so some generalisation remains possible.

Bob Woods, as discussant of Szreter's paper, noted that an important consideration was that the debate on holding a general theory does not reflect an epistemological crisis and should be seen as a sign of strength of the discipline. He reiterated scepticism that the SDT is of equivalent magnitude to the FDT and argued that the term 'transition' may become devalued if it is used in the former context as, while the plausibility of the changes wrought during the FDT being reversed remains extremely improbable, the same cannot be said of the changes associated with the SDT, such as below replacement fertility.

Sebastian Klüsener began the second session by presenting a paper co-authored with Joshua Goldstein entitled 'Culture strikes back: a geographic analysis of fertility decline in Prussia'. This presentation suggested that the basic conflict concerning a general theory of fertility decline has been between cultural diffusionists and economists. From a geographical perspective the cultural diffusion explanation of changes in fertility behaviour across space seems to be more effective. The authors had used a panel model in combination with Ordinary Least Squares approaches, to look at changes in variables, rather than at absolute values, taking their data from historic Prussia. The results broadly supported the cultural diffusion hypothesis, indicating that hotspots of decline in regional centres led the transition to lower fertility, with slower rates of change occurring in peripheral rural and Catholic administrative units.

In the question and answer session which followed an analogy was drawn between the cultural diffusionist view of changing fertility and an incoming tide. This highlighted, first, the underlying difficulty of measuring the broader 'tide' from observations of individual waves and, second, the difficulty of explaining the underlying causal process from simple observations at the surface level. A particular problem for those wishing to use a cultural diffusion model is the lack of acceptable data. While economic variables, which can be more robustly measured, can be controlled, a potentially major assumption may be made that the unobserved residuals can simply be attributed to cultural processes. For example it was noted that in the UK fertility change spread out in a similar fashion from both London and Lancashire, yet there were significant differences in the process and context between the two areas.

Neil Cummins and Greg Clarke then jointly presented their work 'Malthus to modernity: England's first fertility transition, 1760-1800'. From a historical perspective, they argued, there were two main events: the industrial revolution and the demographic transition, but the interaction between the two has perhaps not been sufficiently appreciated to date. Using data collected from 7,000 historic wills in south eastern England, it was noted that prior to 1770 those with greater assets had higher fertility but afterwards the fertility advantage of the rich was lost and there was a systematic reduction of the fertility of the richer strata of society. The timing of the change suggests the influence of factors associated with the industrial revolution. However further analysis of this data, to establish what drove the decline in the fertility of the rich, has proven to be inconclusive with regards to income, child survival and quality / quantity trade-off hypotheses.

As this session's discussant, Stephan Warg highlighted that changes in both cultural and economic domains would be important as innovation of cultural values would in part be determined by the socio-economic context. The difference between cultural and economic theories of fertility decline may be seen from the perspective of individual innovation or adaptation. The suddenness of the changes around 1800 might suggest that the cultural response to the economic changes occurring at that time was actually influenced by the intellectual ideas of Malthus. Evidence of the dissemination of his theories suggests, however, that this is actually

extremely unlikely to have been the case.

The second day of the conference was opened by a joint presentation from Frans van Poppel and David Reher. They discussed recent analyses of historic demographic trends in Spain and the Netherlands during the 19th and 20th century. Using linked reproductive histories from both regions, fertility trends were analysed at the individual rather than at the aggregate population level. The role of child survival as a stimulus for reproductive change, the use of stopping and spacing strategies to achieve reproductive goals, and the timing of change were all discussed. Most importantly, these analyses demonstrated strong evidence for replacement fertility, with child deaths associated with an elevated likelihood of later births. In this light, fertility limitation is seen as strategy to protect families from the effects of increases in child survival. Following the presentation of these analyses, Reher provided further discussion of the implications of this research for demographic transition theory; arguing for the central importance of mortality declines as a precursor to fertility reduction and the persistence of small desired family size throughout European history.

Their discussant, Chris Wilson, praised the use of longitudinal micro-data in the comparative analysis of Spanish and Dutch fertility trends. He noted a general agreement with their interpretations, and reinforced the call for further research linking childhood mortality to individual fertility patterns in historical demography. It was also stressed that future studies should strive to test competing hypotheses for the precursor of fertility decline with the same data – arguing that the central importance of any factor ultimately can only rest upon the exclusion of rival hypotheses. Wider discussion considered the need for demography to move beyond its focus on central tendencies in population data and into the study of the intra-population diversity in fertility histories.

The late morning session focused on evolutionary approaches to fertility with presentations from Lesley Newson and Ruth Mace. Both provided a brief overview of evolutionary models of human behavioural diversity with specific regard to variation in human reproductive strategies. It was argued that the rich theoretical nature of this literature has much to offer population scientists focusing on fertility trends, whether their focus is historical, contemporary developing or contemporary developed populations. Newson then outlined the 'kin-influence hypothesis' for demographic transition; arguing that fertility decline is set in motion by the dissolution of extended-kin networks associated with modernisation, leading to a gradual erosion of pro-natal norms in favour of alternative social rewards. Evidence from role-play experiments were used to support this model; showing that individuals playing the role of friends rather than kin were less likely to offer favourable advice about reproduction. Ruth Mace then provided an empirical test of the influence of kin on the decision to use contraception in rural Gambia. In this case, fertility histories indicate that contraception is used primarily as a tool to schedule births, rather than to reduce the chance of conception. When controlling for

individual socio-demographic factors, there was little evidence that kin directly influence contraceptive uptake, either by their absence/presence or by acting as models for social learning.

Discussion of these papers was led by Sarah Walters. She further underlined the potential for evolutionary models of fertility to contribute new theories and methodologies to the study of demographic transition. In particular, the non-teleological and broad comparative study of fertility patterns adopted by this approach was commended. Walters then outlined the need to tie together the 'big narratives' of demographic transition, such as the kin-influence hypothesis, with the intricate 'sub-plots' of regional fertility trends, which in extreme cases can eclipse the anticipated effects of local social or economic shifts. Wider debate focused on the utility of evolutionary models and how they should be integrated with traditional demographic perspectives.

Sessions five and six of the conference moved further into the worlds of contemporary changes in fertility and the ideas that underpin our understanding of it. Christine Oppong kicked off proceedings with a paper entitled "Parental Perceptions of Child Costs". Based on her extensive ethnographic studies in Ghana in the 1960s and 1970s, Oppong proposed that the behaviour in fertility control displayed by educated subgroups might be regarded as innovative, particularly when such behaviour is situated within its gendered context and given the desire of parents to provide the best for any future children. From a more methodological perspective, she argued that multi-method, small scale studies could be partly constitutive of a broader way of understanding family planning and fertility choices amongst couples, stressing the parallels with Simon Szreter's much-mentioned "communication communities". Ian Timaeus' contribution continued the theoretical thrust of the session, taking particular issue with the popular classification of signs of fertility transition into stopping and spacing behaviour. His suggestion was that we think rather of "postponement", as a means of understanding the flexibility of couples' intentions as well as the unpredictability with which circumstances can change. Far from being a mere matter of semantics, such an amendment to the concept of 'spacing' provided a real means of understanding fertility decline.

Both papers met with a broadly appreciative response, and the discussant, Tim Dyson, was keen to highlight a point both presenters had made: that the African experience of fertility was distinctly different, and that scholars of this subject would benefit from the overt reintroduction of the ideas of Jack Goody into their work. Dyson's comments proved as provocative as the papers in some regards, sparking an intriguing discussion about the relationship of mortality decline to the fertility transition and the extent to which England and Wales fitted the pattern of a mortality fall preceding a decline in fertility.

Session six saw Geoffrey McNicoll and Arland Thornton take up the challenge of the conference title in somewhat differing manners. McNicoll was keen to highlight the links between policy and the encouragement of the fertility

transition in developing countries. He identified four "legacies" of these efforts. These were: the responsiveness of the family unit, the organisation of communities at a local level, agency (in particular the relative power of women within institutional arrangements), and the actions of governments and authorities. He regarded these as common to fertility transitions globally, achieved in much of the developing world through already-prevalent institutional and cultural entities. Thornton also assessed the global nature of aspects of the fertility transition, with regard to the spread of developmental idealism. This was defined as a certain worldview, akin to the Fukuyaman notion of western liberal democracies having reached the end of history, via a path which other nations would inevitably follow. This made it possible to look elsewhere in the world and see how Europe used to be, a process of "reading history sideways". Such an ideological position comes with certain ethical problems, but Thornton chose to highlight how widespread certain values associated with fertility and modernity were in a geographically and economically disparate selection of nations, drawing from his surveys the conclusion that such changes were viewed as positive by respondents. The discussant Laura Bernardi took up a number of these themes of complex change, and the way in which community transmits change, calling also for a consideration of migration from high fertility areas to those where fertility is now low, and the policy implications that such a population movement would entail.

The final day of the conference was opened by Maire Ni Bhrolchain, whose presentation was on 'Time and measurement in explaining fertility change.' The pretext for this paper was, she argued, that we (demographers) lack any systematic treatment of time despite its centrality to demographic processes. As demographers we are concerned with establishing causality and this is something that we are not able to do unless we establish a start date for a particular phenomenon. The example cited was that of the baby boom, but there are other numerous examples, such as when did fertility transition begin in any particular country? There is then the question of how we should view demographic change – an approach viewing change as continuous might very well yield different results to a more episodic approach. A successful explanation of any fertility trend requires a proper delineation of fertility in time and also indicators designed to measure fertility as the dependant variable.

The second paper of the session on 'Where have all the children gone?', presented by Mike Murphy, called into question the validity of survey data. The thrust of this paper was the discovery that in the General Household Survey (GHS) childlessness appeared to be being reported incorrectly. The problem Mike found was that the proportion of women who reported being childless increased as their cohort increased in age. The conclusion Mike came to was that the explanation had to be the conscious concealment of adult children perhaps due to estrangement or boredom with the length of the survey. The implication of this is not good for the use of survey data. If there is a problem with the reporting of fertility then it is hard to be confident in the responses given to

more complicated questions.

The discussant Jan Hoem commented on Maire's paper by suggesting that as demographers we should attempt to get at what we are actually looking at and not adjust measures designed for other purposes, and that using individual level data and running hazard regression models is a useful approach; in doing this, he pointed out, it is also possible to contrast cohort and calendar time. He then questioned whether the implication of Mike's findings could be that we should stop using survey data entirely, but asked what would be left if we were to give up on survey data. The answer given was that registers alone would be left and thus everyone would be forced to analyse Scandinavian countries. Mike's response was that he was trying to draw attention to the problems with survey data in order that they might be solved. He said that histories must be validated, but they are still absolutely indispensable.

Tomas Sobotka followed with a paper on 'Is the only way down? Many factors behind contemporary very low fertility are likely to be temporary' in the final session. He argued that there is still a very strong desire for children and that lowest low fertility is far from inevitable. In fact many factors are now likely to increase fertility and the empirical floor may have been reached in the year 2000. As evidence for his optimism Tomas pointed out that the number of people living in a country with a Total Fertility Rate lower than 1.3 has been going down since 2000 after a year on year increase from zero since 1990. The explanation for this, he argued, is a combination of good economic conditions, immigration from high fertility countries and targeted policy interventions.

Paul Demeny, in discussing this paper, said that everyone is already convinced that lowest low fertility is not inevitable. However, "not being inevitable" is not enough to prevent something from occurring in reality. He remarked that the European welfare states are already overextended and in trouble. They will have to make drastic cutbacks soon. Paul argued that the personal answer to this crisis would seem to be the accumulation of assets and not having children.

The final paper of the conference was a joint presentation by Stuart Basten and David Coleman on 'The future of reproduction: an interdisciplinary challenge'. They began by outlining the problems demographers face when trying to predict future fertility trends such as the high levels of divergence, increasing levels of childlessness and the decline of the larger family. An important question then identified was "Why we bother to have children at all?". In the modern developed world it seems to be a mark of material irrationality to have any children. Several possible explanations for continued childbearing (despite its apparent irrationality) were mooted. There seems to be a biological need to nurture and motherhood appears to be instinctive. These possibilities generated many questions: 'Will people stop having children?' 'Are men actually necessary?' 'Is the desire for children fundamental?' 'Is one child enough?' 'Who will be the parents of tomorrow?' Basten and Coleman argued that such questions need to be addressed and although they are the type of questions which cannot be answered via

traditional demographic forms of enquiry.

To end the conference Paul Demeny, in line with David Coleman's suggestion that we need to think 'outside the box', came up with some unusual possibilities. First, he suggested that parenthood could be turned into a profession. Then, in relation to solving the economic problems associated with low fertility he proposed that it might be possible to link pension schemes to fertility or (even more bizarrely) that the value of a person's vote could be related to life expectancy and that this could be calculated to take children borne into account as well. A further suggestion he offered was that, instead of assuming immigrants would take low skilled, poorly paid jobs, national service could be reintroduced with dispensation only being offered under extraordinary circumstances; such as having a baby.

The organisers would like to end with a vote of thanks to all speakers, discussants, chairs and participants for their varied and highly stimulating contributions. Their hopes for the meeting of bringing a diverse group of people together to engender cross-disciplinary discussion and cross-fertilisation of ideas were certainly fulfilled.

Report contributors:

Melanie Frost, Eilidh Garrett, David Lawson, Paul Mathews, Rebecca Sear & Catherine Sumnall

REPORT ON BSPTS DAY MEETING ON POVERTY & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IN POOR COUNTRIES: ISSUES, MEASUREMENT & EVIDENCE

An international meeting entitled 'Poverty and reproductive health in poor countries: Issues, measurement and evidence' was held at the LSE on 29 May 2009. The meeting was sponsored by the British Society for Population Studies jointly with the ESRC, Centre for Global Health, Population Poverty & Policy (GHP3), Southampton Statistical Sciences Research Institute (S3RI) and the LSE Health. The meeting, attended by over 50 participants from various UK research institutions and international NGOs, addressed the critical debates and methodological challenges underlying the vicious pathways through which poverty affects reproductive health care in poor societies. The event was coordinated jointly by Sabu Padmasas (Southampton) and Tiziana Leone (LSE). Key speakers of the event included Tom Merrick (World Bank), Robert Yates (DfID), Frans Willekens (Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute), Jane Falkingham (Southampton), Susan Murray (Kings College), José Dias (Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa, Portugal), KS James (Population Research Centre, Institute of Social & Economic Change, Bangalore) and Barbara McPake (Queen Margaret University). The meeting acknowledged the need for generating cross-national evidence to identify the causal links between poverty and poor reproductive health outcomes and monitoring the long-term impact of reproductive health

interventions on health and wellbeing at later ages, through a systematic exploration of cross-sectional and panel data, both quantitative and qualitative. There is a need to reconsider the rights approach to the issue versus the economic approach with the latter in need of more research and development. More specifically the health financing aspect of reproductive health and the impact that it might have on health systems and household economics need to be further explored. The presentations reiterated that despite growing number of countries abolishing users' fees there is a lack of evidence on the burden of out-of-pocket expenses. The meeting concluded highlighting the need to invest more in terms of evidence-based research and policy development on the synergies between poverty, gender gap, education and health. For a full programme, please go to:

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/BSPS/dayMeetings/povertyAndReproductiveHealth.aspx>

Sabu Padmadas and Tiziana Leone

POPFEST 2009 REPORT

POPFEST is a small-scale annual conference organised by post-graduate students for post-graduate students whose research interests fall within the broad realm of population-related research. The 2009 conference was the 17th such conference and was held at the London School of Economics and Political Science from Thursday 2nd July to Saturday 4th July. We were delighted to welcome thirty-six conference delegates whose diversity was seen both across their research interests but also their international backgrounds, with notable attendance from institutions in Spain and the Netherlands. We were extremely impressed by the presentations given – all of which were of a remarkably high standard.

Day 1: Thursday, 2nd July 2009

The opening session, held in quite sweltering conditions, was on health and populations and was chaired by Dewi Ismajani Puradiredja (*London School of Economics and Political Science*). We first heard from Sian Oram (*London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*) whose research looks at policy surrounding the health needs of trafficked persons in the UK. At a much more micro-level, Daniel Lewis (*University College London*) showed data from Southwark that broadly indicate that in this particular London Borough the poorer sectors of society seem to have better accessibility to General Practices. Thomas Clemens (*University of St. Andrews*) then presented on the relationship between unemployment and mortality; specifically, on the potential limitations of 5-year wear-off techniques through the analysis of alternative thresholds to the 5-year mark.

The first plenary talk of the conference was then given by Dr Ernestina Coast (*London School of Economics and Political Science*), which broadly looked at the process of doing a PhD, and the challenges and opportunities that it presents.

The last session of the day contained five diverse presentations looking at innovative methodologies and data uses and was chaired by Sarah Mohaupt (*London School of*

Economics and Political Science). Michael Grayer (*Queen Mary, University of London*) examined the methodological difficulties in producing meaningful estimates of mortality from small geographic areas in the UK. Ignacio Pardo Rodriguez (*Universidad Complutense de Madrid*) then gave a conceptual presentation looking broadly at the uses of quantitative and qualitative methods in demographic research and how they can be successfully integrated in mixed methods studies. James Cheshire's (*University College London*) presentation showed how by clustering surnames it is possible to highlight cultural regions within the UK, and then look at changes that have occurred to the distribution of these clusters between historic and contemporary censuses. Kevin Daniells (*University of Portsmouth*) described the different software available for displaying and organising spatial data illustrated with his own work on the distribution of Jews in Posen, Eastern Prussia in the 19th century. The final presentation of the day was given by Fabian Neuhaus (*University College London*) on his UrbanDiary project that uses Global Position System tracking of individuals within London to follow their daily routes and spatial routines.

Day 2: Friday, 3rd July 2009

The second day of the conference began with an extended session on migration chaired by Paul Mathews (*London School of Economics and Political Science*). The session was opened by Garret Maher (*National University of Ireland, Galway*) who explained his recent work on the migration of Brazilians to and from Gort in Western Ireland, illustrating the importance of social networks and remittances for this migration pattern. Stephen Jivraj (*University of Manchester*) showed how a nonconventional dataset for demographers - in his case the Pupil Level Annual School Census - can be used to look at migratory patterns of the poorer families by producing a multi-level model of the changes of pupils receiving free school meals. Jenna Truder (*University of Brighton*) presented the results from her qualitative study on the reach of London global city on Old Town Hastings and how factors outside the economic sphere have particular influence on migration patterns in this case study.

After a short break Celia Fernandez Carro (*Centre d'Estudis Demografics, Barcelona*) gave an analysis of the correlates of older age housing - a presentation that was even more impressive given that it was Celia's first in English. Finally, Jo Sage's (*University of Brighton*) presentation looked at the studentification of housing with specific focus on Brighton, and how a more balanced approach is needed to the traditional negative view of the consequences of increases in student population densities.

After lunch, conference sessions moved away from migration to reproduction and sexual behaviour. The first session, being chaired by Claire Bailey (*University of Southampton*), looked at HIV/AIDS and sexual health. Lucia Knight's (*London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*) work in KwaZulu-Natal provides further evidence for the positive benefits of antiretroviral treatment not just for the individuals provided with treatment but for the wider household. Sarah Keogh,

from the same institution, then showed how HIV/AIDS is affecting fertility, fertility preferences and contraceptive use in the Mwanza region of Tanzania. Billie de Haas (*University of Groningen*) presented her work from focus group discussions with Uganda adolescents, which highlighted the differences between Western and Ugandan conceptualisations of sexual behaviour and the sometimes significant inaccuracy of the sexual education provided to Ugandan adolescents. Dewi Ismajani Puradiredja (*London School of Economics and Political Science*) provided both quantitative and qualitative evidence on the importance of context in understanding use and non-use of condoms by female sex workers in Indonesia. Session six of the conference was chaired by Sian Oram (*London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*). Paul Mathews (*London School of Economics and Political Science*) presented on the positive correlation between having family members as close friends and the probability of first birth. Kazuyo Machiyama (*London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*) looked at macro-trends in the fertility decline in the Sub-Saharan Africa region using evidence from multiple Demographic and Health Surveys. The results showed heterogeneity of the experience across the countries of the region. The final student presentation of the day was given by Claire Bailey (*University of Southampton*) who presented on her fieldwork experiences in Ghana and the important lessons that she had learned.

Professor Mike Murphy (*London School of Economics and Political Science*) then gave the second plenary talk of the conference looking at the extraordinary mortality increases that have occurred since the mid 20th century in the USSR and its successor states.

Day 3: Saturday, 4th July 2009

The Saturday morning of the conference saw the final presentation session on childhood and youth chaired by Paul Bouanchaud (*London School of Economics and Political Science*). Sarah Mohaupt (*London School of Economics and Political Science*) gave a presentation on interviewing the interviewers who collected the household panel survey she uses for her research on intergeneration transmission of poverty in Indonesia. Thais Garcia Pereiro (*Centre d'Estudis Demografics, Barcelona*) on factors influencing actual union status in young adults in Spain and Elena Fumagalli (*Universita ca Foscari, Venice*) on ethnic diversity and social participation of young people in England. Last but by no means least the poster session, chaired by Pia Schober (Cambridge University), consisted of Su-Chuin Soon (*University of Liverpool*) on migration and the ethnic food industry in Liverpool's Chinatown; Wike Been (*University of Groningen*) on fertility and gender equity; Vishala Parmasad (*University College London*) on the significance of low rates of voluntary blood donations in Trinidad; Victoria Prieto Rosas (*Centre d'Estudis Demografics, Barcelona*) on the methodological and theoretical approach to the study of age-congruity of transitions to adulthood and migration; James Robards (*University of Southampton*) on the importance of accounting for differing fertility characteristics in England, Wales and France and understanding the role of policy; Wiraporn Toom

Pothisiri (*London School of Economics and Political Science*) on post-partum family planning among Thai rural women with recent unplanned pregnancies; and, Ian King (*Imperial College*) on a systems approach to human population growth.

At the close of the conference prizes were given with congratulations going to **Michael Grayer** (*Queen Mary, University of London*) for best oral presentation and **Wike Been** (*University of Groningen*) for the best poster presentation.

POPFEST 2009 was both an enjoyable and useful conference and clearly highlighted the healthy state of demographic research.

POPFEST 2009 could not have taken place without the very generous funding and support from the following sponsors:

- British Society for Population Studies (BSPS)
- Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- National Centre for Social Research (NatCen)
- Population Geography Research Group (PGRG)
- Social Research Association (SRA)
- 2CV
- Taylor & Francis Group
- Social Policy Department at the London School of Economics (LSE)

Special thanks also go to Anne Shepherd at the BSPS Secretariat for allowing us to provide website and banking via the BSPS facilities; and, to Anne Summers from NatCen for providing an info stand during the course of the event.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that next year's POPFEST 2010 will be organised by a team of PhD students at the School of Geography and Geoscience at University of St. Andrews.

*The POPFEST 2009 Organising Committee
Dewi Ismajani Puradiredja, Sarah Mohaupt, Wiraporn Toom Pothisiri, Paul Mathews and Paul Bouanchaud.*

POPFEST 2010 - CALL FOR PAPERS

Popfest will be at the University of St. Andrews in 2010. Popfest now has its own dedicated website here: www.popfest.org.uk

The call for papers for POPFEST 2010 is now in operation and can be accessed here:

http://www.popfest.org.uk/resources/Call_for_Papers_PopFest2010.pdf

REPORTS OF NON-BSPS MEETINGS

Report on PAA 2009

The Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America (PAA) was held at Detroit Marriot Renaissance

Centre, Detroit, during April 30- May 2 this year. The meeting consisted of total 192 parallel sessions and 7 poster sessions covering almost all the areas under population studies with presentation from across the globe. The meeting was a gathering place of the leading demographers and population scientists from different parts of the world. I had the opportunity to present at the meeting in Session 66: Strategies for Achieving Reproductive Goals. The title of my presentation was 'Are the Clinical Methods for the Poor in Bangladesh? Evidence from Demographic and Health Survey'. I received good feedback from the discussant and the audience, which will help me to further update the manuscript. Many interesting sessions were allocated at the same time. It was frustrating for me because I could manage attending only one from the contesting sessions and was tired of switching between the sessions. Literally, there was no lunch break and poster sessions were assigned alongside the oral sessions. I managed to attend as many oral sessions I could and hence could not attend poster sessions with full concentration. The sessions I attended include Session 2: What population research can contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; Session 32: Contraceptive use in Asia; Session 48: Abortion prevalence, measurement and programs; Session 75: International perspectives on fertility; Session 81: Child health and survival; Session 91: Family planning, fertility and reproductive health in Asia; Session 108: Unintended pregnancies; Session 112: Contraception; Session 126: Maternal mortality in Asia; Session 136: Indigenous peoples: Asia; Session 145: Family planning programs and contraceptive use in Africa; Session 168: Condom use and HIV risk; Session 187: The role of family planning programs in the continuing fertility decline in Asia. All of the sessions that I attended were successful with reasonable number of participants and with lively discussions. However, the session 49 entitled 'Formal demography' was over flown by audience where I could hardly understand the presentation standing outside the door. Understandably, the papers presented at that session and the renowned presenters were the main attractions. I met some leading demographers in my research area which was a great experience and inspiration for me. The organisers provided with a book of final program and the abstracts which will be a good collection. I am sure that almost all of the presentations at the annual meeting will dominate in the forthcoming volumes of internationally reputed demographic journals for several years. Despite huge enthusiasm due to the attraction of vibrant sessions, the initial outbreak of swine flu in Mexico and its gradual spread in some American cities raised hidden panic among the participants. There were many participants from Mexico and a few participants were wearing masks to protect from contamination of the flu. These added extra dimensions to the panic that probably lasted until all the participants returned to their country of origin. The conference venue was very beautiful and well organised. From the venue the stunning views of the Detroit River and Windsor, Canada were really enjoyable. I also had an opportunity to look around Detroit city. The city looked like a dying city and severely affected by the recent economic recession. This is the first time I have attended the annual meeting of PAA. For various reasons I could not attend three of the previous meetings where I had my papers accepted for poster sessions. This year my

determination and efforts to attend the PAA annual meeting was supported by the British Society for Population Studies (BSPS) in terms of a travel grant (£250). I am grateful to BSPS for the kind support.

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BSPS COUNCIL FROM SEPTEMBER 2009

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FORTHCOMING NON-BSPS EVENTS OF INTEREST

The 4th ESRC Research Methods Festival will take place on 5-8 July 2010, once again at the excellent location of St Catherine's College, Oxford. The Festival aims to engage social scientists across a wide range of disciplines and sectors and at different points in their research careers, and aims to stimulate interest, raise issues, highlight opportunities and showcase new developments. The National Centre for Research Methods are pleased to announce that the draft festival programme is now online at the festival pages <http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/TandE/other/RMF2010/>.

The bookings for the Research Methods Festival will open in March 2010. The festival website will be updated as the session abstracts and other details are finalised, so please keep an eye on the pages.

Forthcoming **SHIP Advanced Training Workshop** takes place at the University of St. Andrews on April 6-10th. There are still places available but early registration is advisable.

This is an intensive five-day course on the theory and practice of analysis of large sets of linked health or social data at an intermediate to advanced level. Advanced principles of epidemiology are combined with hands-on practical exercises in the implementation of computing solutions.

Further information available here:
<http://popgeog.org/2009/12/ship-advanced-training-workshop-6th-10th-april-2010/>

Call For Papers: Family History/Demography Network of the Social Science History Association

The family history/demography network of the Social Science History Association seeks panel, single-paper, and poster proposals for the 35th annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois, 18-21 November, 2010.

Submissions are now being accepted at the SSHA website (<http://www.ssha.org/>). Individuals may either [login to submit a conference proposal directly](#) or contact an organizer of one of the suggested panels. Individuals that are new to SSHA will need to [create an account](#). The deadline for submissions is 15 February, 2010.

The 2010 conference will be held in downtown Chicago, in the Palmer House Hilton. The theme for this year's conference is Power and Politics.

(NB – if any BSPS member would like a copy of the full call, including details of details of suggested sessions and their organizers, with contact details, please contact pic@lse.ac.uk, who will be happy to forward the full email.

2010 Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America.

15-17 April 2010, Dallas, Texas. For more information:
<http://paa2010.princeton.edu>

Understanding ageing: Health, wealth and wellbeing at fifty and beyond

14 to 16 April 2010
St Catherine's College, University of Oxford
For full details visit the conference website at <http://www.ageingconf.org/>

Longitudinal Data Linkage workshop 30/31 March, Edinburgh

A workshop about linking longitudinal data from Census, vital registration records and health registration data will be held at the University of Edinburgh on 30 and 31 March 2010. The workshop is organised by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies, Institute of Education (University of London) in collaboration with the Longitudinal Studies Centre - Scotland.

A flier with more details and the programme can be downloaded

http://www.lscs.ac.uk/Longitudinal_Data_Linkage_30-31March2010.pdf

More information about costs and registration (including an online registration form) can be found at <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/research/16369.html>.

From the Statistics Users Forum – new Housing Statistics Network.

The RSS is supporting the set up of a new Housing Statistics Network which is being launched at a free half day seminar at the RSS on the afternoon of 26th Feb 2010. There is a great line up of speakers so it promises to be a very interesting event as well as an important one for kick starting the Housing Statistics Network. The lack of recent representation from users of housing statistics at the Statistics Users Forum has meant that this important area has lacked the opportunities for dialogue between data users and providers that have been valuable for other subjects. The RSS is therefore very keen for this initiative to succeed. Details of the seminar, the registration form and Aims and Objectives of the HSN, along with other background information are all at <http://www.msjconsultancy.co.uk/>, click on HSN in the navigation bar at the head of the page.

As part of the HSN initiative a new internet forum has just been established. Please use this to give feedback on the proposed Aims and Objectives but also feel free to start new discussion topics.

<http://www.housingstatisticsnetwork.co.uk/>
