

Message from the Chair

In this issue:

<i>Message from the Chair</i>	1-2
<i>Academy Nominations</i>	1
<i>Social Perceptions of People on the Move</i>	2-3
<i>Academy Profiles</i>	4
<i>Scholarships and Prizes</i>	5
<i>Academy External Activities</i>	5
<i>Calendar of Dates</i>	6

This is the first Newsletter to appear for almost 9 months and I would like to start by apologising for this long hiatus. The Academy has been through a period of great change in the last year. New personnel and changes to processes mean that we have been reviewing our systems of communication. In future we aim to communicate with you all on a much more frequent and regular basis, both electronically and in print.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to Dr Caroline Bucklow as our new Executive Secretary, to all new Academicians and to key personnel from learned societies who have joined us over the summer period.

There has been a lot of activity over the last few months and much of it will extend and develop in the future. First of all, the journal of the Academy – 21st century Society – has successfully elicited many articles and we now have enough copy for the first two issues to be published

in volume 1 in 2006. One of the major articles will be the publication of the texts from the Academy's first debate held on March 21st on the political relations between the UK and the USA and EU, foreshadowing the general election.

We are planning a launch event for the first issue, to coincide with the AGM of the Academy in early June. This event will be sponsored by our publishers Routledge/Taylor & Francis: they are also sponsoring a number of events and seminars in the lead up to the publication of the first issue. They are generously sponsoring the President's lunch to be held in the House of Lords on 30th November, at which Lord Richard Layard will speak, discussing the themes of his recent book on 'Happiness and Social Science'.

We would like to offer congratulations to all those people who have become



Signing the contract for the new Journal

Academicians in the recent round. The nominations committee met in early September to review a large number of nominations from learned societies and individual Academicians. We were extremely fortunate in the people who had been nominated and have been able to make over 40 new academicians, including both academics and those who are practitioners of the social sciences.

We also congratulate those Academicians who

(Continued on page 2)

Additional Nominations Round for 2005

The Council has agreed to hold an additional round of Nominations in 2005. Nominations for this round should be sent to the AcSS office by **Friday 16 December 2005**. The Nominations Committee will meet to consider these submissions early in January 2006.

Nominations may be made by Learned Societies and by individual Academicians. Nomination forms are available on the Academy website. For further information contact the Executive Secretary, Caroline Bucklow email: caroline.bucklow@the-academy.org.uk

(Continued from page 1)

have become members of the RAE panels including, on the sociology sub-panel, Dr Sara Delamont, and Professors Nigel Gilbert and John Scott, all of whom are closely involved with the council and the committee of Academicians.

Congratulations are also offered to two members of the Journal editorial board who have been promoted since joining the board. Professor Robert Wright has moved to the University of Strathclyde while Dr Peter Tyler is now a Professor at the University of Cambridge.

Policy and Practice

The Council and the nominations committee feel it is time to review, in the light of changing political and social circumstances and contexts, the criteria for practitioner academicians.

A review will be spearheaded by Professor Alison Assiter and Dr Arlene Vetere, the Deputy chair of council responsible for practitioners. We will share their findings with you to ensure that we develop suitable criteria for promoting social sciences in public, government and other arenas.

Council has also now set in train a major review of our procedures, with a working party of Council members on the memoranda and articles of association, chaired by Mike Jacobs with Janet Lewis, Professor Henrietta Moore, Eliot Stern and Dr Caroline Bucklow, our Executive Secretary.

Professor Nigel Gilbert has returned to Council and will be spearheading a review of strategic development and direction. These items form the main agenda for the forthcoming Council meeting towards the end of November. We also hope to be able to

share with you our ideas as the new ideas and direction emerge.

The key committees of Council are ably chaired by newly elected members. The committee of academicians is now chaired by Professor Philip Davies from the Eccles Centre of the British Library and has planned several events including a welcome event for new academicians and an annual debate. The committee of learned societies is chaired by Robert Upton of the Royal Institute of Town Planning and his committee too have ideas for events, including one on research ethics.

Our website has been revamped and we are now posting news and details of events there more frequently. We hope that you will contribute to it, as well as to our activities and events.

Social Perceptions of People on the Move

The Foresight Programme of the Office of Science and Technology sponsored a meeting at The Royal Academy of Engineering on 31 August 2005. The event was organised through the Academy of Social Sciences and was chaired by Professor Nigel Gilbert FREng of the University of Surrey.

When considering the future of intelligent infrastructure, it isn't just technology that matters. At least as important is how people use it, their attitudes and how these influence their travel behaviour. A group of eminent social scientists, and a sprinkling of technologists, considered these issues at a dinner meeting in London.

Travel is a part of human nature. We all want to explore, even if only locally. And keep children at home for too long and they become increasingly difficult, until their parents "take them out".

Social scientists, by definition, are interested in what happens in society. They observe and investigate such phenomena as changing attitudes to personal mobility.

Some observers see two seemingly opposing trends in our attitudes: we seem to value "embeddedness in place" and yet we embrace

"hypermobility". We see our ability to travel as a sign of social status, perhaps in the same way that our choice of the cars we buy is a personal statement.

Travel has many other social dimensions. For example, it isn't just about getting people from place to place: it can also play a social role. Some people might not take comfortably to a dramatic reduction in their commuting time. For them, time spent travelling to and from work is an opportunity not just to do the crossword but also an important part in the transition from home to work and back.

There are even some people who do not welcome the development of uninterrupted access to information that comes with today's "always on" society.

Who needs more capacity?

Social issues are also important in shaping what we want of a future transport system. Do we really want to keep on increasing road capacity to keep up with the growing number of cars? It seems likely that we will quickly fill up any new capacity.

Would road pricing solve the problem? Such a strategy might create inequities, with poorer people deprived of the ability to travel. A more equitable approach might be to ration road slots. After all, when a cinema is full, or a plane fully booked, no one else can join in.

It is not obvious that everyone wants ever faster transport. People might even accept slower transport if they could rely on it. Thus the demand might be for IIS to deliver slower but

(Continued on page 3)

Social Perceptions of People on the Move

(Continued from page 2)

more reliable travel.

What is intelligence?

Social scientists appear to have a different interpretation of the term “intelligence” from that used by technologists. Technology itself cannot be “intelligent”, they say. It is enabling.

Some sociologists interpret intelligence in the sense of the CIA rather the technologists’ view that it means endowing technology with some of the reasoning skills that living organisms, not just humans, bring to processing information.

More than one person at the meeting held at the RAE at the end of August expressed this interpretation of intelligence. There was also some agreement that when it comes on the future of IIS, technology is not the issue. Social scientists take it for granted that the technology will happen, if it hasn’t already. Their interest is in how society will adapt to an ever more intelligent infrastructure.

Social scientists are also interested to investigate how society might respond to the spread of “intelligence”. Would society itself become more intelligent? Would an intelligent infrastructure system begin to change attitudes to the car? Would we be prepared to abandon the idea that the car is the dominant mode of transport, sitting out in front of the house?

Private concerns

Trust and privacy were recurrent themes throughout the discussions. How much trust might people be prepared to put into an IIS? Would people trust a system that tracks their

every move? How much information would people be prepared to hand over?

One view is that innovation is driven by “deviant” behaviour. Would widespread implementation of IIS deter such innovation? If so, this could be a brake on economic development.

Urban planning

Social scientists also have questions about the way in which IIS could influence urban development. The view is that it might encourage both urban sprawl and densification. A conclusion from this it might be unwise to view IIS as a way of influencing development patterns.

IIS might also help to do something about the current status of transport

“Social scientists take it for granted that the technology will happen, if it hasn’t already. Their interest is in how society will adapt to an ever more intelligent infrastructure.”

around major urban areas, such as Manchester, where it seems to be much easier to travel in and out of the centre of the area than to travel between areas around it.

Smart cars

Intelligent vehicles could have other implications. With technology in charge of vehicles, perhaps we would be prepared to allow younger people to travel alone. And at the other end of the age spectrum, IIS could sustain mobility for the elderly, with the car taking over from their failing senses.

Some might welcome cars that alerted them to growing drowsiness. An autonomous vehicle might also bring about the revival of drinking and

“driving”. But as with the other uses of IIS in transport, this would raise interesting issues of legal liability.

Stupid technology

There is some interest in bringing intelligence to such transport technologies as speed cameras. There is a, perhaps misguided, view that a human observer would be more tolerant of a driver exceeding a speed limit by a small margin late at night on an empty road than they would during the day when schools are closing. Could artificial intelligence emulate this perceived “common sense”.

Does technology matter?

Social scientists are naturally less concerned about the technology itself than its impact on society. The evening reflected this with not much debate about the direction in which the technology is developing.

With just three women in the room and perhaps one person under 30, there was more concern about the narrowness of the input to the discussion. These segments have already provided input to the project, they just weren’t there for dinner.

Younger people appear to be less bothered about the direction or availability of technology, they take it for granted that technology does, and will, surround them. They do, though, have their doubts about the way in which new technologies will be implemented. In this they share the same concerns as the social scientists at the dinner. Whoever you are, the key issues will be around the implementation of IIS technologies.



Professor Miriam David, AcSS, FRSA, PhD.

Chair of Council of the Academy of Social Sciences & co-editor of the new journal *21st Century Society*

Telephone: 0207 612 6825

Email: m.david@ioe.ac.uk

I have just been elected chair of the council, having been acting chair since the end of January 2005. I have been

on council for 3 years in my former capacity as chair of the Committee of Academicians. I became an Academician in 2000 through the Feminist & Women's Studies Association, the British Sociological Association and the Social Policy Association. I have been an academic social scientist for almost 40 years and have held posts at the Universities of London, Bristol, South Bank and Keele and in north America: Harvard, California at Irvine; Wisconsin at Madison, OISE/Toronto. Currently I am a professor at the Institute of Education, and Associate Director (Higher Education) ESRC Teaching and Learning Research Programme. I have an international reputation for my research scholarship in gender, family, education and policy sociology and have published 15 books and over a 100 articles and papers.



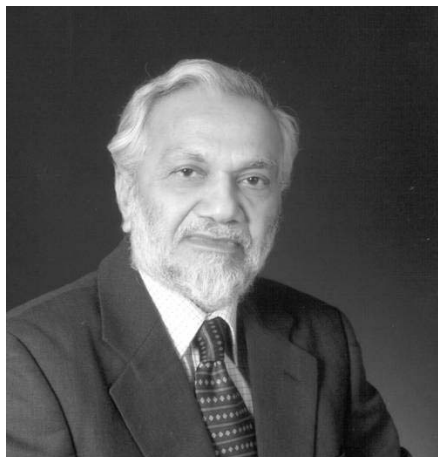
Dr Caroline Bucklow,
Executive Secretary
telephone: 0118 953 3770
email: caroline.bucklow@the-academy.org.uk

I joined the Academy in September as Executive Secretary, based in the new

Academy for Social Sciences Profiles

Caroline Bucklow (continued)

office in Reading. I provide support to the Council, Committee and Officers of the Academy in developing the strategic plan and programme for future activity and also look after administration for the Academy. I have previously held posts as Chief Executive at the British Accreditation Council and the Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILTHE) and as Head of Education at the British Computer Society. I have history degrees from the universities of London and Oxford and an MBA from Warwick University, together with a Certificate in Teaching in Higher Education from Oxford Brookes University. I have also taught organisational behaviour and business communication for Coventry University and the Open University.



Lord Bhikhu Parekh, President of the Academy for Social Sciences.

Lord Parekh has held many academic posts most recently as a centennial professor at LSE and professor of political philosophy at the University of Westminster. He has held visiting professorships at the universities of British Columbia, Concordia, McGill, Harvard, Pompeu Febrer, Pennsylvania and the Institute of Advanced Studies in Vienna. Lord Parekh was vice-chancellor of the

University of Baroda from 1981 to 84. As well as being President of the Academy for Social Sciences he is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and of the British Academy

Lord Parekh was deputy chair of the Commission for Racial Equality for five years and chair of the Runnymede Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, whose report was published in 2000.

His main academic interests include political philosophy, the history of political thought, social theory, ancient and modern Indian political thought, and the philosophy of ethnic relations. He is the author of *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (2000); *Gandhi* (2001); *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform* (1999); *Gandhi's Political Philosophy* (1989); *Contemporary Political Thinkers* (1982); *Karl Marx's Theory of Ideology* (1981); and *Hannah Arendt and the Search for a New Political Philosophy* (1981)

Scholarships and Prizes

NZ-UK Link Foundation

The closing date for applications for the 2006 competition is 30 January 2006.

The NZ-UK Link Foundation, a £10,000 scheme to support comparative social and policy research that strengthens the relationship between the New Zealand and the UK. The scholarship is designed to fund travel and living expenses for visits to New Zealand by British nationals, living and working in the UK. More information about the scheme can be found on the Academy Website.

The Foundation Mattei Dogan / ISSC Prize for Excellence in Interdisciplinary Research

This prize is awarded to a social scientist who has advanced the scientific knowledge in the social sciences, by crossing the disciplinary boundaries or by recombining different specialties, in his/her research and writings. It can also be offered to a team of scholars enjoying a high reputation in academic circles.

Interdisciplinary research means one of the following: The hybridization of specialties across disciplines; magisterial synthesis, which offers large perspectives or deals with impressive theoretical frameworks.

The prize of US\$5000 will be awarded for the first time at the General Assembly of the ISSC, in November 2006, and afterwards, every four years. The laureate will be invited to give a lecture at the ISSC General Assembly.

Nominations are to be received at the ISSC Secretariat, by e-mail [issc@unesco.org], by April 21, 2006 and can be made by ISSC members, or other professional associations in various disciplines, as well as by universities and academic institutions. The selection will be made by an international Jury.

Academy for Social Sciences external activities

Science Week March 2006

We look forward to a very exciting year for the Academy of Social Sciences and our increasing involvement with public activities such as the new Science week in March which incorporates the Social Science week, originally held in June.

Royal Society Links

Professor Richard Munton and Professor Miriam David have been active in developing and promoting greater links with the Royal Society and have set up a process of joint involvement with public and educational activities.

Department of Health Consultation: Better research for Better Health

The Academy has also been active in responding to requests for comments on consultative papers, most recently with Professor Woody Caan organising our response to the NHS Consultation entitled "Better research for Better Health". The Academy's response to the consultation can be viewed in full on the Academy website.

UK Strategic Forum for the Social Sciences

Professor Miriam David will be attending the next meeting of the UK Strategic Forum for the Social Sciences on 19 January 2006

Research Information Network (RIN)

Dr Caroline Bucklow has been invited to attend the launch of the on Thursday 8 December, on behalf of the Academy. The RIN has been set up by a consortium of the Higher Education Funding Councils, the three UK National Libraries and the eight Research Councils to lead and co-ordinate new developments in collaborative provision of research information. More information about the network, including its strategic plan, can be found on the website www.rin.ac.uk



ACADEMY FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES

Berkshire House
252-256 King's Road
Reading
RG1 4HP

The Academy of Learned Societies for the Social Sciences
Company registered in England number 3847936
Registered Charity number 1088537

Phone: 0118 953 3770
E-mail: caroline.bucklow@the-academy.org.uk

Academy for Social Sciences Calendar of Dates

Date	Council	Committee of Academicians	Committee of Learned Societies	Journal Editorial Board	Nominations Committee	Other
November 2005	21/11/05 Main Business Strategic Review	21/11/05	15/11/05			Presidents Lunch 30/11/05
December 2005					Closing date for Nominations 15/12/05	
January 2006				11/01/06:	09/01/06	New Members event
February 2006	8/02/06 Main business Approval of nominations	8/02/06				
March 2006			15/03/06			Journal Seminar/ Annual Debate
April 2006						
May 2006	17/05/06 Main business Approval of Annual Accounts	17/05/06				
June 2006			28/06/06 or 29/06/06		Closing date for Nominations 30/06/06	AGM and Journal Launch probably 7/06/06
July 2006					13/07/06	
August 2006						
September 2006	7/09/06 Main business Approval of nominations					
October 2006						
November 2006	8/11/06	8/11/06				New Members welcome event
December 2006						