

Message from the Chair

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2006 is a year of great opportunity for the Academy of Social Sciences. Since September 2005 when we established a new office base in Reading, with meeting facilities in central London, we have consolidated our administrative support and hope to create a much more interactive and friendly approach to membership of the Academy. The first newsletter and electronic bulletins have been generally well-received by you as Academicians and we are looking at other ways to encourage Academicians and member Learned

Societies to keep in touch with what is happening.

We have also re-established constructive dialogue with the ESRC and we are working hard continuously to improve our communications with both individual Academicians and our

constituent Learned Societies as well as encouraging more learned societies to join us. We are also developing a new approach to encouraging nominations for Academicians, and we would appreciate your contributions to this

debate. The Council has begun the process of thinking about our



Professor Miriam David, Chair of Council

strategic direction for the 21st century and has already developed a number of initiatives and innovations and over the coming year we hope to present these to you for both consultation and implementation.

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AGM and Journal Launch, Wednesday 28 June 2006

The AGM of the Academy this year will be held at the Institute of Education, London University 20 Bedford Way, London at **5.00pm on Wednesday 28 June**. The publishers of our new journal *21st century Society* will be hosting a launch event immediately after the AGM at which our President, Lord Bhikhu Parekh and Dr Sue Duncan, AcSS, the government Chief Social Researcher will provide the major speeches.

The inaugural issue of the journal will be available at this champagne launch and its online version may be available earlier. We are combining these two events, as the launch of the journal marks a key development and new stage for the Academy, in providing a platform for challenging international and inter-disciplinary debates about the social sciences. We hope that you will all consider contributing to the journal with articles, or commentaries and reviews of key policy and practitioner debates.

(Continued from page 1)

A number of Academicians have suggested that we should hold more events outside London and we are actively looking at opportunities to do this. Our plan is to develop events in all parts of the UK and we already have plans for a major event in Northern Ireland, Scotland and the north of England. Suggestions for more events are always welcome. If you would be willing to organise an event, please let Caroline Bucklow know.

The events which have been organised this year have provided an opportunity to explore key issues from a multidisciplinary perspective. The President's Lunch in November 2005 (reported on page xx) was a most engaging debate which challenged views of the social sciences and perspectives on mental health. We have also organised two major events to fit in with National Social Science week (March 10th – 17th), which is

sponsored by all the major Research councils.

The ESRC has supported these two events as part of its programme of activities. The first is our Annual Debate and new members' welcome, this year is on the theme of 'What is Social about the Social Sciences?'. The second is a public lecture by Roger Jowell AcSS, the Descartes prizewinner, who is the first social scientist to win this major European prize. We are grateful to David Green AcSS of Routledge/Taylor and Francis for providing financial support for the President's lunch and to the ESRC, City University and the Social Research Association for support for the Debate and this key note lecture.

Prior to the Academy AGM on 28 June, we will be holding AGMs for the College of Academicians and the College of Learned Societies and hope to re-engage all in our new strategic direction. A number of existing Council members have, sadly, indicated that they wish to

step down, because of other pressing commitments or because they have served their full terms of office. While we will miss their tremendous contribution, we hope that many of you will see this as an opportunity to become actively involved with the Academy and offer to serve on one of the committees or organise either regional or national activities. It is our intention to establish a number of functional committees and working groups to help take our programme of activities forward and build and develop the Academy of Social Sciences for the 21st century.

Miriam E. David, AcSS, FRSA

ACADEMICIANS PERCEPTIONS OF THE GLOBAL FUTURE

Some of you may remember that, early in 2005, I asked Academicians to complete a questionnaire to help me identify what the social science community regards as the key issues facing the world in the 21 Century. For various reasons, this is the first opportunity for me to share the results of the survey with you. 411 questionnaires were posted to academicians at the end of January and by 1 May a total of 197 had been returned – a 48 % response. My thanks to those who braved the naivety of the questions and responded. The numbers of responses in each category are given below.

Respondents were asked to put a tick against one of the suggested answers to each question to indicate the response that is nearest to their present opinion. "If none reflects your opinion, or if you feel you know either too little about it, or too much and so see the question as simplistic, please use the response 'Cannot answer this question'."

I am writing a detailed academic paper to discuss the context of the questions and to give a cautious discussion of the implications of the findings. At the very least it is clear that many prominent social scientists have important contributions to make towards shaping the global future, and not all accept conventional wisdom on these issues..

Michael Bassey

Perceptions of the Global Future

(Continued from page 2)

N=197

Q1 How life threatening are some of the changes in the global environment that are being made by humankind?

- (a) Very serious and needing worldwide urgent action now. [124]
- (b) Quite serious and needing worldwide action in the near future. [58]
- (c) Not serious enough to need worldwide action in the near future. [7]
- (d) Cannot answer this question [8]

Q2 Will economic growth in the UK slow down and stop at some time in the future. If so, should we be planning for a 'no growth' society?

- (a) It is unlikely that the limits to economic growth will ever be reached [72]
- (b) Economic growth will virtually cease at some time in the distant future, but there is no need to take action yet [29]
- (c) Economic growth will slow down and stop in the foreseeable future and we should be planning what to do. [54]
- (d) Cannot answer this question. [42]

Q3 How can malnutrition and starvation be eliminated across the world?

- (a) By increasing trade throughout the world in order to promote economic growth for all countries, rich and poor, and so lift the poor out of poverty. [19]
- (b) By rich countries providing immediate aid plus intermediate technology which enables people in the long term to live on the resources of their own territory. [33]
- (c) By a combination of (a) and (b) [135]
- (d) Cannot answer this question. [10]

Q4 Where survival is reasonably assured and basic needs are met, will an ethos of wealth creation or an ethos of harmony (with others, environment, and self) give the better quality of life and worthwhile meaning to individuals' lives?

- (a) A worldwide ethos of wealth creation would give a better quality of life for all. [14]
- (b) A worldwide ethos of harmony would give a better quality of life for all. [88]
- (c) Both (a) and (b) are needed. [86]
- (d) Cannot answer this question. [9]

Q5 Sustainability is taken to mean a way of life which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. What is the best interpretation of sustainable development?

- (a) Sustaining development through economic growth year by year - while developing policies to alleviate poverty and protect the global environment. [77]
- (b) Developing sustainability by striving for societies which prosper mainly on the resources and produce of their own territories while protecting the global environment and supporting each other in time of need. [85]
- (c) Cannot answer this question [35]

Q6 Should we promote adult education about the socio-ecological predicaments of the world and of possibly enlightened ways forward?

- (a) Yes. Promote wide discussion of questions such as the above in the expectation that this will lead to widespread learning. In turn this should give support to political actions aimed at ensuring that future generations inherit a bountiful Earth with maximum opportunities for joyful lives. [154]

(b) No. No one can predict accurately what will happen or what will be discovered in the future and

talk of 'socio-ecological predicaments' is scaremongering. Adult education should focus on learning the skills needed for the new jobs that the economic development of our society will demand. [14]

(c) Cannot answer this question [29]

Correspondence welcome michael-bassey353@aol.com

THE PRESIDENT'S LUNCH 2005.

Howard Elcock.

On Wednesday, 30th November around 50 Academicians gathered in the Cholmondeley Room on the House of Lords



Guests at the President's Lunch catch up on news

Terrace, as the guests of our President, Lord Parekh. The occasion began with a generous

“Happiness and Social Sciences”, in which he shed new light on some very long-standing social science questions. Happiness is important because it enables us to respond appropriately to the many goods we need for our survival.

How do you define the ultimate good? We have been trying to do this at least since GE Moore's *Principia Ethica* appeared in 1902. Lord Layard then explored what happiness means and raises the question of whether, like temperature, it is measurable, which led us back to Bentham's felicific calculus and the issues to which that gave rise.

After a lively question and answer session, we went our separate ways with our appetites sated and intellectually stimulated – in short, happy.



Lord Layard, guest speaker at the Lunch

We extend our warmest thanks to Lord Parekh for being an excellent host, to Lord Layard

Report of the President's Lunch, November 2005

helping of House of Lords champagne, over which tongues were loosened, so that many old acquaintances were enjoyably renewed. There followed a very pleasant lunch of chicken and/or salmon, followed by dessert and coffee.



Lord Parekh, Lord Layard and other guests

Once coffee had been served, we listened to an entertaining and informative address by Professor Lord Layard, on

Social science knowledge of happiness comes from two sources. The first is psychological experiments; the second is opinion surveys like the General Social Survey, Eurobarometer and many others. Relationships are important, so is income.

The conclusion he draws from all this is that if we are to develop our understanding of happiness, we should set up a multi-disciplinary Institute for Happiness Studies but this would require both volunteers and money. In this utilitarian, pragmatic age, I wonder whether any Government would dare to fund such an Institute!

for is thought-provoking talk and to Caroline Bucklow for making it all run smoothly.



Lord Layard's talk stimulated lively debate

We also thank our sponsor, Dr David Green of Routledge/Taylor and Francis, for subsidising the occasion so that the cost was eminently reasonable.

Congratulations to New Academicians

The Academy is delighted to announce the election of the following new Academicians

Professor David Airey
School of Management,
University of Surrey

Professor Peter Burns
Centre for Tourism Policy Studies,
University of Brighton

Professor Mary Gilhooly
HealthQWest,
Glasgow Caledonian University

Professor Martyn Barrett
Department of Psychology,
University of Surrey

Professor Gibson Burrell
Management Centre,
University of Leicester

Professor Pamela Gillies
Principal and Vice-Chancellor,
Glasgow Caledonian University

Professor Saul Becker
Institute of Applied Social Studies,
University of Birmingham

Professor John Bynner
Institute of Education,
University of London

Professor Christopher Hale
Department of Sociology and Social
Research, University of Kent

Professor Mark Bennett
Department of Psychology,
University of Dundee

Dr Bill Bytheway
Faculty of Health and Social Care,
Open University

Professor Helen Haste
Department of Psychology,
University of Bath

Professor Peter Beresford
School of Health Sciences and
Social Care, Brunel University

Professor David Charles
Business School,
University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Professor Graham Haughton
Department of Geography,
University of Hull

Dr Neil Blake
Experian

Professor Christopher Colclough
Faculty of Education,
University of Cambridge

Professor Clive Hollin
Department of Health Sciences,
University of Leicester

Professor Joanna Bornat
Faculty of Health and Social Care,
Open University

Professor Martin Conway
Department of Psychology,
University of Leeds

Professor Diane Houston
Department of Psychology,
University of Kent

Professor Ben Bowling
School of Law,
King's College London

Professor Adam Crawford
Centre for Criminal Justice Studies,
University of Leeds

Professor Angela Hull
Faculty of the Built Environment,
University of the West of England

Professor Julia Brannen
Institute of Education,
University of London

Professor Michael Crossley
Graduate School of Education,
University of Bristol

Professor Glyn Humphreys
School of Psychology,
University of Birmingham

Professor Christopher Bryant
Pro Vice-chancellor,
University of Salford

Professor John Dumbrell
Department of Politics,
University Of Leicester

Professor Peter Jackson
Faculty of Social Sciences,
University of Leicester

Congratulations to New Academicians

(Continued from page 5)

Professor Alun Jones
Department of Geography,
University of Leicester

Professor John Mohan
School of Social Sciences,
University of Southampton

Professor Harry Rothman
Institute for Enterprise and
Innovation,
University of Nottingham

Professor Martin Jones
Institute of Geography and Earth
Sciences, University of Wales,
Aberystwyth

Professor Robert Moore
Department of Sociology,
University of Liverpool

Professor Robert Rowthorn
King's College,
Cambridge

Professor Diana Leonard
Institute of Education,
University of London

Ms Judith Mudd
British Sociological Association

Professor Richard Sparks
School of Law,
University of Edinburgh

Professor Michael Levi
School of Social Sciences,
Cardiff University

Professor Tim Newburn
Department of Social Policy,
London School of Economics

Professor David Stanley
School of Health, Community and
Education Studies,
Northumbria University

Professor Colin Mason
Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship,
University of Strathclyde

Professor Jane Oakhill
Department of Psychology,
University of Sussex

Professor Steven Tipper
School of Psychology,
University of Wales, Bangor

Professor David Mason
School of Social Sciences,
Nottingham Trent University

Professor Christine Oughton
Department of Management,
Birkbeck College

Professor John Tribe
School of Management,
University of Surrey

Professor Kieran McEvoy
School of Law,
Queen's University, Belfast

Professor Christopher Pickvance
School of Social Policy, Sociology
and Social Research,
University of Kent

Dr Philip Tucker
South West Observatory

Dr Eileen McLeod
School of Health and Social Studies,
University of Warwick

Dr Graham Powell
Visiting Professor,
University College London

Professor Lorna Unwin
Centre for Labour Market Studies,
University of Leicester

Professor Juliet Mitchell
Jesus College,
Cambridge

Dr Rosemary Preston
School of Health and Social Studies,
University of Warwick

Professor Sandra Walklate
Sociology Department,
Manchester Metropolitan University

Professor Rosamund Mitchell
School of Humanities,
University of Southampton

Professor Robert Reiner
Department of Law,
London School of Economics

Professor David Wall
Criminal Justice and Information
Studies,
University of Leeds

Congratulations to New Academicians

(Continued from page 6)

Professor Andrew Webster

SATSU, Department of Sociology,
University of York

Professor Jeffrey Weeks

Faculty of Arts and Human
Sciences,
London South Bank University

Professor Veronica Wong

Business School,
Aston University

Nominations Rounds for 2006

The Council has agreed to have two rounds of Nominations in 2006. Nominations for the next round should be sent to the AcSS office by **Friday 30 June 2006**. The Nominations Committee will meet to consider these submissions in July 2006. There will be a further round closing in December 2006.

Nominations may be made by Learned Societies and by individual Academicians. The Council is keen to attract nominations for social scientists from as broad a range of organisations and disciplines as possible. To facilitate this, we are currently revising the guidance on the nominations process, to include more advice about how the criteria for nomination can be interpreted for social scientists working in non-academic settings.

Nomination forms are available on the Academy website and completed forms should be sent to the Academy for Social Sciences, Berkshire House, 252-256 King's Road RG1 4HP. For further information contact the Executive Secretary, Caroline Bucklow email: caroline.bucklow@the-academy.org.uk.

Reviewers required for the Journal 21st Century Society

The publishers of the new Academy of Social Sciences Journal, *21st Century Society*, are intending to establish a database of experts who can act as reviewers for papers submitted to the Journal. The Journal Editors, Miriam David and Peter Glasner would like to include as many Academicians as possible on this database, since the main focus of the Journal will be to promote the Social Sciences and synthesise, reflect and advance global public debates.

If you would like to be added to the database and to be invited to review appropriate papers for the Journal, please email your full name (including title and postnominal qualifications) and an email address for correspondence, to the Executive Secretary, Caroline Bucklow email: caroline.bucklow@the-academy.org.uk.



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Academy for Social Sciences Calendar of Dates

Council Meetings

5 April 2006
17 May 2006
7 September 2006
8 November 2006
24 January 2007 (provisional)
28 March 2007 (provisional)

Nominations Committee meetings

13 July 2006
(closing date for nominations 30 June 2006)
8 January 2007 (provisional)
(closing date for Nominations 26 December 2006)

Committee of Academicians meetings

17 May 2006
7 September 2006
24 January 2007 (provisional)

Committee of Learned Societies meetings

28 June 2006
8 November 2006 (provisional)
7 February 2007 (provisional)

AGM and Journal Launch

28 June 2006, Institute of Education, London

Important Note: Both the College of Academicians and the College of Learned Societies are required to hold AGMs to elect the members of the Committee of Academicians and the Committee of Learned Societies, in advance of the Academy of Social Sciences AGM on Wednesday 28 June 2006.

The dates for these meetings are:

College of Learned Societies AGM **Monday 15 May 2006**

College of Academicians AGM **Tuesday 16 May 2006**