‘Go west (or east), young woman!’

Since the last Newsletter, much has been made in the print and broadcast media of the gender pay gap. Sadly, the latest Inomics Salary Report confirms that women economists are likely, as a general rule, to be paid less than their male counterparts. This applies in both academia and the private sector. Like all general rules, however, this one has its exceptions. The Report shows that female economists in senior academic positions earn more than men in the region described as ‘Australia and Oceania’ — the difference is about nine per cent. For female economists in the private sector, however, North America is the place to be. Here, senior level female economists typically earn the same as or slightly more than their male equivalents. Elsewhere the conventional gap remains, though the data suggests that it may be very slowly closing.

Whatever the reason for the persistent gap may be, it cannot be that women have come late to the economics party. Ian Preston’s article shows that a number of women were very active in the founding of the British Economic Association, the forerunner of the Royal Economic Society. The history theme is continued with Richard van den Berg’s account of the founding of the History of Economic Thought Conference.

Thanks to Ben Chu’s heroic efforts, we also have in this issue the report of the Society’s Annual Conference held in the spring at the University of Sussex. Readers will also be interested to learn the outcome of recent consultations about the future strategy of the RES. Eileen Tipoe keeps us in touch with the CORE project as does Stephen Millard with the Bank of England’s research agenda. An interesting ‘comment’ piece reminds us of the importance of a ‘spiritual’ dimension often found in studies of well-being.

On a sadder note, however, the grief felt throughout Germany at that country’s early departure from football’s World Cup has clearly been underestimated. The British press has been so fully absorbed in learning how to spell schadenfreude that we were left completely unprepared for the possibility that such despair would cost us our annual ‘Letter from Germany’. We are investigating and will report back.
The Newsletter is first and foremost a vehicle for the dissemination of news and comment of interest to its readers. Contributions from readers are always warmly welcomed. We are particularly interested to receive letters, reports of conferences and meetings, and news of major research projects as well as comment on recent events.

Visit our website at: www.res.org.uk/view/resNewsletter.html

The Newsletter is published quarterly in January, April, July and October

The Royal Economic Society is one of the oldest and most prestigious economic associations in the world. It is a learned society, founded in 1890 with the aim ‘to promote the study of economic science.’ Initially called the British Economic Association, it became the Royal Economic Society on receiving its Royal Charter in 1902. The current officers of the Executive Committee are listed above.

The Society’s bee logo
The Society’s logo, shown below, has been used from its earliest days. The story behind the use of the bee refers to the ‘Fable of the Bees’ by Bernard Mandeville, an 18th Century essayist which alludes to the benefits of decentralisation by looking at co-operation amongst bees and showing how the pursuit of self-interest can be beneficial to society. The Latin quote comes from Virgil and speaks of the drive of bees.
Conference Report 2018

The Society’s Annual Conference was held at the University of Sussex, 26-28 March. Ben Chu of The Independent, reports his impressions.

This year’s Royal Economic Society conference was held somewhat off the beaten track. Sussex University’s Falmer campus is a ten minute train journey out of Brighton, sitting atop the gently undulating South Downs.

As I disembarked from the train at Falmer station and strolled under the A27 underpass in the direction of Sir Basil Spence’s 1960s brutalist fastness, I couldn’t help thinking that this isolation might be something of a relief for the 500-odd economists who had gathered for three days of lectures, seminars, dinners, drinks, debate and digressions.

In recent months, the profession has been on the receiving end of a fusillade of complaints. Practitioners are routinely written off as neoclassical-model worshipping ideologues, neoliberal shills, financial crash-missing incompetents, and physics-envying, arrogant, jargon-spouting, poltroons. And that’s just the abuse from other economists. Non-economists have been even less appreciative. So if many attendees felt pleased to be protected from the angry mob at the gates of the profession’s citadel, who could really blame them? Don’t we all need a ‘safe space’ sometimes?

Talking better
Safe space or not, some of the attendees were willing to take a constructively critical view of the profession

One of the well-attended special sessions on the first day of the conference was on ‘economics communication’. Diane Coyle, of Cambridge University, made the argument that the discipline’s reputational problems are, in part, sociological, remarking that the subject is far more likely to be taught in private schools than state schools. This, to her mind, helped to create an academic profession dominated by those from better off backgrounds. And that not only makes it difficult for economists to speak to the general public, but can influence the subjects deemed appropriate for study. ‘We need to be less unrepresentative,’ she urged. Diversity is an argument that we’ve become used to hearing in relation to gender, unsurprisingly given economics’ heavily male skew, but less so in relation to social class.

Another frustration for Coyle is the maddeningly vague way economists often use jargon. She highlighted that ‘capital’ can mean a variety of different things depending on which researcher is speaking. Sometimes it’s money, at other times it’s machinery. And then there’s the endless menu of human capital, social capital, environmental capital etc — all very different concepts.

‘We need to be careful about language,’ Coyle pleaded, noting that economists often end up confusing themselves, never mind the general public. It’s hard to disagree, yet given this semantic ambiguity over the meaning of capital dates back all the way back to Adam Smith one holds out little hope of it changing soon.

On the subject of reform, Tiago Mata, an economic historian from University College London, contributing to the same special session, dropped the bombshell revelation on delegates that ‘journalists can be formidable intellectuals’.

That was comforting for this journalist to hear. But Mata’s broader argument was that economists shouldn’t be sniffy about collaborating with us hacks since we’re, apparently, often closer to the public than ivory towers researchers. Why? Because journalists have to produce work that is directly relevant to their readerships every day, in a way that academic economists don’t.

I wasn’t entirely convinced. But Mata had some nice case studies. He cited a thermometer that appeared on the cover of the popular US magazine Business Week (now owned by the giant financial news provider Bloomberg) between the 1930s and 1960s which served as a basic indicator of the changing level of American economic activity. This was long before economists developed their own survey-based sentiment indicators. And, he noted it was the Economist editor Walter Bagheot who first started collecting and publishing data on the balance sheets of London banks.

Mata might have also mentioned the FTSE Index, named after the Financial Times, or the Dow Jones Industrial Average, created by the Wall Street Journal founder Charles Dow, as examples of journalistic economic innovation. But the takeaway message was clear: ‘Newsrooms produce knowledge too’.

The theme of economic communication returned on the third day of the conference, but this time we got a policymaker’s perspective. Gareth Ramsay, the new executive communications director of the Bank of England, flying the flag for Threadneedle Street at the RES, talked us through what the Bank calls its ‘layered content’.
These are a series of graphics with text explaining to a non-specialist reader, in extremely simple terms, the latest decision on interest rates made by Bank’s Monetary Policy Committee and why it was made. They are aimed at busy people who, as Ramsay put it, ‘would rather watch puppies on YouTube’.

In contrast to Mata’s plea for economists to collaborate with journalists, Ramsay said the Bank’s goal was actually to cut out what the Bank sees as an increasingly sensationalist and unreliable mainstream media (‘Their agenda is not our agenda’), and to communicate directly with the public via social media.

Fair enough. But is the new content actually any good? I confess I’d not even made time to inspect these graphics when were produced for the first time last year by the Bank. But a presentation by Michael McMahon, formerly of the Bank and now at Oxford University, has persuaded me to take them seriously.

McMahon presented survey evidence showing that people exposed to the Bank’s new layered content reported a greater understanding of its decisions relative to those that didn’t. A bonus is that people exposed to the graphics reported higher trust in the Bank. Improved public communication seems to be a high returning investment.

But is anyone listening?

As far as the economic research actually presented at RES 2018 was concerned, if one had to pick a persistent theme it would be trade — appropriate enough given that, as the conference took place, headlines screamed of Donald Trump’s ‘America First’ agenda and the ongoing headache of Brexit.

Dave Donaldson, winner of the 2017 John Bates Clark medal for best US-based economist under age 40, gave the Sargan Lecture on day one. He began by looking at new techniques to squeeze counterfactual predictions (for example: what would have happened if China hadn’t joined the global economy in the 1980s?) out of neoclassical international trade models. All very technical, though important if economists are too give decent policy advice on trade. He then moved on to evaluating domestic industrial policies. The estimated gains from Donald Trump’s ‘America First’ agenda? Around 0.1 per cent of GDP to US, according to the Donaldson. ‘I don’t know whether you think that’s big or small,’ he offered. We were allowed to draw our own conclusions.

On the second day of the conference, speaking on a special panel on the view on Brexit from abroad, Sussex University’s own trade expert, Alan Winters, offered a blast of home truth to those who insist that leaving the European Union will restore our national sovereignty. The mistake here, argued Winters, is ignoring the fact that we need some level of regulatory harmonisation on product standards, through the EU’s single market, to trade freely and efficiently with our European neighbours.

‘Sure, you can develop your own standards, but if you can’t trade with the rest of the world you effectively have little sovereignty anyway,’ he pointed out.

Winters also stressed that the single market for services goes hand in hand with freedom of movement for EU labour. The idea that one can neatly divorce the two is another fallacy. He pointed out that conferences, like the RES’s, still attract flesh and blood audiences, despite the fact that technology, in the form of high-speed broadband and webcasts, in theory allows people to participate remotely. ‘You are proving that face-to-face contact for services is important,’ he observed.

Nick Crafts of Warwick, one of the UK’s most eminent economic historians, was speaking at a National Institute of Social and Economic Research session on that toughest of economic nuts, the UK’s productivity puzzle.

But Crafts framed his contribution through the prism of Brexit. Is the EU to blame for our dire productivity performance? He asked. It was a question to which the answer turned out to be no. EU accession in 1973, said Crafts, boosted domestic competition, helped rid us of failing corporate management and was, actually, a crucial element of the Thatcher revolution of the 1980s. What a pity so many nominally Thatcherite Tory MPs today seem to have forgotten that. And this history, according to Crafts, pointed to an under-appreciated future danger for the UK: ‘A hard Brexit risks a return to the 1970s’.

In a separate session, Michela Vecchi of Middlesex University addressed a different, but equally persistent, economic puzzle, namely that the share of national income going to labour, as opposed to capital, seems to have been declining for many years across the rich world.

She noted a plethora of hypotheses, from robotisation, to globalisation, to the rise of superstar firms, to de-unionisation, to monopoly power. But, in the spirit of Diane Coyle’s presentation, she turned things around and asked what we actually mean by the ‘capital share’ of national income? Is capital really homogeneous, as the standard analysis of this question tends to assume? Vecchi’s research pointed to a positive relationship between investments in ‘knowledge capital’ (such as company R&D programmes) and workers’ wages.

‘The concept of capital has changed. We cannot rely on a single estimate of the capital stock to explain the labour share,’ she said. The implication of all this, as Vecchi pointed out, is that Trump-style industrial protectionism is very unlikely to help struggling US manual workers. ‘It’s more likely to make robotisation even faster because firms cannot rely on globalisation,’ she warned.
Yet a sad sense of futility clung to such advice. The UK cabinet contains ministers who have famously ‘had enough of experts’. And Trump? This is someone who boasts that ‘my primary consultant is myself’. Economists don’t just feel under siege, but ignored too.

On the subject of advice, the RES held an event, open to the public, on: ‘Is university worth it?’. The panel of experts cited lots of individual benefits of attending higher education, from greater employability, to higher lifetime earnings. We were even told that going to university makes you live longer. And amid ongoing student disgruntlement about high tuition fees, the income-contingent student debt repayment regime was emphasised.

Yet, disappointingly, the panel didn’t directly engage with the key counterfactual outlined recently in a book by the US economist Bryan Caplan, namely: would society simply be better of if we had a radically smaller higher education sector? Might we have locked ourselves into an educational arms race, where everyone has to have an expensive degree to get a job, not because the job truly requires the skills conferred by a degree, but simply because everyone else has one and to lack one marks you out to many employers as somehow deficient?

The members of the public who had come up to the Falmer campus were less interested in counterfactuals than in practical answers to the question of whether to send their own children to university or not. One audience member revealed that she had recently had her student loan wiped out by the government because she had never earned enough to be asked to pay it in and the 30 year expiration had now kicked in. It was unclear whether this was cause for congratulations or commiserations, or indeed whether it supported the pro-university arguments of the panel, or contradicted them.

Drinking problem

This was a conference, like most others, mainly powered by coffee. But fizzier beverages were on the minds of some delegates. For as the RES conference convened, the UK government’s long-awaited tax on sugary soft drinks was about to land.

And Rachel Griffith, a research director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, who will be the first female president of the RES next year, presented new IFS work showing that this is a pretty ‘well-targeted’ tax as far as targeting the health externalities created by excessive sugar consumption goes.

Why not just tax sugar? As Griffith explained, historic data on demand elasticities suggest that targeting all sugars through a new levy would not do much to shift overall buying behaviour. But taxing soda alone tends to hit young people, who are the main guzzlers of the stuff. And this age cohort seems to be pretty price sensitive. There are always social trade offs of course. Middle aged builders, whose soft drink consumption seems very price inelastic, will be made worse off by the new tax.

It’s pleasing to see policymaking that’s backed by some solid evidence, although it’s not clear whether this happened in the case of the sugar tax by accident or design.

Should we go further though? Panagiotis Margaris of Manchester University made the case for removing the VAT exemption on food in order to tackle obesity, estimating that this could save the NHS around £200m a year by curbing excessive eating. Yet, observing the data and arguments presented, I couldn’t help feeling that there might a danger of placing rather too much confidence in econometrics as a predictor of how people will react to new taxes. People’s behaviour can change. As fund managers used to tell their investors, the past is no guarantee of the future.

The lecture by the outgoing RES president, Andrew Chesher, struck a similar note of caution, warning econometricians against presenting a spurious degree of precision in their results. ‘We should be wary of choosing models because they deliver point identification of the objects of interest,’ he said. And, echoing Edward Leamer’s famous cry, Chesher urged: ‘Let’s take the con out of econometrics’.

But econometrics gave way to pure theory in the Hahn lecture, delivered by Botond Koszegi of Hungary’s Central European University. Though this theory came with a twist. Koszegi presented evidence that more regulation can actually help markets to function better.

His subject was markets where a range of firms offer complicated offers, such as mobile phone contracts with variable data download tariffs. Botond’s model suggests that if consumers can do less ‘study’ (defined as ploughing through the small print of a particular contract) they can spend more time ‘browsing’ for better headline offers, thus increasing effective competition.

They key is to regulate the ‘secondary features’ of contracts, such as capping the charges for additional data in that mobile contract. This enables all consumers to be reasonably confident that they are not going to be ripped off, even if they study less.

Koszegi argued this was consistent with a host of markets where people on low incomes seem to end up getting a raw deal relative to better off people who shop around more. High street banking and domestic energy here in the UK spring to mind.

Some have criticised Koszegi’s approach for using a pretty dense mathematical model to explain what common sense tells us is true. Yet this seems to me to miss the point. Regulators and competition authorities, faced with market failures, tend to reflexively push for more consumer choice, rather than consider the case for more
active regulation. What Koszegi provides is a new analytical tool for regulators and competition authorities to use when considering or justifying interventions.

If nothing else, Koszegi’s model is a useful rebuttal to the claim that mainstream economists are all neoliberal zealots, merrily inventing models to justify deregulation.

Chosen people
Another depressing political backdrop to the 2018 conference was a row over anti-Semitism in the Labour Party. Maristella Botticini’s Economic Journal lecture provided some economic context to that ancient bigotry.

There’s a mordant old joke, made in ‘Fiddler on the Roof’, about the Jews being God’s chosen people: ‘Once in a while can’t you choose someone else, God?’ Botticini, of Bocconi University, showed that a remarkable number of Jews once ‘unchose’ themselves.

There was a massive fall in the size of the Jewish population — from 4.5 million to 1.2 million — between the second and seventh centuries CE, which Botticini said was a result of voluntary conversions.

Why the exodus from the faith? According to Botticini’s research it was because one Jewish sect, the Pharisees, prevailed in an internal struggle with another, the Sadducees, in the wake of the Roman destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem in 70CE.

The Pharisees went on to impose a requirement on the Jewish population to educate their sons so they could read the Torah in Hebrew. This was so economically onerous that millions of Jews decided that they would rather convert to paganism or, more commonly, the burgeoning religion of Christianity.

Yet the fact that the remaining Jewish population was now well-educated gave them a huge comparative advantage in the developing urban economies of the Middle East, with hundreds of thousands using their skills to become merchants and money lenders.

It’s commonly assumed that Jews in Europe became merchants because they were prevented by discriminatory medieval laws from owning land or joining the traditional guilds, or that they took up money lending because Christians were prohibited from doing it. I confess I’d assumed this to be part of the story.

But not so according to Botticini. Not only is evidence of such discriminatory laws hard to find, but the idea that the Jews who migrated to Europe in the Middle Ages would have wanted to become farmers doesn’t make much sense.

‘If Jewish people wanted to be sharecroppers in France, or in Germany, or in Italy in the Middle Ages they could do,’ she said. ‘You come from either the Muslim empire or the Byzantine Near East. You’re a wealthy merchant. You want to go and plough the land in the middle of nowhere? Probably not. Once you start using economic thinking, you see that these restriction stories make no sense.’

Rather, they entered these professions simply because they had the skills to do them.

It was a brilliant, and convincing, piece of economic history. And it’s astonishing to think that an accident of history — the victory of one faction in a religious hierarchy — can have such huge consequences. This ought to be a textbook example of path dependency.

The theoretical implications might be important too. Economists have been on a quest for decades to establish a robust model to explain why some nations achieve economic take-off while others don’t, with everything from natural resource endowments, to culture, to institutions, and even climate all favoured as explanations at one time or another. Botticini’s work is further evidence that the secret sauce might be investments in human capital.

What economists really do
#WhatEconomistsReallyDo has become the profession’s defensive hashtag on social media. And the evidence I saw at the RES conference is that most of those in attendance do relevant and high-quality research.

Lots of the smaller presentations dealt with practical and important questions, ranging from the economic factors behind rise of the far right in Europe, to the impact of immigration on training for native citizens, to the effectiveness of international aid, to evidence on whether tailored individual blood pressure warnings work or not.

The famous ‘empirical turn’ was greatly in evidence in most of the sessions I attended. One cannot be everywhere at once in a sprawling conference like this but I personally didn’t see much evidence of the neoclassical dogmatism and unmoored theorising that critics so often denounce.

Yet, as my train pulled out of Falmer, one thing was clear in my mind: that a major challenge remains in communicating the best of this academic work to the general public and overturning the ingrained impression that all economists do is make dodgy macroeconomic forecasts.

The case, as others have urged, for the Royal Economic Society itself to speak up more readily on behalf of the profession when it’s traduced and to communicate the consensus view to policymakers, whether the subject be protectionism, Brexit, or the macroeconomic impact of public spending cuts, feels more pressing than ever.

Academic economists need to come out of the bunker. And the best form of defence, as they say, is attack.

www.res.org.uk/view/resNewsletter.html
Helping to communicate economics

The poor understanding of economics amongst the public and the media has been the subject of frequent comment in these pages, at the Society’s recent Annual Conferences and even at the Bank of England and HM Treasury.

As one of several initiatives aimed at countering this, Peter Urwin at the University of Westminster has recently launched a series of programmes on Share Radio called Economist Questions. Peter asks the interviewee to set out evidence in a particular area; then together they consider the options that are available (to business and government) to tackle any issues and come to some decision on actions that might be taken. Vicky Pryce has spoken of her new book, Why Women Need Quotas?; Prof. Patrick Sturgis (Director ESRC NCRM) has discussed his inquiry into political polling and Dr J Blanden has been interviewed on the subject of free nursery care. Readers can listen at: https://www.shareradio.co.uk/podcasts/?nm=Peter+Urwin

Prof. Urwin’s plan is to extend the range of issues (and the number of programmes) and is inviting members of the RES who would be interested in coming along to be interviewed on their area of expertise. He can be contacted at: urwinp@westminster.ac.uk.

Mark Blaug Student Essay Prize

In honour of the great critical economist Mark Blaug (1927-2011), the Foundation for European Economic Development (FEED) is financing and awarding an annual student essay prize.

Details of the 2018 Prize Competition

Eligible essays for the prize must be critical discussions of any aspect of modern economics.

Rather than applying economics to a particular problem, eligible essays must reflect critically on the state of economics itself, as Mark Blaug did in many of his works.

Critical reflections may include the assumptions adopted, the suitability of the concepts deployed, the mode of analysis, the role of mathematical models, the use of econometrics, real-world relevance, the presumed relationship between theory and policy, the unwarranted influence of ideology, the use (or otherwise) of insights from other disciplines, and so on.

The required language is English. Eligible essays are by university undergraduates, or by graduates who obtained their Bachelor’s degree no earlier than 1 January 2017. There is no residential or geographical restriction.

Undergraduate dissertations must be converted to essay format and reduced to 6,000 words (inclusive of references and appendices) or less. Author names, affiliations and email must be placed on the first page, below the title of the essay.

Up to two prizes will be awarded each year, depending on the quality of the best papers. The respective awards will be £500 and £300. FEED will reserve the right to award no prize, or one prize only, if there are inadequate essays of quality. The prizes will be judged by a committee of leading scholars.

Essays should be submitted by email to wilfred.dolfsma@wur.nl by 1 October 2017. The awards will be announced in late 2018 or early 2019.

Further details can be found at: http://www.feed-charity.org/essay-prize.htm

Sir Tony Atkinson — his final publication?

Sir Tony Atkinson, past President of the RES, died on 1st January last year and this Newsletter published an obituary by Joseph Stiglitz in its April 2017 issue. In our January issue this year (no. 180) Geoff Harcourt threw out a challenge to trace Tony’s final publication. Was it, for example, his joint-authored paper on charitable bequests contained in the Features issue of the Economic Journal published in October 2017? We invited readers to check.

Since then, we have heard from Cecilia Garcia Peñalosa at the University of Aix-Marseille. Cecilia points out that the Journal of Economic Inequality published a special issue in his honour in December 2017. This included a paper by Tony himself, co-authored with Chrysa Leventi, Brian Nolan, Holly Sutherland and Iva Tasseva. Cecilia also points out that the June 2018 issue of the same journal on ‘Top incomes, wealth and inheritance,’ there are three articles written or co-written by Tony.
INOMICS has been offering students and professionals a comprehensive online resource for their academic and career choices since 1998. Amongst the services it provides is an Annual Salary Report. This is a summary of the main findings of the 2018 Report, published earlier this year. Full details of the survey and of INOMICS’ other activities can be found at their website.1

The results of this report were compiled from information collected by an online questionnaire between September and November 2017. The questionnaire was advertised by social media and by email.

The sample
This year, more answers were collected than in any previous year, with 2175 people responding from 116 countries. Participants of the Salary Report Survey 2018 were asked to disclose information about their current annual salary in US Dollars, their highest academic degree, level of seniority, subject area, number of years of work experience and type of employer.

Unlike previous years, the 2018 Salary Report includes a five-year and a two-year comparisons of average salaries for particular positions in academia. The main part of the Salary Report 2018 consists of an analysis of average salaries according to such criteria as level of academic degree, sector of work — academia or the private sector, number of years of work experience, seniority and gender. Selection of the countries and continents analysed in the Salary Report 2018 reflects the number of respondents and their geographical location.

The reported salaries do not take into account such factors as cost of living or possible conversion errors amongst respondents.

Main findings, 2018

Average salaries by academic degree
• In 2017, bachelor’s and master’s degree holders earned 35 per cent and 27 per cent more, respectively, than in 2016.
• Average salaries of PhD or higher degree holders decreased by 12 per cent in 2017 compared to 2016.
• Obtaining a PhD or higher degree is still financially rewarding, however, the difference in remuneration between master’s degree holders and PhD or a higher degree holders, is not as significant this year as it was in 2016.

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<th>Figure 1: Average salary (worldwide), in US$</th>
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<th>Average salaries in academia and the private sector</th>
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<td>In academia, bachelor’s degree holders are better financially compensated than in the private sector.</td>
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<td>In academia, average salaries of bachelor’s degree holders almost doubled in 2017 compared to 2016.</td>
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<th>Figure 2: Average salaries by academic degree in academia and in the private sector, worldwide, 2017 compared to 2016, annual, US$</th>
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In academia in the USA and Germany, salaries are on average 10 per cent higher than private sector salaries, but these countries are exceptions to the global trend.

The only continent where respondents employed in academia earn significantly more than those working in the private sector is Asia.

Researchers in the private sector earn on average 30 per cent more than researchers employed in academia, with Australia & Oceania being the only exception to the global trend.

The highest average salaries for almost all positions in both academia and the private sector, are in the United States of America, Switzerland and in Canada.

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**Level of seniority**

- Asia is the only continent where junior-level specialists in academia earn more than mid-level specialists.
- In Asia, Central and Southern America, salary growth is not directly proportional to seniority, as in North America, Australia & Oceania and in Western Europe.

**Years of experience**

- During the first five years of work experience, employees in academia tend to earn more than those who are working in the private sector.
- After the first five years onwards, private sector workers earn on average 24 per cent more than those in academia.
- There are more people in academia than in the private sector considering themselves ‘juniors’ after five to ten years of work experience.

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**Gender**

- The most noticeable gender salary gaps can be observed at senior-level positions both in academia and the private sector.
- In academia at all levels, the average salary of a male is on average 18 per cent higher than that of a female.
- Both in academia and the private sector a ‘glass ceiling’, making it difficult for female economists to get into senior positions, was observed. In addition there are indications of a ‘salary-ceiling’, causing women in senior-level positions to earn less than their male counterparts.
- When comparing 2017 to 2016, in academia, a positive tendency towards less gender pay disparity worldwide was observed for several positions, particularly PhD candidates and full professors.
The Bank of England’s One Bank Research Agenda: An update

In the April 2015 edition of this Newsletter, Stephen Millard discussed the launch of the Bank of England’s ‘One Bank Research Agenda’. This article gives an update on Bank of England research since the launch, lays out the Bank’s current research themes and discusses ways in which the Bank of England continues to increase its engagement with the academic community.

The Bank’s One Bank Research Agenda

In February 2015, the Bank launched its One Bank Research Agenda based around five themes:

- Central bank policy frameworks and the interactions between monetary policy, macroprudential policy and microprudential policy, domestically and internationally
- Evaluating regulation, resolution and market structures in light of the financial crisis and in the face of the changing nature of financial intermediation
- Operationalising central banking: evaluating and enhancing policy implementation, supervision and communication
- Using new data, methodologies and approaches to understand household and corporate behaviour, the domestic and international macroeconomy, and risks to the financial system
- Central bank response to fundamental technological, institutional, societal and environmental change

These five themes were discussed in more detail in an accompanying document.1

Some examples....

Since launching the research agenda, Bank researchers have made progress on each of the themes, publishing their research as Bank of England Staff Working Papers2 and in journals3 as well as in the Bank’s Bank Underground4 blog.

In terms of ‘the interactions between monetary, macroprudential and microprudential policy’, two particular examples of the research we have done are the Staff Working Papers on ‘Targeting financial stability: Macroprudential or monetary policy?’5 by David Aikman, Julia Giese, Sujit Kapadia and Michael McLeay and ‘Concerted efforts? Monetary policy and macroprudential tools’6 by Andrea Ferrero, Richard Harrison and Ben Nelson, which were both published earlier this year. In the former, the authors develop a calibrated New Keynesian macroeconomic model in which a credit boom can lead to a financial crisis and examine monetary and macroprudential policy interactions within the model. They find that using countercyclical capital requirements can improve outcomes relative to what obtains when only monetary policy is used.

Another two good examples of research carried out jointly with UK academic researchers are the Staff Working Papers on ‘Macropolicy in an agent-based model of the housing market’7 by Rafa Baptista, Doyné Farmer and Daniel Tang (Institute for New Economic Thinking, Oxford University) and Marc Hinterschweiger, Katie Low and Arzu Uluc from the Bank and ‘Capital regulation and product market outcomes’8 by Ishta Sen (London Business School) and David Humphry from the Bank, which both fit under the heading of ‘evaluating regulation, resolution and market structures’. In the former paper, the authors developed an agent-based model of the UK housing market and used it to examine how macroprudential policy affects key housing market indicators. They found that an increase in the number of buy-to-let properties could increase the volatility of house prices. Against that they found that a loan-to-income limit could reduce house price volatility. In the latter paper, the authors examined the impact of the introduction of a risk-based capital regulation regime in 2002 on product market outcomes for the insurance industry in the United Kingdom. They found that firms constrained by the new regulations reduced underwriting relative to unconstrained firms, particularly for traditional insurance products which became more capital intensive in the new regulatory regime.

In terms of ‘operationalising central banking’, we have greatly enhanced our use of ‘textual analysis’ to examine how we communicate with the banks and building societies that we regulate and with the general public in, eg, our monetary policy communications. An example of this is the Staff Working Paper on ‘Sending firm messages: Text mining letters from PRA supervisors to banks and building societies’9 by David Bholat, James Brookes, Chris Cai, Katy Grundy and Jakob Lund. In this paper, the authors use textual analysis of the confidential letters sent from the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) to banks and building societies it supervises to explore whether the letters vary depending on the riskiness of the firm to whom the PRA is writing. They also compare letters from the PRA with letters...
written by their predecessor, the Financial Services Authority, finding that PRA letters are more ‘directive’, reflecting the shift in supervisory approach that has occurred in the United Kingdom following the financial crisis of 2007-09.

In terms of ‘understanding household and corporate behaviour, the domestic and international macroeconomy, and risks to the financial system’ we have greatly increased our use of microeconometric data, together with improving our ‘big data’ analytical toolkit. Two recent examples of Staff Working Papers using large microeconometric datasets are ‘Home values and firm behaviour’ by Saleem Bahaj, Angus Foulis and Gabor Pinter and ‘Gauging market dynamics using trade repository data: the case of the Swiss franc de-pegging’ by Olga Cielinska, Andreas Joseph, Ujwal Shreyas, John Tanner and Michalis Vasios. In the former paper, the authors use firm level accounting data, transaction level house price data and loan level residential mortgage data from the United Kingdom to show that a £1 increase in the value of the residential real estate of a firm’s directors increases the firm’s investment and wage bill by £0.03 each. Given that, in aggregate, the homes of firm directors are worth 80 per cent of GDP, a back of the envelope calculation suggests that a one per cent increase in real estate prices leads, through this channel, to up to a 0.28 per cent rise in business investment and a 0.08 per cent rise in total wages paid. In the latter paper, the authors used trade repository data to examine the effects of the Swiss National Bank’s decision to discontinue the Swiss franc’s floor of 1.20 Swiss francs per euro on the morning of 15 January 2015. They found that this decision led to extreme price moves in the forwards market, similar to those observed in the spot market, while trading in the Swiss franc options market was practically halted. In the following weeks, liquidity was reduced in this market, and this was associated with greater market fragmentation, higher market volatility and an increase in the degree of collateralisation. The authors note that while they analyse the impact of the event on the market and its visibility in the data, they were not making any comment about the Swiss National Bank’s decision itself.

And, finally, in terms of ‘central bank response to fundamental technological, institutional, societal and environmental change’, we have carried out a number of projects on, in particular, climate change, digital currencies and ‘fintech’. The results of all this work can be found on the Bank’s website.

Current areas of interest

As the economy evolves, so do the Bank’s main areas of research interest. The Bank continues to welcome interest from academics, researchers and experts to discuss and potentially collaborate with us on our research topics. Every six months the Bank reconsiders its list of research priority topics and publishes these on the website.

The current list of topics is:

- Supervisory tools, communication and behaviour, and their interaction with firms’ culture and behaviour, with particular interest in firm leading indicators or heuristics, and in psychological, sociological, behavioural, survey or experimental methods.
- Macropredential framework (including stress testing), instruments within and beyond the banking sector and transmission mechanisms, including coordination with monetary policy, macroprudential policy and internationally.
- Exploiting big data and experimental methods to understand the economy, the financial system, the impact of central bank policies and their communication, including text-based analysis, household and firm micro data, trade repository data and Solvency II data.
- The effects of post-crisis regulatory reforms (including the new resolution regime) and technological change on the financial system, central bank policies, and the future regulatory landscape.
- Openness and fragmentation of the international economic system, consequences for financing, trade, supply and productivity, and associated distributional effects, including the medium and long term implications of Brexit.
- The interplay between heterogeneity, distributional issues, the economy and central bank policies.
- The future of the monetary policy toolkit, the Bank’s balance sheet and the interplay with prudential policies, including in a low for long environment.

If you are interested in potentially collaborating with researchers at the Bank on any of these topics, you can fill in our contact form and we will aim to respond within a few weeks.

Continued academic engagement

In addition to increasing the amount of joint research we are carrying out, we continue to engage more generally with the academic sector, particularly in the United Kingdom. The Bank is a member institution of the Centre for Macroeconomics and Ben Broadbent (Deputy Governor for Monetary Policy) chairs its Advisory Board. The Bank has long been a supporter of the Money, Macro and Finance Research Group (MMF). In particular, for the past five years we have co-sponsored with the MMF a conference specifically aimed at UK PhD students. The Bank puts together a Special Session at the MMF Conference, at which the Bank also sponsors a Reception. Each year we also put together a Special Session for the Scottish Economic Society Conference and submit Special Sessions to be considered for the Royal Economic Society Annual Conference. Bank researchers continue to give seminars and lectures at universities throughout the United
Kingdom and further afield and the Bank also continues to engage directly with UK university departments through its representative on the Conference of Heads of University Departments of Economics (CHUDE).19

Conclusion

Since the launch of the Bank of England’s One Bank Research Agenda in February 2015, Bank researchers - often in conjunction with researchers from outside the Bank - have pushed forward our economic knowledge within the themes laid out in that agenda. But we are not complacent. There is still much to be done to increase our knowledge in those areas that are crucial to the Bank’s mission of ‘Promoting the good of the people of the United Kingdom by maintaining monetary and financial stability’. And the more we can continue to engage and work with the academic sector, the more our knowledge in these areas will grow.

Notes:


2. https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/news?NewsTypes=ce90163e489841e0b66d06243d35d5cb&Taxonomies=4509710da7894b9f992d983b8ebdcb&Taxonomies=1e6676670f3d4b0d8f981fe03a7b6a53&Direction=Latest

3. https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/research

4. https://bankunderground.co.uk/


12. https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/climate-change

13. https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/research/digital-currencies

14. https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/research/fintech

15. https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/research/research-themes-and-topics


17. http://www.centreformacroeconomics.ac.uk/Home.aspx

18. http://www.mmf.ac.uk/


The 2019 Annual Conference of the Royal Economic Society

The 2019 Annual Conference of the Royal Economic Society will take place from Monday 15 April to Wednesday 17 April 2019 at the University of Warwick.

The RES Women’s Committee will have a mentoring retreat on the Sunday before the conference.

Further information will be posted at www.res.org.uk/view/0/2019conference_home.html as it becomes available.
RES strategy, 2019-2023

The Royal Economic Society is one of the oldest and most prestigious economic associations in the world. Founded in 1890 and initially called the British Economic Association, it became the Royal Economic Society on receiving its Royal Charter in 1902. As a learned society, the principal aim of the Royal Economic Society is ‘to promote the study of economic science.’

The Society will focus its efforts on four strategic priorities between 2019 and 2023, as follows:

1. Enhancing the credibility and visibility of economics
The RES wishes to play a greater role in the public understanding of economics and its many applications. It intends to extend its communication and engagement activity, with a particular focus on engaging young people. It will invest in new ways to connect the media and interested others with the expertise the Society and its members can offer.

In particular, the RES will:

• Establish a new website, with more information for the media and general public
• Expand its media engagement, offering greater opportunity for the media to connect with RES members and experts
• Increase its use of social media and multimedia channels
• Increase efforts to promote the teaching of economics in schools
• Investigate and employ new methods to further engage with the wider public, building on its ‘RES Presents’ programme.

2. Supporting economists
Through establishing closer contact with its members, the RES wants to better understand how it can meet their needs. It will seek to continually improve its journals, events, and the various training, grant and prize opportunities offered to members. It will speak up for economists on issues that affect them, such as research funding for PhD students, and will continue to support initiatives around economics education.

In particular, the RES will:

• Review ways to further improve the journals published by the Society, building on the strengths and reputations of the Economic Journal and The Econometrics Journal
• Examine ways to further develop meetings organised and/or funded by the Society, including the successful Annual Conference
• Continue to support the teaching of economics in higher education through the Economics Network, CHUDE, and other initiatives
• Increase its engagement with those who fund economic research and research studentships
• Independently manage the administration of its membership, instead of using a third party.

3. Improving diversity
The RES recognises the lack of diversity in the discipline, and wishes to address this. It will place particular emphasis on promoting economics to women and girls, and others in under-represented groups. Through its Women’s Committee, it will continue to monitor the position of women in the discipline, and offer support to women economists through their careers. It will work to improve the voice of early career economists in the organisation.

In particular, the RES will:

• Review how its existing activities, such as the Young Economist of the Year competition and Annual Public Lecture, can attract a more diverse audience
• Seek to increase the role of early career economists in the Society’s decision-making
• Support initiatives which encourage women and girls to study economics
• Review the role it can play in promoting good professional conduct in the discipline.

4. Working effectively
The RES recognises that it can only achieve its objectives through efficient and collaborative working practices. It will establish its new office to provide effective administrative support, and will seek partnerships with related organisations where appropriate. It will manage its finances prudently, investing in activities which align with its strategy, whilst maintaining appropriate financial reserves.

In particular, the RES will:

• Review its committee structure, initiating new Communications & Engagement, Publications, and Finance committees to underpin its work in these areas
• Seek ways to engage more members in the activities of the Society
• Seek partnerships with other societies and institutions on areas of common interest
• Update its reserves and investment policies.
In last October’s issue of the newsletter, I described the early work that the RES Executive Committee had undertaken on a new strategy, and said that a member consultation would take place in early 2018. I am pleased to report that in June the Executive Committee and Council finalised the Society’s new strategy for 2019-2023, which is reproduced above. Below I discuss the main findings from the consultation.

The consultation ran online from 7 March to 11 April 2018 with 253 responses. The vast majority of respondents (93 per cent) were RES members, with 72 per cent identifying themselves as male and 18 per cent female. Respondents could also choose not to state a gender, or indicate that they did not identify as male or female.

Respondents were asked to provide their views on four strategic priorities proposed by the Executive Committee and Council: ‘Enhancing the credibility and visibility of economics’, ‘Supporting economists’, ‘Improving diversity’, and ‘Professionalising the Society’. Within each priority, respondents were also asked to rate the importance of certain activities.

Enhancing the credibility and visibility of economics

84 per cent agreed that this should be a strategic priority, with only minor variations in sentiment according to age and gender.

Respondents felt activities geared to ‘improving the public image of economics’, ‘contributing to the debate around economic education’ and ‘increasing engagement with schools’ were most important. Roughly two-thirds of all respondents felt each of these should be a high or very high priority.

Respondents were invited to provide other suggestions for improving the credibility and visibility of the discipline. There was support for adopting pluralist approaches; a greater focus on policy; and improving collaboration with other disciplines. A number suggested that the Society play a greater role in helping economists connect with the public, including through the media.

Supporting economists

82 per cent of respondents agreed this should be a strategic priority, with female respondents somewhat more positive (86 per cent) than males (79 per cent).

There was broad support for the resources the Society provides for members, with 59 per cent agreeing that improving the quality of the Society’s journals should be a high or very high priority. More than half agreed that training opportunities, lobbying, and strengthening the Society’s relationships with university departments should be a high or very high priority. Young economists were more likely to agree that the Society should provide greater support to undergraduate and masters students.

Suggestions offered by respondents included the Society actively lobbying funding bodies on the needs of economists; offering more prizes; and improving the website to facilitate communication between members.

Several respondents noted the importance of the journals and the annual conference as two of the Society’s core activities.

Improving diversity

72 per cent of respondents agreed this should be a strategic priority. Female respondents (81 per cent) were more likely to agree it was a priority than males (74 per cent). Those respondents who did not indicate a gender or stated that they did not identify as male or female were less likely to agree that improving diversity should be a priority. Respondents aged 41-50 (79 per cent) and 51-60 (78 per cent) were most likely to agree it should be a priority, compared to 67 per cent of those aged 31-40.

Respondents expressed broad support for efforts to increase the number of female students studying economics, monitoring the representation of women in academic departments, and ensuring the Society’s governance structures and activities reflect the diversity of its membership. There was a high level of support for increasing the voice of early-career economists in the Society with, as might be expected, very high support from those aged 40 or below.

A number of respondents noted that diversity issues extend beyond gender, and that the Society should be mindful of these in its work.

Professionalising the Society

57 per cent of respondents agreed this should be a strategic priority. This priority brought together a number of operational areas that Executive Committee and Council considered important, including making it easier for
members to join or renew their membership; providing more information on how Society funding is allocated, and pursuing partnerships with other organisations. Whilst there was overall support for these activities (less than 20 per cent of members considered these activities to be low priority), they were generally rated less highly than activities in the other strategic areas.

Several respondents were unsure about what the term ‘Professionalising the Society’ meant and this was reflected in a relatively high proportion of ‘Don’t Know’ responses.

Changes to the strategy
While respondents were broadly supportive of the main themes, the Executive Committee and Council agreed certain modifications to the strategy in response to the consultation:

• Renaming the 4th priority, ‘Professionalising the Society’ to ‘Working Effectively’
• Reinforcing the role of the Society in economics education
• Reinforcing the Society’s commitment to its journals, events and training activities
• Broadening diversity to include age and ethnicity
• Reinforcing the need for early career economists to be better represented

What now?
The strategy is intended to be a reference point for decision-making, informing decisions on how the Society allocates its resources in the coming years. Members will note that while the Society is keen to extend its public engagement work, this is not intended to come at the expense of its core activities.

The final strategy states the four priorities that have been agreed following the consultation. The format of the annual report will be re-worked to report against each priority. We are also now seeking chairs for the Publications and Communications & Engagement committees.

The launch of the Society’s new website later this year provides an opportunity to tell the wider world what the Society does and is focused on. We will also communicate the strategy to universities, government departments and other appropriate organisations.

The Executive Committee and Council are most grateful to all those who participated in the consultation.

Inomics salary report...continued from p.9

Conclusion
Key findings show that on average globally, economists in the private sector earn more than those in academia. As a continent, Asia was found to provide the only exception to this global trend, with economists employed in academia earning somewhat more. Nevertheless, bachelor’s degree holders and junior-level position workers have more chances to be better off in academia than in the private sector. This was most pronounced for junior-level Asian economists.

The most significant differences in private sector and academic economist salaries were observed in Europe, both in Western and Eastern, where the private sector seems to be particularly lucrative in comparison to academic positions.

For those considering continuing their education, it is still the case that a PhD is financially rewarding. That being said, the added value of a PhD seems to have reduced somewhat from last year, a possible trend that will be observed closely in next year’s Salary Report.

Interestingly those who are in the early stages of their career, with five years of work experience or fewer, are better financially rewarded in academia than in the private sector.

From a geographical perspective it was found that professionals from Switzerland, the United States and Canada earn the highest salaries in both academia and in the private sector.

As in previous Salary Reports we confirmed the continued existence of a gender pay gap in both academia and the private sector. In both sectors the gap seems to be wider in senior-level positions. In academia Australia & Oceania is the only exception to the global trend, where women in senior-level positions reported to earn 9 per cent more than men. In the private sector several exceptions were found as well. For instance, in North America senior-level female economists typically earn the same or slightly more than their male equivalents.

In the Salary Report 2018 a two-year comparison of average salaries of female and male professionals from academia was made for the first time. The results showed that some positive trends towards less gender salary disparity can be observed worldwide at several positions, particularly, PhD candidates and full professors when average salary levels of 2017 are compared to average salary levels of 2016.

It was also observed that female economists are under-represented at the senior-level in both academia and the private sector. In addition, in many countries there appears to be a salary ceiling for those female economists who do reach a senior position, with women in these positions earning less than their male equivalents.
Doing Economics

We have reported many times on the CORE project and the RES’s support for it. Here, Eileen Tipoe describes a new ‘hands on’ initiative from CORE designed to develop students’ skills and confidence in handling data.

Handling data can be scary, especially for anyone trying it for the first time. Real-world data is often messy, and getting it into a state where one can start to make sense of it can be a daunting task for many students. Besides data cleaning, there are also the challenges of understanding what the data actually measures, figuring out the appropriate statistical tools to use, and interpreting the output.

Doing Economics, part of the EQuSS project funded by The Nuffield Foundation, and with support from the RES, is a novel online resource developed by the CORE Team (www.core-econ.org) to address the issues of data literacy and data handling. As with other CORE projects, Doing Economics is free and open-access. From September 2018, this resource will be piloted in some universities in the UK — some parts of Doing Economics will be used by the University of Exeter Business School for course assessment, and by the University of Bristol for their ‘Bristol Futures’ initiative.

These projects were showcased at the June 18-19 RES Nuffield Foundation Workshop Teaching and Learning with CORE hosted by the Economics Network, and received an overwhelmingly positive response, with the majority of participants interested in using parts of Doing Economics for teaching in the next academic year.

The full resource will consist of 12 standalone projects, which can also be used in conjunction with CORE’s new Economy, Society, and Public Policy (ESPP) or The Economy eBooks. Each project guides students through a series of tasks to investigate an important policy issue, using publicly available data and easily-

Figure 1: Doing Economics main page (www.core-econ.org/doing-economics)

Figure 2: Explanation of statistical concepts is integrated with data handling tasks in Excel (left) and R (right).
available software (Excel and R). The first nine projects are already available online, with the remaining three projects to be released in mid-August.

The *Doing Economics* projects are aimed at anyone interested in using data to measure the economy and the effects of policies. Students don’t even have to be taking an economics course — *Doing Economics* may encourage them to sign up for their first one. To be accessible to a broad audience, *Doing Economics* was designed so that anyone with maths knowledge at GCSE Grade C or equivalent (the minimum maths requirement to enter a British university) can do the projects. Under this non-technical approach, statistical concepts such as correlation and standard deviation are introduced and explained using visual examples and interpretation of Excel and R output, but not derived from first principles. Further details, such as how to formally conduct a hypothesis test, are provided as optional material for those seeking a more technical treatment of the concepts.

In addition, no prior knowledge of economics, statistics, or statistical programs is required, except a familiarity with the interface and some basic operations, such as opening a datafile. To show students how to complete specific tasks and understand the output, projects contain step-by-step ‘walk-throughs’. The Excel walk-throughs consist of annotated screenshots, and the interactive click-through format helps students understand how each step builds on the previous step. The R walk-throughs deconstruct the code and explain the general syntax so students can readily apply the same functions to different contexts.

Aside from teaching data handling, data visualization, and presentation skills, the projects are intended to get students thinking about issues related to data collection and the way that variables or concepts are measured. Before working with a specific dataset, students are asked to download the accompanying documentation and use it to explain how the variables of interest were measured and consider the limitations of these measures. These considerations are also present throughout each project. For example, the project ‘Measuring wellbeing’ involves a comparison between different ways of measuring living standards (GDP and the HDI), and students use UN data to create their own index.

Other unique features of Doing Economics include the exposure to a variety of data sources and contexts, ranging from household surveys to self-generated experimental data. The way that these data sources are used is quite flexible; in many cases, students can choose the countries, subgroups, or indicators of interest to use for a particular task. The projects are also easily adaptable to specific teaching settings. Parts of a project relating to a sub-topic can be done independently as a short exercise or altogether as an extended assignment.

![Walk-throughs in Excel (left) and R (right)](image-url)
By giving students hands-on experience with using real-world data to investigate important policy issues, *Doing Economics* will strengthen the link between real-world phenomena and abstract economic concepts, while enabling students to develop skills that are transferable to other courses and to the workplace.

Notes:
1. For further information about Doing Economics, visit www.core-econ.org/doing-economics/ or contact Eileen Tipoe, the CORE EQuSS researcher (eileen@core-econ.org).
2. *Doing Economics and Economy, Society and Public Policy* (ESPP) are products of the CORE EQuSS project. ESPP is an introductory economics text, based on CORE’s *The Economy*, intended for students who are not specialising in economics. CORE EQuSS is funded by the Nuffield Foundation, but the views expressed in this article are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Foundation.
Women in the Early Days of the RES

Ian Preston, University College London, describes the backgrounds and achievements of some of the women who participated in the founding of the British Economic Association, later to become the Royal Economic Society.

The meeting held at UCL in 1890 which founded the British Economic Association, forerunner of the Royal Economic Society, was attended by ‘about two hundred persons’. Sixty four (or five) of them are named in the report of proceedings published in the first issue of the Economic Journal and of those ten (or eleven) are women (though nothing that might have been said at the meeting by any of them is recorded). Some of these women are still well known, though not necessarily as economists, and others less so. To trace their backgrounds and subsequent contributions brings attention to the role played by the opening of access to higher education in the latter half of the nineteenth century in broadening the scope of economic enquiry. Seven of them were women who had participated in university education, three of them at Cambridge and four of them at UCL. Six went on to write pieces of one sort or another in the Society’s journal, typically on similar themes relating to aspects of women’s work. Although no woman would become professor of economics until much later in the following century, a number of the ten became involved in lecturing and in practical public service.

The oldest of the ten was Octavia Hill (1838-1912), a social reformer known for her campaigns for housing for the poor and for the preservation of open spaces, now remembered too for her part in establishing the National Trust.

Also present was Millicent Garrett Fawcett (1847-1929), (pictured left) now best known as a suffragist, honoured only this year with a statue in Parliament Square. But she was also someone highly knowledgeable about economics and her 1870 text Political Economy for Beginners went through ten editions as a widely read introductory exposition of the subject. Her late husband, Henry Fawcett, also a campaigner for female suffrage, had been Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge and she, alongside the philosopher Henry Sidgwick, was one of the founders of Newnham Hall, the second Cambridge college to admit women.

The struggle for higher education

Among the first five students at Newnham in 1871 was another of the women attending the meeting, Mary Paley (1850-1944). She took and passed the Moral Sciences Tripos in 1874 (though could not graduate, being a woman) and then lectured on economics there from 1875 before she married the economics lecturer, Alfred Marshall (mover of the resolution to found the Association at the UCL meeting). The couple moved to Bristol where she continued to teach and collaborated with Marshall in writing, for example, their 1879 The Economics of Industry.

Opened before Newnham was Girton College, the first to admit women at Cambridge, which was the college of two others at the meeting. Constance Jones arrived at Girton in 1875, taking a first class in the Moral Sciences Tripos in 1880. Returning as a research student in 1884 she went on to lecture and write on philosophy and eventually became Mistress of Girton. The Misses Borchardt referred to in the proceedings are presumably two or three of the daughters, Malvina (1848-1916), Sophie (1852-1932) and Helene (1858-1937), of the Manchester suffragist Louis Borchardt. Malvina also studied at Girton from 1873-77, went on to a career in education including becoming headmistress of Devonport High School and establishing a hostel for women students next to UCL in Gower St.

Though able to attend lectures offered by enlightened university staff and able to take examinations with the cooperation of individual examiners, women would be accepted for full membership of the university at Cambridge only in 1948 after repeated rebuffs. The first university to teach men and women together and to permit women to graduate on the same terms as men was in London and economics as a discipline was closely involved in the events leading to that.

Although the foundation of UCL in 1826 was intended to open access to degrees to those excluded by religion from taking degrees at Oxford or Cambridge, its inclusiveness did not extend as far as allowing women to take degrees. It was not until the 1860s, encouraged by
the newly-formed London Ladies’ Educational Association and within UCL especially by the Professor of English Literature, Henry Morley, that lectures were offered to women, at first outside college premises then later within, but women were still not allowed to sit for degrees and men and women were taught separately.

The first coeducational class in any British university was held by John Elliot Cairnes, Professor of Political Economy, in October 1871, his class including ‘Five ladies who are manifesting a very intelligent interest in the subject and are evidently studying it with care.’ Cairnes, a friend of John Stuart Mill, was a strong believer in female emancipation but his request to teach men and women together was founded not on an argument of principle but on his poor health and inability to teach the same course twice. UCL Senate assented without committing themselves to affirming any general principle.

Cairnes remained in the post less than a year after this and his successor Leonard Courtney (another leading figure at the Association’s inaugural meeting) with no argument of disability to justify persisting with the experiment nonetheless argued successfully in his letter of acceptance that it should be continued. ‘The experiment seems to have been attended with great success, and I should very much regret if the interest that has been excited among women with reference to the subject should die away.’ His successor, William Stanley Jevons, evidently agreed since he combined with Morley in using UCL’s example to persuade his previous employers in what was to become the University of Manchester to also go coeducational in 1883.

After other departments followed the lead of Political Economy, the decision to allow women to take University of London degrees came in 1878 and UCL became the first British university to admit women on fully equal terms to men.

...the decision to allow women to take University of London degrees came in 1878 and UCL became the first British university to admit women on fully equal terms to men...”

An earlier scholarship holder, in 1881, was Ada Heather-Bigg (1855-1944), daughter of a well-known designer of and author on orthopaedic appliances, and one of the college’s earliest female undergraduates. She had been studying in the department since 1875 and went on to be awarded a Jevons studentship in 1891 to study economic and social conditions in London. She became a suffragist and opponent of restrictions on women’s work, prominent in the Women’s Provident and Protective League, an organisation promoting trade unionism for women, and in the Women’s Employment Association. The department still awards a prize in her name.

Finally, Caroline Foley (1857-1942) took a BA in 1886 and MA in 1889. Her studies also covered psychology and philosophy, she became interested in spiritualism and went on to a distinguished career lecturing on Indian philosophy and the history of Buddhism in Manchester and at SOAS, marrying and then writing with Thomas William Rhys Davids, the professor of Pali at UCL.

Collet, Heather-Bigg and Foley were among the small group of young progressive economists who formed the Economic Club at UCL in 1890, a group meeting monthly, often with the participation of noted senior economists, to discuss topics in social science away, in the words of fellow founding member Henry Higgs, from ‘people who rant without being “trained economists”.’

...and at the RES

Besides founding the forerunner of the RES, the 1890 meeting established the Economic Journal, edited in its early years by Francis Ysidro Edgeworth, and Foley was
Collet was both the first woman to write in the EJ and the most frequent contributor among these six women, writing sixteen pieces of one sort or another between 1891 and 1940. Her work brings data to bear on questions related to women’s pay, employment, expenditure and social circumstances, beginning with a piece on women’s work in Leeds and including another on the budgets of a sample of middle class working women. Reviewing a collection of Collet’s papers on educated working women, Mary Paley Marshall praises the ‘outcome of trained economic thought working on a wide experience of life.’ Collet and Orme’s work together on the Royal Commission on Labour produced its report in 1893. Summarised in a review by Foley in the EJ, its findings viewed wage-labour as beneficial for women, argued however that they were underpaid and required to endure unhealthy conditions, and encouraged unionisation.

Both Marshall and Foley reviewed several times for the EJ, these two examples being two of the more substantial. Foley, second only to Collet in the frequency of contributions, also wrote articles of her own, one an erudite exploration of the economics of fashion and another on economic conditions in ancient India. Fawcett meanwhile contributed occasional reviews but also a couple of articles, a quarter of a century apart, expounding her changing views on equality of pay for equal work.

Bryant and Heather-Bigg each wrote single articles in the journal. Bryant’s article on educational finance, mainly an analysis of data on cost structures in schools, ended by hoping that achievement of fair pay for women in teaching might help in encouraging broader equalisation of pay through society. Heather-Bigg contributed a historically-informed piece on the tendency to undervalue the wife’s economic contribution to family income arguing that opposition to employment outside the household was motivated more by a fear, not so much of women’s work, but of women’s wage-earning. (Writing outside the EJ, Heather-Bigg interestingly, like Foley, also wrote on fashion, though taking a more polemical line criticising ‘the cost, the tyranny and the uselessness of fashion’ — both articles are references in Alfred Marshall’s Principles.)

Where Bryant and Collet impress with the careful and methodical gathering of statistical evidence, Foley is more discursive, Fawcett and Heather-Bigg more openly committed. Through all of their work runs a belief in the importance of documenting and understanding women’s economic experiences.

Note:
1. Extensive references to accompany this article can be found on Ian’s website:
http://www.ucl.ac.uk/~uctp100/RESwomen.htm

Is the World Cup really worth hosting?

As we go to press, the England soccer team are through to the last eight in the Russian-hosted World Cup (and have even won a penalty shoot-out for the first time in their history). The benefits to England’s footballing reputation are clear. But what about economic benefits to the hosts?

On the Inomics website, William Pearse paints a rather gloomy view of the likely returns, drawing largely on the most recent experience of Brazil’s hosting the World Cup in 2014. ‘... the loss of billions of dollars of taxpayers’ money is less amusing, and its effects far longer lasting, than the odd England penalty miss… With Russia having committed a reported $11.6 billion for this year’s incarnation, questions have once again been swirling as to the financial viability of hosting football’s greatest prize’.

In Brazil’s case, one of the major problem’s was the poor quality of the existing infrastructure. ‘...stadia do not come cheap. Even when constructed, maintenance costs can spiral, especially when, like in Brazil’s case, they cannot be used regularly enough post-tournament to cover the costs of their own upkeep, burning instead a sizable hole in the nation’s coffers. This, unfortunately, is also the enduring legacy of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa...’ It might have been better to have simply invested directly in the respective communities most in need.

A frequently heard argument in favour of hosting major international events is that they ‘put the country on the map’ and encourage tourism…”... events of such magnitude attract huge numbers of fans for the period in which they run, but they also disrupt existing flows of holiday-makers, and in many cases put people off visiting for fear of overcrowding. Even when numbers do increase it may not lead to a ‘Pareto’ gain due to the associated costs from which the increase is procured. South Africa, again, provides a prime example. ... Although failing to match the anticipated 450,000 tourists, South Africa did experience a “visitor spend increase of over a quarter” during the World Cup period; this was, however, offset by the acquisition cost of an estimated $13,000 per visitor. Enough...to have paid the wages of the entire working population for a week’.

But assessing the economic benefits cannot provide a full picture. ‘The events themselves create things immeasurable: memories, pride and unity, things that, when established in fractious settings can be of untold benefit. South Africa bears out this point. Having suffered the injustices of Apartheid rule for 46 years, that 91 per cent of residents believed the World Cup had a unifying influence cannot be underplayed.’

The full article can be read at:
https://inomics.com/insight/is-the-world-cup-really-worth-hosting-1251200
The 50th History of Economic Thought conference and THETS, a new society

In the April Newsletter an obituary of Tony Brewer1 referred to his work on the history of economic thought and in particular his management of one of the earliest repositories of economic texts ‘Documents for the History of Economics’. In this article, Richard van den Berg describes the evolution of this area of study.

Fifty years ago, in January 1968, a group of economists that included Donald Winch, Bob Coats, Bernard Corry and Robert Collinson Black organised a conference devoted exclusively to papers about the history of their discipline. During this event it was felt that it should become an annually recurring History of Economic Thought conference supported with a Newsletter. This is how, with initial support from the Royal Economic Society, the History of Economic Thought Newsletter was born, which ran from 1968 until 2011. The annual conference never stopped running: it will this year see its 50th edition when it takes place at Balliol College, Oxford, from 29 until 31 August.

Over the years many eminent economists and historians attended the conference and their deliberations, notes and book reviews are now freely available in the digitised Newsletters (see https://thets.org.uk/archive/). One early initiative, also sponsored by the RES, was the compilation of information about archives where the papers of significant British economists were kept. This resulted in 1975 in the publication of The Economists’ Papers 1750-1950, edited by Paul Sturges, which formed the basis of the more recent online resource (see http://www.economistspapers.org.uk/).

During half a century much has changed to academia in general and to the economics profession in particular. The nature of economic research and what it taught today is radically different from what it was in 1968. At that time the history of economics, as well as economic history, was taught quite commonly on undergraduate economics programmes in the UK. Especially since the 1980s this has become rarer with only some universities, like Bristol and Manchester, continuing their courses in the history of economic thought. In the last few years, however, a modest revival appears to be under way, with some economics degrees now again giving more emphasis in their curricula to the history of economic theories and policies.

Meanwhile, research in the history of economic thought has flourished in recent decades. Several specialised journals exist, such as History of Political Economy (since 1969) and The European Journal of the History of Economic Thought (since 1993), that publish articles on a wide range of topics and periods in the history of economic thought. Such specialised journals do not just indicate the maturity of an academic field, but also reflect a reorientation in the content and perceived purposes of research in the history of economic thought. It is perhaps fair to say that fifty years ago research was mostly conducted by trained economists who engaged in history as an exercise in tracing back the origins of the ideas and theories that were then current. In other words, most research was carried out by economists writing about the history of their profession and the theories of famous earlier economists.

In recent decades research in the history of economic thought has broadened out. While most researchers do of course still have a background in economics, they also tend to adopt approaches from other social sciences and the humanities. Today, academics in Britain who are interested in the history of economics are just as likely to be based in an economics department, as in an intellectual history or philosophy department, or in a business school. With this, the subjects studied have also broadened out from a strict focus on earlier economic analysis and policies were formulated. What has remained, however, is that history of economic thought can provide uniquely reflective perspectives on what economists do.

Oddly perhaps, given the fact that the 50th conference is due, until recently there was no History of Economic Thought Society in Britain. This was due primarily to the fact that the early generation of scholars who frequented the annual conference decided against any formal arrangements. In one of the first Newsletters (issue 4, Spring 1970, page 7) it was noted that ‘[a]t the Business Meeting there was a characteristic British reluctance to adopt a written constitution’. Only four years ago, when the editorial board of the Newsletter felt the need to make the activities of historians of economic thought in Britain more visible, was the step taken to formally found The History of Economic Thought Society (THETS). With its website https://thets.org.uk and a steadily increasing membership THETS is hoping to promote research and teaching of the history of economic thought for the next half a century.

Notes:
1. See also the obituary of Peter Groenewegen, below
2. University of Kingston
Taxation, socialism and social justice

Recent studies of well-being have often drawn attention to the apparent benefits of a ‘spiritual’ dimension to life. In this comment, Rutherford Card, Johnson of the University of Minnesota, argues that charitable behaviour, rooted in a sense of mutual obligation, is a real alternative to the ‘tax more’ / ‘provide less’ approach to funding social services.

The inadequacy of government services and social programmes is a matter of frequent comment. The solutions that appear to receive the most attention are fiscal in nature. On the right, there is one form or another of laissez-faire policy and trickle-down theory. On the left, there is a mantra of increased taxation. Britain lags behind Continental Europe in the overall tax rate, and the United States is even lower. The general attitude of the public regarding the specific type, scope, and necessity of government services and programmes varies between countries — sometimes wildly so. Likewise, the attitudes of the public towards being taxed and towards government stewardship of that money is geographically diverse.

A fiscal solution, however, will not only not satisfy everyone, it is unlikely to be successful, no matter what form it takes. What must be fixed is the underlying problem that brought society to its present state. From the great unity of the Second World War and the post-war years to the present, there has been a change. Socialism has been growing, and with it, secularism. Secularist principles have slowly eroded religious sentiment in the populations of the UK, the USA, and Continental Europe and those sentiments were what had bred social responsibility and spurred action. Accompanying government policies have all but neutered the ability of many religious organisations to fulfill their mission of charity and service to those in need. In the United States, for example, some Catholic orphanages have closed due to changes in government policy — and those who suffered were the children.

Why does any of this matter for taxes? The relevance is because the earlier, more religious society tended overall to feel an obligation to help others. A large army of clergy and lay workers visited the sick, tended to the poor, and helped prisoners, both during and after incarceration. They provided health care and education, regardless of who the beneficiary was. Many private organisations did likewise. The Boy Scouts, for example, promoted the idea of helping those in need as part of ‘doing a good turn daily’. Would Lord Baden-Powell today even recognise the Britain he so long served?

Secularism, far from its promises of liberation, inherently breeds selfishness. It is unfortunately true that not all religious people do the right thing always, but then they are humans like anyone else. Secularism, however, removes any sense of personal responsibility to a higher power by seeking to strip individuals of their religious identity or at the very least to suppress it to the point that is has no bearing in their personal decision-making processes. Socialism takes matters a step further and casts the state as the central and ultimate authority, the ultimate arbiter of ‘goodness’ and the dispenser of all benefits to those it deems worthy. Yet, to provide more and more services, the government, having taking the ability to help others away from the populace and civic organisations, and having raised generations of people to believe that the moral principles that helped make their society great are now wrong, must raise taxes or else lower quality and quantity. It is a manufactured problem with the government established as the solution to the very problem it created. Even the emblem of the RES, the bee, promotes decentralisation. The emblem also speaks to the benefits of self-interest to society — and self-interest need not be selfishness.

A government cannot so easily legislate morality. Taxing people more and more, may very well provide more money for government services and social programmes (pacté Laffer), but it will not inherently make people support those services or feel good about their taxes going to provide them. And, why is taxation and spending inherently the best approach or the one and necessary solution to failing social services? A government is not a for-profit entity. It does not necessarily seek the most efficient allocation of resources. Rather, to help society, let the people and the civic organisations keep more of their money. It is not a ‘trickle-down’ theory, but one of decentralisation of charitable and humanitarian services to those who have local, first-hand knowledge of the needs of those around them — those who do not turn a blind eye to their neighbours. Of course, for that to be successful, people and organisations that are keeping more of their resources must want it to work. They must have drive and passion. The 1940s had a strong undercurrent of moral imperative flowing beneath them. There was a marked sense of sacrifice. In the interim, secularism has replaced that great spirit with empty selfishness. What is needed is for the governments of Britain, the Commonwealth, the EU and the United States to empower religious and civic organisations once again to do what they once did best. Above all, the very soul of the nation must be renewed, taken from secularism to spirit, from socialism to distributed capitalism, from selfishness to efficient self-interest. It is high principles that drive social welfare, not the other way around. The drive to help others must come and can only come from within and cannot be forced through taxation and inefficient central management. A sound and lasting solution to the underlying problem is needed rather than more superficial fiscal bandages to an ailing system.
Obituaries

Basil J Moore

Many readers will be familiar with Basil John Moore, the economist, and with his work on monetary theory and policy. But there is much more to him than his academic work. I remember Basil foremost as an adventurer, thanks to the many stories that he and his wife, Sibs, told me over the years.

Basil Moore, born in Canada in 1933, passed away on March 8, 2018. He had embraced life to the very fullest. He liked being outdoors. He was an avid jogger and ran a number of marathons, in Boston, New York, Singapore, and London, and even ran the Two Oceans marathon, in Cape Town, South Africa, a race totaling some 77 kms.

Basil was also a skilled hiker. He started climbing mountains as a youth in order to overcome his fear of heights. He climbed the Dhaulagiri in Nepal and to Basecamp Everest (where he nearly died). With his sons, he enjoyed conquering the tallest mountains to ski, and once, with the proceeds of his first book, *The Theory of Finance* (1968), he was able to enjoy the ultimate helicopter skiing.

He was also a qualified scuba diver and explored Jacques Cousteau’s Palancar reef in Cozumel, Mexico, and dove in the Red Sea, as well as in the waters of Egypt, Jamaica, the US Virgin Islands, and Zanzibar.

Later in life, Basil reinvented himself as a dedicated gardener, and was happiest at his sprawling Proteaceae estate, in the Banhoek Valley, in Stellenbosch, South Africa, which he and Sibs bought in 1991. They named it Moores End, after having seen the movie ‘Howard’s End’. There, Basil grew and exported prized flowers, like the protea, cynaroides, leukospermum, pin cushions and warratahs. In fact, so the story goes, Basil defended dollarization not as an economist, but because it was better for his export business!

To many economists, however, he is best remembered as the fiercest defender of the horizontalist approach to endogenous money.

Basil had a long and distinguished career, having studied economics and political science at the University of Toronto, Canada, before obtaining his doctorate from Johns Hopkins University, in 1958, under the supervision of Fritz Machlup. He spent his career at Wesleyan University, in Middletown, Connecticut, from 1958 to 2003, and was also a Visiting Professor at the University of Stellenbosch from 1993 to 2003, at which time he retired there as Professor Extraordinary of Economics, until 2010. He spent sabbaticals at Stanford University (1963), in Germany (1965), at the University of Cambridge (1970), as well as in Morocco (1973), Malaysia (1976), Vancouver (1977), London (1978), India (1985), Korea (1988), and Singapore (1990).

Basil is best known for his book, *Verticalists and Horizontalists: The Macroeconomics of Credit Money* (Cambridge UP, 1988), as well as a great many other writings on endogenous money. Basil first got in touch with post-Keynesian economics while on a sabbatical, in 1970, at the University of Cambridge, where his office was in between those of Joan Robinson and Paul Davidson, a time during which Paul was writing his book, *Money and the Real World*. According to Paul, ‘I believe our numerous discussions in Cambridge plus lectures by Kaldor and Joan Robinson that we attended finally converted Basil to a more post-Keynesian approach and led him to the concept of endogenous money.’ And that influence was instantaneous: indeed, as early as 1972 in an article in the *Economic Journal*, Moore was already talking about an ‘accommodating central bank’ and of ‘endogenous money’ — a paper in which he refers to Kaldor’s prophetic 1970 paper on endogenous money in the *Lloyds Bank Review*.

The book contributed to an intense debate over the specific role of central banks, which continues to this day, although I believe it is safe to say that we have all been convinced by his approach now. In fact, Ulrich Bindseil, of the European Central Bank, claimed the book ‘has impressively stood the test of time. … Central bankers have by now largely buried “verticalism”, at least when it comes to monetary policy implementation’ (U Bindseil and J Konig, ‘Basil J Moore’s Horizontalists and Verticalists: an appraisal 25 years later’, in *Review of Keynesian Economics*, 1(4), 2013, pp. 383-385).

I came to know Basil quite well over the years, and I hold very fond memories of him. Our friendship spanned some three decades and I last saw Basil in April, 2017, at Moores End. I had been invited to lecture at the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS), and my hosts had organized some meetings in Cape Town so that I could spend some time with Basil and Sibs. Joerg Bibow happened to be there as well, and we spent three wonderful nights at Moores End.

Basil is survived by his wife, Sibs, his daughter, Tara, his three sons, Robin, Sasha, and Martin, and a granddaughter. Basil leaves behind his three beloved Rhodesian Ridgeback dogs, Shaka, Sheba and Simba.

There will be a forthcoming symposium in the *European Journal of Economics and Economic Policy — Intervention* (EJEEP) honouring the life and contributions of Basil John Moore.

*Louis-Philippe Rochon*

Laurentian University, Sudbury, Canada

1. This is an edited version of an obituary of Basil Moore, due to be published in the *EJEEP* in September 2018. We are very grateful to the editors of that journal for permission to publish it here.
Peter Diderik Groenewegen

In his chosen primary field, the history of economics, Peter Groenewegen was one of the finest scholars of his generation. This judgement goes to the depth, the range, and the precision of his historical research — richly informed also by a larger learnedness that grasped the wider context of texts.

Groenewegen, who died in Sydney on 4 May 2018, was born on 13 February 1939 in Kerkrade, The Netherlands, his family migrating to Australia in 1952. He graduated from the University of Sydney, Bachelor of Economics (1st Class Hons) in 1961 and Master of Economics by research in 1963. He then undertook a PhD at the London School of Economics and Political Science, awarded 1965.

Peter gained much institutional acknowledgement for his achievements: Professor of Economics at the University of Sydney from 1981 (the university of which he was continuously a member, in one form or another, from the late 1950s to his death, save for his doctoral sojourn at the London School of Economics in the 1960s); elected Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia in 1983; Australian Research Council Senior Research Fellow, 1991-95; Distinguished Fellow of the History of Economics Society in 2005; made Honorary Member of the European Society for the History of Economic Thought the same year; Distinguished Fellow of the Economic Society of Australia, 2010; and inaugural Distinguished Fellow of the History of Economic Thought Society of Australia the same year. Groenewegen retired from fulltime academic employment in 2002, but remained an Honorary Associate of his faculty, and Emeritus Professor, until his death.

Peter’s early work in the history of economics, growing out of his Master’s and PhD theses, concerned the formation of classical economics to 1776, with particular emphasis on the role and thought of the eighteenth-century French contributors, notably, A R J Turgot. This research greatly contributed to a welcome correcting of the mid-twentieth-century Anglocentric provincialism of the discipline’s self-understanding of its history and origins, including also attention to Italian contributions — notably, Pietro Verri and Cesare Bonsana (Marchesi di Beccaria). It was an important element of a wider scholarly effort to rescue classical political economy from a ‘Whig history’ of economics, wherein classical economics came to be perceived as a mere collection of primitive anticipations of the latter-day marginalist theoretical framework.

Then, a series of articles dealing with aspects of the life and thought of Alfred Marshall begins to appear from 1988, preparatory to the massive, meticulous and deeply thoughtful Marshall biography of 1995, as well as many publications on Marshall after that. But while the work on the formation of classical economics and on Marshall are the two most salient features of Groenewegen’s long devotion to the history of economics, there are also very extensive contributions involving other aspects of the history of the science, for example: on the origins of the ‘supply and demand’ terminology; the concept of division of labour; Piero Sraffa in relation to Marx; Marx’s conception of classical political economy; Robert Malthus; the formation of marginalism; one of Peter’s intellectual heroes, Jacob Viner; the internationalization of economics after 1945; and James Steuart’s indebtedness to Richard Cantillon.

Hence, while eighteenth-century French political economy and Marshall are the two major subjects of Groenewegen’s historical scholarship, it is testament to both the scale and range of his research that if, by way of a thought experiment, one were to remove the two sets of associated publications from his curriculum vitae, there would still remain a very substantial academic life. Peter’s research lifework as a whole resulted in a vast collection of publications: most particularly, when I last counted in 2011, over 60 journal articles; more than 70 chapters in books; 6 authored books (two of them co-authored), 11 edited books (of which, three co-edited), a substantial body of translations, and a very large number of contributions to scholarly reference works — with some further published contributions added in the years since then.

If one knew nothing else of Peter but this, one could contemplate the magnitude and diversity of the research achievement and conjecture that he was one of those self-centred academics who pursues his own research without much contributing to the academic communities of which he was a member. In fact, this inference would be entirely wrong. Groenewegen made very considerable contributions of service to the global community of historians of economics and to the economics profession more widely. (The specifics of all this, as well as a more detailed account of his research history, is provided in Tony Aspromourgos (2011) ‘Distinguished Fellow of the Economic Society of Australia, 2010: Peter Groenewegen’, Economic Record, vol. 87 (June).)

But there is more, as well, to a scholarly life than just these tangible contents of a curriculum vitae. The extensive formal service contributions Peter Groenewegen made to academic communities are only the most visible expression of a larger set of roles he fulfilled as colleague, advisor and mentor to very many scholars and academics around the world. This also is to be honoured, even if, or perhaps particularly because, it is under-recognized, in the too narrow and mechanical ‘metrics’ by which academics are now commonly judged.

Tony Aspromourgos
University of Sydney

Editor’s note: This is a condensed version of an obituary that will be forthcoming in the Journal of the History of Economic Thought.
RES news

Secretary General: Professor Denise Osborn
Chief Executive: Leighton Chipperfield
RES Office: 2 Dean Trench Street, Westminster, London. SW1P 3HE
Email: resoffice@res.org.uk  Telephone: 020 3137 6301
Membership queries: cs-membership@wiley.com or 01865 778171.
See website www.res.org.uk for further information.

Journals making more of an impact

The Society’s journals have seen significant gains in their Impact Factor according to recently released figures.
The EJ’s Impact Factor has increased to 2.946 in 2017 from 2.608 in 2016 – its highest ever score. This places the Economic Journal neck and neck with the Journal of the European Economic Association and in the top 12 per cent of all journals within the economics category.

The Econometrics Journal has jumped nearly 100 places in the economics category, and is now ranked 172 out of 353 journals. It also saw a large increase, with an impact factor of 1.152 in 2017 compared to 0.513 in 2016.

A new website for RES

The RES has partnered with a specialist agency to create a new and modern website. Although the current site has served the Society well for some time, it is based on old technology and navigating around the site can be difficult.

The new website will launch towards the end of 2018, with a cleaner design, updated content, and more use of multimedia. If you would like to be involved in the testing process, please contact the Society’s Communications Officer Patrick Scott: pscott@res.org.uk.

Renewing your membership

The launch of the new website will mean that members will renew their membership direct with the Society, rather than with our publisher. Members will recall that in previous years they will have received renewal notices from Wiley during the autumn. This will not happen in 2018. Instead, the Society will invite members to renew via the new RES website when it goes live towards the end of the year.

We will be contacting members again in the autumn to remind them of this change.

RES is seeking chairs for its two new committees

The Royal Economic Society is inviting expressions of interests for the chairs of its two new committees: The Publications Committee and The Communications and Engagement Committee.

Please contact the RES Office (resoffice@res.org.uk) or Secretary-General (secretary-gen@res.org.uk) for further information.

The deadline for applications is Monday 17 September 2018.

Queen’s Birthday Honours

We are pleased to note that Geoff Harcourt was made a Companion of the Order of Australia in General Division (AC). An AC is the highest order of the Orders of Australia. Geoff was for many years the obituaries editor for the Economic Journal and has given invaluable support to this Newsletter since it took over the obituaries from the EJ.

We are also pleased to record that Jonathan Haskel (Imperial College) and Paul Johnson (IFS) were awarded CBEs. Jonathan and Paul have been active supporters of the Society for many years and have both served on the RES Council.

Statistics in finance and economics

The RES is exploring the formation of a new Special Interest Group (SIG) with the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) on the use of statistics in finance and economics. The RES Secretary-General, Denise Osborn, will be chairing a discussion on this proposal on Thursday 11 October at 3.30pm at the RSS offices in London (12 Errol Street EC1Y 8LX). The meeting will discuss the case for a SIG and the practical arrangements. Interested members are encouraged to attend; for information about registration please refer to the event entry at www.statslife.org.uk/events/events-calendar. Further information can be obtained from Denise Osborn, email secretary-gen@res.org.uk.
Conference diary

**september**

**5-7 September**  
**Göttingen, Germany**  
INFER and the University of Göttingen are organising the **20th INFER Conference**. Previous conferences (cf. the history at http://www.infer-research.eu/) have attracted speakers from many different countries. We welcome both experienced and young researchers, academics and policy-makers.  
https://editorialexpress.com/conference/infer2018  
Invited speakers include:  
- Prof. Beata S. Javorcik, University of Oxford  
- Prof. Simon Gaechter, University of Nottingham  
- Prof. Paul Heidhues, DICE, University of Düsseldorf  
*Further information*: http://infer2018.uni-oettingen.de

**11-13 November**  
**Ottawa, Canada**  
Bank of Canada conference on **Capital Flows in Advanced Economies: Implications for Financial Stability**. The aim of the conference is to discuss and promote the latest empirical and theoretical research on the implications of capital flows for financial stability in advanced economies.  
*Further information*: conference.fmd@bankofcanada.ca

**october**

**10-11 October**  
**Hamburg, Germany**  
**Futures Past. Economic Forecasting in the 20th and 21st Century.** The conference at the University of Hamburg aims to bring together scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds to discuss the history of economic forecasting in the 20th and 21st century.  
*Further information*:  

**27-28 September**  
**Oxford**  
**4th Oxford - Federal Reserve Bank of New York Monetary Economics Conference.** At this stage, participation has been confirmed by Klaus Adam (University of Mannheim), Giancarlo Corsetti (University of Cambridge), Marco Bassetto (Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago), Silvana Tenreyro (Bank of England and LSE) and Richard Barwell (BNP Paribas).  
*Further information*:  

**2019**

**march**

**21 - 24 March**  
**Tokyo, Japan**  
Western Economic Association International 15th International Conference will be held at Keio University, Japan. Keynote speakers:  
- Peter Diamon (MIT)  
- Robert Engle (New York University)  
- John Shoven (Stanford University)  
Membership of the
Royal Economic Society

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in economic matters. The benefits of membership include:

• A print subscription to the *Economic Journal*, published at least eight times a year, depending on the membership package selected.
• Online access to the *Economic Journal* back to 1997 including access to forthcoming papers before publication of the print version.
• Online access to *The Econometrics Journal* including accepted papers as soon as they are typeset.
• Free submission of articles to the *Economic Journal* and the chance to win the RES prize of £3000 awarded every year to the author(s) of the best published paper.
• Quarterly copies of the RES *Newsletter* including topical articles, comment and letters.
• Reduced registration fees for both the RES Annual Conference and PhD Meetings and JobMarket.
• The opportunity to benefit from JSTOR’s ‘Register & Read’ initiative for individual scholars.
• Discounts on RES scholarly publications and 20 per cent discount on all Wiley books and journals through the RES Office.
• Access to apply for awards and grants offered by the RES as well as the opportunity to elect the RES Council and President of the Society.

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