



# **The Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth**

## **COMMITTEE MEETING**

**19 Amherst Road, Manchester. 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2008. 12.00-17.00**

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Minutes of 2.6.08**
- 3. Matters arising**
- 4. Reports (Written reports to be circulated in advance, please, minimal and urgent verbal reports only at the meeting)**
  - a. Chair**
  - b. Administrator**
  - c. Treasurer**
  - d. Ethics**
  - e. Networks**
  - f. Publications**
  - g. Media – moving towards a media strategy?**
- 5. ASA conferences - review and plans**
  - a. ASA 2008**
    - i. Marilyn Strathern event**
    - ii. Douglas memorial**
    - iii. Student grants**
  - b. ASA 2009**
- 6. Dates of meetings 2008**

# Chair's report

## WCAA

My most enjoyable activity since our June meeting was attending the second WCAA meeting of association presidents in Osaka, Japan in July. Thanks to the extra-ordinary generosity of our Japanese hosts, this trip was entirely expenses paid and a really good opportunity to discuss matters of mutual interest. The outcome of the meeting was a clarification of aims and objectives, embodied in a redrafted Constitution, and some important decisions about future organization. Rather than give any further details here, I have appended the text of the summary of the meeting, which I wrote for the WCAA Executive and has now been adopted as the official account of the meeting (**Addendum 1**). Up until this meeting I was a member of the Executive Secretariat and was asked to continue, since all the other existing members wished to do so as we made the transition to the new structure outlined in the report. However, an obvious problem with the executive secretariat we had (henceforth to be renamed an "organizing committee" at my suggestion) is that it consisted entirely of men! I therefore decided that I should resign in order to make it possible to address this problem in a rational way, since Shalini Randeria of EASA and Setha Low of AAA were both eager to join the group, and unless I went we would replace a problem of gender balance with a new problem of regional balance. Since Shalini and Setha are very committed, I'm sure this is the best solution. I agreed to become a member of the WCAA Advisory Board after my ASA term ends.

One issue that requires a decision from us that arises from this meeting is in relation to the need to have someone in each member association who can stand in for the current chair/president/international delegate when urgent decisions are required. I propose that the ASA chair normally act as our WCAA representative, but that the Hon. Secretary be identified as the second figure (all emails will be sent to both). The Secretary is likely to be as well informed as the chair about issues and specifying the office (and generic email) rather than the present incumbent will ensure that information always reaches the right person. The alternative would be our new President, but since Marilyn has plans for her retirement that don't involve being at her email day-to-day, I think that naming the secretary and chair as our representatives makes best sense. We are unlikely to have many more special meetings like this in the future because of the cost, but there will now be regular WCAA meetings at international congresses.

## Madrid Conference

In September I participated in and gave a keynote (written in Spanish at the organizers' request but in the event, after a survey of audience language competence, delivered off the cuff in English!) at a conference on Anthropology in Spain and Europe hosted by the Ministry of Science and Innovation (which was a development of the Wenner-Gren funded *Mapping European Anthropology* project). Though less generous on the expenses payment front (and still waiting to get the airfare back!) this was also enjoyable and productive. Although much of what we had to talk about concerned European convergence with UK practice of a kind that was hardly welcome, because the group included Russia and other non-EU countries, and delegates delivered quite detailed reports on the state of the discipline in their countries, a lot of useful information has now been assembled. (For the working documents, see

[https://campusvirtual.ucm.es:443/SCRIPT/curriculo-1411570-6/scripts/serve\\_home.](https://campusvirtual.ucm.es:443/SCRIPT/curriculo-1411570-6/scripts/serve_home.)) It was interesting to see that other Europeans thought the British were particularly good at seizing the opportunities that EU funding provided (though there was a lot of complaint about the amount of report writing that principal investigators ended up doing rather than research as such). We also had quite a lot of discussion of the Bologna agenda, especially with regard to Masters courses. I remain puzzled by the fact that discussions in my own institution (and I imagine elsewhere) seem to be totally detached from this harmonization scheme if not diametrically working against it, and ASA may want to do more work on how we see the future of anthropology training here relating to the future that is being shaped in Europe. Another interesting part of the discussion related to evaluation schemes and bibliometry, greatly stimulated by a wonderful talk by Don Brenneis. This offered an opportunity to revisit the vexed question of ERIH (vigorously) with the recently hired (and therefore not culpable) young Irish woman now in charge of it, to which I will devote a short section of its own.

## **ERIH**

It is quite clear that AHRC failed to do what ESF asked it to do with regard to ERIH in the case of anthropology, and probably didn't do all that it should have done even in the case of the other disciplines in its core constituency: had the proper consultations taken place, this shambles would probably not have occurred. The one member of the ERIH panel that drew up the initial lists present in Madrid said he was concerned by the lack of transparency and system in the original decisions (and constantly being harassed by phone calls from editors from Eastern and Central Europe to get their journals boosted up a category!) I think there is now consensus that lists drawn up by small panels are not going to fly. The people now responsible for ERIH have now made a big effort to get better data and to make the ranking consistent with the criteria and evidence available, but they face the problem that response rates from publishers and journal editors have been far below 100%, in fact only 34% at the start of September, probably a reflection of the lack of confidence which the scheme has generated. In the discussion we reached a consensus that (a) like it or not, the categories were being read as a ranking and (b) the final list would have to be convincing in the light of that. There is talk of ERIH being extended to cover other forms of publishing, i.e. books and non-traditional formats, so they really have to get this right. AHRC has at least now said that it would not view such a proposal with enthusiasm before the work on journals is made more robust and that ERIH list rankings cannot at present be used as a measure of quality. This will remain an important issue, I think, since the citation indices (ISI, Scopus etc) are problematic, and ISI is making spectacular amounts of money selling its commercial product.

## **ESRC Representation and Grants Situation**

Our nominees, Cristina Toren and Pnina Werbner, were appointed to the ESRC Virtual College. Sara Randall from UCL is now on the Research Grants Board, not as our nominee, and probably not as an anthropologist as distinct from a demographer, though it was probably a case of killing two birds with one stone. She received a personal invite from Ian Diamond. Since Harvey Whitehouse is not on the RGB any more, and we failed to get David Mills onto the Research Resources Board in a further call for nominations that followed my previous report, we are stuck with a situation of scant representation.

Sara will, however, be feeding back general information about applications and success rates from RGB and I have had a conversation with her and Tim Ingold (our last ASA nominated

RGB member) about that. Things are bad on that front and likely to get worse, but relatively speaking, they are not particularly bad for anthropology as yet, despite the fact that so many people are being disappointed. After falling to twelfth place in terms of applications to grants in 2007, we were back in first place in 2008, but the numbers of grants awarded are now very small, since the success rate on standard grants is down to 15%.

**This means that even if an application gets straight A+ marks from all its reviewers it may still not get funded now, and this must put the whole future of peer review in jeopardy.**

It is difficult to see this situation getting any better with the recession deepening, even if major reforms are instituted in the FEC system, which has had a really negative impact, and resources transferred to responsive mode grants from larger scale investments like Centres and Research programmes, as we suggested it might in the response to ESRC's strategic plan consultation that I made for ASA after consulting HODs (see **Addendum 2**).

### **Security Research**

I had private discussions with a number of colleagues about whether they should join the commissioning panel for the ESRC's *Global Uncertainties* fellowship programme. I encouraged them all to do so, after reaching consensus with James Fairhead and others involved in our earlier campaign that this call did not present any difficulties for the profession, and one, excellent choice, finally did. I have also corresponded with a senior colleague in international relations who is compiling an independent report to ESRC on future directions in security research and opinions about it. All this seems to be evidence that ESRC is taking the nature of this kind of research very seriously, which can only be good.

Since it mentions ASA, though I am not, of course, speaking for ASA on this occasion, I should report that I have recorded a BBC radio programme for its *The Essay* series on "anthropologists as spies" issues. I was quite surprised at how much interference took place in a script that was pretty anodyne to start with – had I, for example, linked the Human Terrain Systems project to BAE systems as chief subcontractor, I might have understood such sensitivities, but purged phrases included "After the enforced peace of colonialism ended..." and "capitalist" is apparently too loaded a term to apply even to a 19<sup>th</sup> century Californian timber baron who called himself a capitalist (with pride!) Anyway, this will take its place with four other contributions from anthropologists and I guess we should welcome the airtime.

### **Ethical Code for TV filmmakers**

Simone, Georgie and I have all been dialoguing with RAI in an attempt to progress this, but I will leave Georgie to bring us up to speed on where we are now in her report.

### **Academy of Social Sciences**

This august body continue to send invitations to meetings at short notice and on impossible days. The latest (for November 10) was a meeting of affiliated learned society CEOs (how corporate we have become). As a result of a conversation with Sally Hardy of the Regional Studies Association, convenor of this gathering, I have discovered that apparently most of these don't have any teaching or other chores to perform during the university working week.... I should be able to report on what transpired at this latest gathering by the time of the

meeting. We are apparently not alone in wondering what ACSS spends its money on, given that it won't even pay for the venue for such meetings now, but I have made the interesting discovery that we should receive three copies of the journal for the ASA in return for our collective subscription. ACSS is responding to various consultations and policy documents on behalf of the social sciences, but it has major problems still in getting input from its members due to its organizational defects, in particular, summoning people for meetings without proper notice. I am promised that this will improve under new management.

### **Sage Handbook**

RAE and HOD duties have prevented Richard Fardon from making a great deal of progress on this of late, but we are going to try to move forward now. Remember that all royalties from the project will go to ASA to replenish the Radcliffe-Brown Fund. We have to face the considerable inconvenience that Berg, now bought up by Bloomsbury Plc, but continuing to operate as an independent division under existing management, have commissioned James Carrier to produce a competing volume, but we think ours will be equal to this competition. Sage has unfortunately made advance payments to me and Richard, which we have sent back (we don't know about other editors as yet) so a little money should reach ASA's accounts shortly.

### **Our new initiatives**

Simone and Trevor deserve thanks for getting the on-line publications and film competition off the ground, and we have also posted Janice Body's Firth Lecture on the website. The blog is also attracting attention, thanks to Nayanika's and, for the current anthropology on TV topic, Simone's hard work, so we are making good progress. Another issue we should consider is ways of expanding the information available on our members via the online database, especially with a view to making searches more productive by providing more detail that members could add themselves, but in a structured way (e.g. through drop down lists for regions, countries, themes, perhaps?).

## ***ADMIN report***

### ***Summary of work done over the past six months***

NomadIT were pretty 'distracted' from ASA work mid-year by preparation for EASA's biennial; however Megan continued working on membership issues, and I continued working on financial changes. Since September we have been busy: the publications side of the website has been completed & announced; the remaining subs have been chased; more direct debit forms gathered; a new system of financial reporting put in place; and both 08 and 09 conferences progressed. The one negative to report is that development of the online directory has been halted by my colleague Darren's slide into serious depression. He is on the road to recovery, but this has delayed work on this.

### ***Detail***

#### **ASA Membership**

Membership has grown slightly to 580 members. More significantly, only ~50 members are in subs arrears, which is the strongest 'admin' position we've been in for years. I envisage a slight deterioration next year with the move away from standing order to direct debit. However we will use the monograph mailing as leverage to extract subs early in the year. We are moving to the slightly simpler membership structure & higher fees in the New Year.

#### **ASA Finances**

In conjunction with the treasurer, all money has now been moved to the Co-op bank, where it can be seen and played with easily online. We have a main (subs) account (14k), a conference account (30k at present - though this will be spent) and a deposit account (30k). The Barclays account has been closed and so standing orders are no more! I am currently working on getting the first set of Direct debit payments taken; this has partly lagged due to my lack of time, but I also feel that the 'handling' company hasn't taken a great interest. We are running a ledger which will make accounts production far simpler/faster from now on.

#### **ASA website**

ASAFilm - thanks to assistance by a friend of Simone's we have been able to finally get the first film streaming. So far I have not received any enquiries from hopeful film makers. We have placed an ad in the ASA08 conference book.

ASAonline - available both in web and PDF format, the first edition is up. Now design formats are clear, future editions should go online quite promptly. We have also advertised this in ASA08 conference book.

Annals - these are up as web pages. I've had no feedback & no requests for a printed version. Consequently I have not placed these in PDF format. Have any on the committee used these new pages? Do you think PDF is necessary? Do any of you use the search feature in the site, which would also trawl the annals?

Apply Ethics – I have been sent a rather long update to this section of the site, so this is work in progress.

## Conferences

### ASA09

This is progressing: the call for panels closes 1<sup>st</sup> Dec; the keynote speaker & Firth speakers are confirmed with abstracts already online; the £500 seed money has been paid to Bristol to open a conference acct there; I've paid the deposit on 60 hostel beds in the city centre, which will be sold by the ASA, together with the 50 University beds. DS is aiming at >300 attendees; the budget indicates a 'profit' at 190 heads. I will not be in attendance, but Megan and Eli from NomadIT will be present in Bristol. So far, I have no worries about this event.

### ASA08

With >400 registrations, (167 Oz, 110 NZ, 71 UK), 90% paid up, 50+ panels, 340 papers, this should be a successful conference. However I remain extremely concerned about the finances. Despite my arguments to maintain registration fees at usual rates, the convenors insisted on reducing these, to take into account the local economy. I limited this reduction to £5; however the convenors insisted I further reduce the student rate. Unsurprisingly the proportion of student registrations is disproportionately high, straining the budget. (Despite global inequalities, costs are no lower than UK.) The outcome will depend on whether we have to use the budgeted contingency (unlikely that we will use it all).

By way of information, rather than to request any action, I write the following: NomadIT's fee estimated back in 2006 was £5k, based on an attendance of ~120, and my old way of working (none of this integrated online system/stuff). The convenors were resistant to my updating this to reflect work-style/technological advance, and a >300% delegate increase (our work is more or less proportional to delegate numbers). We are also running a tri-association conference, a set of tours, multiple book launches, etc. - more than I initially envisaged. While this work is shared, it still results in increased admin for me. We finally agreed an increase of 70% to £8.5k. However if the conference makes a surplus I would look to renegotiate how much NomadIT is paid. It is ironic that I have been running events for far longer than many of our colleagues have been writing papers (25yrs), and yet this professional experience is not recognised.

What lessons can be drawn from the above?

- I think the ASA needs to carefully consider its future overseas conferences and how different locations affect the usual 'run of the mill'; this year's location raised issues over timing, cost, carbon footprint, budget, AGM, etc.
- NomadIT will have to stop its previously generous & informal approach to estimates for its clients, where it quoted low, attempted to minimise the cost to the client, and renegotiated if workloads increased. Given the two year lead time on most conferences and the unpleasantness of this contract, I will be forced to quote high to cover inflation, risk and poor prior specification by clients. This may impact on whether the ASA feels able to continue working with NomadIT; possibly preferring the cheaper and less professional alternatives that University conference offices and young colleagues/students offer.

## ***Treasurer's Report***

1. As I am now playing a supervisory role, I can give you a rundown of figures provided by Ro from the Co-Op accounts:  
ASA subs (main) account: 14.2k  
ASA conf account: 29.5k (most of this is promised)  
3 months bond: 30.3k – the majority of this is RAI funds with some extra (about 2k) from the main account in order to accrue interest. This latter will earn Gross 5.03%/Net 4.02%, and will be renewed each 3 months. The sum earned approx £300 in interest in 3 months. We could gain a slightly higher rate (0.2% more) if we went with a 6 month bond, but we will pursue this after the NZ conference
2. The Barclays account is now closed. We have transferred most funds from Lloyds to the Co-Op but have retained a nominal sum of about £6 in it in order to keep the account open. In view of the recent banking crisis, we thought we could keep it as a back-up account in case total sums in the Co-Op exceed £50k (which would not be protected according to current compensation schemes)
3. Han Sang Yun contacted us about his accidental payment to the ASA and we have returned the £9,692.43 (12,668 Euros) to him.
4. Megan has reminded UK-based members to send her direct debit forms and this will be pursued rigorously over these months.
5. All expenses will now be paid by BACS. So please email the attached form with your bank details to both me and Ro, and post your receipts to the address listed: 28 Commonwealth Drive, Crawley, RH10 1AE.
6. We have started a ledger for this year's accounts. This will also aid the Accountant. The ASA's financial position seems healthy. An accurate overview of our current financial standing can only be done once the ledger has been completed.

Raminder Kaur.



## ***Ethics report***

In this report I have only a few of things to refer to.

Since I have been on leave since August, Simone has kindly taken over the running of the blog. I sent her an email with suggestions about the running of the blog.

At the ASA 08 conference in Auckland, I have organised an open meeting on the 'Ethics of Apology'. This meeting is scheduled during one of the lunch breaks on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> of December, 12.15 -1.30 pm and does not clash with any of the sessions. I felt this discussion would link up with the theme of the conference, with the events in Australia and New Zealand as well as beyond it. The theme is broad and specific, contemporary, empirical as well as philosophical which will hopefully be of interest to the ASA participants. This open meeting would be led by a group of panellists: Prof. Gillan Cowlshaw (University of Technology, Sydney), Prof. Ghassan Hage (Melbourne University), Dr. Lisette Josephides (Queens University Belfast), Prof. Nigel Rapport (St. Andrew's University). I also plan to report the discussions of this meeting possibly in Anthropology Today.

At the time of the meeting I will be in India and given the time difference is 5 ½ hours ahead it might become difficult for me to join the meeting virtually. So please excuse my absence. I shall look forward to receiving the minutes of the meeting and send my comments.

See those of you who are going to Auckland.

Nayanika Mookherjee.

## **Publications report**

### **1. ASA Monograph 46**

Following a face-to-face meeting with the editors Tom Selwyn and Julie Scott in January 2008 to develop the book proposal, a final proposal was produced and accepted by the committee, and work is in progress. I met again with Tom Selwyn on 16 October and he assured me that they are on schedule to get the chapters to Berg during November 2008. If this schedule is met, the monograph should be available for mailing in July 2009 (UK) and September 2009 (USA).

Berg has also expressed concerns about the extra costs of mailing out copies in dribs and drabs as subscriptions come in. Ro has made useful suggestions about this—including, for example, planning additional dates for subsequent mailings rather than on an as-and-when basis—and Berg appears satisfied with this for the time being.

### **2. ASA Monograph 47**

I have had initial discussions with Veronica Strang about the monograph to be published out of the New Zealand conference, and she is keen to receive any advice we can offer on how best to gather together a representative sample of material from the more than 400 papers to be presented. I have responded with general suggestions.

She also wondered if there would be any possibility of producing two volumes—a question she has also put directly to Berg. Berg responded (to us) that this would double the subsidy cost to the ASA from £10 per member to £20, and they would need to be stand-alone volumes, published six months apart from one another. I am assuming our answer would only be yes if the editor could raise the additional money (and subject to Veronica making a strong case for two volumes), and I have replied to this effect, but it would be useful to discuss this briefly at the meeting.

### **3. Berg bought-out**

Berg was sold to Bloomsbury publishers in September. Bloomsbury is developing an academic arm and Berg is the second press to join that arm. The Berg imprint will stay, will continue to operate out of Oxford and, according to Anna Wright—the Assistant Editor we now work with—this should have no bearing on our contract with the publisher.

### **4. Permissions**

*16 June 2008:* Educational Media Development at Athabasca University requested permission to reproduce 75 copies of the ASA's ethical guidelines in print format for a distance learning course. Granted.

*22 July 2008:* OUP requested permission to reproduce excerpts from Clifford Geertz's 'Religion as Cultural System' (in *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion*, ed. Michael Banton) in the forthcoming *Introducing Religion: Readings from the Classic Texts* by Daniel Pals. Taylor Francis had already granted permission but directed OUP to us for 'additional consent': granted, with the caveat that we don't officially hold the copyright for this.

## ***Media report***

The main activity in recent months has been some discussion concerned with the idea of staging a dialogue with the television industry about the ramifying genre of reality tribal programmes. This was of course stimulated in part due to our collective disquiet and concern following the Cicada Productions incident in Peru, but disquiet has been growing among ASA members for much longer. (I was in Norway recently, and was appalled to find that our home-grown British take on the genre is less objectionable than what is being shown there on national, ostensibly public service channels.)

In August I met several people from the RAI Film Committee in London: Hilary Callan, Suzanne Hammacher and Andre Singer. We had earlier suggested that we would take the lead on organising a small Chatham House style event with the industry, leading into a more public event perhaps at the RAI Film Festival in summer 09. The meeting showed, however, that a) Andre Singer was better placed to move forward any dialogue with the industry, and b) that the RAI's conception of a Chatham House style event was more ambitious and exacting than ours had been. Afterwards I therefore wrote to the RAI people suggesting that they, and specifically Andre, are better placed to take the lead in these initiatives, and that our aim should perhaps be to make the RAI Film Festival the focus of our public event, and before that to work on some smaller discussions which build towards that. In addition we might make sure that we invite some senior industry figures to that event, to whom we could present, and with whom discuss, the results of our work. The response was positive, and Andre Singer has agreed to pursue these goals.

Another aspect of the discussions with the RAI was the question of how we can begin to knock out in the anthropological community ideas about what kind of ethical code should be developed for 'tribal' entertainment and documentary shows. After consulting with John Gledhill and Simone Abrams, I advised that we might suggest the formation of a small working group - perhaps with Andre and Paul Henley, in dialogue with a couple of other experienced anthropologist-television film makers - in order to begin to develop a minimalist framework that we could then take to meetings with industry figures, for their input and feedback, in a recursive way. This would have to be a small group to be effective, and should be people familiar with the existing ethical codes (such as the ASA's and the BBC's). It would be important for this process to culminate in some proposals for the RAI Film Festival event. Thus far I have not had a RAI response to this specific suggestion.

John, Simone and I also discussed another idea which came out of my meeting with the RAI, which they were keen to develop. This was for a 'three tiered structure' of response to the media as the potential outcome of these contacts and mutual concerns on the part of the ASA and RAI: 1) the ethical code of practice (hopefully) adopted voluntarily and as self-regulation by the industry; 2) a standing consultation committee of anthropologists (Simone's words) to help with immediate enquiries and to offer rapid advice as issues arise; and 3) a database of anthropological experts offering advice on a less short-term basis for program development, etc. I think in principle there was an openness on both sides to the second and third levels, though there was some concern about how the existing databases of the ASA and RAI could be integrated given their unevenness and different formats, and the challenge of coordination that this represents. My own view is that, if it is at all possible, such an integration of functions would be desirable in the end.

A final outcome of these discussions was that I contacted Ofcom in September, to ask about their perspective on these issues as a regulator. I had a long phone call with Chris Banatvala, Head of Standards at Ofcom, with whom I discussed the general concerns of the ASA and RAI about the tribal reality genre, and asked what role Ofcom might play in taking forward our concerns or - if it is appropriate – in generating regulation in the area. This was a complex and difficult call, since Mr Banatvala was quite defensive and aggressive as I outlined our concerns. I will summarise. The main point was that Ofcom considers itself responsive to complaints, and that the two professional bodies might therefore profitably compose a letter, appending evidence, setting out our concerns and raising the issues with Ofcom. Ofcom considers itself to be an 'evidence based' regulator; a first question (critical for us to consider) will be: was the Cicada incident an isolated one, or are there generic issues across the genre that we can identify and give 'evidence' of? For example, I mentioned in the call that the peoples being contacted are 'vulnerable' - this struck a chord as protection of vulnerable people (I was told) is in Ofcom's main code; but it is generally applied to children, the mentally ill etc. If it is a generic set of issues, and if Ofcom can be convinced that there are real issues and that it is appropriate for it to take something forward, then they can engage in a process: they can do research on the issues, examine the programmes, speak to related experts and interested parties, and the industry, and can come up with guidance for the industry. (This is a process they apparently did recently for children's involvement in certain reality shows).

But if what we are complaining about is really just a one-off, or if Ofcom can't be convinced that there are generic issues (and Mr Banatvala was very sceptical at the outset, challenging me to provide examples etc), then it is more difficult. First, they are only a 'post-transmission' regulator: did the Cicada programme ever actually get shown? I am not actually sure. If it did not, we would have to invoke an exceptional category of complaint, to do with unethical and illegal behaviour in the *making* of a programme. Mr Banatvala said that though they normally don't touch this, if evidence is provided it could result in Ofcom pursuing action. Second, Ofcom do not regulate or have any oversight role with the independent production companies; (I have written many critiques of the problem of outsourcing production and the quality - and legal - controls that this industry structure creates). So if it was Cicada acting on its own, Ofcom would have no role or powers to intervene; it is then PACT, the production company professional body, that should be approached (but in my opinion it is a defender of the production companies, and would be unlikely to pursue investigations that might risk criticising Cicada or worse). If Cicada already had a commission from Discovery, or were acting under Discovery's imperative, then Ofcom does have a role as it licences Discovery in the UK.

So: a number of key issues were raised in relation to the Cicada case, and together they point towards the kind of actions we could take, with or without the support of the RAI. My suggestion is that we do pursue the Ofcom link. There are several ways in which - IF they are persuaded that the concerns are general and real - they might help us and get involved, and if they do, it will be very effective. For example, another idea I pursued with Mr Banatvala was whether they might help us to catalyse a meeting with industry representatives; he said that first the industry had to be convinced, and that hitting a moral / ethical nerve - such as the 'vulnerable people' angle - would help to do this. (Note here: it might help if we went to the press or got someone like Mark Lawson or Anna Ford to write a high profile piece on this theme).

But to pursue any of this, someone has to put in careful work preparing a letter or dossier with evidence to send to Ofcom (and of course this could also be used with the industry), and to address as part of this process whether what we have are general or specific concerns (eg with reference to the Cicada incident). The question that remains is: who is prepared to put in this work? I asked both the ASA colleagues and the RAI people to consider and make suggestions. Unfortunately I am not in a position to put in this work, nor do I feel qualified. It has to be rigorously done; Ofcom is highly legalistic and has excellent minds checking over what comes in to them. We still have to address this question, and it is really the next serious step forward at the level of engaging with the structures of regulation in the UK.

Throughout these developments I have been helped and supported by Simone Abrams and John Gledhill, to whom I send my warm thanks.

Georgina Born

## Addendum 1

### Statement

From the second meeting of Association Presidents and International Delegates  
**World Council of Anthropological Associations**  
July 10-13, Osaka, Japan

This second face-to-face meeting of Presidents and International Delegates of the member associations of the WCAA, which also benefited greatly from the participation of Leslie Aiello, President of the Wenner-Gren Foundation, provided us with an invaluable opportunity to:

- review the aims and objectives of the Council as defined by the founding document prepared at the first WCAA meeting in Recife, Brazil, in 2004;
- consider whether any further goals should be added to WCAA's mission;
- reflect on the best way of achieving our aims and objectives in terms of procedures and organization.

Given that the number of member associations has doubled in the four years since WCAA's foundation and further growth remains likely, an in-depth review of this kind was essential. One of the major results of the meeting was agreement amongst the delegates to hold similar meetings of the entire WCAA Council every two years in future. To make this practicable, given that we could not normally expect to receive the level of support that had been so generously provided by our hosts in Osaka, it was agreed that such meetings should coincide with a conference convened by one of our member associations, to maximise the opportunities for delegates to obtain support from a variety of funding sources, and that they should have a thematic agenda relevant to advancing the primary goals of the WCAA.

The meeting reaffirmed the three primary objectives of our founding document, which were:

- To promote the discipline internationally
- To promote cooperation and sharing of information among anthropologists worldwide
- To promote jointly organized events of scientific debate and cooperation in research activities

*Dissemination of anthropological knowledge*, originally included in the third of these objectives, has now been promoted to a fourth primary objective within what will now become the constitution of the WCAA. This reflects our conviction that we need not only to promote better understanding among anthropologists working in different languages and national and regional traditions, but also better *public understanding* of the work that anthropologists do and its relevance to major issues of public policy and social concern at national and international levels.

Our discussions thus led us to a series of concrete proposals about how we could best further our aims that can be divided into activities and initiatives internal to the WCAA and those that are externally orientated towards society and the public sphere. In terms of the internal development of WCAA, as a framework for bringing associations together, WCAA is concerned with recognizing and debating a diversity of views and perspectives within world

anthropologies whilst also seeking to identify and disseminate common concerns and conclusions. WCAA will act as a clearinghouse for communication of news, ideas and knowledge, and as a network facilitating the exchange and flow of information. This will include ethical codes, to promote global discussion about how the profession can best respond to contemporary challenges that are themselves often the product of forces and relations beyond the level of the individual nation-state. We aim to strengthen the circulation of ideas and knowledge by facilitating the translation of anthropological work into a multiplicity of languages to improve knowledge of world anthropologies on all sides, counter-act the hegemony of English-based knowledge production, and to enable different local publics to learn about the results of anthropological research in their vernacular languages. WCAA-sponsored panels will be organized at meetings of member associations, with a target of three per year, and our website will be developed to make it a more powerful instrument for providing up-to-date information and facilitating scholarly exchange. WCAA will also seek to promote international networks of postgraduate students, as already requested by national student networks in the UK and Australia.

In terms of external orientation, WCAA will continue the work it has already begun to improve the profile and image of the discipline through different forms of public engagement. These will include a focus on deepening and broadening anthropology's presence in the education system, especially secondary schools, and encouraging anthropologists to contribute to public debates on issues such as multiculturalism, cultural diversity and immigration, by seeking to clarify the meaning of key terms on which anthropologists hold expertise and by practising appropriate forms of political advocacy. The WCAA itself will seek, when there is a consensus among its member associations, to issue public statements that reflect anthropological knowledge on issues such as indigenous and minority rights, as well as draw attention to arbitrary acts on the part of states and other groups towards such groups, and to threats to the lives and welfare of anthropologists and others. We will also issue statements on matters of worldwide professional concern. These include the impacts and potential biases of academic evaluation processes on the development of anthropology and of changes in funding models and the institutional organization of teaching and research in different national contexts. In some cases, such developments may raise ethical concerns and pose threats to academic freedom. As past WCAA actions have shown, the positions taken by member associations at national level are likely to be greatly strengthened by the support of the other WCAA member associations.

In order for advocacy statements to be made by the WCAA itself, the meeting reaffirmed the principle that this requires the unanimous support of all member association representatives, but clarified the original article by agreeing that two weeks be allowed for a response to ensure that WCAA could respond opportunely to events. To ensure the viability of the new rule, it was also agreed that each association should nominate an alternate to the official international delegate to the Council, who is usually although not necessarily the association president, so that two people would receive all communications by email from WCAA. In order to strengthen the authority of the WCAA facilitator as spokesperson of the Council in communication with the external arena, it was agreed that this office be renamed that of "Chair". It was, however, also agreed that the Council made up of all member association delegates remains the sole decision-making body, and that this could be underscored by renaming the existing Executive Secretariat an "Organizing Committee", dedicated to managing the Council's business and oversight of ongoing activities.

Our meeting did, nevertheless, agree some further changes to the loose governance structure specified in the founding document, whose inadequacy had already been recognized by the constitution of an executive secretariat. The work of the organizing committee will be overseen by the Chair, serving for a non-renewable period of two years, supported by a deputy chair who will take over the Chair's role in the next two-year period. There are now four other committee members, each of whom will take on a particular oversight task: organization of the upcoming biannual WCAA meeting; facilitation of WCAA-sponsored sessions at member association meetings; liaison with Wenner-Gren and other funding agencies; oversight of the website (previously the responsibility of the facilitator). A system of rotation will be developed to ensure that the entire committee will not change at the same time, and continuity in the immediate future was ensured by the re-election of former facilitator Junji Koizumi of JASCA to the post of Chair and former executive secretariat member Thomas Reuter of AAS as deputy-chair. Henk Pauw of ASnA and Gustavo Lins Ribeiro of ABA also agreed to stay on as committee members, but the voluntary retirement of John Gledhill of ASA allowed two new members to be elected, Setha Low of AAA and Shalini Randeria of EASA. The new organizing committee therefore has an improved gender composition whilst conforming to the condition that the organizing committee should include members from five world regions (The Americas, Africa, Asia, Europe and Oceania) with no more than two members from the same region.

These improvements in our organization are essential if WCAA is to pursue its mission effectively in the future, but WCAA will remain a network rather than seek to build a substantial and costly bureaucratic infrastructure. It will be necessary to seek funding for a webmaster if the website is to be kept up-to-date and fulfil its role in the development of new WCAA dissemination initiatives, but no further infrastructure investment should be necessary. WCAA does not seek to duplicate the role of the IUAES as a world anthropological body organizing congresses and extensive commissions on sub-fields of the discipline. Our role is to facilitate the collaboration and integration of world anthropology by bringing the representatives of the different international, regional, national associations and organizations of anthropology together to pursue shared goals and pool their resources to the benefit of anthropology worldwide. As a result of the Osaka meeting, we are confident that we now have the consensus on aims, objectives, procedures and organization necessary to move forward substantively on the agenda that we have set ourselves for the coming years.



## **Addendum 2 (ESRC Strategic Plan Consultation)**

### **Question 1: Thinking about our current strategic objectives -**

#### **a) Which have been sufficiently addressed?**

We recognize that ESRC is obliged to maintain a broad portfolio of activities beyond the funding of research and professional training and continuing career development. Much of what ESRC is now doing to communicate the value of social science research to society at large and to link academic and practitioner communities is very worthwhile (albeit still in a somewhat contradictory relationship with a national research evaluation system that seems to prioritize purely academic impact). The social anthropology community also finds much to commend in the increasing attention that ESRC has paid to international research and research collaboration between UK academics and colleagues beyond Europe and the United States. We also recognize that ESRC is making great efforts to maximise the cost-effectiveness of its own operations in order to make maximise its capacity to provide funding for research in a context of tightening of public expenditure. There is no doubt that ESRC is continuing to meet its goal of funding research of the highest quality and that it has demonstrated its commitment to supporting research outside its strategic priority areas through responsive mode funding that maintains, to use the words of the current Chair of the Council, a "full and open research agenda" for UK social science.

Nevertheless, the gap that has opened up between the ESRC's target of a 25% success rate and the 2007-8 15% success rate for standard grants is preoccupying, despite the higher success rates of 26% and 36% for fellowships and small grants respectively. Given that the ESRC CEO has himself recognized that the Council is not able to support all the high quality research and training that it would wish to support, in considering its strategic priorities for what is likely to continue to be a period of financial stringency, we feel that it is essential that ESRC continue to evaluate the relative returns in terms of advancing knowledge of very large scale investments in centres, programmes and ventures in comparison with responsive mode projects and the impacts of its broad portfolio of activities on the resources available for funding basic research and training.

Low success rates discourage both applicants and peer reviewers from investing their time in the preparation of more ambitious responsive mode project proposals, whilst the impacts of FEC (see below) have to date compounded the problems from the point of view of many members of our academic community.

We are also concerned by the increasing weight that business and policy agendas seem to be acquiring in the shaping of strategic priorities and allocation of resources.

Whilst recognizing that a publicly funded body must be responsive to the demands of government, we would urge ESRC to continue to advocate a longer-term and less directly instrumental view of the benefits and impacts of independent scholarly research. Research questions that reflect immediate political preoccupations seldom provide an adequate frame for a strategic approach to fundamental questions about the implications of social changes nationally or globally. It is essential that the core mission of ESRC remains one of fostering the widest possible range of empirical research and critical theoretical work on the human condition in all its dimensions if UK scholarship is actually going to address not merely the global challenges of the day, but those that will await us, often unanticipated, in the future.

The cross-cultural perspective of anthropology has an important role to play here, but it is one that depends crucially on the perceived independence and detachment from national interests of our research when we work overseas. All social science research that involves collaboration with government and the private sector needs to be seen to maintain that critical level of academic independence, and this principle should be reiterated strongly in ESRC's next strategic statement.

**b) Have there been new developments that need to be addressed?**

We are eagerly awaiting the results of ESRC's evaluation of the results of the first phase of FEC funding (on which ASA has conducted a survey of emerging experience in all the UK departments which has revealed some variation but also some generally disturbing emerging patterns).

The responses of many institutions to the need to make up the 20% of FEC not currently funded by the research councils has frequently led to the imposition of constraints on the real amount of time that funded researchers are allowed to buy themselves out from other duties, and some questionable use of the allocated funds to cover the shortfall on research expenses covered by the Councils, to the particular detriment of field research that has to be conducted outside the UK. FEC also seems to have fostered a tendency for replacement teachers to be appointed as teaching fellows, at lower rates of remuneration than temporary lecturers and without allocated time for research and scholarship, which prejudices the chances of young scholars entering the profession to build their research careers. The vastly increased costs of FEC grants has clearly also had an impact on possible success rates, but it is vital that ESRC ensure that FEC works in all institutions in a way that does not have a negative impact on the ability of the researchers to carry out their work on the basis on which ESRC has funded them.

It is of the utmost importance that these problems be resolved and we would hope that the Councils would be able to negotiate an increase in the proportion of FEC that they can fund without any further deterioration of success rates by continuing to reduce administration costs and scrutiny of the full portfolio of their activities.

**Question 2: What are the most important and exciting research challenges facing social science in the next five to ten years?**

From the point of view of anthropology, a central challenge for the coming period must be to promote understanding of an increasingly polycentric world in a way that transcends ethnocentrism, in particular those forms of ethnocentrism that derive from North Atlantic conceptions of being at the centre of the world and research questions that are premised principally on our national perceptions of what is important, for us, in global processes of change.

In responding to this challenge, we must be careful to be inclusive, rather than focusing simply on new hubs of economic development and geo-political influence, current "hot spots" in the international security scenario, or limited perspectives on global population movements

and cultural and political transformations that are defined simply by domestic preoccupations about immigration. We have learned that place-based and regional research remains valuable in a globalized world, but we also need to recover the importance of the holistic approach to social life that anthropology has always sought to pursue.

This is not to say, of course, that there is not important work to be done closer to home, at least part of which will be based on continuing the existing process of extending ethnographic research methods to new contexts and the greatest possible range of organizations in our societies. But ethnography alone is not a “magic bullet” from the point of view of anthropologists, since it is a still more powerful method of understanding the dynamics of human social relations (and the way that might affect the relationships between practice and the formal goals set by managers of organizations) when it is accompanied by a cross-cultural perspective on human similarity, difference, and historical path-dependence (as illustrated, for example, by work that compares and contrasts China’s “modernization” at a variety of social scales with that of the West).

Although ESRC has given considerable priority to strengthening the capacity of British social science in quantitative research and large data sets in recent years, its collaborations with other Research Councils and investments in developing innovative qualitative research methodologies point in a variety of directions, in which interfaces with Arts and Humanities seem as important as interfaces with natural, biological and medical sciences (the latter also being of considerable importance for anthropologists, many of whom have studied the social processes of scientific communities, in addition to the relations between socio-cultural, biological and ecological aspects of human behaviour and development).

The challenge here is for ESRC to foster the developments of these productive interfaces in ways that are facilitative rather than directive, enabling researchers themselves to drive the development of new kinds of dialogues and debates that arise out of unsolved problems and critical scrutiny of conventional wisdoms (see also response to 3d). However, the importance of recent ESRC-AHRC collaborations coupled with the greater financial restrictions being experienced by the humanities funding body does suggest that much exciting world-class research shedding new light on human experience may go unfunded unless ESRC itself gives more priority to the grey area between social science and humanities and recognizes that a good deal of new thinking, conceptual advance (which often emerges from reading the work of philosophers and trying to operationalize new ways of thinking that such readings suggest empirically). Even the adoption of new research techniques (such as the use of visual media) in subjects within ESRC’s remit is actually being stimulated by developments in the humanities.

### **Question 3: How can we –**

#### **a) Further embed economic, social and policy impact into all of our activities?**

We question whether it is desirable to aim for further embedding of “impact” in the first place.

It is certainly desirable that the public understand and appreciate the knowledge that social scientists produce and that “users” and policy makers of all kinds are attentive to the lessons that can be learned from social research. However, as in the controversies over the use of bibliometric measures, there is a fundamental issue of timescale to consider. Selection for

work likely to have the biggest short-term “impact” on particular users of knowledge may well be to the detriment of fundamental and critical scholarship of a more radical kind that will prove far more influential in the shaping of research and understanding in the longer term, once it has been digested and diffused into areas other than those in which it originated. There is a serious danger that allowing “impact” to drive funding will make the social sciences increasingly subservient to corporate and government interests, to the longer-term detriment of both society and the knowledge base.

It is notoriously difficult to guess in advance which lines of enquiry will have the biggest long-term impact. ESRC already accepts that some experiments that look very promising must, in the nature of things, be doomed to relative failure, and it is far from clear whether all the ESRC’s activities *should* be expected to have the kinds of “impacts” that seem to be implied by the question. Claims about such impacts (short- or long-term) might recommend some proposals for funding, but the existing position of evaluating the academic and non-academic impacts of the ESRC’s subject communities and investments, and publicizing a range of policy-relevant, interesting or engaging research results, seems sufficient without further attention to this issue (particularly of a kind that would divert further resources from research and training).

#### **b) Further embed internationalism into all of our activities?**

The ESRC’s efforts to build new relations with the research funding agencies of other countries are to be applauded, as are the developments that now allow scholars from a wide range of foreign countries to be co-principal researchers on ESRC projects. These developments have already gone some way towards strengthening the UK’s contributions to collaborative research across international borders, and are particularly welcome to anthropologists, since many of us engage in such collaborations.

But there is still scope for developing these schemes further and including more countries and regions, not least those that have less well funded research infrastructures and whose researchers are often destined to take on problematic roles as junior partners in projects or face relative marginalization from international circuits of knowledge diffusion and debate.

ESRC should do its utmost to facilitate the circulation of junior academics from low-income countries (perhaps by expanding some of its existing partnerships with other UK funders) and to encourage collaborations that might involve overseas academics participating in studies in the UK, for example, as well as more even-handed scholarly relations between British scholars working overseas and local researchers. The costs of such investments would be modest in terms of the practical and reputational benefits that would accrue, and further internationalization of perspectives on European societies would also prove extremely rewarding intellectually.

Major questions remain to be addressed about the relationship between ESRC and organizations and initiatives emerging in the European Research Area (in which the pressure towards favouring large multi-national projects with high administrative costs and reporting requirements so comprehensive that principal researchers scarcely have time for research is often a source of complaint). It is particularly important that ESRC does not drop the ball in any aspect of this area of activity, as appears to have happened with the ESF’s European

Reference Index for the Humanities Project, in which AHRC was left to deal with the anthropology initial list and in fact did none of the things that it was supposed to do (arguing that social anthropology was ESRC's responsibility) with results that left British anthropology unrepresented and magnified the unsatisfactory nature of the original outcome from the UK point of view and in general.

### **c) Encourage more innovative, ambitious research?**

Again it is not necessarily obvious why this should be a goal. Research is not necessarily better because it is innovative or ambitious. In particular, if the goal is to produce substantive additions to knowledge, it is not clear that new methods are always more fit to purpose than tried and tested ones. This is not to argue against innovation and allowing scope for new methods to be tested, but it is an argument against making a fetish of novelty per se.

It would be difficult to argue against encouraging new research questions or applying social science insights into new problems (examples such as studies of development or science practitioner communities make this abundantly clear). Yet established concerns and basic research remain important, given that the world does not stand still. It is even more difficult to argue against ambition, but difficult to see what it means. Is this a question of the scale of the project or intellectual goals, and if the latter, then there is clearly no necessary relationship with scale? Anthropologists have to a certain extent clearly been discouraged from pursuing ambitious project in the sense of scale by past difficulties of securing funding at this level. Concentration of funding on centres and large-scale, policy-related research or production and projects involving the construction and manipulation of large-scale data sets probably adds to the belief that small and highly focused projects have more chance of making it into the alpha-rated and funded category. ESRC would have to give a rather more direct steer (and deliver) if it wishes communities such as ours to raise our ambitions in this sense, but needs to do little to increase the intellectual ambition that generally characterises our smaller-scale bids.

But as some EU projects led by UK anthropologists have demonstrated, there is no absence of aiming high in terms of scale as well as intellectual ambition where the chances of success are perceived as high. It is simply that people do not necessarily believe assurance that everyone has the same chance in this sense with ESRC in the light of current perceptions of ESRC priorities.

### **d) Encourage more interdisciplinary research?**

Anthropology is of its nature a subject that has always been open to relations with scholars across an unusually wide disciplinary spectrum. If encouraging inter-disciplinarity means taking actions designed to end disciplinary boundedness, it seems to be addressing a non-problem, but if it means encouraging the slow erosion of disciplinary identities it is neither realistic (these are as much social as intellectual, related to communities of practice) nor necessary.

We do not believe that our minds are closed to new ideas and influences (though we accept that *multi*-disciplinary projects can be dialogues of the deaf without a willingness on all sides

to listen, translate, and reconsider one's own ideas as well as offer critical suggestions to one's interlocutors). Indeed, disciplinarity itself rests on the fact that people in one community regularly compare and contrast their thinking with people in another group. Assuming that everyone learns as a result, inter-disciplinary dialogue achieves its intellectual goals, and collaboration is likely to be fostered by the possession of particular areas of skill, expertise and knowledge that can be exchanged and shared.

All ESRC has to do, therefore, is foster the full potential of such sharing, exchanging and dialoguing, by not putting all its resources into projects that activate only a few of the possible interfaces (and there is already evidence that, although resourcing is uneven, ESRC is now attending to a broad spectrum in both its research and methodology innovation funding). This is not a process the Council itself should attempt to manage from above. Successful inter-disciplinary research generally arises from below because scholars in different fields decide it would be productive to talk to each other. What the Council might do, however, is facilitate awareness of what people are doing in different fields by promoting the creation (through RCUK) of a searchable national researcher database across all disciplines of the kind that the Brazilian research council CNPq has created.

**Question 4: What are the key issues in –  
a) Training and career development?**

The ESRC has developed excellent schemes for early career researchers and these schemes are continuing to evolve in sensible ways. The problem is simply the level of funding available in relation to the supply of truly excellent researchers seeking it.

Given that the removal of funding for Masters programmes was justified by the post-doctoral enhancements this promised, and ESRC recognizes the need to support longer-term career development as well, falling success rates are deeply disappointing for both candidates and referees, and adding to the differentiation of the opportunities available to young scholars who have successfully completed a doctorate (an effect magnified by the limited number of students who now receive funding for research training from ESRC or another research council and the “de luxe” PhD model that the ESRC scheme provides for the fortunate few). The only way to solve this problem is to move more resources to these schemes, at the expense of the largest and most costly investments.

The problems are even more acute in terms of postgraduate training. Anthropology remains deeply disappointed by the fact that our number of quotas could not be increased after the IBR panel recommended this (in recognition of the discipline's “exporter” role as well as its international excellence), and by the fact that so many recognized outlets either lack studentships altogether or have very few (on a pattern that currently suggests the possibility of even greater concentration in the future). Given that some departments still denied quotas possess specialist expertise not strongly represented elsewhere, while the competition is now so small, this level of selectivity militates against the certainty that the best students will always be matched to the best-qualified supervisors. The limited numbers of grants that are available nationally now threaten disciplinary reproduction, despite our relatively favourable relative age profile. Pressures on departments to maintain research postgraduate critical mass now seem threatened by negative changes in the conditions that will govern future recruitment of students from overseas, so this is an increasingly pre-occupying situation.

We are also eagerly awaiting the results of ESRC's review of its postgraduate training requirements, in the hope that greater flexibility will diminish the overhead costs of gearing programmes around the needs of what, even in many of the departments favoured with quota awards, is now a very small number of ESRC-funded students even taking into account the possibility of adding more students through CASE or research-grant related bids.

The Researcher Development Framework and FEC have not had a particularly favourable effect on provision of ongoing training for anthropologists because of the priorities that have dominated the development of the former and the impact of the latter on the successful national courses previously run by ASA (which lacks the resources to participate in FEC-based funding). We are concerned that our subject is no longer represented on either the Training and Development or Research Resources Board, and hope that these will continue to consider the particular needs of our subject, especially with regard to such areas as overseas research and the importance of various kinds of applied anthropology and academic-practitioner interfaces.

## **b) Data and methods?**

Anthropologists are often perplexed that the ESRC data archive rejects the data that they offer to it (on the grounds that it would be useful to other researchers). For those of us who are interested in large data sets, ESRC investment in improving UK-based researchers' access to overseas data sets (which are quite numerous) would be helpful, but many anthropologists simply do not work within the kind of epistemological framework in which research produces "data" through the application of appropriate "methods" and we have often felt that prejudices against our ways of doing things have influenced ESRC funding judgements on projects that were highly rated by specialist disciplinary referees.

Again, it is difficult to be against innovation in methods and we recognize that ESRC has invested in the development of work on qualitative as well as quantitative methods, including through work of centres in which anthropologists have played their role, and in a way that has encouraged cross-fertilization of ideas between the social sciences and humanities. But in a time of financial stringency, it must be questionable how much further investment can be justified in work on methods as distinct from substantive research that embodies methods (old and new) that can be discussed and disseminated as a side product of the research itself.

## **Question 5: How can we ensure that we fully integrate capacity – training, data and methods – into our activities?**

We have difficulty in understanding "capacity" as training, data and methods, despite familiarity with the way ESRC and government have constructed this as a way of measuring the effectiveness of the national social science base.

Capacity is ultimately people, and its integration takes place through actual research and writing (possibly for a variety of audiences and purposes). This means that integration and enhancement of capacity has to pay attention to the distribution of opportunities for all scholars of high ability to prove their worth as researchers by providing them with the funding opportunities and working conditions necessary to realise their potential. There would be little

point in attending a workshop on methods funded by ESRC if one never had the opportunity to try the new ideas out in the field.

This means prioritising funding for research and training in a way that maximises opportunities, rather than increasingly restricting funds to a shrinking core of stellar projects and applicants and reducing responsive mode research funding. Indeed, we feel that an increase in responsive mode funding with a reduction in larger scale investments from their present level would be the best solution to enhancing capacity in the absence of convincing evidence that scale economies or superior contributions to knowledge result from concentration of resources, although there are clearly a variety of network and consortia organizational models for facilitating collaboration between individuals, teams and institutions where this is desirable that could also enhance individual opportunities and diversity.

The information you provide in your response will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations, which allow public access to information held by the ESRC.

This does not necessarily mean that your response can be made available to the public as there are exemptions relating to information provided in confidence and information to which the Data Protection Act 1998 applies.