

Editorial

John Bynner

The move from three to four issues per annum – January, April, July October - happened relatively seamlessly at the beginning of the year and is now fully established. This (July) issue is a good example of the new shape the journal will take.

The issue contains research papers addressing a range of life course topics as pursued in different countries together with a new sub-study profile and a Debate section. The latter is the first of what will be a series of debates about issues arising in the theory and practice of life course research. The final component is a conference abstracts supplement.

The papers reflect different facets of family functioning at different life course stages displaying both the range of work that is being carried out and the variety of long-term longitudinal surveys in different countries deployed to do it.

The effects of the post-2008 recession on economic vulnerability start the proceedings, drawing on the first two waves in the two cohorts – starting ages nine months and age nine - in the *Growing Up in Ireland* (GUI) longitudinal study. The differential effects of the recession on the development between the two cohorts is clearly shown in terms of vulnerability profiles with single parent families particularly subject to economic stress in the older (child) cohort. In the next paper the landscape switches to Australia where eight waves of the *Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia* (HILDA) survey is used to challenge the hypothesis that the amount of time spent on housework relates to selection into and out of relationships.

The following paper shifts the focus to the relationship between work-family conflict and mental disorders using age 45 data from the UK *1958 Birth Cohort Study*. Using data collected at later ages from the same source the next paper tackles the long-term adult health effects past age 50 of parental divorce. Methodology for trajectory identification follows, exemplified by analysis across eighteen waves of *British Household Panel Survey* (BHPS) data to identify trajectories of ‘functional

disability’ in the elderly between ages 65 and 74.

The Study Profile reports the supplementation of the standard family and finance information collected in a sub-study of the 2013 US *Panel Study of Income Dynamics* (PSID) survey to serve as a resource to support research on family transfers of funds from parents to children. The new Debate section follows in which Leon Feinstein and others debate methodological criticism of his influential research based on UK *1970 Birth Cohort Study* data on ‘Cognitive development and socioeconomic grades’, which identified relative decline of cognitive development through the early years and childhood of children from working class family backgrounds compared with their middle class counterparts.

Finally a supplement to the issue comprises some 75 abstracts from papers and workshops presented at the 2015 *Understanding Society* scientific conference held by the UK Household Longitudinal Survey team based at the University of Essex.

The good news about expanded production is complemented by the increase in the number of submissions and people attending this year’s SLLS conference in Dublin 18-21 October. SLLS members benefit from a substantial discount on the conference fee. And membership is a major part of the life-blood on which the journal’s existence depends.

SLLS membership is linked to the other major component of journal support – libraries. We have launched a major push through the summer to boost the number of libraries across the world subscribing to the journal from the present 40. Paying the LLCS library subscription gives library users immediate access to all issues of the journal up to the most recent edition. If your library has yet to sign up please do all you can to persuade the (‘Serials’) librarian to do so, or let us know by emailing Journal Manager Cara Randall at crandall@slls.ork.uk and we will write to them ourselves. Your journal needs you!