

Issue 1
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The Galton Review



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Front Cover Photo: Professor Alan Bittles receiving the Galton Plate from Professor Veronica van Heyningen after his Galton Lecture on 11 November, 2015.

Back Cover Photo: The team responsible for the new Galton Institute website.

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EDITORIAL

The past few months have seen significant changes at the Galton Institute, driven by our President, Professor Veronica van Heyningen.

In October, our new website went live and has since received many admiring reviews. The “Comms” team of Paul Hurd and Robert Johnston, led by Branwen Hennig, began working on this in January 2015, with significant input from the President and Helen Middleton-Price. The latter was given the role of writing all sections of the new website, a mammoth task which required a lot of research and involved some delicate issues. We are enormously grateful to Dr Middleton-Price for all the hours she spent on this magnum opus.

By April, web designer, Ian Henges of Diditon, was unanimously chosen from a shortlist of applicants; in hindsight, a very wise decision. Matters progressed quickly and without major incident. A new logo was designed, along with a strapline which I hope you like. Thanks are also due to our General Secretary, Betty Nixon, who has put in the extra hours needed to negotiate and navigate our new site.

Your editor decided this was also a good opportunity to re-design the Newsletter with a new logo, new look and new name. Please let me know your thoughts on ‘The Galton Review’.

The Galton Institute sponsored a number of conferences in recent months. November saw the Annual Conference at the Royal Society, the title of which was ‘Mate Choice’. The six speakers approached this topic from very different angles, but the highlight was this year’s Galton Lecture, given by Professor Alan Bittles from Perth, Australia. A full report appears later as do accounts of the British Society for Population Studies Conference in Leeds, the European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association Conference in Helsinki and the Population Histories in Context Conference in Cambridge.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue and that it stimulates you to write a piece for the next edition.

Robert Johnston

The Galton Institute: Conference on Mate Choice

Wednesday 11th November 2015 at the Royal Society

This year's conference considered the subject of mate choice from a variety of different perspectives. It was fascinating to explore such a complex topic from a wide range of angles: biological, social, anthropological, evolutionary, demographic and cultural. Such an analysis, drawing from a wide range of disciplines truly gives a deeper understanding of the nuances behind mate choice.

The day opened with an enthralling discussion of "**Mate choice and assortative mating on the Internet**" by **Professor Melinda Mills** of Nuffield College and Department of Sociology, University of Oxford, chaired by Dr Stuart Gietel-Basten.

In an age where we increasingly live online, the fastest growing way to meet a partner is Internet dating. In fact, 37% of single Internet users in the US use a



Professor Melinda Mills

dating website. Drawing on the concept of assortative mating, whereby individuals choose partners from a similar social group and with a similar social status regarding ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status and education, she posed the question 'Does Internet dating narrow or widen our mating choices?' In order to answer this, she focused on racial dating preferences in Europe, using data from mainstream dating websites. This has particular relevance today in light of recent European migration. Online, people are free to pursue genuine preferences, which gives a profound insight into the factors that individuals take into account when choosing

a mate. It is unclear whether when presented with a wealth of information, online people are more selective when considering potential partners, or whether the freedom to mix with people from different backgrounds leads to a more open-minded attitude and a consequent breaking down of the boundaries imposed by assortative mating. In fact, Internet dating allows for the more discerning selection of characteristics, thereby reinforcing a hierarchy of preferences as predicted by the assortative mating model. With respect to racial preferences in Europe, all groups have a preference for native Europeans, which is the majority group, followed by their own group. Interestingly, there was no clear association between migrant integration policies and preferences. Patterns of variation within countries were also evident, for example Germany demonstrated an urban-rural divide with Berlin having a high level of openness to dating individuals from a wide range of social groups.

The broad conclusions which may be drawn from this discussion are as follows: partner preferences in online dating continue to be racially determined to a large extent, social distances are perpetuated especially by Europeans, but also by racial minority groups themselves. Moreover, the way in which anti-immigrant sentiment in Europe in recent years has changed behaviour is a captivating topic for future research. At the end of the session, the questions revealed a further dimension for consideration: age. Research suggests that male preferences for physical traits go down over time, whereas women get more selective as they get older.

The second lecture, chaired by Dr Elena Bochukova, was on the topic “**Mate selection in time of demographic masculinization**”, given by **Professor Christophe Guilmoto** of the Institut de recherche pour le développement, CEPED, Paris.

He started his lecture with an introduction of the countries that form the focus of his research, India and China. While pre-natal sex selection is commonly found from Eastern Europe to East Asia, it is concentrated in Asia. In fact, China's sex ratio at birth is the highest in the world, as a result of the deliberate elimination of girls through selective abortion. The bias in terms of the sex ratio leads to a

“surplus of men” in the marriage market, leading to a rise in forced bachelorhood in future years with limited potential adjustments. The computed results of Professor Guilмото’s research show that in China and India, which contribute 86% of the female deficit, there will be longer and more severe marriage squeeze in the future, with 60-70% more men than women trying to marry.



Professor Christophe Guilмото

There may then be 30 more years of a male surplus of approximately 50%. The model also indicates a rise in male celibacy. This has created a deficit of females, partly due to male preference for younger women who belong to later birth cohorts. Another element to consider is the differential marrying customs between the two countries: whereas hypergamy is common in China, endogamy is prevalent in India. This would suggest that marriage squeeze disproportionately affects men from less privileged social backgrounds. In reality, however, marriage in the two countries is apparently more flexible than theories and models. In China, urbanisation and industrial development have led to increasing numbers of female migrants, both internally and across regional borders. This has promoted fluidity in China’s marriage market, and also indirectly encouraged a decline in the propensity of women to marry. Moreover, homosexual rights have been improving very quickly in China. Although high sex ratios are usually associated with higher rates of gender-based violence, human trafficking and inevitable demographic consequences, Professor Guilмото calls for future research to draw particularly on recent societal changes in East Asian countries such as the relaxation of pressure to marry. He also calls for a fusion of demographic research with sociology and anthropology, in order to produce a more holistic vision on mate selection in the era of demographic masculinization.

Following this, **Professor Neil Small** of the Faculty of Health Studies at the University of Bradford presented the **“Findings from the ‘Born in Bradford’ project and their relevance to the understanding of contemporary mate choice”**.

This was a longitudinal study of the birth cohort of babies born from 2007 to 2011 in the Royal Infirmary Hospital in Bradford, which has the largest Pakistani population in the UK. High levels of poverty in Bradford are correlated with high infant mortality rates, which stood at 7.0 for Bradford in 2012, compared to the England and Wales figure of 4.3. Explanations for this lie in the congenital anomalies which have higher prevalence among Pakistani groups. A detailed breakdown of the study group revealed strong patterns, including a doubling of the risk of congenital anomalies from 3 per cent to 6.2 per cent in first cousin consanguineous relationships. The talk then explored some of the presumed benefits of consanguinity, including the stability of families, maintenance of income and wealth, transmission of cultural values, support and a sense of belonging within a community. This session concluded with a gripping section on translating research into action for change. This included considering how social support can be maintained and at the same time genetic risk reduced, for example using family and social networks as a route to give information on genetics and risk. Importantly, the findings of this can be applied more widely to places where consanguineous marriage is customary. The combination of genetic research and community level action was particularly enthralling; 'Born in Bradford' is sensitively aimed at making a change in a thoughtful and considered manner.

The 2015 **Galton Lecture** was delivered by **Professor Alan Bittles** of the Centre for Comparative Genomics, Murdoch University, Western Australian, Honorary Professor in Community Genetics, School of Medical Sciences, Edith Cowan University, Perth. It was chaired by Professor Veronica van Heyningen, FRS, President of the Galton Institute. He discussed "**Patterns of consanguineous marriage across the world and their consequences**".

Both in academic and public discussions, there is a readiness to criticise consanguineous marriage, even in the absence of reliable evidence. According to Professor Bittles, the negative consequences of consanguineous marriage have been overemphasised. High levels of inbreeding can be seen throughout human history and evolution, even dating back to the first movements of small groups of humans out of Africa between 60,000 and 80,000 years ago. Estimates of the

size of the migrating human population range from 700 to 10,000. Different communities and religions have different rules regarding consanguineous marriage. Today, a conservative estimate is that over 1100 million people live in countries where 20-50% of marriages are consanguineous. Such partnerships have an adverse effect on health via detrimental recessive genes whose incidence in the general population is rare.

At first glance, data suggests that congenital anomalies occur at a level of 10.9% for consanguineous offspring but 2.9% for non-consanguineous offspring. However, Professor Bittles stressed the need to consider social, economic, religious and ethnic sub-divisions when measuring the health outcomes of consanguineous marriage to ensure that like is being compared with like. Consanguinity is associated with lower socioeconomic status, rural residence, low maternal literacy, younger age at marriage, lower contraceptive use, reduced birth intervals, and long reproductive span. It is of paramount importance that these social variables are controlled, otherwise analysis will give an elevated risk associated with consanguinity. Intra-community marriage is the norm in many populations. For example, population stratification and consanguinity have meant that 12% of marriages in India are consanguineous. It is important to consider that health problems may arise due to genome-based clustering rather than consanguinity. An instructive example is Volendam in the Netherlands, a small fishing village founded by 7-20 families. This produced a founder effect leading to a high prevalence of autosomal recessive disorders. However, it is a Roman Catholic community, meaning that there is no first cousin marriage. The observed health problems are a result of the extremely closed nature of the community rather than consanguinity.

Looking to the future, it seems that there will inevitably be a reduction in consanguineous marriage due to factors including urbanisation, female education, male and female employment, declining family sizes, and the adoption of marriage norms of host communities by migrants. On the other hand, these trends are counteracted by the maintenance of cultural traditions in rural communities as well as political and civil instability in regions where consanguinity is traditional. These changes are occurring in a time of flux with regards to health, where the global epidemiological transition is leading to rising health expectations and a shift from early death to extended morbidity. Moreover, the development of public



Left to right: Professor Neil Small, Professor Laura Fortunato, Dr Elena Bochukova, Professor Alan Bittles, Dr Stuart Gietel-Basten, Professor Markus Rantala and Professor Veronica van Heyningen

genome projects provides an opportunity for further research and also potential solutions to preventing congenital birth defects. On balance, Professor Bittles concludes by arguing that the balance between the biological disadvantages and social benefits of consanguinity has shifted with the move from pre-industrial to industrial societies, so that the adverse biological effects are outweighed by the social benefits.

The next lecture, chaired by Dr Paul Hurd, was given by **Dr. Laura Fortunato** of the Institute of Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology at the University of Oxford, on the topic **“Mate Choice: A view from evolutionary anthropology”**.

The emphasis of her lecture was on the prevalence of monogamy among human societies, which she proposed as a “puzzle”. According to Bateman’s principle

based on studies of *Drosophila*, an individual's number of offspring increases as number of matings increases. This phenomenon is limited to males, which suggests that men in societies ought to benefit from polygamous marriage. However, monogamous marriage has always been more apparent among human societies: dating back to the ancient world. Dr Fortunato examined reasons for this from an evolutionary perspective, through a model of marriage strategies. Different marriage strategies are connected with different ways of allocating wealth to offspring, namely heirs. Within a monogamous marriage system, one man's property is transmitted to one offspring from his only wife, so that resources are concentrated in a single heir. On the other hand, resources must be divided among descendants from multiple wives in polygamous marriage systems. The nature of the resources that are transmitted further complicates this because some resources are diminished by splitting across multiple heirs, in which case monogamy would be advantageous, whereas other resources are not diminished in this manner, in which case polygyny would be preferable.

Dr Fortunato further analysed this through a game-theoretic analysis model, in which males allocate investment strategically, while females allocate paternity strategically. This indicates that males benefit from allocating resources in a consistent way, and females benefit from exclusive investment in their offspring. Hence an evolutionary stable strategy emerges when males transfer resources vertically to the wife's offspring, as multiple heirs would need higher male contribution. After explaining the evolutionary aspect of mate choice, Dr Fortunato explored the anthropological evidence for marriage systems. She described that whilst monogamous marriage is prevalent in Eurasia, polygamous marriage systems are commonly found in African societies. Dr Fortunato argues that land availability and female contribution to subsistence are the key determinants for such regional variations. Combining the evolutionary models and the anthropological evidence, she considered the patterns of marriage systems with regard to the archaeological, ethnographical, as well the historical records, such as how the rate of polygamy will decline alongside reducing availability of land. Dr Fortunato suggests that future research considers an evolutionary perspective in the study of human behaviour, and further explores the evolutionary mechanisms in the development of marriage strategies.

The final lecture was given by **Professor Markus Rantala**, Department of Biology, University of Turku, Finland, entitled “**Immune Defence and Sexual Selection in Humans**”.

He considered why there is individual variation in attractiveness, pointing out that we have strong inborn standards of beauty. In fact, research suggests that newborn infants prefer attractive faces, and infants play longer with dolls with attractive faces than ones with unattractive faces. These innate standards of beauty are also universal, not arbitrary cultural conventions. Questions considering variation in attractiveness are relevant not only to humans but also to other species, for example female peacocks prefer males with beautiful tails, and sexually selected ornaments are widespread in nature, even in invertebrates. It has been suggested that these are indicative of ‘good’ genes, but this begs the question of what these ‘good’ genes are. It is possible that those with better immune defence are able to produce larger and more impressive ornaments. With regards to humans, we are dimorphic and both sexes have secondary sexual ornaments. It has been hypothesised that sexual selection in humans is linked to immune defence. There is a universal aversion to those with pathogens and parasites: a psychological adaptation to avoid contagion. This is universal in animals. In order to investigate whether male facial attractiveness signals immunocompetence, Professor Rantala carried out research using the hepatitis B vaccine. Hepatitis B is a viral disease that affects the liver, and has infected 2 billion people. 74 men were vaccinated and the amount of antibody they produced was measured. It was found that there is a strong positive correlation between facial attractiveness and number of antibodies in these men. Moreover, he found a positive correlation between levels of testosterone and facial attractiveness. This is linked to the very strong positive correlation between testosterone and immunocompetence.

The stress-linked immunocompetence handicap hypothesis posits that the interaction between testosterone and cortisol on immune responsiveness is linked to attractiveness. Indeed, high levels of testosterone and low cortisol levels are associated with high attractiveness. It is traits signalling good immunocompetence that are most attractive: for men, a slim and healthy physique is of utmost importance. Height is also a central factor in male attractiveness. Correspondingly, body height affects the strength of immune response in young men, but not

young women. The proximate mechanism may be MHC heterozygosity, which is especially important for immune function because MHC alleles encode peptides that bind to and present a restricted range of antigen-peptides to T-cells, thereby initiating a rapid immune response. MHC heterozygosity is positively correlated with resistance against viral infections, including hepatitis B virus. These findings link in to sexual conflict in humans. Men with high testosterone levels show typically masculine features and are less likely to invest in offspring and relationships than more feminine men, leading to the suggestion that more feminine men are 'compensating' through care. Lower testosterone is associated with a more feminine face, appearing more reliable, more submissive, more romantic, and suggesting an increased tendency to fall in love. Higher testosterone, on the other hand, is associated with a more masculine face, appearing more untrustworthy, dominant, less romantic, and suggesting a reduced tendency to fall in love. Interestingly, females preferred more masculine-looking faces at ovulation, but less-masculine faces when non-fertile. In this way, facial attractiveness correlates with immunity in a way that depends on the phase of the menstrual cycle. However, the relation no longer holds when parcelling out the effects of obesity and/or masculinity. Thus, it suggests that there are cues to immunity that may lie in face structure. It is also worth considering whether a woman's attractiveness signals good immunocompetence in the same way that it does for men.

Professor Rantala took pictures and plasma hormone levels during the fertile phase of the menstrual cycle of 65 young Latvian women not taking hormonal contraception. No strong correlation has been found, nor any correlation between cortisol and facial attractiveness. Facial attractiveness in women does not signal immune responsiveness to hepatitis B virus. However, health factors still remain relevant, although there is much more variation. Women with a healthy BMI are more attractive than those with a very low or very high BMI, indicating higher fertility. Carotenoids affect skin colour universally in a way that increases attractiveness and also play an important role in immunodefence. Therefore a diet of fruit and vegetables can enhance attractiveness. Women who eat healthily, do not smoke, do not drink, and are less stressed are more attractive.

The Galton Institute would like to thank the writers of this Report, they are:
Sally Hayward, Jennifer Lord and Sonia Zhang
(University of Oxford)

Population Histories in Context: Past achievements and future directions

A conference to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure was held on 16-18 September 2014 at Downing College, Cambridge

Session 1: Locating the industrial revolution: population and economy, Malthus and beyond

Recent research has suggested that the 'industrial revolution' was both less abrupt and more complex than was once supposed. In the 17th and 18th centuries, both in the Netherlands and in England (and perhaps elsewhere), there was substantial change and 'progress' as evidenced by production outstripping population growth and rising urbanisation. There were also striking changes in occupational structure in England well before the conventional dating of the industrial revolution. Papers were given by:

Leigh Shaw-Taylor (University of Cambridge), **Cormac O'Grada** (University College Dublin) and **Nick Crafts** (University of Warwick)
Commentator: **Tony Wrigley** (University of Cambridge)

Session 2: Life expectancy: levels and trends with particular reference to the mortality of large urban centres and the disappearance of the 'urban penalty'.

The late 17th century saw the beginning of a noteworthy divergence between the trends in infant and early childhood mortality and that of adults. Infants and young children experienced a significant worsening of their life chances while adults began a phase of steady improvement that was sustained during the 18th and early 19th centuries. London is a distinctive geographical context where these changes appear to have taken the most extreme form. By the end of the 18th century, mortality had improved to such an extent that it was revealing, for the first time since demographic records began in the late 16th century, an excess of births over deaths and was therefore capable of growing without excessive immigration.

Papers were given by:

Walter Scheidel (Stanford University, USA), **Romola Davenport** (University of Cambridge) and **Jan de Vries** (University of California, Berkeley)
Commentator: **John Landers** (University of Oxford)

Session 3: Household formation systems and their social and economic correlates

In its early years, the Cambridge Group expended considerable energy on the measurement of the attributes of co-resident domestic groups, influenced in particular by John Hajnal's seminal work on the European marriage pattern. Research on early modern France has uncovered the homeostatic version of the northwest European household formation system in which the death and birth rates balanced to ensure 0% growth rates. Subsequently, much more research has been undertaken for a broader area of Europe as household listings have been investigated, exposing greater geographical complexity than was initially supposed.

Papers were given by:

Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux (EHESS, Paris), **Keith Snell** (University of Leicester), **Jan Luiten van Zanden** and **Sarah Carmichael** (University of Utrecht, Netherlands)

Commentator: **Michael Anderson**, (University of Edinburgh)

Session 4: Marital fertility and celibacy before, during and after the demographic transition

The expectation that each married couple should live in a separate household, which was normal in much of Western Europe, implied the existence of an economic hurdle to matrimony which must be surmounted by those wishing to marry. If joining an existing household was not an option, they had first to assemble sufficient resources to establish a new household. As a result, age at marriage for both sexes was higher than elsewhere in the world and a significant fraction of each generation never married. Moreover, both the possibility of marriage and its timing were influenced by economic prospects. The increasingly widespread use of effective methods of contraception meant that the link between nuptiality and fertility disappeared, with profound implications across a wide range of variables.

Papers were given by:

Alice Reid (University of Cambridge), **Simon Szreter** (University of Cambridge), **David Reher** (Complutense University, Madrid) and **Miguel Requena** (UNED, Madrid)

Commentator: **Ron Lestaeghe** (Vrije Universiteit, Brussels)

Session 5: Ageing, maximal life extent and social and economic correlates

Probably the most important current demographic issue is ageing. More work is needed on: 1) Charting the origins and pace of the rise in life expectancy which can be located in the early 18th century. 2) Understanding the relationship between these changes and maximum human life span as well as developing a conceptual framework for integrating the factors that have generated social, economic and geographical inequalities in the ageing process and the diseases of old age. 3) Identifying robust ageing genotype-phenotype associates through family-based linkage studies.

Papers were given by:

Emily Grundy (LSE) and **Mike Murphy, Ron Lee** (University of California, Berkeley, USA), **Jim Oeppen** (Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Germany)

Commentator: **Gabriele Doblhammer** (University of Rostock).

Session 6: The West and the Rest

The spectacular success of western societies in achieving exponential economic growth at rates which had never previously been attained, and with it, military superiority, has made it tempting to suggest that one or more of the West's characteristics during the last 250 years - capitalism, features of its legal systems, novel advances in science and technology - account for the brief dominance enjoyed by an area which the previous two or three millennia was peripheral to the major civilisations of the world.

Papers were given by:

Zhongwei Zhao (Australian National University, Canberra), **Osamu Saito** (Hitotsubashi University, Japan), **Tim Dyson** (LSE), **Jack Goldstone** (George Mason University, USA) and **Tommy Bengtsson** (Lund University, Sweden)

Commentator: **Patrick O'Brien** (LSE)

The organisers of this conference are extremely grateful to **the Galton Institute** for a grant of £900.

British Society for Population Studies Conference 2015 at the University of Leeds

Over 3 days, there were 270 attendees, with international presenters from Europe and beyond. 178 papers were presented in 47 strand sessions, with 6 sessions running simultaneously in each time slot. Over 50 posters were also on display. Additionally, there were well-attended training sessions on *Using GIS for population research*; *Systematic approaches to reviewing the literature*, aimed at graduate students, and *An Introduction to the UK Longitudinal Studies using the national Synthetic LS data spine*. On the final morning, there was an innovative panel session on *Measuring ethnicity: the challenges using census and survey data* organised by Stephanie Condon and with a panel of invited speakers.

There were two plenary sessions; Professor John Stillwell from the University of Leeds spoke on *Monitoring internal migration in the United Kingdom*, and Professor Helga de Valk, from NIDI and Vrije Universiteit Brussels spoke on *European migrants: new demographic questions and challenges*.

The BSPS website at www.bsps.org.uk has the full Conference programme and abstracts.

Plenary 1: Monitoring internal migration in the United Kingdom – John Stillwell

Professor John Stillwell began by showing that internal migration underpins the process of rural and urban change and has defined the UK pattern of settlement over time.

The plenary was anchored around four main research questions (i) How has migration changed in the United Kingdom over the decade between 2000-2001 and 2010-2011? (ii) What distance did internal migrants actually travel within England in the mid-2000s? (iii) How does the migration intensity and distance of migration compare with other countries, and (iv) How important is scale in the analysis of migration indicators? To address these questions, Professor Stillwell outlined four key dimensions of internal migration: intensity, impact, distance and scale and identified three key data sets: Census data, PRDS/NHSCR administrative data and Acxiom Research Opinion Poll survey data. These sources revealed how migration patterns vary by age, ethnicity and gender.

For the cross-national comparison, use was made of IMAGE. The results showed that, compared to other countries, the UK has average aggregate intensity.

Scandinavian countries, Australia, Canada and the US had higher relative intensities, while Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany had similar intensity to the UK. Most Eastern European countries had low aggregate intensities. Professor Stillwell concluded that census and administrative data suggest modest declines in internal migration intensities in the UK, driven by older people. Secondly, changes in net migration in the UK suggest a spatial pattern of waning counter-urbanisation and increasing re-urbanisation. Thirdly, the inter-district migration distance is decreasing but can vary depending on individual demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Fourthly, there has been convergence of migration impact by age group at lower levels, but the impact of students is increasing.

Plenary 2: European migrants: new demographic questions and challenges
– Helga de Valk

Professor de Valk asked the audience to consider international migration in a European context and, whilst acknowledging the recent plight of migrating refugee and asylum seekers, she turned her attention to the migration of European citizens and third country nationals around the whole of Europe. She considered the patterns of European inter-country migration, the characteristics of European movers and the consequences that migration has had on different partnership combinations in terms of their European identity and language.

Professor de Valk provided evidence that suggested largest migration flows are between Germany and Poland. However, she argued it was not enough simply to look at country flows but to tease apart these larger migration flows by demographic features, such as family composition, age and sex. She questioned the impact bi-national couples had on national identity and language transmission and considered family formation and its linkages to identity, in addition to the use of language, as divisors for integration.

Professor de Valk concluded by highlighting the importance of migration within the European Union and how future research should not focus exclusively on the migration of low-skilled and low-paid migrants, but should also explore additional forms of migration such as the movement of the elite as well as skilled migrants.

BSPS would like to thank the **Galton Institute** for their invaluable financial support again in 2015.

Plenary reports compiled by Matthew Wallace and William Shankly

**The European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association (EHBEA)
2015 conference in Helsinki, Finland 29.3.15. - 1.4.15.**

This first EHBEA conference to be held in a Nordic European country was hosted by the Institute of Behavioural Sciences at Helsinki University and the Population Research Institute, Väestöliitto.

One hundred and ninety five delegates from twenty four countries attended the event. Around half of the delegates were students, and the conference also enrolled twenty Finnish student volunteers from Psychology and Social Policy. The conference was preceded by a one-day Satellite Meeting on Evolutionary Biology.

The main conference program had six half-day sessions and two dedicated poster sessions. The plenary speakers were Professors Beverly Strassmann (University of Michigan, US), Chris Kuzawa (Northwestern University, US), Oliver Schülke (German Primate Centre, Germany); Wil Roebroeks (University of Leiden, the Netherlands), Melissa Hines (Cambridge University, UK) and Gert Stulp (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK) who was the Winner of the New Investigator 2015 award as elected by the EHBEA membership.

The full programme including plenaries, talks and poster abstracts is available to download at <http://ehbea.com/conf/> while the full day-to-day report written by a conference participant has appeared in the EHBEA October 2015 newsletter. All talks were recorded and are freely available on YouTube, see links from the Full day-to-day report.

EHBEA Helsinki 2015 organisers would like to thank **the Galton Institute** who generously helped support this conference with a grant of £1,000.

Galton Institute Mendel Essay Prize 2016

The Galton Institute wishes to announce an Essay Prize for A-level students on any aspect of the life, work and/or legacy of **Gregor Mendel**, the father of modern genetics. This year 2015 marks the 150th anniversary of Mendel's first public communication of his work on breeding of peas, which defined the inheritance laws we now refer to as Mendelian inheritance. A year later, on 8th February 1866, Mendel published his findings in the *Proceedings of the Natural History Society of Brünn*.

The competition is open to all students currently studying for A-levels in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The top prize is £1,000, with two runner-up prizes of £500 and £250 and accompanying certificate.

The deadline for the 2016 essay prize is **8th February 2016**.

Terms and conditions

*The essay should focus on the topic of Gregor Mendel and his contribution to the study of inheritance. Credit will be awarded for essays with stimulating, imaginative and readable content.

*The Authors should aim to communicate their scientific writing to a lay audience.

*The essays should not exceed 1000 words and contain an abstract, and a maximum of one illustrative Figure or Table, and five references.

*All essays should be submitted by the school's Headteacher, after internal selection and approval. The Authors must still be in 6th form in February 2016. The maximum number of essays that can be submitted from each school is five.

*The submitted essays will be checked electronically for plagiarism and marked anonymously by the Galton Institute's dedicated panel of experts. Their decisions are final. The Galton Institute will own the copyright to the winning essays, which may be published in the Institute's Newsletter and on its website.

*Essays are required to be the original work of the candidate and written and submitted by the competition deadline (6 pm **8th February 2016**).



The team responsible for the new Galton Institute website.

Left to right: Dr Paul Hurd (Galton Institute Public Communications Committee or PCC); Mr Robert Johnston (PCC); Dr Helen Middleton-Price (human molecular geneticist); Mr Ian Henges (Diditon, website developer); Dr Branwen Hennig (PCC)