

Under-represented Groups in Surveying

**NEWSLETTER NO. 1/06  
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ON UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS IN SURVEYING**

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**FIG Congress 2006 in Munich**

Once again: There is an open Call for Papers for the FIG Congress 2006 in Munich. The deadline for abstracts is 15 March 2006. One of the topics for the call for papers is "Improving participation of under-represented groups". For more information: <http://www.fig2006.de/e/themes.htm> . I would be very pleased to organize one or two sessions concerning this subject with your presentations.

Gabriele Dasse

**ICA Gender and Cartography commission  
by Ewa Krzywicka-Blum, Poland**

The 2005 year may be recognized as a very fruitful period of Gender and Cartography commission of the International Cartographic Association because of two scientific events. The first one was The Open Discussion Forum in Poland (Wrocław, 11-12 February) devoted to basic problems connected with cartographic presentation of under-representation within different societies in the globe, the second – participation of commission's members in XXII ICC "Mapping Approaches into a Changing World (Coruna, Spain, 11-16 July). GaC commission was responded for organization of two sessions in the frame of 21 themes titled 'Gender and under-represented groups and cartography'. Such problems as: gender's diversification of school map understanding (T. Bandrova, Bulgaria), barriers in determination of under-represented groups (e. Krzywicka-Blum, Poland), case of woman in cartography (L. Phalaagae, Botswana), the role of women in the Atlas of Spain (D. Abad, Spain) and Community mapping: changing lifestyles through participation (S. Perkins, UK) were presented. Very interesting appears also two commission's meetings during the conference. The results of Wrocław's forum and mentioned discussions above were formulated in the form of 29 propositions for part society of the Agenda prepared by EC of ICA (Prof Kirsi Virrantaus). On commission's web side first maps in a prepared system of population are accessible (<http://www.geo.ar.wroc.pl/GC/>).

The first International Conference on Cartography and GIS (January,25-28, 2006 Borovets, Bulgaria) was an event very interesting not only from the scientific but also interpersonal contacts within several groups of research workers and representatives of organisations from the Central and East Europe (DATAMAP-Europe, ESRI). The

open meeting of ICA's Gender and Cartography commission was devoted actual and future activities. Participants considered the question if the consequence of changing profile of terms of reference shouldn't be proposed a new commission's name. Suitable resolution may be accepted during the next General Assembly in Moscow (2007)-

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**Women and Surveying revisited: Two separate Realities?  
by Clara Greed, UK**

Twenty years ago I embarked on research on the position of women in surveying, and by the time of its completion in 1990, women composed 5% of surveyors in Britain (Greed, 1990). Whilst great progress has, apparently, been made in the intervening period of time, in 2004 women still only represent just 10% of surveyors in the UK (RICS,2003; Watts,2003) (See Tables 1 and 2). In comparison, women comprised 6% of lawyers in 1974 and they are now comprise 40% of the profession, with more female than male lawyers under the age of 30. The first woman lawyer qualified in the UK in 1922 (a Carrie Morrison) and if the current geometric rates of growth continue by 2105 we will see the last male lawyer to qualify and the legal profession will become entirely female (Rose, 2005). In comparison in 1984 4% of architects were women, whereas today 10% of the architectural profession is female (RIBA, 2003; De Graft-Johnson et al, 2005). Meanwhile town planning has always attracted more women with female membership of the RTPI running at around 25% of the total but women still compose less than 5% of senior management posts in planning (Greed (ed) 2003). So one encounters a mixed, even contradictory picture, with some aspects being much better and some issues remaining unresolved, or even going backwards in terms of lack of progress. This paper, based on perusing the surveying and property press, and drawing on recent research, seeks to look below the surface and discuss what is really going on in the surveying profession nowadays.

Table 1: Membership of the Built Environment Professions

Professional Body	Total Membership	Women Members
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors	107817	11173
Institution of Civil Engineers	78641	3678
Chartered Institute of Building	37511	1181
Royal Institute of British Architects	28328	2858
Institution of Structural Engineers	20173	950
Royal Town Planning Institute	17924	4714
Total	290394	24554

Table 2: Percentages of Women in the RICS 1994 and 2004 by Membership Category

Fellow	1	2
Full Member	9	12
Trainee	17	17
Student	8	23

Source: Raising the Ratio and RICS data

There is undoubtedly a growth in the numbers of women entering the built environment and construction professions. Whereas in the past one was glad to find any women at all in some of the construction and property professions nowadays they seem, at first sight, to be everywhere and encountering few problems. But this paper argues this is not necessarily so. Whilst there are many more women students, there is a significant drop out after qualification and a continuing attrition of numbers at key stages in subsequent career development (Sweet, 2005). For example, in our recent research on the architectural profession we found that whilst 18% of students were female in 1984, women comprise 33% of architectural students today, but over half never actually went into architecture. Thus the argument that it is only a matter of time before the women catch up does not hold water (De Graft Johnson et al, 2003). Likewise in surveying, according to an article in Property Week (28.5.04) only 55% of those completing RICS surveying degrees go on to become fully qualified surveyors with women disproportionately dropping out. Those women who do persevere find that their salaries are, on average, 27% lower than those of men, according to RICS survey findings published in RICS Business journal in April 2004, pp 20-22.

Nevertheless, there are definitely more women around nowadays in the workplace, in the professions and in management, and the situation is very different from when I first started my own career and subsequent research. There have been many changes, and sometimes improvements, in equalities legislation, maternity rights and childcare provision. There has been a paradigm shift within society itself; it is now acceptable for women to have a career as well as a family. Many young women take this as 'normal' and cannot understand what all the fuss was about, and tend to be embarrassed by the word 'feminism' and appear to have little knowledge of what things were like before women campaigned to change the situation. Yet the situation is far from perfect, and nowadays one must look more carefully at the subtle mechanisms that are at work, controlling and channelling women in certain career routes rather than others.

In Britain 'surveying' encompasses a range of specialisms and careers under the membership of the RICS, ranging from property, urban planning and estate management, where more women are to be found - to the more technological fields of 'real' land surveying, construction and building engineering, where still there are less women. There is no doubt that nowadays one can find some truly spectacular women in very high levels within the professions, government and major organisations, particularly within property and urban planning but also to some extent in surveying itself. For example the Director of the Ordnance Survey in Britain is now

a woman, Vanessa Lawrence, a situation that one would have imagined to be impossible 20 years ago. In 2004 for the first time a woman stood for the post of RICS president, Delva Patman, albeit unsuccessfully, and it is likely that the next president of the RTPI will be a woman (Janet O'Neil). The Chief Planning Inspector, responsible for the national development control system is a woman, Katrina Sporle, as is the head of the Office of National Statistics (ONS), Karen Dunnell. We even have a woman Minister for Planning and Housing, Yvette Cooper, who at the time of appointment was a mere 35 years old in July 2005 and was the first planning minister to take maternity leave (see Regeneration and Renewal 11.0.3.05 on page 21) but there is criticism of the lack of women in regeneration agencies, expressed on page 20 of the same journal. Whilst there are some individual women in very senior positions in regeneration, such as Lorraine Baldry, chair of the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation (responsible for the huge western expansion of the city's development), others consider that women as a whole are being 'pushed to the margins' within urban renewal bodies and policies (see [www.regen.net](http://www.regen.net)). The property journals frequently feature successful women who have become partners or directors of international surveying firms. Furthermore, with some significant expectations, one seldom finds such successful figureheads taking a visible line on women's issues and policies. One also notes that some of the most prominent women in international surveying and realty companies are American, as is the case in Jones Lang LaSalle (see 'Chicago Hopefuls' 10.06.05 at [www.propertyweek.co.uk](http://www.propertyweek.co.uk)). This may signify that American women have benefited earlier from equality programmes to forward their career, or that British women are not seen to be as suitable, or possibly less glamorous.

But on closer inspection it is noticeable that some of these appointments are of women who came into 'property' from a generic business background, recruited apparently for their commercial track-record not for excelling in the built environment professions. But there are a few women who do gain success because of their professional and technological abilities, such as Vanessa Lawrence who previously chaired the Association for Geographic Information. The London Eye (the Millennium Wheel) was designed by a husband and wife team of architects, David Marks and Julia Barfield, although it is significant that Julia's name has often been left out in media reports on the design of the Wheel. One also finds women heading urban regeneration schemes and other multi-million pound projects (see Planning 15.07.05, pp 18 at [www.haynet.com](http://www.haynet.com) But at the same time one finds research and articles stating that 'women are pushed to the margins in regeneration', often taking on administrative or public relations posts, rather than strategic policy and decision-making roles. But one does not necessarily find women-friendly employment practices or women-aware urban policy decisions in the organisations that they head (Reeves and Greed, 2005). There have also been some high-profile sexual harassment cases in large surveying firms, although some would say this was the tip of the iceberg as many women do not feel they are in a senior-enough position to speak out. It would seem that nowadays men have a wide range of types of women to choose from, and they are the most likely to select those that 'fit in' and are 'don't make waves' (Monaghan, 2004).

Overall, there seems to be a vast gap between such successful women and the rank and file of women in the built environment professions, particularly in respect of salary and 'bonuses.' This is even more so in the City where a few top women in the

financial and property world receive literally millions of pounds in end of year bonuses (like top men) whereas as everyone else struggles to pay their mortgage. But are most women surveyors aware of such inequality, both between men and women, and between women and other women? Many are more concerned about gaining better conditions of employment, than simply money. For example the recent RICS survey, 'Raising the Ratio' found that many women wanted more flexibility in terms of hours in order to establish a better 'home/work' balance (RIC,2003). In our research on why women leave architecture (De Graft-Johnson et al, 2003) we found that many women still encounter a hostile, male, macho office environment. A long hours culture predominated, in which working late into the evening, or even overnight was seen as good practice and a sign of commitment. Instead women would rather 'work smart' rather than 'work long', and many commented that men were slow and tended to achieve very little in spite of working longer hours (De Graft-Johnson et al, 2005).

So to conclude this short paper, quantitatively the situation appears to have improved, but 'more does not necessarily mean better' because qualitatively the 'game' has become more complex (Greed, 2005). More women are now let in to the built environment professions, but sophisticated hidden mechanisms control and delimit their progress. Whilst a few women are always let through and become 'successful' one has to be very careful not to equate this with progress for all. There is an old feminist saying in England, 'while the women were playing tennis, the men were playing football'. In other words one must be very careful to make sure that goals and achievements really are a sign of progress and not an indication that the whole game has changed into something else. For example, whilst women have campaigned for equality in respect of recruitment, job interview procedures and employment practices, it is estimated that over 60% of jobs are filled not by advertisement but by word of mouth, through traditional male networking. Likewise, whilst women campaign for equal pay, in many surveying and, also, architectural firms, there is a complex system of bonuses, perks and benefits that are over and above actual salary. Meanwhile young women continue, bravely, to enter surveying, perhaps over-confident that 'everything is going to be all right now'. They are certainly made to feel welcome as the construction industry as a whole is experiencing a 'manpower' shortage at all levels, manual, skilled, managerial and professional. According to the Chartered Institute of Building, English is not the first language of over 80% of workers on London building sites, and there is going to be a major skills and manpower shortage with all the construction for the Olympic Games. Migrant male labour being a major means of filling skills shortages within construction according to the European Institute of Construction Labour Research (see [www.efbh.be](http://www.efbh.be) and [clarkel@wmin.ac.uk](mailto:clarkel@wmin.ac.uk)). So the situation is more complex than when I did my original research on women and planning, the situation is paradoxical and contradictory with examples of great individual success but also overall marginalisation of women surveyors in many respects.

Many construction, surveying, science and engineering degree course places are also unfilled, as young people, nowadays, seem to prefer to study, law, management studies, media studies, or even environmental studies. They appear to have very ignorant perceptions of the nature of the shunned subjects or the nature and scope of the careers they offer. So the construction industry and property professions are turning to women, ethnic minorities, mature returners, and non-surveying graduates

to fill the gap. This results in a curious form of 'equality' in which there appears to be few concessions made to meet the requirements of these new groups. Introducing a more diverse range of groups into the built environment professions should result in changes in work practices and organisational culture: or perhaps it will simply result in people trying it for a while and then leaving out of frustration - at huge personal and financial cost.

As for 'getting more women' into surveying, the profession is still besotted by the idea of recruiting young women. For example a recent article stated, 'it's time people realised surveying is sexy and cool' Property Week 28.05.04, and included three case studies of successful young women surveyors in their twenties. Likewise an item in RICS Business February 2006, page 30-21 on 'narrowing the gender gap' stressed that being young and female can be a positive advantage in today's property professions. But there was no mention of the problems that women surveyors are likely to encounter when they start families, or when they get older and want to be promoted into more senior jobs. Perhaps the ideal woman surveyor, is the eternally young woman surveyor! Meanwhile all the other women surveyors live their lives, and strive to achieve respect and credibility in their chosen profession. Undoubtedly some things have got better but we are not there yet. How all this will turn out in say ten years time who knows? Will surveying as we know it still exist? Will the profession still want women? Will women still want to go into surveying?

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