On 18 and 19 March 2004, a two-day conference was held at the Institute of Community Studies in Bethnal Green, London, entitled “Whither Community Studies?”. Jointly sponsored by the Institute of Community Studies, the University of Stirling and ESDS Qualidata, the aims of the conference were to review earlier achievements in this field and discuss what might be the most worthwhile directions for work in the future. Sir Howard Newby, chairman of HEFCE, and co-author of the key volume, Community Studies, chaired the opening session.

The first part of the workshop brought together scholars who worked in the field in its heyday up until the 1970s, giving “owning up accounts” of their research experience which explored both the possibilities and the difficulties of community studies. Contributors to this session, focusing on rural community studies, included: W.M. Williams on Gosforth and Ashworthy, and his conceptual movement from traditionalism to constant flux; Ronald Frankenberg on Village on the Border and gender in community studies; Ray Pahl on his Hertfordshire commuter villages, and his path from social geography to sociology; and Anthony Cohen on community and individuality, researching in Shetland. In the afternoon, three others pioneers spoke on urban community studies: Meg Stacey on Banbury; Michael Banton on the Stepney black community; and Robert Moore on Sparkbrook and Liverpool.

The second part of the workshop, on Friday, looked towards the future. Contributions came from current researchers in the field, including: Graham Allan, Anthony Cohen, Graham Crow, Tim Butler, Pat Caplan, Giovanni Contini, Geoff Dench, Harry Goulbourne, Lynn Jamieson, Lorna McKee, Judith Okely, Chris Phillipson, and Mike Savage.

The conference was a small event with some thirty participants, the idea being to keep the discussion informal and create the opportunity for a real working exchange. It was
held in honour of Colin Bell, who died in March 2003 and who was joint editor with Howard Newby of *Community Studies*. Professor Bell worked with many of this workshop’s participants in successive roles as student, supervisor, colleague and co-author, and finally as Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Stirling University. The programme for the conference below can also be found at: [http://www.esds.ac.uk/news/eventsdocs/whither.doc](http://www.esds.ac.uk/news/eventsdocs/whither.doc).

It is anticipated that a selection of the papers will be published in a forthcoming edition of a journal.

**Programme**

Thursday 18- Friday 19 March 2004

Institute of Community Studies,
18 Victoria Park Gardens, Bethnal Green, London E2 9PF

Reception and coffee from 11.00

12.00-12.45: Introduction

Sir Peter Hall, Wellcome from ICS
Sir Howard Newby, “Reflections on community studies”
Louise Corti, “The continuing value of classic community studies”
Chair: Paul Thompson

Lunch

Rural Community Studies
Interview with W. M. Williams, “From tradition to constant change”
Ray Pahl, “Hertfordshire commuter villages, from geography to sociology”
Ronald Frankenberg, “Village on the Border and gender in community studies”
Anthony Cohen, “Community and individuality, researching in Shetland”
Chair: Sir Peter Hall

Tea

4.15-6.00  Urban Community Studies
Interview with Meg Stacey, “Tradition and change in an urban community”
Michael Banton, “How the study of migration could contribute to the study of community”
Robert Moore, “Researching race and housing in Sparkbrook”
Dennis Marsden, “Searching for Working Class Community”
Chair: Paul Barker

7.30  Conference dinner in Wapping

Friday 19 March

Recent Community Studies
Graham Allan and Chris Phillipson, “Community in the 21st century: personal, local and transnational experiences”
Rural Community Studies
Graham Crow and Catherine Maclean, “Researching rural communities today”
Giovanni Contini, “Comparing communities in Tuscany”
Chair: Judith Okely

Coffee

Urban Community Studies
Lorna McKee, “Unemployed families in Kidderminster”
Geoff Dench, “The Institute of Community Studies and the re-study of Family and Kinship in East London”
Tim Butler, “Telegraph Hillers: in the city but not of the city?”
Chair: Harry Goulbourne Comment: Lynn Jamieson

Lunch

Where Next? Concluding Panel and General Discussion
Mike Savage, “Community, networks and the cultural imagery”
General Comment
Pat Caplan
Phil Cohen
Gerard Lemos

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Mots-clés: Colin Bell, Etudes de communauté, Grande-Bretagne
Keywords: Colin Bell, Community Studies, Great Britain

ABSTRACTS

This report was prepared by one of the organizers of this conference and the head of the Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS) Qualidata service. The conference was in honour of Colin Bell and brought together several of his former colleagues and students, and covered past, present and future topics of community studies.

Rapport sur la conférence d’ESDS Qualidata Online, “Où vont les études de communauté ?”
Ce rapport a été préparé par une des organisatrices de la conférence qui est directrice du service Qualidata de l’Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS) britannique. Cette conférence était à la mémoire de Colin Bell et a rassemblé plusieurs de ses anciens collègues et étudiants ; elle a été consacrée aux thèmes passés, présents et futurs des recherches sur les communautés.