

The 15th Marie Jahoda Annual Lecture

6.00pm Wednesday
12 October 2011

Fulton B Lecture Theatre
University of Sussex

How to get to the University of Sussex



How to find us

The 15th Marie Jahoda Annual Lecture will be held in the Fulton Building off Refectory Road on the University of Sussex campus.

Parking in all University car parks is free from 5pm.

More detailed travel information can be found on our website
www.sussex.ac.uk/about/campusmap.html

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University of Sussex

SPRU – Science & Technology Policy Research

The 15th Marie Jahoda Annual Lecture

to be given by

Professor Luc Soete
Director of UNU-MERIT

Science, technology and innovation: from creative destruction to destructive creation

Luc Soete (1950, Brussels) is Director of UNU-MERIT (www.merit.unu.edu), Professor of International Economic Relations and Dean of the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance at Maastricht University, The Netherlands. He graduated from the University of Ghent, Belgium in 1972 in economics and obtained a DPhil in economics from Sussex University in 1978. He was a research fellow at SPRU from 1979 till 1986. In 1986 he joined the new Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Maastricht University and set up the research institute MERIT (Maastricht Economic Research Centre on Innovation and Technology) which merged in 2005 with UNU-INTECH to become UNU-MERIT. In 2010 he also became Director-Dean of the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance of Maastricht University. Luc Soete is a member of the Royal Dutch Academy of Science (KNAW) and of the Advisory Council for Science and Technology Policy (AWT) in the Netherlands. He is also a member of the European Research Area Board. In 2010 he received a Doctor Honoris Causa from the University of Ghent. Over the last 30 years, he has contributed both as (co-)author and (co-)editor to many publications with current and past SPRU researchers including John Clark, Charles Cooper, Giovanni Dosi, Chris Freeman, Marie Jahoda, Pari Patel, Keith Pavitt, Carlota Perez, Roy Rothwell and Roy Turner.



Science, technology and innovation: From creative destruction to destructive creation

“Innovation is good for you” appears a common feature of most science, technology and innovation studies over the last decades. In many ways this is surprising given the fact that innovation failure rather than innovation success appeared a much more common feature in micro innovation studies as highlighted amongst others in the early SAPPHO project from SPRU. Hence the simple, but straightforward question which will be central in this Marie Jahoda lecture: could it be that innovation is not always good for you? That at a societal level, innovation rather than representing a Schumpeterian process of “creative destruction” renewing society’s dynamics and hence leading to higher levels of economic development and welfare – destroying a few incumbents to the benefit of many newcomers – presents now and then the exact opposite pattern: a process of “destructive creation” innovation benefiting a few at the expense of many.

In this period of “crises” examples abound: unsustainable fossil-fuel based economic growth; European monetary integration; financial innovation; and many more. A common feature of “destructive creation” innovation is its short-termism: its easy, free rider nature; and its dependency on networks whereby the regulatory framework governing the network provides the major source for innovation. The reason is simple: the advent of information and communication technologies has allowed for a dramatic growth in opportunities for fragmentation of service delivery. Picking out the cherries of service delivery is however accompanied by negative societal externalities. In network services it has increasingly become expensive to be poor.

The S&T (Science and Technology) and innovation economists’ community seems to have not been sufficiently forthcoming in highlighting the limits of innovation in sectors where forms of destructive creation appear much more common than the usual forms of creative destruction.

Professor Marie Jahoda, CBE
26 January 1907 – 28 April 2001

Marie Jahoda was born in Vienna in 1907. In 1928 she earned her teaching diploma from the Pedagogical Academy of Vienna, and in 1933 her Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology from the University of Vienna. In 1937, she fled Austria, staying in England during World War II. In 1946 she emigrated to the United States. During her time there she worked as a researcher for the American Jewish Committee and Columbia University and as a Professor of social psychology at New York University where she founded the Research Centre for Human Relations. She came to the University of Sussex in the 1960s and played a full part in the academic life of the University and its governance. After her official retirement at 65 she began a new period of active creative work participating in the interdisciplinary research of the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU). She made major contributions to research programmes on social and technological forecasting and the social psychological consequences of prolonged unemployment.

Her work has been recognised with a prestigious Kurt Lewin Memorial Award from the American Psychological Association and was belatedly honoured by the German Social Democratic Party and by the Austrian Social Democratic Government. She was awarded an honorary degree by Sussex in 1973 and received a CBE in 1974.

Marie Jahoda Lectures

The annual Marie Jahoda lecture series was launched in 1997 to celebrate the outstanding contributions that Marie made to SPRU. The inaugural lecture was given by Sir Robert May, the Government Chief Scientist, and other speakers have included Professor Linda Wilson, the President of Radcliffe College, Cambridge, MA; Professor Chris Freeman, founder and first Director of SPRU; Professor David King, Government Chief Scientific Adviser; Baroness Sharp, House of Lords; Lord Giddens, former director of the London School of Economics; Professor Sir Gordon Conway, Chief Scientific Advisor, Department for International Development; Sir Howard Newby, Vice-Chancellor, University of the West of England; Professor Carlota Perez, Professor of Technology and Socioeconomic Development, Technological University of Tallinn, Estonia; Professor John Beddington, Government Chief Scientific Adviser; and Calestous Juma, Professor of the Practice of International Development and Director of the Science, Technology, and Globalization Project at Harvard Kennedy School.