**50 Years of Life in Britain – Transcript**

**Episode 3 – A new dawn, the 1990s and skills for life**

Lee Elliot Major 00:03

In one week in April 1970 17,000, mothers and their newborn babies were asked to take part in a survey to find out more about the first week of life. This became known as the 1970 British Cohort Study, BCS70. The study followed these babies as they grew, and continues to do so today. This year, the study turns 50. And so welcome to 50 Years of Life in Britain, a podcast celebrating half a century of the 1970 British Cohort Study. I'm Lee Elliot Major, Professor of Social Mobility at the University of Exeter, and I'll be your host over the next six episodes as we trace the story of BCS70 across five decades, and consider the future of this amazing study. In the last episode, we discovered how the study managed to survive funding cuts during the 1980s and we heard how reading for pleasure was key when comes to improving children's English and math skills.

Alice Sullivan 01:03

The ones that read for pleasure made more progress. They scored more highly in vocabulary at age 16, but they also scored more highly in mathematics as well.

Lee Elliot Major 01:16

And so, on to the 1990s. As the study entered the decade of Britpop, Blair and the dotcom boom, it moved from Neville Butler's shabby chic Georgian mansion to City University, but it couldn't escape the effects of another recession.

Study member 01:39

The 90s for me was definitely the favourite part of my life so far. Music-wise, Stone Roses, Happy Mondays, all the club music – that was the soundtrack of our lives for many years.

Study member 01:52

I had a car, I had a mortgage, just had started to work and just really cracked on with being a married woman.

Study member 02:01

I used to travel all over the country to parties in the middle of fields and used to love that freedom to meet people and feel kinship with them straightaway.

Study member 02:12

Great sporting moments like Euro 96, the big changes in technology, everyone using computers.

Study member 02:22

I went to university and met people from different parts of the country, different religions, different parts of the world and had time on my hands to explore ideas with these people, find out about their different perspectives, and it really helped me grow as a person.

Study member 02:39

Getting my first mobile phone then, and then email coming on board, with the internet.

Lee Elliot Major 02:49

Those running the study worked on short-term contracts and the future of BCS70 was under threat once again. However, by the mid-90s, it would be thrown a lifeline, and as a new government came into power, its value to evidence and society finally became acknowledged. The study went from strength to strength. In this episode, I speak to Professor John Bynner and Dr. Sam Parsons, whose stark findings about the poor levels of literacy and numeracy among British adults would go on to influence government policy for the next two decades. We'll also hear from the study participants who will tell us what they remember about joining the study again as adults after a decade-long gap. But first I speak Survey Manager Kate Smith and former Director of the Centre for Longitudinal Studies Professor Heather Joshi, about those topsy-turvy years in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Kate has been designing surveys at CLS, the home of BCS70, for more than three decades. I asked her what she remembers from that time.

Kate Smith 03:58

It was my first real research job but at the time that I joined in 1989, there was an awful lot of uncertainty about funding at that time. Cohort studies were not something that the current government, which was one of the Thatcher governments, were very keen on, they weren't really keen on the messages that were coming out of cohort studies, which was largely about inequality. And so there wasn't a lot of interest in funding them. Mid-90s onwards with the change of government – to the Labour government – very different times from '97 onwards. I mean, we received not just recognition but there was recognition amongst politicians of the real value of the studies and what they could bring to the table.

Lee Elliot Major 04:47

Can you remember when BCS70 then moved to City University – because that was in the early 90s?

Kate Smith 04:54

That's right. It was – it was around '91 that the BCS70 came up from Bristol where it was located with Professor Neville Butler. And John Bynner, who was director – he was really fundamental in bringing up and continuing the 1970 cohort, he did not want to see the 1970 cohort not continue.

Lee Elliot Major 05:20

Were you involved in that funding that you managed to get as a group in '96, then?

Kate Smith 05:28

The cohort members themselves hadn't had an interview with them or a visit since they reached 16 in 1986, and all the contact for that survey was done through the schools. And so with it moving to a new location and getting a new name for the study, as well, we needed to establish whether we could actually find the cohort members as adults. So we launched a tracing exercise with our small tracing team to try and find them, and also then to contact them and see whether they'd still be willing to take part in the study 10 years after they'd last had a survey. Because obviously, I mean, the internet was in no way the internet that we have today. I mean, we were very lucky in universities in that we had early, early types of the internet, because it was sort of built for us for academic networks. But we certainly didn't have it for tracing people and sort of to find people in the way that you can do now. And there were no social media sites in 1996. So we had to do tracing sort of the old fashioned way. A lot of it was through sort of things like medical records and government records and school records, and also writing to people at the last address that we had and an awful lot of it had to be done by mail. So when the study came up to City University, what we did do was something that we were already doing for the 1958 cohort which was to send an annual birthday card. And as part of that, we asked them to get back in contact with us if they had changed their address, and we managed to find them through the postal service managing to forward it to them. Now the team is quite large now. But it was just basically there were two of us, for the team: Peter Shepherd and myself. And so I designed the questionnaire and yeah, sort of ran the survey really – and did quite a lot of the analysis as well. There were times when we were on month to month contracts, because we just didn't know when our next funding or whether our next funding was coming through. And so you just have to sort of hope. It's one of the reasons I was 35 before I bought a house because we're on such perilous, perilous contracts.

Lee Elliot Major 07:49

Were there any moments where you found something that was really surprising or interesting?

Kate Smith 07:56

Well I think from all cohorts actually what amazes me is that people are willing to give up significant portions of their time for no return other than a sort of social good. Because they don't get paid for it, the results – because of the nature of the surveys – take quite a long time often to come out. They don't get an immediate return in any sense of the word. So it always amazed me how committed and that they continue to be committed and continue to give us their time and in many times, personal information and sometimes biological specimens. And that amazes me – the commitment of the study members really amazes me.

Lee Elliot Major 08:42

Professor Heather Joshi is currently Emeritus Professor of Economic and Developmental Demography at the UCL Institute of Education, and the former Director of the Centre for Longitudinal Studies. She recalls those uncertain times in the early 1990s and reflects on the successful Age 26 Survey.

Heather Joshi 09:02

So I was Deputy Director when the 1970 cohort got its new lease of life, this was in 1996. As usual, the cohort studies were in the state of not knowing whether they were going to continue, but there was a lobby to rescue the 1970 cohort from oblivion. And we were delighted and surprised to get at short notice enough money to do a postal survey when they were 26. So everybody in the team was all hands to the wheel to write an initial description of what was found in that survey. We got responses from 9003 cohort members, which wasn't as many as we later made contact with. But they provided evidence that this was a cohort of young people who were having quite a different experience from the cohort born 12 years earlier, the 1958 cohort. They'd left school at a time when the labour market was down. So there was a lot of unemployment. Many of them had been on the Youth Training Scheme. But they'd spent more time in education – and particularly the girls had spent more time in education and they were rapidly overtaking the boys in academic attainments. Especially at school level, but almost as many of them had degrees as the boys, which hadn't been the case in the past. Even the 1946 cohort – tiny numbers of female graduates. The whole experience of the transition to adulthood seemed to have slowed down, more education, more staying at home with parents – particularly the men – less partnering, less childbearing in your 20s, particularly men. There was still quite a substantial minority of the 1970 women who had become teenage mothers – same proportion as in the 1958 cohort. But apart from that, the more educated women in the 1970 cohort, were staying out of motherhood until their 30s. And the men even longer, we could see that they were set to have a rather different experience of adulthood than the 1958 cohort who we were busily studying at the same time.

Lee Elliot Major 11:36

We're also lucky enough to feature voices from the study itself. Jo and Liz are both in the BCS70 cohort, and they share their memories of joining the study again, at age 26 after a 10 year gap.

Study member 11:49

I was an adult and you know, been to university – I'd got a job, I was sort of settled in a relationship. I remember when they got in touch, because I like questionnaires so I sort of remember things about that, and I think it was more sort of attitudinal, you know, putting your opinions across. And although I think we've done that, as a teenager, I think it was a little bit more and looking at how, you know, obviously how life had been over those past 10 years. So, you know, almost we spent quite a bit of time thinking about it, you know, when I was responding to answers, but I think I remember it was, I think it was quite a big questionnaire, I think at that point in time. And I think it was starting to think more broadly, as well, not just about your life, but about society and wider things that were going on as well.

Study member 12:35

The survey came out, I think, when we were in our mid 20s, probably around age 26. And we hadn't had any contacts since the age of 16, when we'd had this incredibly long survey to complete – lots of questionnaires, very intrusive questions, and then it all went quiet. At that stage, I was actually working in Africa, and somehow the survey still managed to reach me. I think it was probably via my parents – or I can't even remember how it got to me. You know, I feel as if it is truly an observational study that we've just been allowed to get on with our lives. And from time to time, we're asked to report how our lives are going. So I don't remember a great deal about the survey when I was in my mid-20s. I suspect it's because other things in my life were happening, and it was a very busy, exciting time. But I can remember feeling pleased that the cohort hadn't gone away, that it was still there and it was still part of my life.

Lee Elliot Major 13:34

After taking part in 10 surveys, answering thousands of questions and taking part in countless cognitive and physical assessments, the study members have given us a wealth of invaluable information about life in Britain at various points of time. Here's a snapshot of the country from the mid-90s.

Narrator 13:53

At age 26, 6 in 10 participants were living with a spouse or cohabiting partner. 7 in 10 felt that the death penalty was appropriate for certain crimes. A quarter smoked every day. 13% never drank alcohol or only drank on special occasions. 40% owned their own home and 20% lived with parents. 1 in 3 women had become mothers. 1 in 5 men had become fathers. 7 in 10 felt that there should be more women bosses in important jobs in business and industry.

Lee Elliot Major 14:37

Professor John Bynner, former Director of BCS70 and Dr. Sam Parsons, Research Officer at the UCL Institute of Education, conducted influential research on adult literacy and numeracy in the 1990s and new millennium. It went on to underpin a series of important government education initiatives over the next two decades, including Sure Start and Skills for Life. First of all we speak to Professor Bynner about his research on basic skills, which used data from the Age 21 Sub-Study. These findings came to the attention of Chairman of the Basic Skills Agency Lord Claus Moser. Moser went on to cite them in his 1999 government report, which looked at the worryingly low literacy and numeracy levels in the UK in comparison with other developed nations. I asked John whether he could remember when Lord Moser first became interested in the research.

John Bynner 15:30

Okay, well, we had done some initial work with the Basic Skills Agency. Well, it wasn't based on big surveys or anything, it was drawing I think on the 58 cohort from way back. But how we got involved was that I had done work initially for Alan Wells of the Basic Skills Agency through data that had been produced by Neville Butler originally – a project that he had hoped to do himself years back. Because of the money that came forward from Neville Butler, from Paul Hamlyn on the one hand, the Basic Skills Agency decided to top that up with some money of their own. So none of this came from government or research councils or anything. And we then put together a survey at age 21, which enabled us then to go much further into all these issues. A package was put together that would enable a 10% sample to be covered in a survey. And they had impressed Alan Wells a lot. He'd been able to use the data we'd produced hugely about the effects, of basic skills in adulthood, or lack of them would have on progress and the quality of life generally. That was point one, but the second, which I think in many respects, Lord Moser and people like Richard Layard found particularly interesting was numeracy was very, very poor by the standards of anybody. You know, almost half the population were operating at the age of a 10-year-old or something, on numeracy. The decision to launch a programme on basic skills – and which led to the Moser Report as it came to be known – was very much part of the New Labour government coming into operation. They really believed that it was time to tackle the basic skills issue. We were comparing badly with other countries, over literacy and numeracy. You can begin to unpin this in the sense of various kinds of experience, or lack of it, or poor teaching or illness – there are a whole string of things which you can begin to unravel. And this becomes enormously important, as I say. The Moser Committee, for example, that was set up by the Labour government at the time to look at the whole business of adult basic skills and what could be done to improve them. And that was a brilliant report, in fact, in many respects, but it uncovered all these issues in enormous depth, and it used the birth cohort studies hugely to provide the evidence base for what they wanted to come up with. And then the policy proposals that came out of that.

Lee Elliot Major 18:15

18 years is a long time. So you would have done many analyses on this. But was there any particular shock finding – if you like – around adult skills?

John Bynner 18:26

Well, I think the main shock was that these problems existed and that they were not spotted at childhood. Up to about 20 to 30% of the population has poor literacy – and of that, about 7 to 10% are really close to illiteracy. So that was a great shock initially. In relation to numeracy, half the population are in that low-to-bottom category, which is very, very striking because what is the education system doing if it misses this when children are passing through it.

Lee Elliot Major 19:04

Lord Moser's report made the case for launching Skills for Life, a major New Labour government policy to tackle the literacy, language and numeracy needs of the country's adults. Sue Pember is a former policymaker, and was given the responsibility for rolling out Skills for Life in the new millennium. I started by asking Sue how the BCS70 study helped her to champion this policy.

Sue Pember 19:29

Back in the 1970 cohort, a report was written on the basic skills that fed into the Moser Report in 1998. That sort of information was the grounding that made Lord Moser determined to write a report that brought out the inadequacies of the system and explain you know, what was happening to young people in literacy at the age of 16, and then adults 19 onwards. So without the cohorts such as this study, Lord Moser wouldn't have had the evidence for his report. And then without the Moser Report, government in David Blunkett and Baroness Blackstone – which were the two Ministers at the time that absolutely championed this – and without them saying that they would implement Lord Moser's report, without them making that commitment, and they were only making that commitment because of the cohort study. So it was like one built upon the other. So it was incredibly important piece of research work. And then we also used it in 2004. We took one of those cohorts in 2004. And we did a further test with them on literacy that said, we're going to test people with these questions – which were built on the cohort's quite original questions. We took it a bit further, we added an IT test to it. And then that study turned into a much bigger, wider study, which was about the whole sector cohort, which was done twice before the skills initiative actually stopped. But it was one of those things that, you know, we didn't have the first part of it. So if we didn't have the birth cohort study, we wouldn't have had Moser, we wouldn't have then had Skills for Life, we wouldn't have had the secondary assessment. And then we wouldn't have had the third assessment that showed how impactful the Skills for Life strategy had. So there's a direct storyline there that one builds on the other.

Lee Elliot Major 21:42

And what was the actual finding? Was it a shocking finding? What was the headline finding?

Sue Pember 21:50

7 million people with a literacy and numeracy problem. It was shocking. So you're talking about 1 in 5 of the population, they have skills less than what you'd expect of an 11-year-old. So they couldn't read the front of their prescription bottle. You know, they couldn't read the back of the Domestos bottle. And it showed that there was an issue in why they got jobs or didn't get jobs, why they got the jobs that they did get, why they didn't stay in a job. But also it shows how it affected the rest of their life – you know, so if you've got poor literacy skills, you're more likely to be in prison. If you've got poor literacy skills, you're more likely to get in debt. If you've got poor literacy skills, your children are more likely to not read themselves. So it was, I think, quite shocking. And that's why David Blunkett was able to use the word "crusade", you know. He really felt passionately about this, that we really had to let people know that, you know, if you've got a poor skill, then well – don't worry about it. We could do something for you, but also to explain to employers why they were being less productive. And in a way, that's why I turn to productivity – although it's not actually part of the productivity calculation, skill level, but, you know, it seems to be obvious to me, if we've got a country that's got poor productivity, and we've got country that's got, you know, 1 in 5 of the population with poor skills, there must be a correlation there. And if we can improve the skills level, then we improve the productivity level.

Lee Elliot Major 22:37

So can you tell us how this then helped you shape the skills policy that you led? Can you tell us a bit about what you've been trying to do?

Sue Pember 23:34

So first of all, the Moser Report left us with – or gave us – I think it was 12 really good recommendations that needed to be acted upon. And those recommendations – as we just pointed out – were just in literacy. So we broadened it to do numeracy as well. And that turned then into a strategy called the Skills for Life Strategy that was published in March 2001.

Excerpt of Skills for Life TV advert

Younger child 24:00

Mum, how do you spell choir?

Skills for Life learning gremlin character 24:05

That’s a tough one, isn’t it!

Skills for Life learning gremlin character 24:08

You don’t know do you? Mummy can’t spell!

Skills for Life learning gremlin character 24:11

Oh that is so embarrassing!

Narrator 24:13

Don't put it off. Get rid of your reading, writing or maths gremlins. For free courses call 0800 100 900.

Game show host 24:21

Right, next one up is going to be... Freddie!

Freddie 24:25

No, no, you don't want to see me, see.

Skills for Life learning gremlin character 24:28

Freddie, what's your problem? You're worried about reading your words.

Narrator 24:32

If you're frustrated by your reading, writing or maths, call 08000 150 650. Get rid of your Gremlins and get on.

Sue Pember 24:42

That strategy brought together government, really, so though I was based in the Department for Education and Employment. The department split – I think it was that year. You got the department DWP and you got Education in a split, so employment was removed. However, that coming together of DWP and DfE was incredibly important, because this couldn't be seen as an issue just for education, it had to be seen as an issue for work, but also the rest of government needed to get involved. So, we had, first of all, we had a cross-government group of ministers, which involved the MoD, it involved the Health Service. So the first thing that was good about the strategy: that it was led by government, and by a cross-government group of ministers. And each of those government ministers had a target – it was of the days where the New Labour government was very keen on their performance targets, and in a way, that focused the mind. So we had a target to get 750,000 people through the first you know, upper level, you know, within three years. So that actually targeted – it was a target not just for ministers and departments; that target was used by a teacher who was all the way down the system and all the way back. We sort of drilled down, people knew, people were trained. And they felt that they were part of this bigger picture. You know, and there's people out there now, 20 years on – they were trained originally in 2004-5 – and still look back to that time as the best, you know, fundamental training they could have. David Blunkett particularly did use this terminology, "crusade". And he would come to like mass gatherings of like 1500 teachers in conference centres to say how important their work was. If we roll on to 2011 and where the test was repeated with this wider cohort, that research shows that over 14 million people improved their skills. It was one of the largest social interventions we've ever tried in England. And it absolutely worked. But it still had gaps. It didn't do very well with the lowest levels. But it did very well to get people into level two – which was in a way one of the target groups, because if you can get people to a level two, it makes a big difference to their employment going forward and to their salary level. So that was what, you know, the strategy was aiming for. So we demonstrated that we can do it as a country. So the strategy was successful, met its targets early, went on to ensure that between 2001 and 2011, 14 million participated in adult literacy and numeracy activities, and over 8 million qualifications achieved, which produced a 13% improvement in literacy.

Lee Elliot Major 27:46

Dr. Sam Parsons worked closely with Professor Bynner on a number of BCS70 studies looking at basic skills during the 1990s and 2000s. She was funded by the Skills for Life initiative to conduct further literacy and numeracy research in the new millennium. Here Sam talks about her memories of working on the study in the 1990s and reflects on her basic skills research.

Sam Parsons 28:10

I joined in '95 and I particularly worked with John. I started on NCDS – so the older cohort – that was when BCS70 first really came to us. So the first one they did – what was it – it was in 1996, so when they were 26. We were such a small unit then, sort of really on a shoestring, particularly the, you know, the survey team. So I was very involved in the Age 34 data – sort of putting the questionnaires together and all aspects of it. But since then, it's become more... well, there's a whole survey team now. It's more split between survey team and researchers, whereas it was more fluid before – through a need because there wasn't so many people actually working there.

Lee Elliot Major 28:58

Because the other thing that's coming across with all these interviews, I suppose, is that it does depend on individuals championing the cause on this. It has depended on people actually getting that support for the surveys.

Sam Parsons 29:11

Yeah. And John was brilliant at that. So no, I wasn't involved in the fundraising at all. I was his research assistant, really. It was all part of John's – he had a bit of a master plan – of trying to get them interviewed at very similar age points so that you can allow for all these cross-cohort comparisons. And I think that it finally brought them up to the level of the '58 cohort, which always previously had this, you know, higher status. But once they were brought in line, it created this great opportunity for cross-cohort comparison. And I think they were absolutely valued from then on just as equally.

Lee Elliot Major 29:50

So what did you show then about adult basic skills – because you were involved with that study, particularly on the 34 Sweep, I believe – so can you tell us a little bit about: well, one, I guess why you wanted to look into that – how did that emerge as an interest as a group? And what did you find?

Sam Parsons 30:12

With this great interest from the then government and the Skills for Life – they put an enormous lot of money into it. And so they funded the National Research Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy, who in turn funded the cohorts to be able to assess the literacy and numeracy skills of everybody who took part in the Age 34 Sweep. So we found that there was 8% percent of BCS who at age 34 had very poor literacy skills and 40% had very poor numeracy skills. What that equates to – in the language of the Skills for Life survey levels and everything – it means that that proportion of people had the skills of no higher than an 11-year-old, that would be expected on average of an 11-year-old. Which is, I mean that's a bit of a headline-grabbing way of putting it. But it's quite shocking to be that low. By being able to look at all of the data that we have, we produced a lot of publications from that. And we really showed the disadvantage that these men and women had across all the domains of adult life, you know – in work, income, housing, family life, their health and mental well-being was poorer, all of it was poorer. And also that their children – particularly those who had the poorest skills, so entry level two, which was actually even worse, that's kind of 7 to 9-year-olds' equivalent skills – that their children had much poorer reading and math scores compared to the other children that we also interviewed or completed the assessments with. We couldn't do all of them, but for 1 in 2 sample, we also assessed the reading and math skills of all of their children. Well, all of their children who are age 3 and above. And so then you can look at the, you know, intergenerational transfers if you like.

Lee Elliot Major 32:16

So you found these very stark gaps in both numeracy and literacy. Were those children or adults particularly from poorer backgrounds?

Sam Parsons 32:25

Absolutely. I mean, not all – it's never an all – but far more proportionately, obviously, from disadvantaged backgrounds. You know, social housing, very low income, overcrowded home, parents with low level qualifications.

Lee Elliot Major 32:42

And did you find that there was an intergenerational link – so that if your parents struggled with basic skills, then you're more likely as a child to grow up in the same way?

Sam Parsons 32:56

Yeah. I mean, it's probably like now with this COVID business – you know, the gap. You know, the children of those who those are more in the 'haven't got' as opposed to 'have got' are less likely – they're not so much involved with the teaching at home because the parents probably aren't so able, and they're not so engaged – perhaps because of facilities or space to do the online stuff with their schools. For the children with additional needs, I think they're exponentially going to be, you know, put back further. That work, that had a lot of policy impact both nationally and internationally. And various government ministers referred to the work in the House of Commons debates and Select Committee hearings. And it's also informed a range of government policies such as the introduction of the literacy hour in schools, and early initiatives such as Sure Start, and the government-sponsored Early Intervention Foundation – and this wasn't even established until 2013. So it continued to have influence. And also, governments in Australia and New Zealand have used the findings to inform their own policies on adult literacy and children's literacy. And also because of how it was funded if you like from government, you were able to produce very accessible reports. We would roll them out at conferences quite a lot – and a lot of the teachers or those involved in adult education were really sort of interested in them, and said the research really spoke to them and reflected the adults who they were involved with.

Lee Elliot Major 34:38

James is one of the study members still filling out his surveys in now his 50th year. He reflects on his contribution to a wider understanding of Generation X. Likewise, Sam, who shows the pride she takes in contributing to BCS70.

Study member 34:55

I think I've always liked to contribute to the research. Things are released from the study, aren't they? So they find out that actually reading to children in their early years, 0-5, actually makes a massive impact on their comprehension as they go through secondary school, and learning, and can impact on GCSE results and things like that. So I think when you know that you've contributed to that kind of research – that helps shape how people can have better outcomes for their own children – it makes you feel like 'actually, I'm doing something worthwhile here'. And that can help other people better their lives or their children's lives. And so I think it probably ticks a bit of an altruistic box for me.

Study member 35:46

Yeah, I’ve always been really keen to take part. And I find it really interesting as well when you get on your birthday – you know, occasionally you send through sort of the findings of the survey or where it's been covered in the newspapers. And I know you did that particularly this year for the 50th, but before then you've done that in small pamphlet form. I've always found that really interesting because often you do read things in the papers: "50-year-olds nowadays think like this", and you sort of read it and you don't – and then it's at the bottom, you know, the cohort study thing. Oh hang on a minute – that's the study I'm in. But I feel quite, you know, lucky and honoured to be part of it. These sorts of studies – they're sort of invaluable, really. You know, I genuinely think they do make a difference and can influence politics and policy and things like that. So I think just by – you know, you're making a bit of a contribution to that.

Study member 36:54

I feel like the cohort members have got the easy part of the deal because we get to answer lots of questions about ourselves. And then someone goes and crunches all the data. And that's the hard part. You know, this is real research. It's real people taking part. And I think, you know, that's what's important. People need to trust the science, so I think it's important to know that we are part of a bona fide group.

Lee Elliot Major 37:22

Next time we'll move into the new millennium as the study enjoyed a golden decade. With BCS70 becoming greatly valued by scientists and policymakers, the study was funded to meet participants on three occasions, and was often cited by the government in its policies. With this newfound recognition, researchers across the globe started using BCS70 in conjunction with other birth cohort studies to see how members of Generation X were faring compared to other generations. This led to an explosion of new findings on health, education and social mobility. We'll also speak to study participants about their careers and lives during the exciting new decade. See you next week.

Narrator 38:09

50 Years of Life in Britain, powered by UCL Minds. I hope you subscribe to join the celebration.