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THE SOCIOLOGY TEACHER

THE JOURNAL OF BSA SOCIOLOGY TEACHERS

FAKE

NEWS!

Self-actualisation in Sociology - The Peak of My Day!

Reflections on achieving
self-actualisation in
the classroom

Visions in Monochrome:

Teaching Resource
for Families and
Households

Summerhill School

Documentary

A Resource for the
Education Topic

In this Issue: • National A Level Sociology Competition for Students!

• Changing topics for A level Sociology

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SOCIOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

Acknowledgement to our contributors

In this issue, The Sociology Teacher (TST) wants to acknowledge and celebrate the important contributions made by all our inspirational sociology teachers – you! Sarah McLaughlin's article (pg 32) on Maslow's hierarchy of needs explores how she witnesses and achieves self-actualisation – that highest state – in her teaching life and here at TST we see examples of that throughout this issue.

Our first article is the prize-winning essay from the BSA's A Level Sociology Essay Competition by Amanda Daud (pg 4). TST went to meet Amanda and her teachers at The Jo Richardson Community School to present the prize and we were so honoured to meet everyone and to see how the school keeps the interest in sociology alive in its students. (The stuffed Karl Marx plays a role at Jo Richardson and so just had to join the class in the photo!)

If your students are inspired and achieving sociological self-actualisation, encourage them to submit to next year's prize. Details are on page 12 and we welcome all creative submissions. You are constantly challenging and encouraging your students and the work they produce is astounding. We love the opportunity to see even a small portion of it through this prize.

This issue also contains articles written by teachers inspired to create resources, and to share their experiences. Heidi Bickis shares an article summary (pg 16) very useful for engaging students with the roles that family, religion, and culture play on intimate relationships; Sarah McLaughlin passes on her idea for a sociological ice breaking activity to introduce new students to each other and to the subject (pg 13).

Zoe Hepden's thought-provoking article (pg 20) describes actions making a major impact at her school to challenge the normalisation of far right ideas. With a hopeful outlook and early signs of positive outcomes, it's clear that sociology can make a concrete difference

in the classroom and across the school as a whole.

Helen Berriman reflects on the value of keeping the topics lively and looks at the benefits of changing your optional topic at A level (pg 26).

Many of these authors are new writers for TST who have taken time to reflect on and be generous with their experiences in the sociology classroom. When the magazine called for more writers, these and many others responded, showing how dynamic and giving is the community.

And there is a particular sociology teacher that we honour in this issue – someone hard working and incredibly generous with his time and energies: Patrick Robinson, long-standing Editor of The Sociology Teacher. Patrick has been involved in the magazine for over six years. He has edited many an issue and often written his own contributions as well. His generosity carries on with his resource for the Education topic this month. He is stepping back from editing and will be handing over to new editors for the next issue of the magazine and we owe him a huge debt of thanks for his many years of editing and writing and we wish him the very best with his future adventures. And TST is sure we'll still see his contributions in the magazine!

If you would like to get involved we'd love to hear from you – join the BSA, encourage your students to submit to the competition, send us your ideas for articles in the magazine. We welcome all teachers who are looking to network, share and support each other.

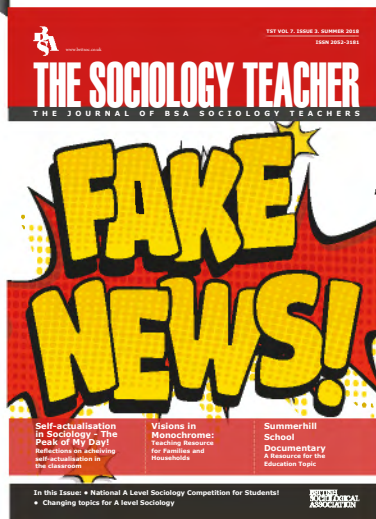
All the best as we get into the Autumn months.

The Sociology Teacher
 Alison Danforth
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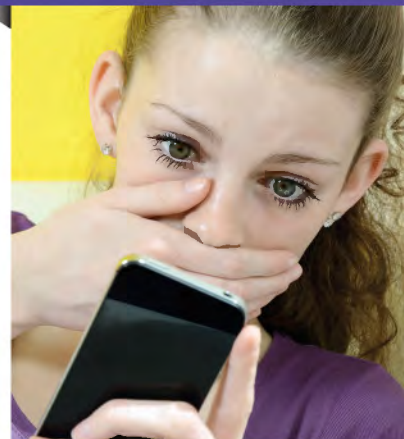
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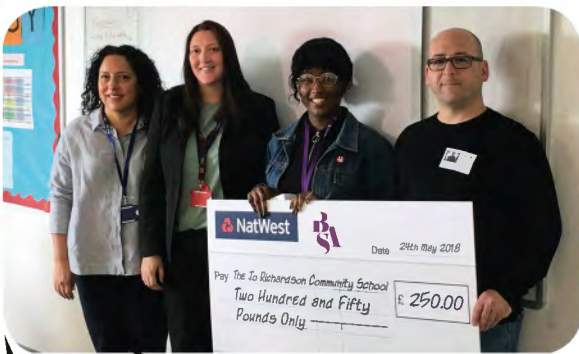
You could see your article on the Contents. Contact Alison Danforth at the BSA, alison.danforth@britsoc.org.uk

FAKE NEWS?**WE ARE ALL FLAGS IN THE BUNTING****CHALLENGING THE – THE NEW FRONTIER**

Fake News? A Sociological Perspective

BSA A Level Sociology Prize-winning Essay 2017 by Amanda Daud

Amanda Daud attends The Sydney Russell School and completes her A Level Sociology with The Jo Richardson Community School in East London. When The Sociology Teacher visited, we could see that it was a great environment for sociology!



Fake news has been given media attention by US President Donald Trump this past year. Collins Dictionary has defined their 2017 Word of the Year as “false, often sensational information disseminated under the guise of news reporting”, with ‘yellow journalism’ being used as the more traditional terminology (Collins Dictionary). Since 2016, usage of the term ‘fake news’ has risen by 365% according to the dictionary’s lexicographers, with the biggest influx of fake news coming from the 2016 US presidential election. This is shown in a primary research study I conducted that found that 50% of my respondents agreed that Trump has had a big influence on the usage of the term ‘fake news’ (see Appendix A.9).

The sociology of fake news is based on the fact that news is a social

FAKE!

construction; it is based on the writings and interpretations of media journalists where some stories are rejected and others accepted. As Cohen and Young (1973) put it, the news is not discovered but manufactured. This is because of the notion of 'news values'; the criteria by which journalists and editors decide whether a story is newsworthy enough. If a story follows some of these criteria, such as dramatisation and unexpectedness, then it is more likely to be published and engulfed by the public. With fake news, it can either be news stories that are completely false and are posted with the intent to mislead people, or they could be stories that have some truth to them but the facts haven't been properly checked or have been exaggerated to sway public opinions. The Digital News

Report found that television remains the number one source of news in countries such as the UK, Germany and France, whereas online sources are most popular in most other countries such as the USA, Denmark and Finland¹.

In his book *Understanding Media* (1964), McLuhan argued that the real importance of the media lies not in their content, but in the way, they themselves, alter our social world. In the mass media, sociologists believe that there is a message conveyed from one point to a very large number of other points, which is enabled due to the increased globalisation and interconnectedness of

1 Digital News Report (2017)

the world due to mediums such as the internet. For example, from January 2017 to March 2017, 89% of adults in the UK had recently used the internet (in the last 3 months).² Worldwide, as of June 2017, 51% of the world's population was on the internet³. As well as this, findings from my

2 Office for National Statistics – Internet users in the UK (2017)

3 Internet World Stats (2017)





research shows how 72% of respondents agree to using social media, such as Facebook, daily (see Appendix A.1). This shows just how vast media messages can be transmitted, although, even though singular messages may be sent, many postmodernist sociologists regard media messages such as false news stories as polysemic; they can be interpreted in many different ways, but they still have a massive impact.

However, pluralist sociologists argue that society is made up of many interacting but competing sections that have more or less equal access to resources and influence. These are policed by a neutral state that operates in the public interest, and pluralists argue that different parts of the media cater to these various sections of society and that they follow public opinion not shape it. Just as there are divisions in society, there are divisions in the media that are unlikely to have much effect in changing society. Jones (1986) argues that radio news, for example, is neutral, fair and balanced; it does not take sides but reports all relevant views with equal emphasis. Therefore, fake news, according to pluralism, has a limited effect on public opinion. However, Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) disagree with the fact that the media is neutral and fair in terms of what they call the 'emergent shared culture' of politicians and journalists. They believe that, under the lobby system, both groups depend on each other and adapt to each other; politicians need journalists to help them get the public on board with their views, whilst journalists need politicians for the publicity they bring to their news. This leads to a growth of trust between the two that develops patterns of expected behaviour from both sides. As a result, journalistic diversity narrows and their objectivity becomes compromised,

which leads to more fake news 'out there'. Therefore, sociologists such as Blumler and Gurevitch can advocate for this shared culture to become more objective and neutral to reduce the amount of fake news.

Moreover, some sociologists argue that it has now become a political strategy to use social media to spread fake news, becoming a target of both the left and the right on the political spectrum globally. In their paper 'Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election', Allcott and Gentzkow (2017) found that "of the known false news stories that appeared in the three months before the election, those favouring Trump were shared a total of 30 million times on Facebook, while those favouring Clinton were shared 8 million times". There

were claims that Trump's victory was due to those 30 million stories that had put him in a better light than Hillary Clinton, such as false reports that Clinton sold weapons to ISIS. This shows how fake news has a huge influence over political voting behaviour.

However, in Katz and Lazarsfeld's (1995) book *Personal Influence*, they studied how far the media influences public opinions and attitudes, particularly political opinions and voting behaviours, and found limited influence because the communication process is affected by different 'variables'. This includes personal, political, practical or technological factors that shape someone's exposure to the media message, as well as the beliefs and attitudes among the audience that can



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Some sociologists argue
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modify/distort the meaning of a given message. They also argue that leaders within communities can mediate messages received from the mass media, however, people tend to vote in the ways their friends and family do, not in the way the dominant media messages tell them to vote. As a result, they argue that power and status are of little relevance with voting behaviour. This links to Allcott and Gentzkow's (2017) final conclusion where they argued that false news stories may not have been as persuasive and influential as is often suggested. Gentzkow stated that "a reader of our study could very reasonably say, based on our set of facts, that it is unlikely that fake news swayed the US

election...but that conclusion ultimately depends on what readers think is a reasonable benchmark for the persuasiveness of an individual fake news story." In other words, even if a voter believed a fake news story, it had to be very persuasive to change their vote. Therefore, this presents the argument that there isn't much to be done with fake news as it's just open to interpretation; it doesn't have that much of an effect on public opinion to be eradicated so sociology doesn't really have much to contribute.

In contrast, Marxists believe that the media are the means by which the ideas of the ruling class maintain their dominance

(ruling ideas). These ideas control the information we have and the way we see the world, so when these ideas contain false and sensationalised information, it alters the way we

perceive the world in terms of the themes present in the news story. Marxists argue that there is digital dominance of large internet players such as Facebook and Google, who have allowed fake news to flourish. As well as the ruling class largely owning the means of production, over the years, there has been increased evidence of monopolisation as a few big companies have gained domination of the media market through becoming a conglomerate. For example, Bagdikian (1997) found that in the 1980s, the US media were controlled by 50 corporations, and by 1997, this reduced to just 10. For these conglomerates, bad news sells. Genuine and high-quality content is costly and difficult to create as it needs proper funding and regulations to protect that funding. Therefore, it is more profitable, according to Marxists, to sell bad news stories that have this 'news values' that have hardly been fact-checked due to the costly nature of it.

In the past year, Facebook has been criticised by having associations with fake news websites. For example, the Las Vegas shooting earlier this year showed how Facebook, as well as Google, had displayed false reports on what had happened, according to Forbes⁴. On Facebook, stories from right-wing news sites such as Gateway Pundit were prominent, with them falsely identifying the suspected shooter and his motivations. This became a spiral; Facebook's searches for the name

⁴ 'Facebook and Google Still Have A 'Fake News' Problem, Las Vegas Shooting Reveals' Forbes (2017)

of the misidentified suspect led to more fake news reports, and these searches increased once the suspect became the “Trending Topic”, leading to more fake reports. As a result of these fake news spirals, users pressured the social network to introduce tools to reduce and eventually stop the spread of fake news. Now, media organisations are spending a lot of money fact-checking information. For example, FactCheck.org is working with Facebook to help identify and label viral fake news stories. They provide support for users such as advising them on how to spot fake news and by providing a list of websites that have published fake articles. This is important because 72% of my respondents have come across fake news before (that they know of), with the highest frequency being once a month (see Appendices A.3 and A.4). Shockingly, 30% of participants agreed to reading a news story and believing it even with the possibility of it being fake (see Appendix A.5), which shows the importance of knowing how to spot fake news.

As well as this, a recent BBC News article claimed that they’re going to help students to identify fake news. The project is targeted at secondary school and sixth form pupils across 1,000 schools and they will be mentored in class and online to help them spot the false information⁵. This was sparked after a study at the University of Salford that investigated how well children can spot fake news. The study found that although the pupils knew what the term meant, they couldn’t always distinguish between fake and real stories. These findings were consistent with my research as I found that 98% of respondents knew what the term meant (to some extent) (see Appendix A.2). As well as these consistent findings, there was another parallel. The University of Salford study found that most children felt that big

5 ‘BBC to help students identify “fake news” BBC News (2017)

news brands, like the BBC, were the most trustworthy news companies, which is similar to my findings as 60% of respondents found the BBC as the most reliable source of news (see Appendix

clicks and ultimately the most money. Although more political sociologists would see in terms of swaying political ideologies to encourage people to think in a certain way.



Therefore, we need to reimagine the mass media (including social media, internet companies and TV/radio news) in order to reduce and possibly irradiate fake news. Companies such as Facebook, the internet’s most popular news source but with the biggest fake news problem that stretches globally, needs to be properly checked to stop this issue. This is becoming more important with not only Facebook, but Google as well, having taken over 50% of all digital and mobile net ad revenue worldwide⁶.

Although, a study by Marchi (2012) found that young people preferred opinionated rather than objective news, desiring a more authentic rendition of professional journalism. This shows that although sociologists should advocate for less fake news in the media through understanding why fake news is out there in the first place, this shouldn’t necessarily mean that journalism becomes just fact-based; opinions still do matter (they just need to be honest and truthful).

All in all, without this understanding, the future of society is put into question. Higher levels of fake news in the media could lead to increased marginalisation and political polarisation. As the EU’s Digital Commissioner Mariya Gabriel said, “fake news is a disease that European society needs to be vaccinated against”⁷. Although, my findings show how 96% of participants agree that fake news is dangerous (see Appendix A.7), however 68% of them do not think it’s easily resolvable (see Appendix A.8).

6 Digital Content Next (2017)

7 ‘Gabriel leading Commission effort against fake news “disease” Euractiv (2017)

A.6) This study, and the BBC’s plans for the future, show how important sociologists are in digital research and analysis. If people stop believing that everything they read in the news is true, then they’ll stop trusting the media entirely and stop wanting to know what’s going on in the world. Therefore, with the understanding that sociologists provide, we can understand the sociological reasonings behind why people publish fake news, and how to know what stories are real and what are fake in order to trust the media. For example, Marxists would see it in terms of the profit motive, thereby posting the most sensationalised and dramatic stories to get the most

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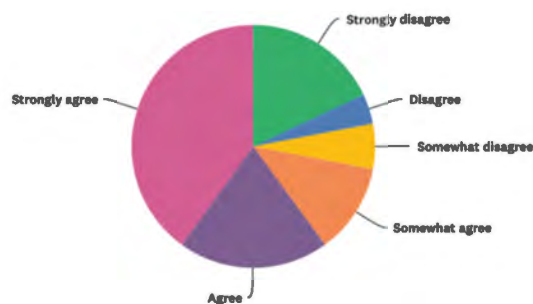
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Appendix A: Findings from a primary research study I conducted

These findings represent the results of a questionnaire sent out to students and staff of The Sydney Russell School. The sample size was 50.

A.1: I use social media such as Facebook and Twitter daily

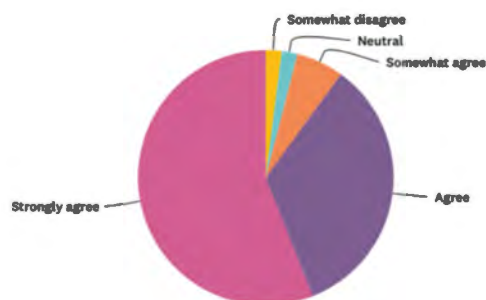
Answered: 50 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly disagree	18.00%	9
Disagree	4.00%	2
Somewhat disagree	6.00%	3
Neutral	0.00%	0
Somewhat agree	12.00%	6
Agree	20.00%	10
Strongly agree	40.00%	20
TOTAL		50

A.2: I'm familiar with the term 'fake news'

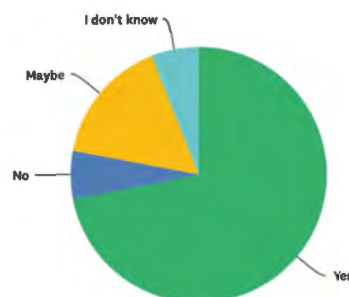
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Somewhat disagree	2.00%	1
Neutral	2.00%	1
Somewhat agree	6.00%	3
Agree	34.00%	17
Strongly agree	56.00%	28
TOTAL		50

A.3: Have you come across 'obvious' fake news before? (i.e. news displayed as real but you could tell it's fake)

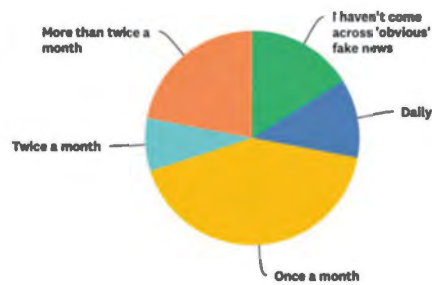
Answered: 50 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	72.00%	36
No	6.00%	3
Maybe	16.00%	8
I don't know	6.00%	3
TOTAL		50

A.4: If so, how frequently has this happened?

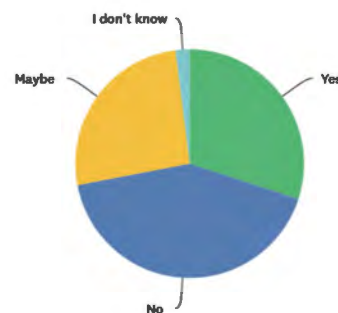
Answered: 50 Skipped:0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I haven't come across 'obvious' fake news	16.00%	8
Daily	12.00%	6
Once a month	42.00%	21
Twice a month	8.00%	4
More than twice a month	22.00%	11
TOTAL		50

A.5: Do you feel like you've read a news story and it may have been fake but you still believe it?

Answered: 50 Skipped:0

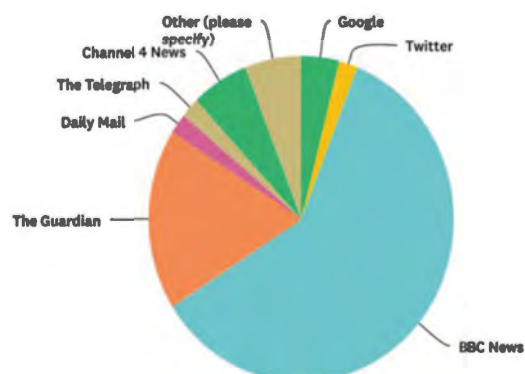


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	30.00%	15
No	42.00%	21
Maybe	26.00%	13
I don't know	2.00%	1
TOTAL		50

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Google	4.00%	2
Facebook	0.00%	0
Twitter	2.00%	1
BBC News	60.00%	30
The Guardian	18.00%	9
The Independent	0.00%	0
Daily Mail	2.00%	1
The Telegraph	2.00%	1
Daily Mirror	0.00%	0
The Sun	0.00%	0
Channel 4 News	6.00%	3
Huffington Post	0.00%	0
The New York Times	0.00%	0
Evening Standard	0.00%	0
Vice News	0.00%	0
Yahoo!	0.00%	0
CNN	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	6.00%	3
TOTAL		50

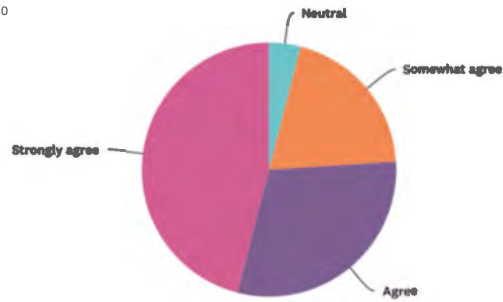
A.6: Who do you feel are the most reliable source of news?

Answered: 50 Skipped:0



A.7: Fake news is dangerous. : Agree/disagree

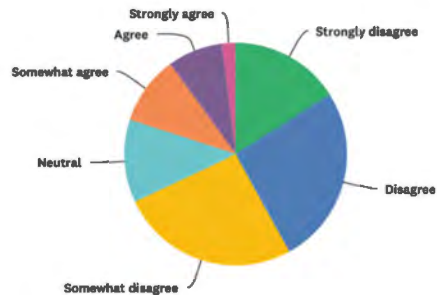
Answered: 50 Skipped:0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly disagree	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%
Somewhat disagree	0.00%
Neutral	4.00%
Somewhat agree	20.00%
Agree	30.00%
Strongly agree	46.00%
TOTAL	50

A.8: Fake news is easily resolvable. : Agree/disagree

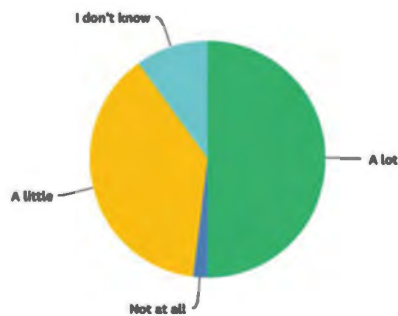
Answered: 50 Skipped:0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly disagree	16.00%
Disagree	26.00%
Somewhat disagree	26.00%
Neutral	12.00%
Somewhat agree	10.00%
Agree	8.00%
Strongly agree	2.00%
TOTAL	50

A.9: How much do you think Donald Trump has influenced the usage of fake news?

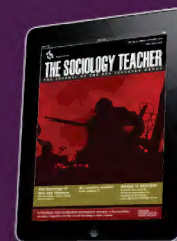
Answered: 50 Skipped:0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
A lot	50.00%
Not at all	2.00%
A little	38.00%
I don't know	10.00%
TOTAL	50



BSA Teaching Group COMPETITION



NATIONAL A LEVEL SOCIOLOGY COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS!

WIN AN IPAD MINI!

We look forward to reading your entries!

If your students are aged 16-19 and can do a great sociology research project, they could win a fabulous **Apple iPad Mini** as well as **£500** for your school!

The BSA runs an annual competition for the best essay on a sociological research project looking at important questions for our society. This is a wonderful way for your national subject body to recognise the excellent teaching and learning that is going on in schools.

Using a range of sociological arguments, to what extent does society have a responsibility towards those who are vulnerable?

This year's question can encompass a vast range of areas of enquiry for students and sits well alongside the curriculum topics. How would you answer it? Encourage your students to work through the question and come up with their own answers.

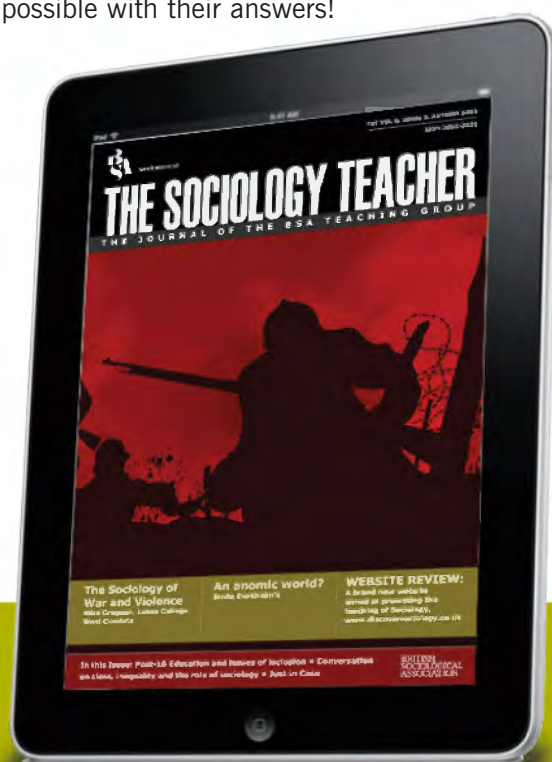
Entries are expected to refer to results obtained from their own primary method of research using a suitable sample. This could be an observation, an interview, a questionnaire based study.

The closing date for entries is Friday, 14 December 2018, 5pm so there's lots of time to plan your research project and get your submission in!

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The British Sociological Association is the largest sociological network in the UK and is the public face of sociology in Britain. Its primary objective is to promote sociology.

Our National A Level Competition, is open to anyone currently studying at A Level, A/S level, Scottish Higher Level or equivalent post-16 qualification in Sociology and we encourage students to be as creative as possible with their answers!





We Are All Flags in the Bunting!

By Sarah McLaughlin

Access to Higher Education lecturer at
Weston College, Weston-super-Mare

Every year when I introduce sociology to my new students, the objective of my first lesson is for students to be able to get to know each other and to comprehend the meaning of sociology as a subject of study. I teach adult students on an Access to Higher Education course, most of whom have never studied the subject before and so my aim is to evoke curiosity and enthusiasm for the course ahead, whilst settling their anxieties surrounding a new subject.

During my first lesson I talk to my new learners about how we are all

different and are shaped by these 'things' called structures. Students are tasked to write a list of how different structures influence their own lives, and in order to bring the lesson to a pinnacle, I bring out my annual bunting analogy activity.

I give students a range of coloured paper and a bunting flag template made of card to draw around and cut out. I ask them to decorate their flag with words, drawings and symbols to represent who they are (glitter glue always goes down a treat!). They may include names of important family members and friends,

drawings of pets, music, hobbies, food they like, role models, famous people they like, films which have made an impression on them, their career aspirations or degree choices, etc., etc.

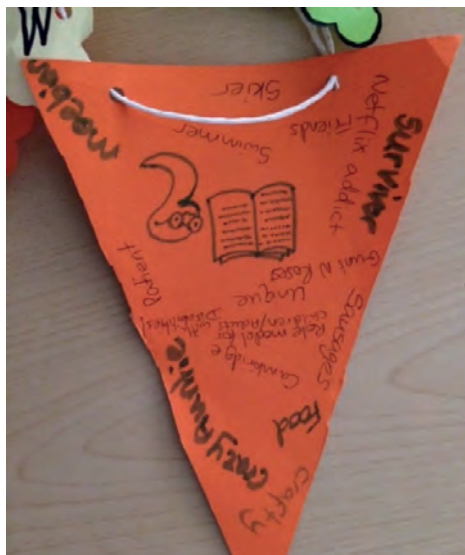
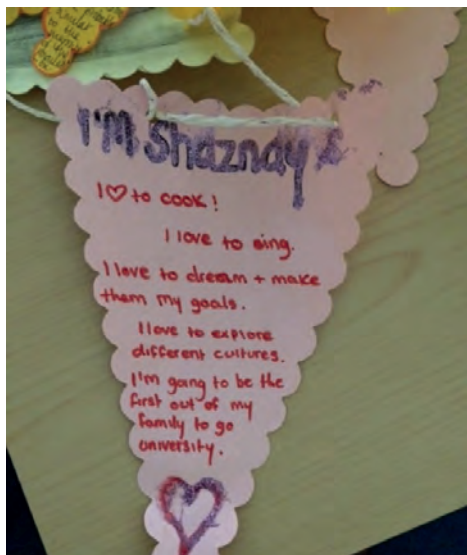
The activity is an effective ice breaker, the students start the 'getting to know you' process and I also get to learn about my new cohort. Often the content of the bunting helps me to identify any anxieties or previous experiences which may impact upon their confidence, or factors which may influence their progress, such as whether they have

different backgrounds and are different genders, ethnicities, sexualities, and have different identities, but together we make up a mini society – our sociology class – and ask students to discuss with each other how this may be an analogy of society, and an opportunity to embed British values!

I then task students to hang our class bunting up, and this becomes a symbol of our class identity – who we are. I also feel that the students make their own stamp on the classroom and hope that this helps them to feel part of the class and feel welcomed into the room next lesson. I repeat this task for all four of my different sociology groups and the class becomes decorated in bunting and the learning environment becomes more colourful and student-led. At the end of the year before my students leave I take the bunting down and hand back the flags to each person to read and we discuss how they have changed and what they have learnt this year. They take the flag away with them and I ask them to remember that sociology is a subject which is relevant to any occupation they may go into. Some students throw theirs in the bin, but many tell me they will stick it to the inside of their folders when they progress to university or tape it to their fridge or wall at home. I hope they do.

A vertical illustration of a globe surrounded by a city skyline. The globe is the central focus, showing continents and oceans. Above it, a large yellow sun or moon is visible, along with a hot air balloon and a rocket. The sky is filled with stars and various icons like a satellite and a cloud. Below the globe, there are several charts and graphs, including a bar chart and a pie chart, suggesting a focus on data and statistics. The overall style is a mix of realism and conceptual art.









Visions in monochrome:

Teaching Resource for Families and Households

Article summary to be used in the classroom by Heidi Bickis a sociologist who teaches at a college in the West Midlands

One of the challenges of teaching sociology is to make students aware of the living nature of the discipline, that is, the fact that the concepts and theories they're learning come from somewhere, a book, an article, a research study. Moreover, these concepts and theories were developed, examined, and critiqued by real human sociologists who were and are investigating social life. When there is a lot of content to cover, and students and teachers alike become very focused on ensuring good exam results, the aliveness of the discipline risks getting lost, and the names, concepts, and studies become simply a list of things to remember. I've been thinking about how to engage students more directly with sociological research, while still recognizing the real worries they have about achieving on their exams. One idea I've had is to use summaries of relevant journal articles as opportunities for reflection and discussion in order to help ground the arguments and theories they're trying to understand. Below is a summary of Carol Smart and Beccy Shipman's 2004 article, 'Visions in monochrome: families, marriage and the individualization thesis' published in *The British Journal of Sociology*. Carol Smart is one of the key sociologists associated with the sociology of personal life, a recent addition to the Families and Household topic in the AQA specification. Smart is

students and is intended as a resource to be used during lessons or for homework to prompt a discussion about contemporary theories of the family. It also can be used to discuss research methods and the effects of globalisation on family life.

Article Summary

Visions in monochrome:
Families, marriage and the
individualization thesis
Carol Smart and Beccy Shipman
British Journal of Sociology, 2004,
vol 55, 4: 491-509

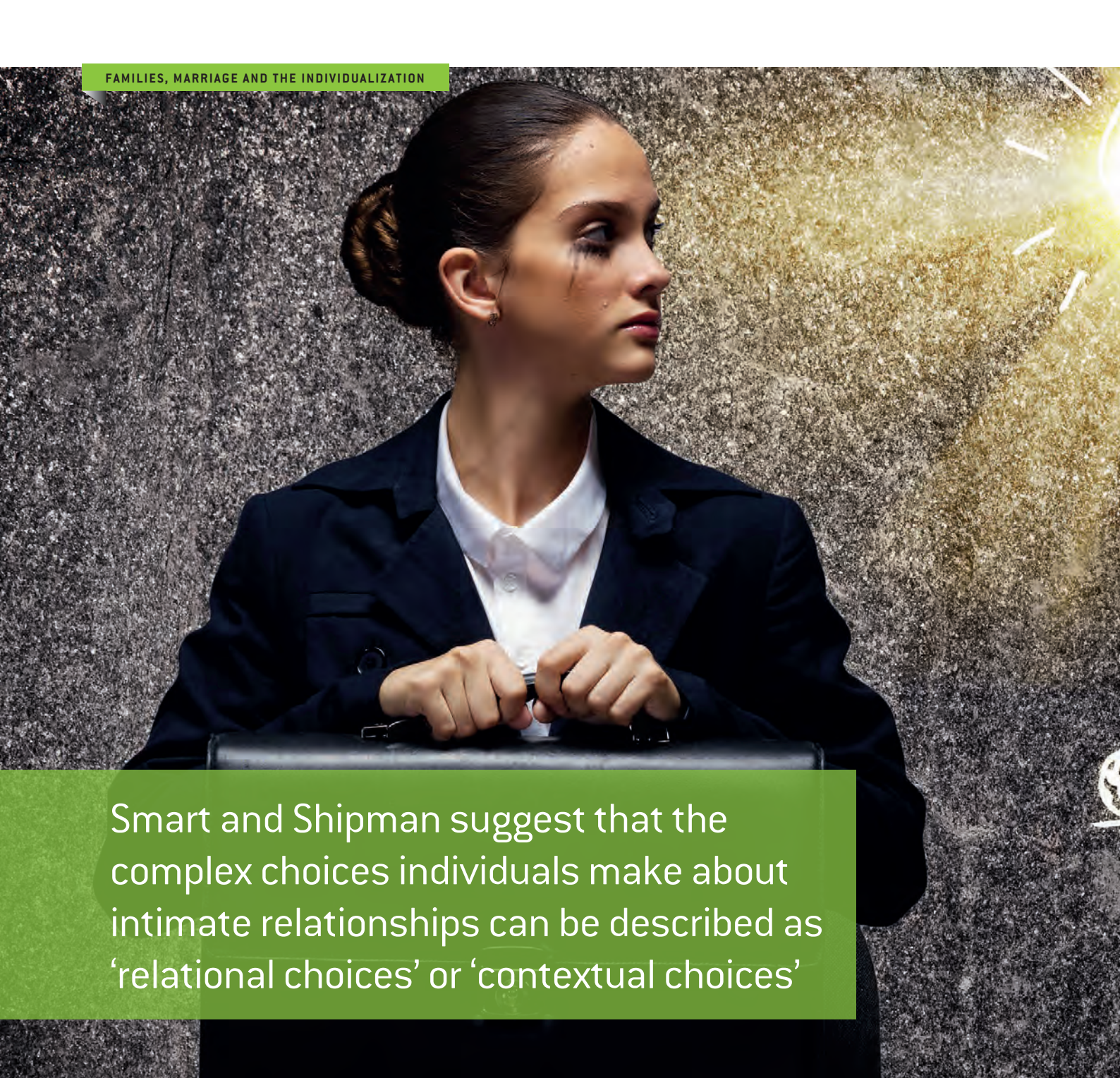
Imagine your life in the next ten to twenty years. Do you think you'll get married? Or will you choose to live with your partner without being married? At the moment, do you feel like you will make these choices freely? In other words, will you follow your own desires or will you consider the views of your mom or dad, grandparents, friends, or siblings? Do you think religion or culture will influence your decision? These are the kinds of questions at the centre of debates among sociologists studying contemporary family life. Two British sociologists, Carol Smart and Beccy Shipman, consider these questions in an article titled 'Visions in monochrome: families, marriage and the individualization thesis.'

They argue that family, religion, and culture play a key role in decisions people make about their intimate relationships (i.e. dating, marriage, and cohabitation). Their view

Family, religion, and culture play a key role in decisions people make about their intimate relationships.

also critical of the late modernist and postmodernist analyses of family life, another part of the specification. Although Smart and Shipman don't explicitly discuss the sociology of personal life in this article, their critique of the individualization thesis provides some insight into the former approach. The summary is aimed at

counters what is known as the individualization thesis, a perspective that has become dominant in contemporary analyses of family life (Smart and Shipman, 2004). The individualization thesis is used to describe arguments that suggest that individuals have greater freedom to make choices today than in the past because



Smart and Shipman suggest that the complex choices individuals make about intimate relationships can be described as ‘relational choices’ or ‘contextual choices’

traditional values and family relationships are no longer as influential. This thesis is evident in the work of sociologists such as Anthony Giddens, Ulrich Beck, and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim. For example, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim argue that today, individuals make choices about marriage and relationships based on love (Smart and Shipman, 2004). In other words, we are free to marry or live with someone we love rather than being expected or required to consider our family's wishes or follow traditional social expectations.

In the article, Smart and Shipman demonstrate what they see as key problems with the individualization thesis. To do so, they discuss qualitative interview data they collected with members of transnational families in Yorkshire. By

transnational they mean ‘individuals who had lived in Britain for at least five years’ but who also had close relatives in another country (2004, p. 494). Interviewees were selected from three different minority ethnic communities: Indian, Pakistani, and Irish. Their sample included 69 people: 28 men and 41 women, ranging from 16 to 84 years old. These respondents made up 46 different families and, in many cases, Smart and Shipman were able to interview two generations within one family. One goal of the interviews was to learn how the interviewees' values informed their experiences of family life, including decisions around marriage.

Smart and Shipman found that family relations and cultural traditions played an important role in the interviewees' decisions about marriage. In other words,

the individuals interviewed did not make choices based solely on their own desires and wishes. Using the interview data, the authors suggest that choices about intimate relationships are best understood on a continuum. At one end of the continuum, obligation to family is very strong. This was evident among some of the Pakistani Muslim interviewees who had agreed to an arranged marriage. However, not all of the Pakistani Muslims interviewed had the same views about arranged marriage. Shameen, for example, said she would be flexible depending on what her children wanted, as long as they married within their faith. At the midpoint, choices are made within the context of family culture. In other words, individuals think carefully about what their family might want. One Irish respondent, Annie, had married an Irishman. Although she



had not planned to marry someone who was Irish, she was pleased it made her mother happy. At the other end of the continuum, there is a balance between tradition and individualization. Another respondent, Varun, explained that he was worried about his parents' reaction to his relationship with an Indian woman from a different religion. He was waiting to get married until after he had a good job so he could marry independently. He was trying to balance his own desires with those of his family.

Smart and Shipman suggest that the complex choices individuals make about intimate relationships can be described as 'relational choices' or 'contextual choices' (2004, p. 495). Relational choices refer to choices we make that also take into consideration our relationships with our families. That is, we think about how our choices will affect others. Contextual choices highlight how we make choices in the context of various family commitments and obligations. Rather than following our own desires, we consider our duties to our family and community. Thinking about choice in these ways emphasises

the contexts and relationships within which individuals make decisions about marriage, cohabitation, or even dating. As Smart and Shipman (2004) argue, the individualization thesis seems to suggest that individuals 'exist without parents, without kinship ties, and with concerns only for their own psychic well-being. The lives of the individuals we interviewed were far more complex and committed than this' (p. 503). For Smart and Shipman, the individualization thesis overemphasizes the individual and, as a result, forgets that individuals are affected by their societies, communities, and families. In addition, the authors argue that the individualization thesis also fails to consider how ethnicity, as well as class, gender, and sexuality, can affect the kinds of choices individuals make.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

1. How does Smart and Shipman's article help us think about contemporary family life? In other words, what issues do they ask us to consider? Why are these issues important for

our understanding of family life in contemporary society?

2. Reflect on your own life-choices. How much do you think your family influences the choices you make? Would you choose a partner who was from a different religion or ethnic background? Why?
3. Consider other choices we make, for example, going to college, university, friends, and so on. Choose one example and discuss the extent to which this choice is individual, relational, or contextual.
4. Smart and Shipman emphasise the role ethnicity plays in choices about intimate relationships. What other factors might affect an individual's choices about dating or marriage? In what way?
5. Why do you think Smart and Shipman collected qualitative data through interviews for their study? What might be a limitation of this method?

I have noticed that my classroom can sometimes be a battleground in the war against far right extremism which is becoming ever more prevalent in the UK and requires a considered, focused response in order to educate our young people.

Challenging the Far Right in the Classroom – The New Frontier

Strategies to address the normalisation of far right ideas in open and tolerant ways by Zoe Hepden, teacher at a boys school in the north of England

Over the last few years, particularly but not exclusively since the 2016 referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union, the election of Donald Trump and the resurgence of fascism as a political force around the world, I have noticed an interesting and at times very worrying shift in my classroom. There has been a shift in the world view of some of the young people I teach, a change in how some pupils perceive and articulate the limits of what it is acceptable to say, a subtle closing of the epistemological gap between fact and opinion. I have noticed that my classroom can sometimes be a battleground in the war against far right extremism which is becoming ever more prevalent in the UK and requires a considered,

focused response in order to educate our young people about it and protect them from the dangers of uncritically buying into its narrative. Challenging the creeping normalisation of far right ideas is without doubt the new frontier in the classroom and at my school we are developing a cross-curricular programme of study and a whole school approach to addressing any potential risk to the pupils.

Identifying the problem

I teach in a fantastic boys' grammar school where the pupils are, like young people everywhere, wonderfully curious and keen to discuss ideas. They love to challenge and be challenged, and in our school there is a climate of open debate,

Challenging the creeping normalisation of far right ideas is without doubt the new frontier in the classroom and at my school.

discussion, critical thinking and empathy. Despite this, and despite the support of an excellent curriculum, pastoral team and supportive, creative senior management, I am concerned that these curious young minds are being exposed to far right ideas that were previously on the fringes but which now have entered mainstream debate. This can manifest in the classroom for example as railing against 'political correctness'; a misunderstanding of free speech as the right to be offensive without any accountability or responsibility to the other; toxic masculinity including the claim that the gender pay gap doesn't exist, that feminists hate men and want to take their power away, that female rape victims are somehow to be held responsible for the violence perpetrated against them, that women falsely accusing men of rape is a bigger problem than rape and sexual assault; that being gay or transgender is a lifestyle choice; the questioning of historical or scientific fact as 'fake news' or just belief or opinion; that there is a natural hierarchy of wealth and power and that poor people, the socially and economically excluded or those on benefits are somehow weaker, less deserving or lazy; refusing to accept that racism, Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism are structural as well as individual. These claims are being made repeatedly and with conviction across all year groups, which has led us to recognise enough patterns to look at where it is coming from and although teenage naivety plays a part, some pupils are buying into a political narrative that can be dangerous.

I am fully aware that many of these issues have long been the subject of debate in schools, but as mainstream debate is moving to the right, so is the virulence of opposition from some pupils to, for example, gender equality. I understand that young people tend to be rebellious and inquisitive. However, it is all too easy to put what we may hear in the classroom down to these tendencies and fail to challenge what is being said in any meaningful way, perhaps seeing it as a behaviour issue rather than looking at where these ideas might be coming from. It is becoming clear that the reality of young people's vulnerability to extremist ideas is deeper and more pervasive than this and can be easily overlooked. This

goes beyond the government's problematic Prevent strategy which seems to have encouraged the focus in schools primarily to be on the vulnerability of young Muslims to extremism. For example, it would be very easy, working in a boys' school, to dismiss particularly the sexism and misogyny as

to a world of ideas which wishes to do them, and all of us, harm.

Recognising the problem

Because they are young my students are vulnerable. Because so much of their life is spent online they are exposed to vast amounts of information and content from pornography to fake news to clickbait to gaming to YouTube commentary on the



only happening 'because there are no girls to shut them down'. But this view does a disservice to both boys and girls. It is not fair or correct to assume that without the influence of girls in the classroom, boys are sexist by default. There are plenty of boys I teach who are not sexist and active in shutting down sexism and there are many who identify as feminist. However exploring where some of these views are coming from has given us an insight into how young people who hold these views and are left unchallenged may look for affirmation online and expose themselves

games they play. It is a world beyond my understanding: I have no idea what they mean as they shout 'Battle Royale' when they do well in class and all fall about laughing. Fortnite the free online game is only the latest in a series of internet crazes and although this is wonderful in so many ways, the blurring of truth and fiction, irony and sincerity which is so often the teenage way has now seeped into the social and political because all of this is being performed online in a world without regulation. As teachers we owe it to these young minds to try to understand their online world in order that

we can keep them safe from the normalising of it's darker elements.

It is a start to discuss pictures of the new Nazis in Charlottesville, USA holding tiki torches with twisted hateful expressions on their faces, or British far right extremists at demonstrations in London who claim to be patriots whilst throwing Nazi salutes. However, I have found that this does not

'incel' 4-Chan.¹ The far right is becoming increasingly adept at talking to young people in their own language, weaponizing irony online through the use of memes and GIFs, or through the 'funny' (as some young people see it) speeches and writings of the 'alt-right'.² The American White Nationalist Richard Spencer, for example, led a fascist salute to Donald Trump which went viral online, and he claimed it was

advances in social economic and political life of minority groups for rights, equality and acceptance by blaming them for being offended by something that was 'just a bit of fun'. This can appear to young people to be an exciting, subversive challenge to the status quo when it is in fact calculated to draw them into what is in fact a very conservative and regressive mind set. The real challenge here is to expose the far right's lie that it is a critical, enlightened alternative to the mainstream. It is very important to show our young people that hate speech is most definitely not free speech³ and to do so whilst giving them an accepting and tolerant space to discuss these issues.

The 'alt right' pundit Milo Yiannopoulos is a current hit with many young people—ironically of course, in the first instance; they often watch his content to laugh at him, to see what the fuss is about. However, the more Yiannopoulos they watch on YouTube, the more of his books they buy, the more it legitimises and normalises his misogynistic, anti-Semitic ideas. The British far right extremist Stephen Yaxley-Lennon ('Tommy Robinson') is also of current interest and young people watch his 'funny' speeches, failing to recognise the fact that Yaxley-Lennon is the latest frontier in the campaign by Steve Bannon and his far right associates along with the Arron Banks/UKIP campaign to normalise the anti-immigration, protectionist-nationalist language and ideas of the far right in Western liberal democracies and give the far right (in the case of Bannon ethno-nationalism in particular) political legitimacy. The success of these campaigns has become clear: one of the reasons UKIP is no longer a political force is because the major parties have absorbed their policy ideas believing them to be vote winners. A further issue here is through the damaging work of some academics - who many students automatically give legitimacy to because they are academics - for instance Jordan Peterson, who specialises in naturalising and rationalising the patriarchal social order. Peterson's claim that gender isn't a social construct is ultimately extremely damaging to the mental health of vulnerable young men and women.⁴

Although exposure to these ideas is not necessarily a problem per se, it is their normalisation in the media and the unlimited and uncritical access that young people have to them that is of concern. When these ideas are reinforcing prejudices such as sexism or anti-Semitism in the school environment then we have a problem. Unless we engage young people openly by discussing, evaluating and criticising these phenomena safely in class, the ideas at best could develop into a hardened mindset by the time they



It is all too easy to put what we may hear in the classroom down to these tendencies and fail to challenge what is being said in any meaningful way

go far enough in tackling what I see in a small number of the young people I teach. The pupils look at these images and are repulsed, or laugh, or want to know why; but ultimately, they are not making the link between these images and their own thinking or behaviour. For instance, they do not recognise that what they may be engaging with online can negatively influence how they see the world. We now know that a major recruiting ground in the USA and increasingly in the UK for far right extremism is anti-feminist web content, for example the anti-feminist, anti-LGBTQ,

exuberant irony rather than serious. This is dangerous for two reasons; first, modelling fascist salutes to young people as funny is unacceptable (and why would anyone do this unless they actually mean it – is there really a difference between an 'ironic' and a 'serious' Nazi salute?) and second, Spencer is using the 'I am free to do, think and say what I like' free speech argument of the far right which on the one hand is part of the far right trope of challenging the norms of social acceptability with anti-political correctness and on the other hand delegitimizes and undermines the

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
 SEGREGATION
 RACE RELATIONS
 DUE PROCESS
 BLACK LIVES MATTER
 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE
 DISCRIMINATION
 PRIVILEGE? GUILT
 DIVERSITY
 VICTIM? AGGRESSOR
 INTEGRATION
 CIVILITY & RESPECT
 RACISM
 HATE? JUSTICE?
 MATTER
 WRONG
 RACISM
 ORDER

Our approach has already had a very positive effect across the curriculum. The year group we have been focusing on in PSHE is now discussing issues such as transphobia in other subjects in sensitive, respectful, critical and open ways.

leave school or at worst their vulnerability online will be exploited by those who wish to recruit them. In order to address any potential future problems, at school we are taking a holistic approach which challenges rigid, binary constructions of identity, toxic masculinity, 'alt-right' narratives and 'anti-ipc' misunderstandings of free speech whilst promoting empathy, tolerance, diversity and inclusion.

Addressing the problem

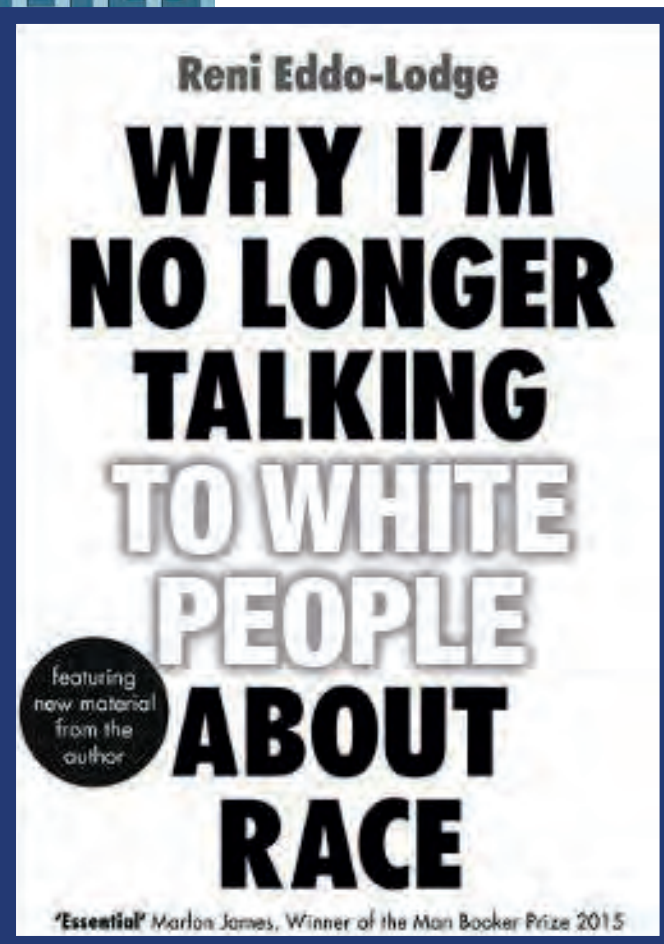
In order to address this complex issue, we are taking a whole school holistic approach. First, we are training staff in understanding toxic masculinity and its' relationship to sexism, misogyny, anti-feminism, homophobia and transphobia. We are also learning to recognise how this could manifest in the classroom and if it does how to challenge it safely and

respectfully, especially around the idea that gender equality isn't about undermining men. We are exploring the relationship these issues have to behaviour and safeguarding especially online safety and the impact that the influence of sexism, homophobia, racism, transphobia and normalised far right language and thinking could have on students and teachers.

Second, we are challenging potential sexism, misogyny and toxic masculinity by teaching the boys about 'the Man Box', showing the Ted talk 'A Call to Men' by Tony Porter in assemblies.⁵ This gives the boys a conceptual framework from which to criticise their own or others' toxic masculinity in an empathetic, non-

accusatory way. We are also learning how to recognise and challenge our own privileged viewpoints and those of the pupils.

Third, we are establishing a cross-curricular working group where we will explore how to engage pupils in these issues in a positive and critical way and share good practice in promoting tolerance and diversity. This group will consider the legacy of the work we are doing, we will focus on how to ensure that what we are teaching isn't just confined to the classroom. For example we are teaching the boys to challenge anything they hear outside the classroom by setting challenges for them to confront anything they hear or see in an open,



tolerant and non-threatening way - not just 'you're a sexist' etc, but 'what do you mean by that'? We run a PSHE programme in year 9 that specifically challenges sexism, homophobia, transphobia and toxic masculinity, including rape culture and the risks of pornography.

We are focusing on modelling openness, respectful boundaries, tolerance and empathy in the classroom. This has already had a very positive effect across the curriculum, the year group we have been focusing on in PSHE is now discussing issues such as transphobia in other subjects in sensitive, respectful, critical and open ways.

A further way to address these issues is through the school's History & Politics

society where we are running a two-year project on political concepts. This is managed by staff but run by the sixth form students and is being delivered across each key stage. It explores political concepts that are under threat from the far right such as free speech, identity and rights. This involves a programme of external speakers, events, workshops and a reading group where we discuss challenging contemporary texts such as Reni Eddo-Lodge's book *Why I am no Longer Talking to White People About Race* alongside traditional heavy hitters like Hobbes, Locke and Nietzsche. The aim is to foster grey-area, dialectical critique rather than rigid and binary thought. For instance, rather than learning about 'British values' we explore the question 'what does it mean to be British' through the intersections of

history, economy, class, geo-politics and philosophy. The students will then write critical articles about the concepts they have studied.

Ultimately if we wish to challenge any potential threat to our young people from the far right we need to find ways to foster meaningful inclusion, critical inquiry and dialogue in safe tolerant classrooms. We need to win the war rather than fight battles and I am very keen to develop strategies that will keep our children safe so they can become thoughtful, engaged, compassionate citizens. I would be very interested to hear how other schools are approaching these issues.

If you would like to tell The Sociology Teacher about your experiences in the classroom with far right extremism or about other subjects, please email us at alison.danforth@britsoc.org.uk

1. <http://uk.businessinsider.com/right-wing-militias-recruit-young-soldiers-on-4chan-2017-5?r=US&IR=T>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/may/23/alt-right-online-humor-as-a-weapon-facism>
3. <http://blogs.bath.ac.uk/iprblog/2017/04/03/brexit-and-trump-on-racism-the-far-right-and-violence/>
4. <https://www.vox.com/conversations/2018/6/6/17409144/jordan-peterson-12-rules-for-life-feminism-philosophy>
5. https://www.ted.com/talks/tony_porter_a_call_to_men

Changing Topics for A Level Sociology

**An exploration of choosing optional
teaching topics by Helen Berriman,
Durham Sixth Form Centre**


A few years ago, I took the decision to change my optional A level teaching topic. The latest round of education reform brought changes to the compulsory topics. But now that the new A Level is more established, what topics are optional and what are the pros and cons?

A social media poll of sociology teachers showed that the two main reasons

teachers would be likely to change topic are to improve student engagement and to increase achievement. Exam board support and lack of resources were the least likely to influence teachers' reasons to change. This suggests that teachers are more concerned with teaching lively, engaging and accessible Sociology to a typical 16 to 19 year old, which will ultimately lead to better student outcomes. Teachers are willing to switch

to new topics even if it means planning from scratch and learning new material themselves. The risk for teachers is knowing whether or not the switch to a new topic will improve achievement and be worth the extra time spent planning the new teaching resources.

A few years ago I switched from teaching Families and Households to Culture and Identity. I found it was easier to



The risk for teachers is knowing whether or not the switch to a new topic will improve achievement and be worth the extra time spent planning the new teaching resources.



engage my students with contemporary material and that the topic helped their core understanding of sociology. For example, when teaching identity it involves covering the main Social Action approaches before looking at different aspects that shape an individual's identity such as sexuality, gender and nationality. Many examples of celebrities can be used to explain points but it is the ability to link this to a student's own identity that makes this topic engaging for them. The main disadvantage for me when starting to teach this topic was that there were very few resources available to get ideas from; however this has changed over the years and there are now more available. Some of the concepts can also be quite

abstract. I find this when teaching globalisation, consumption and identity, and some of the exam questions tend to be overly wordy and need a lot of breaking down for students to access them. However, these challenges are emphasised in teaching to help students overcome them.

In an ideal world, teachers would be confident in all of these areas and choose the topics on the abilities and preferences of the students to help raise achievement. However, lack of time and resources often limits teachers to teaching the same topic they have taught the previous year. If you

do have the opportunity to change topics and there is a need too, it can lead to an improvement in achievement and retention and can be worth the extra effort. Even if it does not work, you can always change it back for the following year!

Results of the social media poll:
Teachers were asked: Apart from changes to the specification, what would be the TWO main reasons for changing topics taught?

1. Improve student achievement= 37%
2. Improve student engagement= 38%
3. Teacher interest/ specialism= 16%
4. More teaching resources available= 8%



Pros and Cons of some of the Sociology A Level Topics

<p>FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (+) one of the most popular topics and therefore lots of resources and support available (+) accessible material; all students have a family to relate to (-) lots of content for students remember 	<p>THE MEDIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (+) student engagement is high as they already know many of the examples (+) direct links with the Culture and Identity topic (-) some difficult terms for students, particularly in the ownership and control subsection (-) not as many resources available; but they are being developed
<p>HEALTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (+) contemporary topic, often in the news (-) lack of teaching resources available 	<p>GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (+) helps students to understand the core theme of globalisation (+) Links with Crime and Deviance (-) not as many resources available; but they are being developed (-) the political and economic focus can be difficult for some students to understand
<p>WORK, POVERTY AND WELFARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (+) students are engaged when covering the inequalities in the UK (-) the political and economic focus can be difficult for some students to understand 	<p>STRATIFICATION AND DIFFERENTIATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (-) the political and economic focus can be difficult for some students to understand (-) it is not as popular as the other topics, therefore, there are less teaching resources available
	<p>BELIEFS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (+) one of the most popular topics with lots of resources available (-) some students report a lack of engagement with this topic, but this can be based on individual preferences

NB: while the list above is mainly focused on AQA topics, there is some correspondence to all the exam boards that offer Sociology A Level.

**RESOURCE FOR EDUCATION TOPIC: BY PATRICK ROBINSON, SOCIOLOGY
TEACHER AT CADBURY SIXTH FORM COLLEGE IN BIRMINGHAM**

SUMMERHILL SCHOOL DOCUMENTARY

One way to engage students who are studying the Education topic is to share a documentary that represents the liberal philosophy towards education. Although a rather extreme example, the documentary that focuses on Summerhill School in Suffolk: "Summerhill at 70", can be a way to challenge students thinking about the purpose of education. It is available on Youtube at this address:

[https://www.youtube.com
watch?v=gfYqpDmJS3k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfYqpDmJS3k)

2. What can mainstream education learn from the Summerhill school example?
Can state schools learn from their example?
How? How not?
3. What would sociological theories say about the way Summerhill school works:

Functionalism?
Marxism?
Feminism?
Labelling theory?



In the documentary, we see how the philosophy of student choice and student democracy operates. We see footage of lessons, parties, events and school meetings where matters of rules and discipline are settled. It can be a great resource to apply sociological theories of education, so I would recommend that you play this to a class that have already had a grounding in the main theories of education.

These are the discussion points I would focus on in lesson time, but use these as a starting point for your own worksheet/ note-taking pro-forma:

Questions

1. What is your reaction to the norms and values of Summerhill school?
Would you have liked to attend there?
Why? Why not?

4. Would these theories praise the way that Summerhill works or would they have objections/criticisms?

Extension task:

Read about Summerhill school from their website, and make summary notes regarding:

- School fees
- School History
- School policies
- Inspection Reports
- Where do/what do Summerhill students progress to?
- Where do they go when they leave?

<http://www.summerhillschool.co.uk/>





Self-Actualisation

desire to become the most that one can be

Esteem

respect, self-esteem, status, recognition

Love and belonging

friendship, intimacy, family, sense of connection

Safety

personal security, employment, resources

Physiological needs

air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing



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Self-actualisation in Sociology - the Peak of My Day!

By Sarah McLaughlin,
Access to Higher
Education Lecturer
at Weston College,
Weston-super-Mare

During my PGCE year Maslow's hierarchy of needs was a prevalent theory applied to challenge the considerations we had made when planning lessons and managing classroom behaviours. It made sense that students would not learn if their physiological needs were not met or they were being bullied, and that strategies to raise self-esteem would promote learning. The prepotent hierarchy made sense to me and I could easily identify barriers to learning or low self-esteem and consider steps to help foster an environment which enabled student's needs to be met. It was, however, difficult for me to comprehend and quantify the self-actualisation stratum of the triangle. Maybe if a student gained 100% on a test or was seen to be attending and engaging in lessons, they might be deemed as reaching self-actualisation, but it was hard to define and it seemed impossible to measure. During my first few years of teaching, however, I soon started to identify self-actualisation in more qualitative ways.

For 19 year old Tanya (name changed), sociology has helped her to look at wider society and the influence of the structures which bend and shape us. She is now able to view her world from a different perspective. For Tanya, self-actualisation was the moment when she declared that "sociology lessons make you 'deep' your life". Sociology made her reflect upon her life and what influences have shaped her, constrained her and influenced her without her even knowing. She started to see the

influence of different social structures and how these may be contributing factors to her not doing so well when she left school. Seeing students experience those lightbulb moments and identify how sociology is relevant to their lives, and not just a subject in which to gain a grade to help them progress to university, is that moment where the learner is at the self-actualisation stage. When a student identifies that their learning is relevant to their lives, that they recognise how much they have learnt and how this can empower them, I would consider this moment the peak of Maslow's hierarchy.

The crime and deviance module is a particular topic which students seem to enjoy and where they start looking at wider society's influence over deviance, and how functionalists identify social institutions as contributors to social stability. They start to identify different causes for social problems, and debate how to come up with a solution. When they reach the point in the topic where they can apply theories to a particular news story or case study of a crime and can suggest numerous social factors which have influenced the individual to commit a crime, they often become confident in their discussion and look for alternative explanations, where they previously may have

prejudged or given opinions which were unfounded.

I see learners using their learning to debate and justify the points they are making. Martha, age 34, sent me an email over the Easter break telling me to watch a particular programme on TV as it linked to social class and deviance, and told me how she is seeing sociology in films and TV programmes and that she is proud that she sees things through different perspectives. When students are thinking sociologically outside the classroom and want to tell me about it, I believe this to be a self-actualisation moment for the learner. A moment when they are at the peak of learning. When they are putting their learning into practice, and not just in the classroom, that is the moment of visible self-actualisation.

Rebecca (a mature student) was visibly at self-actualisation during a task whereby students were asked to produce a poster to represent Merton's Strain Theory. She depicted Merton's typology of deviance (the five responses) as different types of cars. Innovators were stolen cars, ritualists were old cars which were purchased legitimately but were cheaper and modest versions of the desired expensive cars. Rebellious cars were not cars at all, they were bikes powered with fairy dust. Rebecca had taken the theory and

recreated it to become her Car Theory of Deviance. She was engaging in the lesson, she understood the theory and she was confident enough to make it her own. She was in that self-actualisation stratum.

But what about the self-actualisation of myself, as teacher? There are times when I feel I am at the top of the pyramid: when I have had my morning coffee; there is good attendance in my class, and the students are engaging and hard at work; my marking is up to date and I take time to reflect on my teaching and remember why I came into it. When I believe I am good enough at my job (because I am sure we all doubt this sometimes), and I feel inspired to write an article, create a new resource or make some changes to lessons, this is when I feel I am at the top of the pyramid. There is, nevertheless, an extra layer to Maslow's hierarchy which I propose is necessary for us teachers to break through a layer entitled 'flourishing of other' for it is not until my students are flourishing that I feel I could reach that peak. It is the students who can make my day, (or break my day!) and it is not until my students are having those lightbulb moments or telling me they've had an epiphany moment and they "get it now" that I can feel self-actualised and proud.

References

Maslow, A. (1943) A Theory of Human Motivation. *Psychological Review*, 1943, Vol. 50 (4) pp. 370–396.





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