

THE SOCIOLOGY TEACHER

THE JOURNAL OF THE BSA TEACHING GROUP

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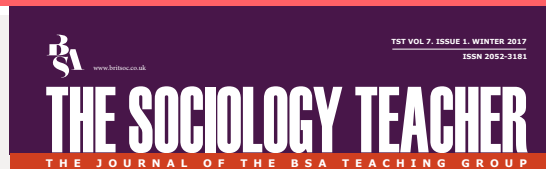
**The Role of an
Employment Personal
Tutor in Higher Education**
Article by Kavita Sohanta,
Coventry University

Crime and Deviance
"Hey! I got a social disease!"
Article by Patrick Robinson

Just in case
Book Review: Diane Reay on
"MisEducation".



Patrick Robinson



Happy Autumn/Winter Issue everyone.

Feeling flat out at work this term so, I thought I'd lighten this issue with the Sociologist limericks that I wrote on the bus to work today.

If you think you can do better, send some of your own in to my email and I can collate the best ones we can do. This could be a teacher competition to join the announcement of the BSA Student essay competition: *see page 31 in this issue.*

There was a bloke called Marx,
Who studied class for larks.
He saw the proletariat pains,
Who should lose all their chains
And the rich should pay more tarx.

There was a woman called Anne.
Who challenged the patriarchy of man.
She studied housework
And found there was no perk
For women who always carried the can.

There was a man called Sudhir,
Who studied a gang for seven year.
He got empathy
With a man called "J.T"
And even drank some of his beer.

There was a woman called Eileen.
Who studied what religion could mean.
She got to be roomies
With a group of Moonies
Who weren't a brainwashed team.

There was a bloke called Max.
Who said Marx had cracks.
He said there was status
That also did rate us
And party covered political backs.

There was a man called Emile,
Who said society made a good deal.
Marx said: "Well, that's news!"
That We all have shared values"
Emile said: "It depends how collective you feel".

All the best, Patrick Robinson".

Patrick Robinson
Patrick prs@cadcol.ac.uk
Co-editor of the
BSA Teacher Group Journal.

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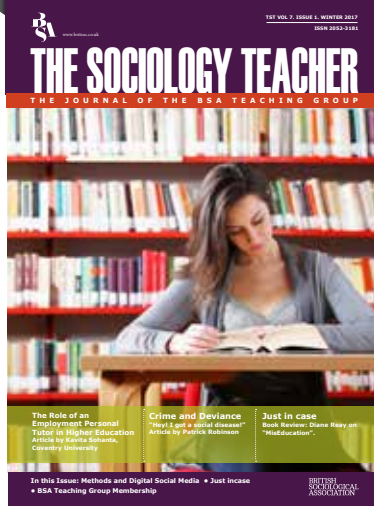
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If you're someone with an idea for something we could include in the journal, we'd be delighted to hear from you. Any aspect of teaching and learning in the Social Sciences can be suitable, but we'd be especially interested in material relating to GCSE and/or KS3, which are currently under-represented in the publication.

Articles, classroom resources or offers to provide regular features will all be considered, as will any other ideas for suitable copy. In the first instance please contact commissioning editor, prs@cadcol.ac.uk and we will pass your proposal to the editorial board.



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DEADLINES FOR 2017

Editorial and Advertising copy:
Next copy deadline 28th February 2018
Next issue March 2018.

THE SOCIOLOGY TEACHER
ISSN 2052-3181

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BSA Publications Ltd

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THREE SOCIOLOGY BOOK REVIEWS



CRIME AND DEVIANCE OVERVIEW.



JUST IN CASE



The BSA Teaching Group is a network of anyone keen to further the interests of sociology teaching from secondary to tertiary education.

The aim of the Group is to encourage and promote the teaching of the Social Sciences in Primary, Secondary, Further and Higher Education. The Group therefore provides opportunities for those teaching in Sociology to develop and share ideas and strategies for the promotion and delivery of the teaching of the Sociology. To this end, one of the main activities of the BSA Teaching Group is the dissemination of information relating to teaching materials and teaching methods. The Group is also active in promoting the interests of Sociology teachers to examination boards, academic bodies, governmental and political agencies and the wider public.

Members of the Group can be found in every sector of education, but the majority are teachers of Advanced Level Sociology. Members are encouraged to be active in the running of the Group, either nationally or through local activities.

Introduction: in the last issue of the BSA Sociology Teacher, Patrick Robinson, teacher at Cadbury College in Birmingham, outlined a summer reading task in which students found and reviewed a Sociology text of their choosing. In this article, he shares three examples of the book reviews he received from his students in September 2017. Students had three questions to answer:

Book Reviews

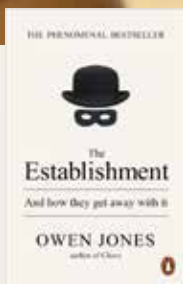
Three Sociology Book reviews by students.

1 Summarise the main arguments/evidence of the book/source. (200 words maximum). To help with this question, you can focus on the book's blurb (the description on the back cover of the book) and what is said on the first and last chapter of the book.

2 Which sections of the book/source were the most interesting or useful for you? (200 words maximum). Any particular statistics? A particular line/quotation? Why? Are there many notes you should keep that would link to exams next year? Where are they? Which exams are they useful for?

3 How would you evaluate the book/source? (200 words maximum). Consider the research methods concepts of validity, reliability, representativeness, ethics?

How might these apply to the book you've read? Was the author a writer that was bias free? Or did they have a particular point to make from their own personal beliefs or political opinions? Did you think the writer was "steering" you as the reader to agree with them? How would you challenge the conclusions of the book, perhaps from an alternative theory/alternative point of view?



Book review:
The Establishment
Owen Jones
Review by Soumaia Edbali, student at Cadbury College in Birmingham

This non-fiction book was written by the British political commentator Owen Jones and published in 2014. In this book the author explains and portrays in depth the relationship between elite networks at the top of British society, it also



L-R: Obadara Akinpelu, Soumaia Edbali and Saphira Maskin.

gives an insight into groups of unelected people "who rules the roost" as he explains and rule the mentalities of the population.

Jones also shows the difference of what Fairlie's 1950 definition of the Establishment means to that of his own. The author's definition of the Establishment is what links the people who presently run the British society and their shared interest in maintaining an ideology of what is politically possible, furthermore he also explains how today's Establishment is much more socially diverse and includes all sorts of people, such as:



"The media play a crucial role within Britain's Establishment. By focusing their fire at the bottom, often with coverage based on distortions, myths and outright lies, they deflect scrutinize from the wealthy and powerful elite at the top of society."



politicians, police force, bankers, business people, and journalist. Finally, another important point that the author makes is that the Establishment includes any figure who stands to benefit from the free hand that the free market ideology gives them (that of a neo-liberal capitalism), it's remarkable that you no longer have to be British to be part of the Establishment, as Owen Jones states, it's rather the shared interests that have become more important than shared backgrounds.

I found this book rich with essential quotes and resources for the sociology topic of inequality in the U.K. Some of the statistics are really interesting as they show the current political, economic and social situation in Britain. Here I will list the overview of the chapter and any quotes or statistics that I personally found useful.

Chapter 3 titled "Mediaocracy" explains the relationship between the British Press with politicians and the outriders (individuals with power) from previous chapters. Because wealthy people own much of the press, they tend to promote Establishment ideas and views. Here is a quote from the book that would summarize it "The media play a crucial role within Britain's Establishment. By focusing their

fire at the bottom, often with coverage based on distortions, myths and outright lies, they deflect scrutinize from the wealthy and powerful elite at the top of society." With this quote I would like to add this important statistic: **"just 25% press articles derived from information that wasn't provided from pre-packaged sources."**

Chapter 4 titled "the boys in blue" gives a detailed description of the role of British police force with the Establishment. It also discusses the various incident that the police were involved into, such as the Plebgate, the Hillsborough and many more, the author also highlights the complex relationship the police have with the media as well the politicians and how "Britain



"In the New Labour era, the threat of terrorism was used to justify the passing of laws that allowed the imposition of "control orders" on those suspected of terrorist activity but who had not been found guilty, and that extended powers for the legal interception of phone calls, letters and emails."

faces the prospect of police forces policing by consent of their shareholders rather than their communities." It's important to see how the role of the police has changed overtime, Owen Jones indeed shows that "In the New Labour era, the threat of terrorism was used to justify the

passing of laws that allowed the imposition of "control orders" on those suspected of terrorist activity but who had not been found guilty, and that extended powers for the legal interception of phone calls, letters and emails." Furthermore in this chapter the author shows how the

Establishment makes use of the police to progress on neglecting the fact they are themselves committing wrongdoings: "how the police exercise their authority reflects the imbalance of power in British society that the Establishment itself embodies, the police enforces a law that cracks down on the alleged misdemeanors of the poor, like possessing a small quantity of cannabis or committing benefit fraud, but which ignores, allows or facilitates the adverse behavior of those at the top such as tax avoidance or purely through free, plunging the economy into calamity." These are the following statistics: "since 1990, 1,500 people died following police contact." And "in 2013 only 7 out of every 1,000 white people were checked for possessions of drugs, 18 for every 1,000 Asian and 45 for every 1,000 black."

This book is well written and structured in different yet linked chapters. Each chapter begins by giving a simple as well as in depth overview of it, and this gives you a useful hint of what you will read.

"The Establishment" is a reflection of contemporary Britain and so it is a perfect source from which you can study and understand the current situation of Britain. It gives the real picture of who is part of

Tyler said “Things you own end up owning you” this is because we live in a capitalist society where as Postmodernists would say a consumer culture where we identify ourselves with what we buy.

the Establishment and what their beliefs are, and so this is a validity strength for this book, also the author in this book primarily uses lots of face to face interviews with different prominent individuals as well as statistics, which give a real picture of the topic being studied that make his book a mixture of Interpretivism and Positivism.

However, the only fragility of this book, is that the Author wasn't bias free, it gave the impression that he was driving you to agree with them, nonetheless this could be because his political opinions are firmer than depending who the reader is, and so I believe that if you are not really engaged in politics you would easily settle for whatever the writer was saying.

As for representativeness, Owen Jones aimed to represent the sample he used, of course it depended on the research topic (the Establishment), and it is for this reason that this book is depicting well the sample Owen Jones decided to use.

Ethically, Owen Jones has not deceived the sample nor as he participated in illegal activities, evidence to this is shown when he met Siddharth a City worker: “when I met

Siddharth in a Soho café, he is nervous about talking, so much so, he had considered getting me to sign a contract pledging to keep his real identity anonymous.” The author had therefore accepted to keep his identity anonymous and this can be seen as a strength to the ethical issues of this book.

Finally, I would recommend this book, especially to students who are studying politics and or sociology as it really gives a profound awareness of Britain's political history.



Sociology book report:
Fight Club
by Chuck Palahniuk
Review by Dara Akinpelu,
student at Cadbury College
in Birmingham

The book is about the character Tyler Durden who creates a fight club and can gain a sense of “real” power by fighting other men, the inner frustration they feel towards their job is allowed to be projected towards others in the club. However, Tyler also has terrifying plans of bringing an end to



Overall I think the book is good as it shows us the extreme side of the Marxist theory. Although it shows a bad representation of working class men; assuming they all hate their jobs and are all miserable it withholds a certain amount of truth as we do live in a capitalist world where most of us are materialistic, therefore find our identity in our possessions or even comfort in them.

the social state in a world where cancer supports groups are one of the only places people can feel warmth and get sympathy from others who suffer in life. Although his ideologies are mainly to do with anarchism the reason behind most of what he does are because of his extreme dislike to the capitalist society and the consumerism which is what mainly took over the narrator's life.

One part of the book that was prominent to me was when Tyler said "Things you own end up owning you" this is because we live in a capitalist society where as Postmodernists would say a consumer culture where we identify ourselves with what we buy. In a way its showing that the bourgeoisie have such enormous power over us that they products they sell to us is used as a form of control over us so we are enslaved to materialistic things by buying the latest products in order to have a sense of fulfilment. Another quote that links to this was Jack saying "That was not just a bunch of stuff that got destroyed, it was ME!" we realise that Jack had become trapped by the ways of consumerism as

he realises that he finds his identity in his possessions. Through our love for capitalist products and obsession to work in order to achieve the ideal lifestyle we are only helping the bourgeoisie to get richer and what also happens is what Marx calls 'opiate of the masses' where the proletariat are to suffer from working in their low paid and unsatisfactory jobs in hope of being rewarded later by the ideal lifestyle they wish to have. Lastly a feminist standpoint is very important in the book as there is a lack in presence of women and the book is dominated by men and this could reinforce the idea of a patriarchal society. Men are given some sort of escape from their jobs, even men in white collar jobs and women are not allowed in fight club, it may even support the idea that women are truly seen as passive and do not need some form of escape from jobs which may be seen as degrading for women such as being a housewife. On the other hand it may be seen as a positive because men are able to release their frustration towards each other rather than their wives absorbing their husband's anger and frustration at home

which is what Feminists criticise about the warm bath theory.

Overall I think the book is good as it shows us the extreme side of the Marxist theory. Although it shows a bad representation of working class men; assuming they all hate their jobs and are all miserable it withholds a certain amount of truth as we do live in a capitalist world where most of us are materialistic, therefore find our identity in our possessions or even comfort in them. It's valid in the sense that it shows us a clear and descriptive view of how the working-class men view themselves in a capitalist society, but it's not reliable. Ethically the ideologies are wrong as it promotes anarchism rather than communism. The need to destroy capitalist buildings as part of project mayhem reinforces the idea of murder which is highly immoral. I felt as though the author was biased from a feminist standpoint as the lack of females represented in this book reinforces the idea that women are passive and women don't feel boredom or are miserable in jobs such as being a housewife which Marxist feminist consider



This book will be very helpful for my sociology exams especially the gender topics when talking about how women are disadvantaged in the work place.

to be a job and women should be paid for it because they bring up these men who are the next generation of workers. Many areas in the book suggest that the author's political standpoint is that there should be a complete fall in the capitalist society, and this quote "It's only after we've lost everything that we're free to do anything" implies that once there's a collapse of consumerism and no class hierarchy are we free from the control of the bourgeoisie and are free to do what we really want.



A2 Sociology:
Summer reading task
Book choice: Living Dolls
The Return of Sexism by
Natasha Walter
Review by Saphira
Maskin, student at
Cadbury College,
Birmingham

This book looks at feminism within the 21st century and how we are backtracking with our feminist views as we move forward

by breaking the glass ceiling as more women are now in the world of work but there's still women working in places such as strip clubs for male pleasure. Natasha Walter explains how the word 'choice' is used often to cover the fact that things aren't seeming to change for women and Natasha says 'Feminism is all about choice, but at the moment the language of choice is used almost always in relation to those women and those women who choose to follow traditional patterns of behaviour' she also goes on to say 'Given our unequal society, it is much too early to make the assumption that the choices we see today are free.' In the blurb, Natasha mentions how the inequality we observe around us is told to us that it is due to 'innate biological differences,' which she then explored in the first chapter as neuroscientists concluded from their experiments that 'girls are biologically predisposed to prefer pink.'

I found it very interesting that researchers concluded from finding that women prefer reddish hues more than men

whereas a man can be seen however he wants. This links to why women see leadership roles as 'too stressful' due to men simply getting more positive reactions when in such a role than women, which links to the glass ceiling as women are less likely to even try for higher roles due to the negative reactions towards women in power. This book will be very helpful for my sociology exams especially the gender topics when talking about how women are disadvantaged in the work place.

A strength of the book is that it is ethical as she clearly stated that the individuals identified by only a first name, it is a pseudonym which protects the identity of the individual and this is a strength as it ensures confidentiality. Another strength is that Walter personally spoke to girls about their experiences such as Ellie who was a lap dancer, spoke about the environment she worked in and the men she encountered. This increases validity, as the information given is her actual experience rather than assumptions. However, these

Natasha writes 'a man seeking power enhances his masculinity whilst women seeking power reduces her femininity' and leads to women seeming 'not human' as she has given up something essential of herself.

did as women in the past would have gathered ripe red fruit whilst men prefer blue due to them seeking out blue skies to hunt in. This links back to how Natasha believes that these biological explanations are now encouraging inequality in society. Another thing which was interesting was on page 211 Natasha writes 'a man seeking power enhances his masculinity whilst women seeking power reduces her femininity' and leads to women seeming 'not human' as she has given up something essential of herself. This clearly represents how women are seen as living dolls and without femininity, they're seen as useless

conversations that Walter had would be different with every person, decreasing reliability, as there was no structure as each was a natural flowing conversation. A weakness of the book however is that Walter did not look at the disadvantages women of colour experience and therefore her findings aren't very representative. I think Natasha Walter does balance out evidence found for both biological explanations and social explanations of gender inequality however she may steer the reader to agreeing with her on that gender inequality is due to mainly social factors, so this may be a flaw/weakness.

It is often helpful
for students
to note that all criminal
activity is deviant ...
whereas not all deviant
activity is criminal.

Crime and deviance overview.

Article by Kevin Bloor:

Kevin Bloor, has been a teacher within the social sciences for nearly two decades and shares an overview of the main content relevant to the Crime and Deviance topic. He kindly shares a very useful collection of Powerpoint slides that help resource the A Level teacher on how to deliver the key ideas of this topic.

No other area of sociological inquiry has provoked as much research and interest as that of crime and deviance. Potentially, there are a vast number of sociologists that could be referenced within this particular section. However, the aim is to highlight the most relevant towards our inquiry. The most obvious starting point is to define what is meant by the key terms, beginning with the distinction between crime and deviance. The term crime is self-explanatory and is widely studied within the field of cultural criminology. One of the key themes running through cultural criminology is the rejection of rational explanations as to the cause(s) of crime. The main impact of cultural criminology has been to expand the way sociologists think about crime and the legal and social responses to rule breaking. Deviance however is that behaviour which is disapproved of and that society finds impossible to tolerate. Deviance is culturally determined and as such what is considered to be deviant differs from

one generation to the next. Marshall B. Clinard adds that the term deviance should be limited to that behaviour which is so much disapproved that society finds it impossible to tolerate. Under this definition, both crime and delinquency are the most obvious forms of deviance (1974). It is often helpful for students to note that all criminal activity is deviant ... whereas not all deviant activity is criminal.

The term deviance can be applied to many forms of social behaviour. Of these, one of the more unconventional interpretations is that of shyness. In a study published in 2003, Susie Scott found that shyness was often experienced as a conflict between a desire to be part of a scene and the fear of being negatively judged. Many participants felt plagued by feelings of "what if they don't like me?" Shyness was particularly linked to those social situations in which the reactions of others were perceived as important. Scott also found that there is a great

deal of moral pressure put on shy people to overcome their problem. Shyness is of course usually seen as deviant, although in some groups it is likely to be interpreted as normal (such as amongst girls).

Theoretical explanations for the causes of deviance may be categorised as either structural or subcultural. Having said

and the relationship between human behaviour and the animal kingdom. Socio-biology has faced sustained criticism due to three main issues. Firstly, it is a view which provides a biological basis for inequality within society. Social Darwinism can also be criticised for its amorality and being devoid of optimism about human nature. The relationship between humans and

characteristics. From a contemporary perspective, this would strongly suggest a degree of bias within his research. He also claimed that women have a deficient moral sense, which is clearly a sexist argument. Lombroso's findings have also been criticised for providing a quasi-racist excuse for identifying potential criminals simply by their physical appearance.



this, interactionists view deviance from a very different theoretical standpoint. Interactionists seek to examine aspects of deviance that have been largely ignored by previous approaches. For instance, they focus upon the meanings that various actors bring to and develop within the interaction. There may be a stereotype of a typical delinquent shared by members of the police force, and those who conform to this stereotype are more likely to be arrested than those who do not conform. What passes for criminality amongst a marginalised subculture or ethnic minority may be passed off as 'high jinks' amongst middle-class members of society. There have been several studies into the relationship between labelling and criminal / deviant behaviour, noting the double standards applied in these cases.

The earliest theoretical perspective upon the cause(s) of crime derives from socio-biologists. The socio-biologist argument was prevalent during the 19th century but has since become discredited, and in contemporary Sociology the socio-biological argument is very much at the distant margins of debate. The socio-biology perspective is based upon four main elements - a belief in genetic determinism, a stress on the importance of biological characteristics towards human behaviour and the structure of society, Social Darwinism



animals can also be challenged because human behaviour is distinctive from animals in terms of its sophistication of language and for the sheer complexity of everyday life.

Cesare Lombroso was a sociobiologist who during the mid-19th century supported the then popular theory of Social Darwinism. Lombroso can be cited as part of the nature side of the nature v. nurture debate who argued that criminals could be identified by a set of physical

A far more persuasive arena of inquiry can be identified from labelling theory. Labelling occurs when society places an identity upon an individual, or a social group, often on the basis of negative assumptions and even prejudice. Labelling holds relevance to several elements of Sociology. For example, in the field of education the impact of teachers labelling students may result in a self-fulfilling prophecy. It may also explain why middle-class children do

better than working-class children, why girls perform better than boys and why some ethnic minorities do significantly worse than the national average. In the field of crime and deviance, there are a number of studies we might consider. Of these, arguably the most seminal remains that of Albert Cohen and the concept of re-action formation. He claimed that within certain subcultures

young lower-class men replaced societal norms and values with alternative ones. A common illustration of this point is when members of a subculture act in a delinquent manner in order to gain status from within the group itself. Cohen's findings also relate to the concept of status frustration, in which young lower-class men find themselves

replacing societal norms and values with alternative ones in order to gain status from within their particular social group.

Another significant study into labelling and the causes of deviant behaviour was published by Stanley Cohen. He found that when members of a subculture break the norms,

The causes could include education, family, religion and many more. As society has undergone countless changes throughout the past the cause of social consensus and conflict may be viewed differently to different people.

Leslie Wilkins is associated with the term deviancy amplification. This is said to occur when the media focuses upon the negative behaviour of a deviant group (usually young people / subcultures), thereby labelling such groups in a negative manner.

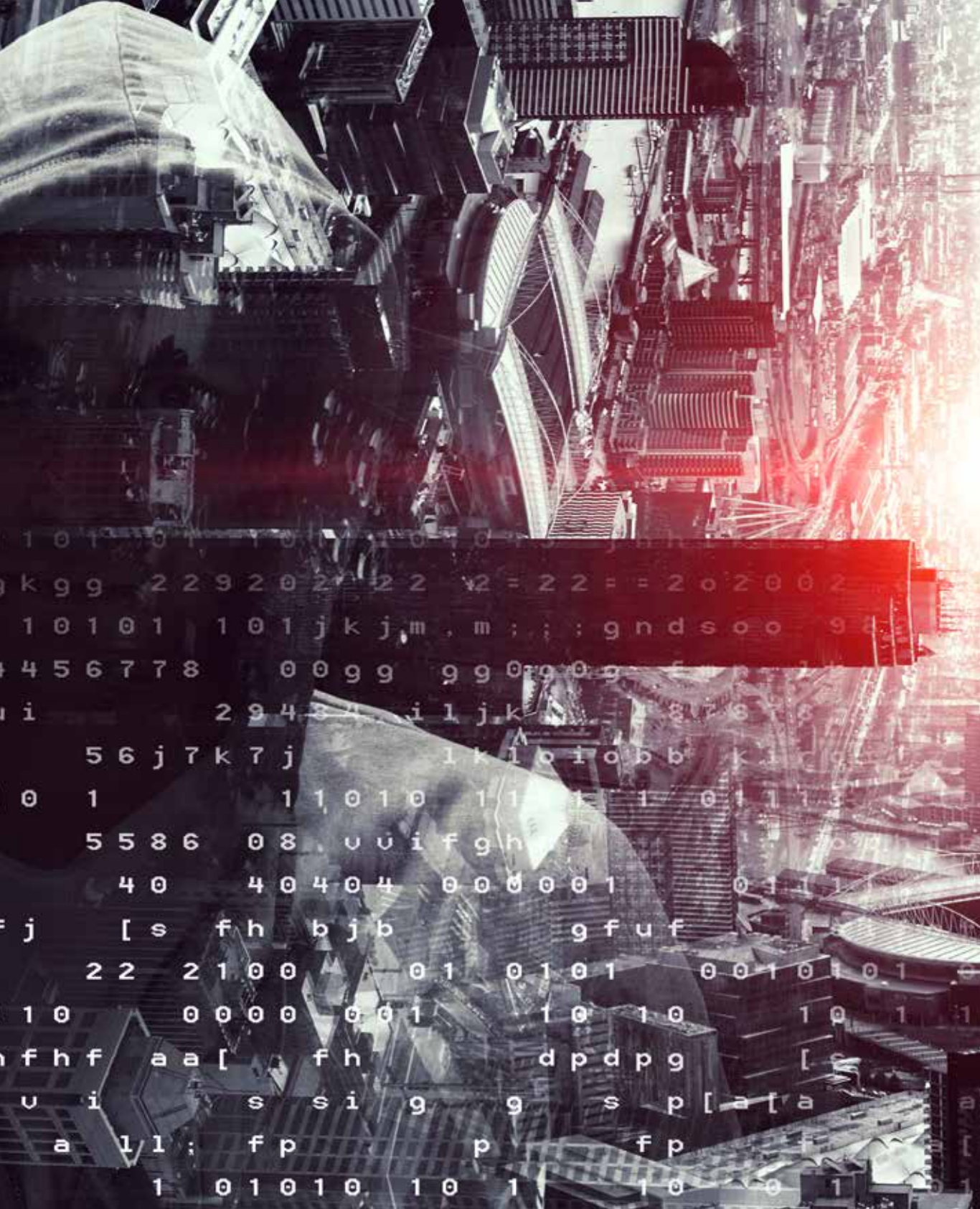
mores and values of society they are actually conforming to what is deemed acceptable behaviour within their own subculture. Cohen also noted that society's perception of what behaviour might be classed as deviant differs greatly from one generation to the next. Moreover, deviant behaviour is highly likely to be distorted via the media; thereby generating a moral panic.

Leslie Wilkins is associated with the term deviancy amplification. This is said to occur when the media focuses upon the negative behaviour of a deviant group (usually young people / subcultures), thereby labelling such groups in a negative manner. Deviancy amplification can often result in a moral panic amongst members of society, distorting information and thereby fostering a level of fear about said minorities and

subcultures. The threat to society is often greatly exaggerated. For instance, punk music and fashion was once described by the mainstream media as "a threat to our way of life more serious than Russian communism." With a degree of historical hindsight, this statement seems completely ridiculous. It is also worth adding that the threat of youth subcultures and associated music have always been exaggerated within the mass media from the teddy boys of the 50s to the ravers of the 90s.

A further contribution to the relationship between labelling and deviant behaviour derives from David Matza and his work into the concept of delinquent drift. This is said to occur when delinquents neutralise the norms and values of society by defining those norms and values in a subjective

sense. Matza argued that deviance only becomes possible when delinquents use techniques of neutralisation that temporarily release them from the confines of societal control. Matza locates his understanding of deviance within the context of subterranean values (such as seeking excitement) which exist alongside formal values within society (which encourage hard work and self-discipline). He also claims that the final decision to step over the line comes when adolescents experience a mood of fatalism. Matza adds that this could be overcome by a restoration of the mood of



humanism (1964).

One of the most significant figures in the field of labelling theory and criminal / deviant behaviour remains Howard Becker and his work into the concept of a master status (1963). According to Becker, the result of labelling someone as a criminal is will be a self-fulfilling prophecy. When a self-fulfilling prophecy occurs, the deviant identification becomes the controlling one and this in turn encourages further deviance. Like other interactionists, he emphasised the importance of subjective meanings

given to experiences. According to Becker “the deviant is one to whom the label has successfully been applied; deviant behaviour is behaviour that people so label.” He also argued that the reasons for deviant behaviour change as circumstances change, and that the deviant may return to conformity at a later stage. Furthermore, the deviant label can lead to further deviance and can even change our conception of self so that the ‘deviant’ regards themselves as such for the very first time. Controversially, Becker effectively argues that there is no such thing as a deviant

act. Instead, an act is only deviant when others (particularly the agents of social control) define it as such. In other words, “deviance is not a quality that lies in behaviour itself, but in the interaction between the person who commits an act and those who respond to it.”

During the 1970s, the relationship between labelling theory and deviant behaviour was explored further by Jock Young (who has since worked extensively in the field of crime and deviance) and Edwin Lemert. Young applied labelling



theory to hippies around the Notting Hill area of London. He found that due to the increased level of police activity the deviant act of drug taking became of greater value to the group. Drug taking took on a symbolic importance in terms of both their difference towards social norms *and* of their defiance to a social injustice (1971). Lemert however emphasised the importance of societal reaction towards the deviant. In doing so, he made a distinction between primary and secondary deviation. The former

consists of deviant acts *before* they are publically labelled, whereas secondary deviation is the response of the individual or group to societal reaction.

Primary deviation is of little significance as the causes of the deviation give way to the central importance of the reaction from society. To support his argument, he argued that societal reaction to stuttering actually produced that particular form of deviance amongst American Indians.

Lemert therefore reversed the traditional view of deviance. According to his findings, the blame for deviance lies with the agents of social control as opposed to the deviants themselves (1972). From a similar angle, Plummer claims that deviance depends partly on what a person does and on the social



reaction to it. He also recognised the importance of the situation in which the act occurs (1979).

Labelling theory has been the target of criticism amongst sociologists. Taylor et al (1973) for instance claim that most deviance can be defined in terms of the actions of those who break social rules rather than in terms of the reaction of a social audience. They also point out that "we do not live in a world of free social meanings." In most situations, there is very little or no freedom of choice in determining whether an act is labelled as deviant or not. For them, the key towards understanding crime lies in the material basis of society. Their work into 'The New Criminology' adopts a neo-Marxist perspective upon crime. According to this stance, most criminal

acts are deliberate and have political motives (such as the redistribution of wealth from rich to poor). Deviants can therefore be understood to be activists engaged in a struggle to alter the basis of capitalism (1973). Gouldner adds that interactionists tend to portray the deviant as passive and controlled instead of someone who makes an active choice to engage in a deviance (1975). However, the most persuasive critique of labelling theory derives from Knutssen. He asserts that interactionists have not produced sufficient evidence to show that labelling amplifies deviance. Instead, they have relied upon 'self-evident truths' without producing convincing research. In the context of Sociology, this is often a damning criticism.

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Kavita Sohanta

Employment Personal Tutor for School of Humanities
(History, International Relations, Politics, Sociology)

THE ROLE OF AN EMPLOYMENT PERSONAL TUTOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Kavita Sohanta, Coventry University, explains her role as an Employment Personal Tutor in Higher Education, working for undergraduates in the School of Humanities.

At Coventry University we value the direction of our students' careers, as such they are given an Employment Personal Tutor (EPT) to support them with their transition throughout university. An EPT supports the students' understanding of how to build transferable skills by offering advice and guidance on securing work experience, voluntary roles and work placements. We also offer training and development of the students' employability profile, offering them workshops on understanding how to write a successful CV, interview techniques, presentation techniques, etc. We focus on supporting students' confidence and self-efficacy, delivering sessions on building personal power and self-resilience. As such, we give tailored support and guidance to each student developing their personal career planning into final year, therefore highlighting relevant graduate careers, jobs and courses. A Humanities degree, specifically Sociology, should not just be an interest for students, it should be a strategic step in the direction of a fruitful and positive career.

As an employment tutor within the

my pleasure and duty to change these perceptions one student at a time. As such, I find that once our students have understood the transferable skills they are developing, they approach Sociology with a renewed respect for the course and the number of valid career opportunities they could develop. The EPT model has impacted the number of students in graduate positions, whereby a higher proportion of our students enter into positive graduate destinations after completing their degree. We have as such moved from 40% positive destinations in 2009 to 76% in 2017.

Some of our alumni have secured roles within the Civil Service, NHS, police and army roles, probation service, BBC and media sector, human resources departments, research and development projects and departments, social research organisations, hospitality and leisure sector, teaching at primary and secondary schools, community development projects, working within the charity sector, youth development and mentoring, and various masters courses.

I believe this is due to our embedded

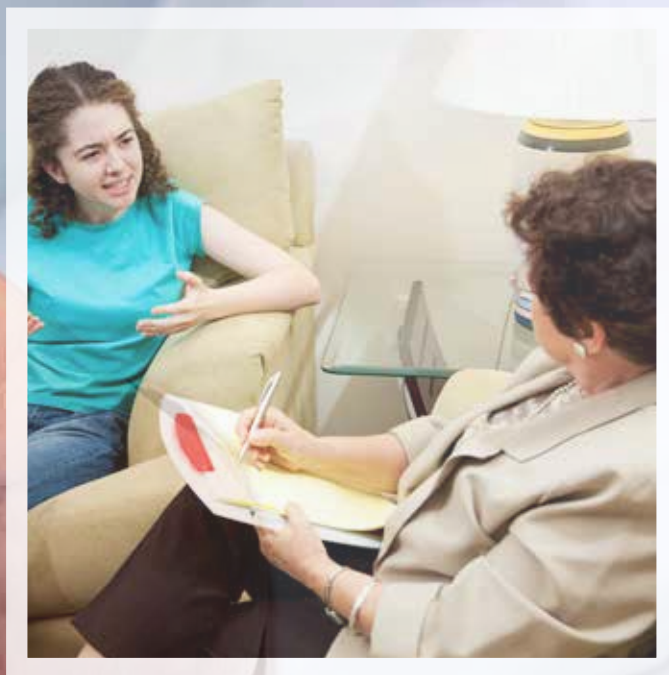
I often find that students who start the Sociology degree often do so apologetic for their motivations for choosing the subject, often embarrassed of the fact that it is not vocational to a clear career direction

Humanities School, I am committed to supporting students with their own personal journeys, which is student focused and not a one size fits all approach. I often find that students who start the Sociology degree often do so apologetic for their motivations for choosing the subject, often embarrassed of the fact that it is not vocational to a clear career direction. As an EPT it is

approach to employability, whereby our academics drive employability activity as a consistent thread within all of their module delivery. In addition, the EPT model supports the already developed structure, as such offering our students a solid foundation to build their character, their ideas and plans for the future, with a clear vision, support, guidance and passion at the forefront.

By Patrick
Robinson,
Sociology teacher
at Cadbury Sixth
Form College,
Birmingham.

Interventions for underachieving students.



My college defines underachieving in two specific ways:
Any student failing a course (U grade at A level, Fail mark for BTEC)
Any student having a progress grade that is two grades lower than their target grade.

I was asked at my college to deliver some training for staff that focused on interventions that can be used for underachieving students.

My college defines underachieving in two specific ways:

- Any student failing a course (U grade at A level, Fail mark for BTEC)
- Any student having a progress grade that is two grades lower than their target grade.

This definition tends to lead to a workable amount of students to focus on for

some intervention that aims to raise their achievement levels.

How can this be done?

Perhaps this is the “million-dollar” question for any school or college. I certainly do not feel I have all the answers to intervening with underachieving students, but I thought I could share the following ideas as a starting point for a discussion with colleagues about what works in a range of subject areas.

I categorised 5 possible intervention

categories: we could refer to the following as a possible:

“Intervention toolbox”

- 1:1 feedback/dialogue with subject teacher
- Re-attempt assessment
- Other people as support
- Carrots
- Sticks

Here were the ideas I had behind each category:

1:1 feedback/dialogue with subject teacher

- Specific feedback on test/assessment
- Leave gaps in feedback comments: student has to complete. Teacher then checks.
- Assessment Cover sheet: student to complete their own targets, but then teacher needs to check.
- Need to improve students' ability to make S.M.A.R.T targets (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic, Time linked: by when?). Some specific Sociology targets might be that, in the next assessment: "Use all three theories (Post-Modernism, Marxism and Feminism) in Q3 (Unit 3, section

Re-attempt assessment

- Prepare a teacher handout/worksheet/ self-completion questionnaire: "How to turn E and U grades into D and C grades". Same for: "How to turn D and C grades into B and A grades"
- Could include model answers, with comments.
- Writing templates or suggested sentence "openers".
- Any other "differentiation by input"?
- Re-mark = quick (1/2 days) turnaround: improves feedback process. One intervention idea is to have a student re-attempt work, then sit with them while you mark it: such "live marking" can help students see how

upper sixth students that are planning a career in teaching: it gives them a responsibility they can then write about in their university applications etc.

- Parent input: contact parents to attend parent's evening appointment, or even send home details of homework tasks for parents to support this at home.

"Carrots"

- Explore student's motivation: recommend "Getting to know you" sheet: this is a very simple form I use in the first lesson of the year, asking students what their plans are after the year. Use this as a "carrot" reminder throughout year.



A paper)". Or "Expand on knowledge and understanding by using key phrases such as: "This means.....", "For example.....", "This is similar to....". Or "Boost evaluation skill by using one theory to criticise another eg: "Marxist arguments would criticise Post-Modern arguments because....."

- Students may need a 1:1 reminder concerning timings used in exam, command words in questions and what they mean (eg: "To what extent.....") and training on the skills assessed in the mark-scheme.
- Broader discussion on learning eg: how does student "revise"? Is the student revising effectively or are they merely copying out lots of notes in a passive learning manner?

examiners mark their work. This can't be done for a whole class, but as an intervention idea for a small number of students, it may prove very successful.

Other people as support

- Make use of your additional learning support teams where you work. Be aware of deadlines for when exam concessions need to be assessed for some students.
- If your college runs study sessions/ supervised homework time, contact the member of staff that runs the session so they know what specific work/task students need to be completing.
- Student mentoring: you could pair up underachieving students in the lower sixth to students in the upper sixth that have performed particularly well in their year one. This would work well with

- Reminder: progress grade goes up, so does their estimated grade.
- Reference update when students have made progress.

"Sticks"

- "Sticks" needed at times: use Pastoral system when needed eg: stage 1/2 warnings for missing homework? Etc.

Intervention pitfalls

- Learned helplessness: the more teachers do, the less students do for themselves? Try to encourage a "growth mindset" (Dweck 2006) that allows them to develop their own level of resilience.
- Discreet interventions: as the classroom is an audience, need to offer interventions in a discreet manner so as to avoid damaging self-esteem in front of the peer group, and any potential

- labelling process.
- Model answers: some students then see this as their solution, without seeing the need to develop their own skills in understanding exam questions and planning answers with relevant material.
- The sessions I had with colleagues

at my College, led to the sharing of some ideas that I summarised on a whiteboard: see photos for details.

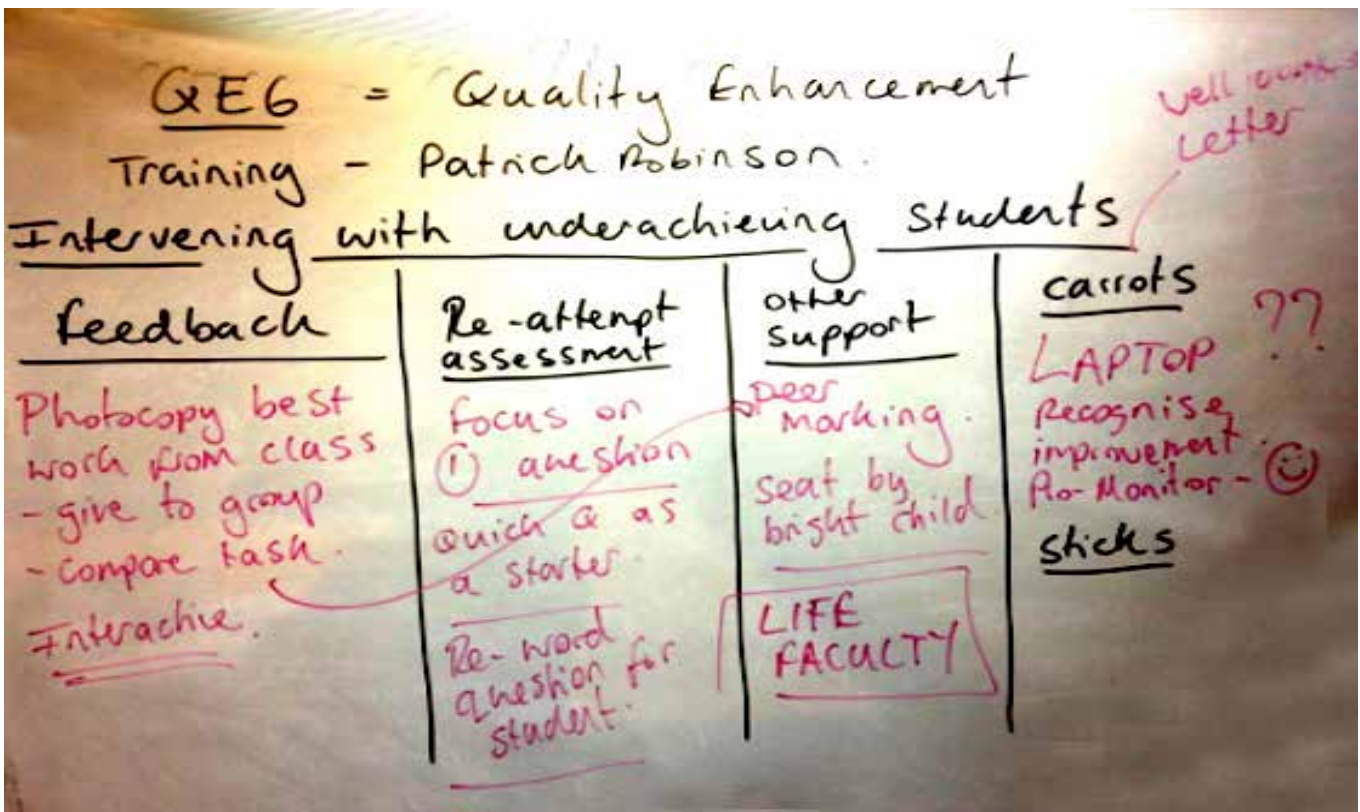
Further Reading

Carol S Dweck (2006) Mindset : The New Psychology of Success. Random House USA Inc New York, United States.

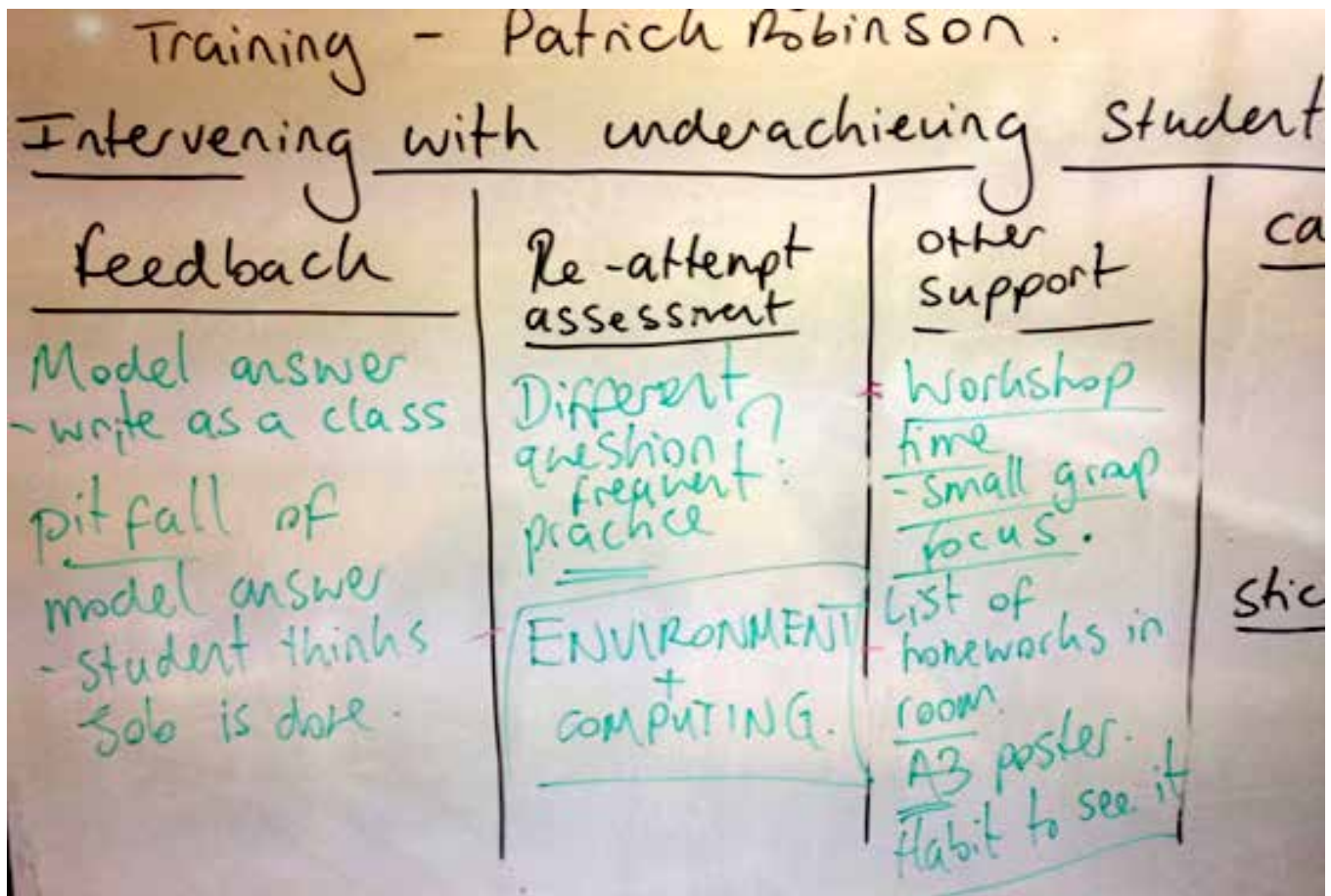
<https://www.york.ac.uk/media/iee/documents/Closing%20the%20Gap.pdf>

Research review focused closing the gap in educational achievement for children and young people living in poverty.

<http://www.carolyncoil.com/ezone33.htm>



The sessions I had with colleagues at my College, led to the sharing of some ideas that I summarised on a whiteboard: see photos for details.





Crime and Deviance:

“Hey! I got a social disease!”.

Sociologists looking at educational achievement find that there are distinct patterns. Success and failure at school seem to be closely related to membership of certain social groups.

There are many factors, which can hinder a child's attainment especially if he is from a Black ethnic background (e.g. material and cultural deprivation, lack of proficiency in English, a high incidence of lone parenthood, a culture of resistance, teacher stereotyping and labelling, the ethnocentric school curriculum, etc.). There are also some factors, which explain why Chinese and Indian students do so much better than others in education (e.g. positive teacher stereotyping, parental involvement in education, high value put on education, etc.). Research in education inequality would also try to enumerate some factors why girls outperform boys in

school (e.g. feminization of the workforce, genderquake, girls possessing an 'elaborated code', etc.), while boys' underperformance could be due to other factors (e.g. crisis of masculinity, decline of traditional masculine industries).

Interestingly, when the performance of the different ethnic groups is further broken down by gender it also becomes obvious that girls consistently outperform boys across all ethnic groups. It also appears that the gender gap that exists varies depending on the ethnic group.

Thus, we already know that certain ethnic groups (Chinese, Indian) do very well while others (Black African, Black Caribbean) underachieve. And we also know that girls outperform boys in general. But what is not so apparent is that girls outperform boys

across all ethnic groups, although the size of the gap varies among the ethnic groups. The groups with the widest gender gaps include high performing groups like Chinese, as well as underperforming ones such as Black Caribbean, Black African and White British pupils. The groups that have the narrowest gender gaps include one very high performing group, the Indians, on the one hand, and mid-table Bangladeshis and Pakistanis, on the other.

Therefore, what needs to be examined, is the issue of whether these two variables are somehow related to or independent of each other, at least with respect to differences in educational attainment. Simply put, are gender and ethnicity with respect to GCSE grades, related or not? Which variable is stronger? How do we know? Is there a test for it?



Chi-square Test of Independence

The Chi-Square Test of Independence is a test that allows you to determine whether two variables are somehow related to or

independent of each other. It does that by determining whether what you observe in a distribution of frequencies would be exactly what you would observe if it occurred by

chance alone. It allows you to compare the actual, or observed, data to the expected (what would have occurred by chance alone) one. In other words, the Chi square test

Social Deprivation	New Criminology	Psychological Explanations
<p>"It's just our bringing upke, that gets us out of hand"</p> <p>"I'm depraved on account that I'm deprived".</p>	<p>"Society's played him a terrible trick."</p>	<p>"It's just his neurosis that oughta be curbed...."</p>
<p>Labelling theory</p>	<p>Sub-cultural theory</p>	<p>Underclass explanations</p>
<p>"They treat us like we ain't even human".</p> <p>"They believe everything they read in the papers about us cruddy JDs" (Juvenile Delinquents)</p>	<p>General peer influence of the clip.</p>	<p>"Our fathers all are drunks"</p> <p>"We no earthly good"</p> <p>"The trouble is he's lazy"</p>

Just in case

If you are looking for ideas or inspiration to liven up your sociology teaching, in each issue we review ICT related activities, guides, websites, book and film reviews for you to explore.

Book Review:

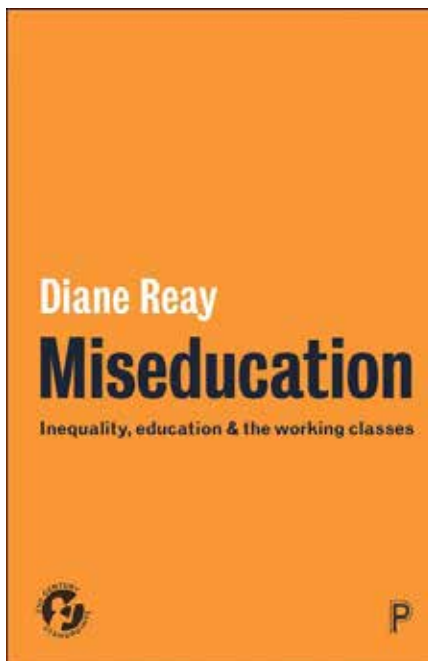
Diane Reay on “MisEducation”.

Review by Thomas Smith

Teacher of Social Science at the Nobel School in Stevenage, Herts.

<https://policypress.co.uk/miseducation>

DIANE REAY'S MISEDUCATION PROVIDES A CAPTIVATING INSIGHT INTO THE STARK CLASS INEQUALITIES WHICH PERSIST IN OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM.



The book has clearly been produced as a response to the author's own battle with class and social mobility: herself adopting an ambivalent identity somewhere between her working-class origins and the privileged position she now inhabits. Consequently, I was compelled to reflect on my own experiences of class and schooling whilst reading. I was left with no option but to conclude that class has affected every aspect of my own education, and that of others, and will continue to do so unless it is challenged in a meaningful way.

Through her writing, Reay revives the supposedly lifeless corpse of social class and demonstrates that it remains a stubborn issue that will not go away. Reay takes a cynical stance on principles of social mobility and meritocracy: for example, by highlighting how expanding higher education, whilst providing a façade of progress, masks the continuing exclusionary and elitist hierarchy within these institutions. In this system, the price of genuine mobility for the educationally successful is to become socially and culturally dislocated from their working-class roots.

According to Reay, the decline of the traditional working-class has actually contributed to further marginalisation and stigmatisation. Producing a climate in which those who fail are labelled

as lacking skills and attitudes, rather than the necessary social, economic and cultural resources. She introduces a harrowing assertion: that neoliberal emphasis on economic efficiency has overshadowed any genuine concern for social mobility and has had a destructive impact on the wellbeing of students, parents and teachers of all backgrounds.

The combination of personal testimonies, policy critique and undisputed personal bias culminates in a convincing plea for social justice. Reay demands a change from a system which quashes autonomy and critical thought and preserves inequality, to one which encourages cooperation and respect. *Miseducation* is a must read for anyone with an interest in promoting an education system that works for all:

politicians, teachers, and students alike. The book is perfect for the teacher seeking to keep lessons relevant to the 21st century by linking to current issues, such as Brexit and the diminishing role of the state in education. I also recommend it to my students, in the hope that it will encourage a critical awareness about the world which Reay advocates and sociology invites.





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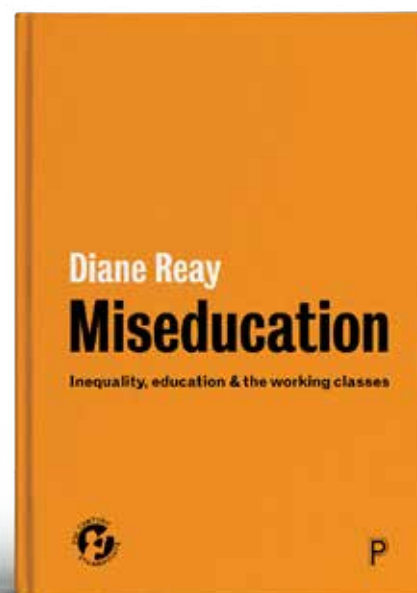


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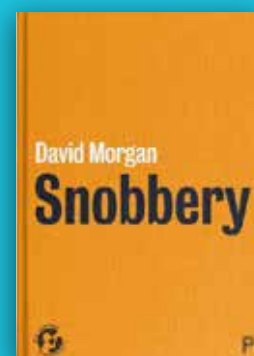
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BSA Teaching Group National A-Level Sociology Competition for Students!

The BSA Teaching Group's National A Level Competition invites essays and short videos from sociology students allowing you to win an Apple iPad Mini and £500 for your school. Enter now via by emailing your submission to Claire Simmons, Membership Development Officer.

The A Level Competition is open to anyone currently studying at A Level, AS Level, Scottish Higher Level or equivalent post-16 qualification in sociology, and we encourage you to be as creative as possible with your answers!

This year's question '**What can Sociology contribute to the debate about "fake news"?**' The aim of this question is to get you thinking about news and public information and to link to the modules you have studied or are about to study. To enter all you need to do is submit a 2,000-word written piece or a 10-minute podcast or video clip. The closing date for this is **Friday, 15 December 2017**.

Previous years have covered topics such as 'what is the important topic for sociologists to study over the next 20 years?', 'Changing Society – what is the role of the sociologist?' and 'why is sociology important?' These questions have received some fantastic answers from all over the world. Students have also commented on how much fun it is to take part in these competitions, enjoying the discussion sessions with their teachers and classmates. Read last year's winning entry.

Why not submit an essay or short video to this year's competition now!

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 or a questionnaire based study. All research carried out for this competition has to abide the ethical guidelines of research, as stated in the BSA's Statement of Ethical Practice. If you have any questions regarding the competition criteria, please contact: Claire Simmons.

How to enter:

Please email your entry with a completed entry form to Claire Simmons or post it to:

Claire Simmons,
Membership Development Officer
British Sociological Association, Bailey Suite, Palatine House,
Belmont Business Park, Belmont, Durham DH1 1TW



Terms and conditions:

- Entries must be accompanied by confirmation from a Sociology teacher that it is the work of the pupil.
- Entries must be lone submissions (not joint).
- Reports must be around 2,000 words (excluding bibliography, figures, tables etc.)
- Filming your project as a presentation or podcast/YouTube entry (must not exceed 10 minutes).
- We reserve the right to check submitted works for plagiarism using online tools.
- Reference to other scholars (including teachers, books, articles and web sites) should be acknowledged.
- All work must be written or presented in the English language.
- The judges' decision is final and we reserve the right to publish your entry with your permission.
- The British Sociological Association (BSA) is the national subject association for sociologists in the UK and its primary objective is to promote sociology. The BSA is the largest sociological network in the UK and is the public face of sociology in Britain.

We look forward to receiving your entries!



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