

THE SOCIOLOGY TEACHER

THE JOURNAL OF THE BSA TEACHING GROUP



**BSA Teaching
Group National
Sixth Form
Sociology
Competition**

**The Black
middle-class
and laissez-faire
racism in Britain's
classrooms**

**Financialisation
and Capitalist
Crisis**

**In this Issue: Classic Topics, Choice for Teachers and
A Contemporary Approach: New A-level Sociology**

**BRITISH
SOCIOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION**



Patrick Robinson



Over the last few weeks of teaching I've noticed a change in lesson time. If I try and refer to a TV show as a quick reference for a sociological concept, it's more often the case that students have never heard of what I am referring to. What I feel are popular culture, mainstream television references fall very flat. Some examples: Functionalist warm bath theory of the 1950s and 1960s: "Have we seen Mad Men?". None had. Historical example of extended families in Birmingham: "Anyone watched Peaky Blinders?". Nope. Illustrating ideas to do with social control: "Anyone seen LOST?". Nope. Crime and Policing: "Who's watched The Wire?". 1 student. The increase in same sex families: "Have we watched Modern Family on SKY?". 2 had.

Perhaps this reflects the change in the range of entertainment options we have today, especially through internet, digital channels and social media. Pluralist plethora? Perhaps.

Speaking of change, this issue of the Sociology Teacher includes a summary of

the changes in A level Specifications that affect teaching from September 2015. All 3 exam boards that offer Sociology A level were asked for a summary that could help our readers glance at the overview of each, then use the weblinks and contact details to pursue further details.

We also have some great contributions of articles to update subject knowledge, many thanks to the volunteers that have sent me their contributions for this issue.

If you think you would like to contribute to the next issue, Spring 2015, please get in touch. It's a bit like.....you remember that show, that used to be on the telly: "Points of View". You wrote in with your own thoughts?..... Nope?.....ah well.

Have a good end to 2014,
All the best,

Patrick Robinson

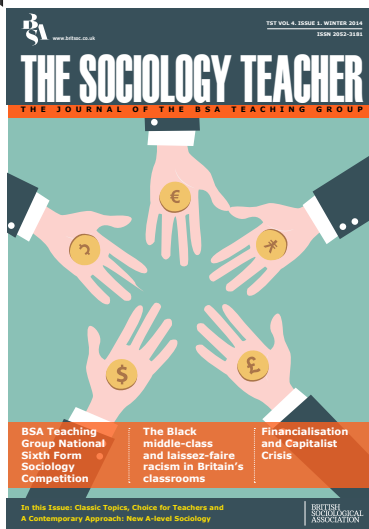
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Co-editor of the
BSA Teacher Group Journal.

Could you write for THE SOCIOLOGY TEACHER?



If you're a BSA Teaching Group member 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, please contact prs@cadcol.ac.uk and we will pass your proposal to the editorial board.



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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.

FINANCIALISATION AND CAPITALIST CRISIS



THE BLACK MIDDLE-CLASS AND LAISSEZ-FAIRE RACISM IN BRITAIN'S CLASSROOMS



CLASSIC TOPICS, CHOICE FOR TEACHERS AND A CONTEMPORARY APPROACH



SELL





BUY

Financialisation and Capitalist Crisis

By Mark Kirby

The current estimate for the peak cost to the UK government given by the National Audit Office (<http://www.nao.org.uk/highlights/taxpayer-support-for-uk-banks-faqs/>, accessed 16.9.2014) for cleaning up after the crisis of 2007-9 is £1,162bn. To try to put this in context, each year all the VAT collected by the govt adds up to between £150bn and £175bn so this means a figure equivalent to all the VAT collected for about 7 or 8 years. To be fair this is a calculation of total possible liabilities, some of which may not come to pass and also includes the cost of buying shares in RBS and Lloyds which may well be sold off later (albeit possibly at a loss). Nonetheless this figure of money was money at risk at the height of the crisis and shows the scale of the possible harms caused by the financial sector of capitalism.

The concept of financialisation is a relatively new concept which aims to analyse the nature of capitalism today with the relative and growing importance of financial processes at its heart. It represents an attempt to explore the distinctiveness of this form of capitalism, a form of capitalism highly prone to crisis largely due precisely to the importance of the finance sector: "The crisis of 2007-9 is replete with peculiar characteristics due to the role of the financial sector. Its outbreak reflects the ascendancy of finance in contemporary economies or, more accurately, financialisation" (Lapavistas, 2010. p.5)

This concept derives from an appreciation of the need to modify Marxist accounts of crisis in the light of the emergence of new forms of capitalism, perhaps best described by the phrase Monopoly Capitalism (Baran and Sweezy,

1966).

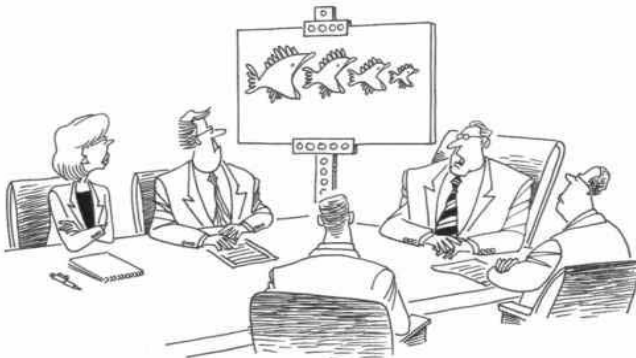
Classical accounts of crisis in Marxism revolved around the idea of the falling rate of profit as the organic composition of capital rose, but also the problem of over-production. In simple terms the idea is that as competition increases, more and more capital input is required (meaning more fixed capital) and thus the ratio of fixed capital to variable capital (essentially workers wages) rises. This means that for any given amount of surplus or profit more input is needed and this can lead to crisis. The other aspect of over-production is the problem that since workers are not paid the full value of what they produce, there is a potential problem of there not being enough money to buy up all the products produced, leaving goods unsold. These tendencies do have countervailing tendencies of which two of the most important are increasing exploitation (or productivity as it is sometimes called) or reducing taxation. Clearly we have seen elements of these since the mid-1970s.

Baran and Sweezy (1966) modified these accounts to consider crisis in the period of Monopoly Capitalism. They argue that without competition, the level of surplus can rise both due to less pressure for prices to fall and also the ability to push down costs. As a result the surplus exceeds the level of demand for investment and this means that in order for production to continue the surplus needs to be absorbed in either levels of waste (conspicuous consumption) or production with the state for military adventures. This leads to the period of state capitalism (also emphasised in the similar concept of late Capitalism from the Frankfurt School) and the growing

importance of military adventures (Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo for example) but also to the growing importance of property and financial investments (or gambling as it might be called):

"monopolies generate an ever expanding surplus, which cannot be absorbed by the sphere of production, resulting in stagnation. To relieve stagnation, unproductive consumption (including

years (partly as a result of the neo-liberal revolution of the 1970s). This has certainly increased the level of exploitation and thus surplus but as a result, companies have not had to rely on bank loans but have used retained profits for investment purposes. Obviously this presents a problem for banks who have had to go looking for a new audience to enable them to invest their surplus.



"I assume you're all familiar with the way the stock market works."

pure waste) inexorably rises in mature capitalism. It is apparent that this argument is quite different from the analysis of accumulation and falling profit rates within classical Marxism. What matters here, however, is the use to which it was put when economic turmoil took hold in the 1970s.

Briefly put, as production stagnated under the weight of the surplus, capital began to seek refuge in circulation, and above all in the speculative activities of finance. Financialisation emerged as the sphere of production became inundated by the investible surplus " (Lapavistas, 2010. p. 9).

This approach can be contrasted to the Keynesian argument which basically states that the growth of the finance sector has led to it becoming bloated and a burden on the economy overall. In other words, they see finance as a kind of parasitical growth undermining economic production whereas Marxist accounts argue that this is necessary unproductiveness to keep capitalism going (showing how capitalism as a structure is in need of replacement). Keynesians will call for a readjustment away from finance and back to other forms of production, while Marxists will point out this will merely delay the crisis and we need an end to the process which creates these pressures, namely the exploitative character of capitalism.

The original analysis of all this was with Hilferding looking at the way monopolies came to rely on banks for finance and this led to mergers with banks in a dominant position. It also led to trade barriers, militarism and imperialism.

What is new today is the way that finance capital has developed in recent

This has meant lending to households and individuals, primarily in the form of loans for property. The expansion of this market (initially in the USA) and its expansion through securitisation was the immediate cause of the 2007 crisis. That banks needed to do this is a reflection of the fact that industrial capitalism is no longer in need of bank loans and

therefore the development discussed by Hilferding is not happening now- instead we get financialisation.

The rise of financialisation

There are different forms of capitalism and the model closest to the one discussed by Hilferding is the German model where banks still remain important as a source of finance (The bank based capitalism of Germany or Japan). In contrast the Anglo-capitalism model seen in the USA and the UK places more importance on the stock market as a source of finance (the market based model of capitalism seen in the USA and the UK.)

It is clear that financialisation reflects

the triumph of the market based systems within capitalism and the resultant need for the banks to seek out victims elsewhere. Hilferding's notion of Finance capital based on the model of capitalism seen in Germany, has during the neo-liberal era, been replaced as the creative destruction of the market is given free rein. Crisis therefore is seen as natural and inevitable and a good thing (creative destruction).

The effect is to create a much more unstable economy from the point of view of the worker. The Resolution Foundation pointed out in 2011 that the share of national income taken by wages of workers in the bottom half of the income distribution had fallen by 25% between 1977 and 2009 (from 16% to 12%). The growth of zero-hours contracts is merely one aspect of this, albeit a particularly unpleasant and exploitative one.

While sociologists had their heads elsewhere (extolling the exotic virtues of post-modern living) inequalities were rising at an increasing rate.

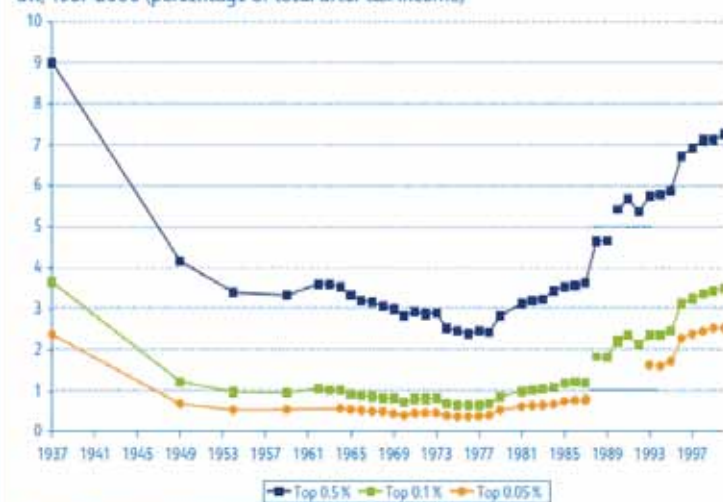
As part of a long-standing project to consider this, Tony Atkinson in the UK and Thomas Piketty in France have developed a highly detailed database and the graph below is from their work:

The key point here is the way the share of income held by the very richest fell during the roughly thirty years after WW2 when social democratic arguments and trade union power enabled redistribution but that since the mid 1980s (following the defeat of the miners in 1984-85) the levels of inequality have very nearly returned to their pre-WW2 levels.

This is form of capitalism where there is a big surplus produced, but where the options for the productive investment of this are not present due to the stagnating economy and therefore greater levels of money are essentially wasted on parasitic consumption and the advertising industry which supports this.

The creation of brands makes this

Figure 2A: Share of total personal after tax income of the top 0.05%, 0.1%, and 0.5%, UK, 1937-2000 (percentage of total after tax income)



Source: Atkinson and Piketty (2007), figure 4.6.



worse. The workers are exploited (think of all the Apple products made in factories in China) but so too is the consumer (again think of the extra price put on Apple products) .

That some people volunteer to be branded is symptomatic of the parlous state we are in but is nonetheless also storing up further crisis in the future.

Since workers are not paid a lot and since banks can no longer make money lending to companies, they lend instead to households and this credit is all that keeps the economy going (it has been seriously suggested in some quarters that compensation payments for PPI from banks has had a measurable impact on keeping the economy going) because the growth rates produced by this monopoly capitalism are very poor.

In all this the UK has become a brand leader:

- **Income inequality growing faster in UK than any other rich country, says OECD**
- Top 10% have incomes 12 times greater than bottom 10%, up from eight times greater in 1985, thinktank's study reveals
- The share of the top 1% of income earners increased from 7.1% in 1970 to 14.3% in 2005.

- Source: DIVIDED WE STAND: WHY INEQUALITY KEEPS RISING - OECD 2011

People can only continue to live their lives by getting into debt and this is exactly where the banks now make their money. As a result the current financialised capitalism is one where:

- Banks are no longer key source of finance for production, having been replaced by market based systems such as private equity or share markets
- Workers can no longer rely on the welfare state for provision of services and increasingly these are mediated by finance (mortgages, private pensions, credit cards etc)
- Banks now make money by lending to households.

Thus the neo-liberal project of cutting back on the state (particularly the welfare state) has provided a market for the banks but due to the unstable nature of the economy this creates, the state is still needed to bail them out but also to keep order when the inevitable protests occur. The fact that the banks have managed to get the state to bail them out (rather than for instance putting them in prison) reflects the weakness of alternative views and this

was also highlighted in the recent Scottish referendum. When one SNP person suggested BP might be nationalised the outpouring of horror (even from the Labour party) reflects the way these non-statist ideas have become hegemonic.

Loic Wacquant (2009) has summarised the continuing role of the state in all this as follows:

"A central ideological tenet of neoliberalism is that it entails the coming of small government [...]the neoliberal state turns out to be quite different in actuality: while it embraces laissez-faire at the top, releasing restraints on capital and expanding the life chances of the holders of economic and cultural capital, it is anything but laissez-faire at the bottom. Indeed, when it comes to handling the social turbulence generated by deregulation and to impressing the discipline of precarious labour, the new Leviathan reveals itself to be fiercely interventionist, bossy and pricey. The soft touch of libertarian proclivities favouring the upper class gives way to the hard edge of authoritarian oversight, as it endeavours to direct, nay dictate, the behaviour of the lower class" (Wacquant, 2009. P.307-8).

It is therefore a form of capitalism characterised by continuous debt, insecure employment, state protection for failing businesses, state punishment of the poor.

None of this was inevitable and sociologists have contributed to this by turning their head from macro-concerns for the playground of postmodernism for most of this period. However with Wilkinson and Pickett (2010), Dorling (2014) , Stiglitz (2013) and Piketty (2014) there are now some writers who are looking at the issue of inequality in society. Financialisation as a concept represents the latest Marxist analysis though as can be seen it does have its roots in the 1970s before the post-modernists really got going.

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The Black middle-class and laissez-faire racism in Britain's classrooms

By Ali Meghji

Amidst recent claims that Black and Minority Ethnicity individuals were underrepresented at the level of football management, Chelsea Football Club's Jose Mourinho denied such allegations, responding 'if you are good, you get the

With regards to the Black middle-class, whereas research in Britain is still in an embryonic stage, America has its own set of canonic texts (for example Collins, 1983; Pattillo-McCoy, 1999; Lacy, 2003). Nevertheless, research itself is a

'If you are good, you get the job.
If you are top, you are top'

job. If you are top, you are top'¹. This colour-blind approach is indicative of the pervasiveness of 'post-racialism' which, in its most controversial form, claims that society now 'transcend[s]' the disabling racial divisions of the past' (Bobo, 2001: 14). Particularly focusing on Black-British middle-class parents' and their children's experiences of secondary school, this article takes issue with the doctrine of post-racialism. Drawing upon the transcripts from the Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC's) project on Britain's Black middle-class², this article analyses how contemporary racism functions in a much more covert manner – what Bobo et al. (1997) have termed 'laissez-faire racism'.

practice within which not just knowledge, but categories are produced (Gunaratnam, 2003). Consequently, the lack of research attention given to Britain's Black middle-class reproduces a stereotype of 'Black-ness' which, to a degree of irony, the nation's Black middle-class have to struggle against.

Marking a start of a more systematic analysis of Britain's Black middle-class, between 2009-11 the ESRC funded a project entitled 'The Educational Strategies of the Black middle-class'. One of the main findings of this project, which involved qualitative interviews with 62 Black [occupationally] middle-class participants, was that the majority of the research participants were 'middle-

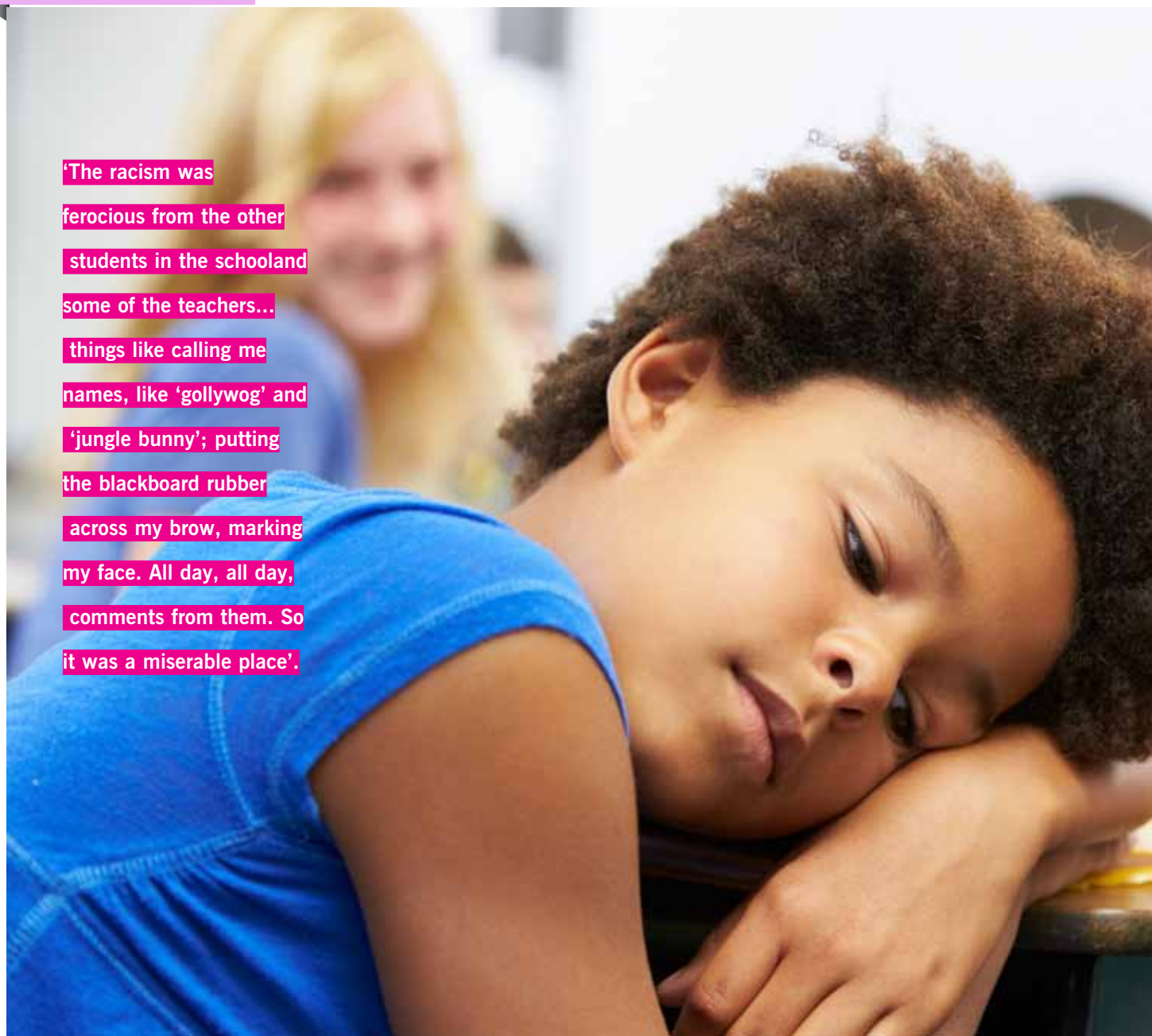
1 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/0/football/29478599>

2 Grant Reference: RES-062-23-1880

3 <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2008/sep/05/raceinschools.raceineducation>

4 <http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/features/black-boys-victimhood-school>

'The racism was
ferocious from the other
students in the school and
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things like calling me
names, like 'gollywog' and
'jungle bunny'; putting
the blackboard rubber
across my brow, marking
my face. All day, all day,
comments from them. So
it was a miserable place'.



class ambivalent' (Rollock et al., 2013: 23). Middle-class ambivalent refers to the discomfort most of the Black middle-class participants had in defining themselves as middle-class, despite their high-earning occupations. Thus, following Wacquant (1991), social classes can be seen as constructing their own methods for reproduction, and consequently have rules for membership inclusion and exclusion. 'Race' or ethnicity seems to function as one such rule for exclusion or inclusion with regards to the 'official' middle-class in Britain, with laissez-faire racism being the mediating factor by which the Black middle-class are denied the privileges of their socio-economic status.

Rather than engaging in armchair research, the shift towards laissez-faire racism from a more institutional form of racism can be identified by two respondents' statements on experiencing racism in secondary school. Gabriel, an educational consultant, recalled his

experience as a beginning student in grammar school, some years previous to the present day: *'The racism was ferocious from the other students in the school and some of the teachers... things like calling me names, like 'gollywog' and 'jungle bunny'; putting the blackboard rubber across my brow, marking my face. All day, all day, comments from them. So it was a miserable place'.* Compare this overt racism, institutionalised to the extent that even teachers partook in the name-calling, with Jean, a higher education lecturer, describing how her child negotiates racism in their school in the present day:

'...you're not gonna walk into the school and someone's gonna call you 'nigger.' But the absence of that doesn't mean everything else is [fine]. It's the subtlety and I think it is more on an interpersonal level now rather than institutional.'

What Jean is describing is the crystallization of laissez-faire racism, a 'kinder, gentler antiblack ideology' (Bobo

et al. 1997: 15). Bobo et al. (1997: 16) have used this term to understand the demise of Jim Crow segregation in America towards more subtle forms of racism whereby 'state policy is formally race-neutral and committed to anti-discrimination; and when most white Americans prefer a more volitional and cultural, as opposed to inherent and biological, interpretation of blacks' disadvantaged status'. Although laissez-faire racism is therefore a term used in the context of America, it has direct applicability in the Britain. Although Britain did not have segregation laws to the same extent as America's Jim Crow laws, there were the infamous 'No Coloureds, No Irish, No Dogs' signs in the 1940s and 50s, followed by 'Go Black Home' in the 1970s and 80s, both indicative of the widespread hostility towards the Black-British.

However, if we look at racial discourse in contemporary Britain, such discourse



is highlighted not by anti-racism but by 'anti-racialism' whereby racial categories and concepts are 'evaporated' into thin air within a colour-blind regime (Kapoor, 2011: 1029). This silencing of racial discourse has been perpetuated since New Labour came to office in the 1990s. New Labour's preoccupation with community cohesion symbolized that 'cultural diversity had become a problem of such magnitude that it needed to be effaced' (Kapoor, 2011: 1036). Secondly, on face value, anti-discrimination and employment laws such as the 2000 Race Relations Act, the creation of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, and the 2010 Amendment to the 2000 Race Relations Act seem to create a structure which ensures equal opportunity to all, regardless of gender or race. Contrary to what seems prima-facie evident, such equal opportunity laws deliver a blow to institutional racism, but allow laissez-faire racism in through the back door, unnoticed. This is because in



a structure that appears to endorse equal opportunity as a legal right and obligation, a persistency 'to blame blacks themselves for the black-white gap in socioeconomic standing, and resistance to meaningful policy efforts to ameliorate...racist social conditions and institutions' becomes the dominant form of racism – laissez-faire racism (Bobo et al., 1997: 16).

With this understanding of laissez-faire racism as involving the blaming of the culture and individual failings of members of certain racial groups for their lower standing, Black-British middle-class experiences of secondary school provides an interesting case study. With regards to educational attainment in Britain, individuals of Black Caribbean ethnicity are consistently outranked by other ethnic categories (Gillborn et al. 2012). However, this consistent underperformance is essentialised as a characteristic of Britain's Black Caribbean population, deriving from their cultural outlook, which does not prioritise education. This example of laissez-faire racism is normalised to the extent that The Guardian, with no repercussions, published an article which argued that not racism but Black

students' 'peer group culture' is to blame for their underachievement³. Similarly, Prospect Magazine published an article arguing that 'African-Caribbean boys... have failed their GCSEs because they did not do the homework, did not pay attention and were disrespectful to their teachers'⁴.

By silencing discourse on racism in the education system, teachers have 'systematically lower academic expectations for Black children... regardless of the students' social class background' (Gillborn, 2012: 121). Subsequently, Black middle-class students' educational progress is circumscribed by negative stereotyping and, by extension, lack of positive teacher attention and interaction. This hindrance

to success manifests itself in a multiplicity of ways, both directly and indirectly. Firstly, Black middle-class parents have found that racism is more common in private school settings, where there tends to be a lower amount of minority ethnicity students. This assertion is well illustrated by Felicia's (a lawyer) experience with moving her child away from a private school. With her son being racially bullied by other students, she claimed that *'it got to the stage that he just didn't want to go any more, but he wasn't saying why he didn't want to go... and this went on for a year ...*

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and his marks started dropping as well... When he left in the morning his head was down, he was hunched over'. The school in this case did not take any charges of racism seriously, and instead suggested that Felicia's son had a learning disability and ought to be referred to a specialist. In response to this ignorance from the school, Felicia took her son out of the private school only to receive a letter from the headmaster 'essentially suggesting my son was some sort of latent gangster, it talked about how he embraced the bling culture. I've never seen my son in any bling! ... If you look at his school reports, there's never been any suggestion of bad behaviour'.

Within such school settings, where there is an absence of ethnic diversity, the Black-body is 'othered' and alienated from the norm, being the subject to racist, racial intrigue. For example, Vanessa, a community development officer, talked about the 'zoologizing' (Rollock et al., 2011) of

her body: 'I remember children coming up to me to find out if my bottom was white or black because they just had no idea at all... they were shocked about my hair not being the same as theirs... they were just intrigued about me as a person'.

'I remember children coming up to me to find out if my bottom was white or black because they just had no idea at all... they were shocked about my hair not being the same as theirs... they were just intrigued about me as a person'.

Similarly, both Brenda, head of research for a voluntary organisation, and Barbara, a health care professional, discussed how Black students in their schools were automatically put in the 'lower sets' for the less-bright students without any formal test to justify this decision. This tacit dismissal of Black students' educational aspirations can also be seen in the case of Robert's (a higher education academic) daughter, whereby his daughter's achievements would be omitted from school reports and magazines: 'I couldn't quite understand how it was that her achievements were omitted; clearly she

wasn't their blue-eyed person. Whereas someone else's comparable achievement hadn't been omitted'. Similarly, Vanessa, a community development officer, despite her son eventually leaving school with a very strong academic record, was told at a Parents' Evening with regards to her son's recent results that 'Well you got a pass, so what more do you want? Where we weren't expecting you to get a pass'.

By consequence, many Black middle-class parents move their children to more ethnically diverse schools under the belief that racism is less likely to occur there. However, in many cases such schools were often less academically oriented, and consequently their children were denied the resources to increase their educational attainment (Ball et al., 2011). For example, Elsa, a Senior Human Resources Manager, talked about the drawbacks of sending her son to a less academically oriented school in favour of a more diverse one, claiming that she worries about the negative influences of 'what I can only call his bad boy friends... I keep trying to say to him they are not really friends, they are just kind of fly by night people'. Elsa's comments implicitly refer to the distinction Moore made between 'multi-class' and 'middle-class minded' individuals (2008: 504), with the latter preferring not to socially mix with those of lower classes.



‘acts as a form of embodied capital that disrupts and lessens the worth of [their] cultural capital’ (Rollock, 2014: 458).

In conclusion, the doctrine of post-racialism, or colour-blindness, is pervasive in British society. However, in virtue of the widely accepted belief that society is post-racial, laissez-faire racism is allowed to continue because ‘if we overlook the effect of racism in society, if we pretend that race and racism do not exist, then racism is not a problem to be fought, allowing it to persist and flourish’ (Burkhalter, 2006: 176). Black-British middle-class experiences of secondary school offer an interesting way to analyse how laissez-faire racism functions in society. Despite their increased economic and cultural capital, Black middle-class students still face barriers in the education system such that their increased socio-economic status does not translate into increased educational attainment. However, the problem of racism in the education system is overlooked, and instead the laissez-faire racist assumption – that the underperforming students themselves are to blame – has become the normalised assumption. Social science has a key role to play in the debunking of this current racist ideology – as Phillips and Sarre (1995: 91) commented: ‘if social science has any claims to be an emancipatory activity, it should challenge middle-class Whiteness as a principle just as it refutes it as empirically outdated’.

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CLASSIC TOPICS, CHOICE FOR TEACHERS AND A CONTEMPORARY APPROACH

OCR 2015 New specification summary
by Ewan Brady, OCR Subject Specialist

Our new GCE Sociology specification still covers classic aspects of Sociology, for example, Socialisation, culture and identity and Researching and understanding social inequalities. We continue to offer a choice of the most popular topics, such as families and relationships and crime and deviance. However, the aspect of the course that we and Sociology teachers are most excited about is our new contemporary topic on Globalisation and the Digital Social World. The course was developed following consultation with higher education and Sociology teachers

from schools and colleges. There was a demand, in particular, for a topic on globalisation and digital sociology.

KEY FEATURES AND BENEFITS OF NEW OCR SOCIOLOGY

- Straightforward specifications with choice for teachers and students
- Co teachability of AS and A Level
- A new assessment model with a range of short, medium and long answer questions
- A contemporary approach with a new

section on Globalisation and the digital social world

- Improved support and more teacher guidance from OCR

SUPPORT

- A range of resources for teachers - Plans, Delivery Guides, Topic Explorations, Lesson Elements
- Help to prepare your students - Exam Creator and Mock exam service
- Personal support from OCR Subject Specialists

STRUCTURE

- Component 1 – Socialisation, culture and identity – including one of three options
- Component 2 – Researching and understanding social inequalities
- Component 3 – Debates in contemporary society – including one of three options

CO TEACHABILITY

The course has been designed to allow easy co teachability of AS and A Level

AS students and students progressing to the full A Level can be taught together.

CONTENT

Component 1

Section A: Introducing socialisation, culture and identity

- What is culture?
- What is socialisation?
- What is identity?

Section B: Options (choose one of three)

- Families and relationships

- Youth subcultures
- Media

Component 2

Sections A: Research methods and researching social inequalities

- What is the relationship between theory and methods?
- What are the main stages of the research process?
- Which methods are used in sociological research?

Section B: Understanding social inequalities

- What are the main patterns and trends in social inequality and difference?
- How can patterns and trends in social equality and difference be explained?

Component 3

Section A: Globalisation and the digital social world

- What is the relationship between globalisation and digital forms of communication?
- What is the impact of digital forms of communication in a global context?

Section B: Options (students choose one of three)

- All three options include a global aspect
- Crime and deviance
- Education
- Religion, belief and faith

ASSESSMENT

- We've changed our assessment with a range of short, medium and long answer questions.
- We've introduced source questions to allow teachers and students to focus on skills.

WHAT STAYS THE SAME, WHAT CHANGES?

We've kept the most popular aspects of our course and brought in changes following discussions with teachers and other stakeholders. We've:

- Kept a solid foundation of classic topics
- Maintained a choice of topics for teachers
- Changed our assessment
- Introduced an exciting new topic
- Improved our support for teachers

FREE TRAINING

We'll be holding two free series of events:

- 'Introducing the new specification' courses in November and December 2014 in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, and Bristol
- 'A guide to first teaching' courses in June 2015 in London, Bristol, Birmingham and Manchester
<https://www.cpdhub.ocr.org.uk>

SUPPORT MATERIALS

In addition to the specification, and sample papers and mark schemes we'll have a range of resources:

- Delivery Guides contain expert guidance on the key concepts, links to other parts of the course, approaches to teaching

and suggested teaching activities.

- Topic Exploration Packs provide general teacher guidance about a range of potential approaches for delivering a particular topic, e.g. Marxism. They'll include a number of creative and engaging lesson activities.
- Lesson Elements provide all the materials necessary to deliver a creative classroom activity.
- There will be other support including:
- ExamCreator
- A mock exam service

The specification, sample papers and mark schemes and a range of teaching and learning resources are available on the qualification page:

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-a-level-gce-sociology-h180-h580-from-2015/>

Hodder will be publishing endorsed OCR textbooks in 2015. A sample chapter will be available soon.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you have questions about our new course contact the Sociology Subject Specialists at sociology@ocr.org.uk

Sign up for Sociology updates at:

<http://ocr.org.uk/updates>

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Component 1 | <p>Section A A mix of short and medium questions, some source based</p> <p>Section B Three questions</p> <p>1 hour 30 minutes 90 marks</p> |
| Component 2 | <p>Section A A mix of short and medium questions, some source based</p> <p>Section B Two compulsory long questions</p> <p>2 hours 15 minutes 105 marks</p> |
| Component 3 | <p>Section A A mix of short and medium questions, some source based</p> <p>Section B Three questions</p> <p>2 hours 15 minutes 105 marks</p> |



Classic yet modern, familiar yet fresh, engaging with a contemporary approach.

AQA's AS and A-level Sociology specification is fresh, relevant to the modern world and based on the existing highly popular specification.

AQA's new AS and A-level Sociology specification has been developed in consultation with practising teachers and subject specialists, Higher Education and the British Sociological Association.

Teachers will find a high degree of continuity from the existing specification to the new specification but subject content has been updated where necessary to take into account contemporary social trends and developments within sociology.

In addition, concerns of teachers were taken into account during the development of the specification and subject content has been reduced in some areas, notably Crime and Deviance.

A summary of the changes from the existing specification can be found on AQA's website: [Summary of changes](#)

Co-teachability

The AS and A-level have been developed to be fully co-teachable, ensuring a seamless transition from modular to linear. The content of the AS is exactly the same as half of the content of the A-level, allowing little disruption to planning for teachers. First year A-level students and AS students can be taught in the same class.

A guide as to the co-teachability of the AS and A-level can be found on AQA's website: [Guide to co-teachability](#)

**Familiar
routes
to a new
destination**

| AS content – compulsory topics | A-level content – compulsory topics |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Education | Education |
| Methods in context | Methods in context |
| Research methods | Theory and Methods |
| | Crime and Deviance |
| AS content – optional topics | A-level content – optional topics |
| Culture and Identity | Culture and Identity |
| Families and Households | Families and Households |
| Health | Health |
| Work, Poverty and Welfare | Work, Poverty and Welfare |
| | Beliefs in Society |
| | Global Development |
| | The Media |
| | Stratification and Differentiation |

Content

AQA's most popular topics have been made compulsory, namely Education in respect of the AS and Education and Crime and Deviance in respect of the A-level. The specification provides an opportunity for students to apply their knowledge and understanding to research methods through the study of Methods in Context in the AS and A-level meeting the needs of Higher Education.

A wide range of optional topics has been retained, to provide the opportunity to respond flexibly to student's interests.

An overview of the content of AQA's new specification can be found on AQA's website: [Companion guide](#)

Assessment

The means of assessment has been simplified with clearly defined command words. The AS comprises two papers each of equal weighting and 1 ½ hours long. The two papers have a combination of questions requiring short and longer form answers. The highest tariff question holds 20 marks.

The A-level comprises three papers, each of equal weighting and lasting 2 hours. The three papers have a combination of questions requiring short and longer form answers. The highest tariff question holds 30 marks.

The specimen assessment materials can be found on AQA's website: [Specimen assessment materials](#)

Future training events

Following the success of AQA's launch events in July and September, further free face-to-face events are being organised between November and February, providing teachers with the opportunity to find out more about the new Sociology AS and A-level specification.

These events will allow teachers to learn more about the content, assessment objectives, assessment structure and resources for the new AS and A-level Sociology specifications. They will also be able to have their questions answered by our team, which includes a senior examiner involved in developing the new specification.

Preparing to teach courses will be held from early spring next year. These will be free, face-to-face events which include further direction on the new content and the application of the new mark schemes, using marked student answers for the specimen assessment materials. Details of these will be available on our website shortly.

Textbooks

Polity, Collins and Hodder have been selected to enter the AQA approval process for AS and A-level Sociology. Upon successful completion of the process, the books will be published as 'AQA approved'.

Resources

The following will be available on our website early January 2015:

- new online resources including schemes of work with supporting material
- student answers to the specimen assessment materials which have been marked by the examiners with a commentary
- a second set of specimen assessment materials, which can be used for the purposes of a mock exam, will be available on our secure area of our website.



The following will be available by December 2015:

- a glossary of recent studies to support our new specification and provide teachers with fresh new materials to engage students in the delivery of the new specification
- a teaching guide to our new specification providing further amplification of the content of the new specification.
- There will be a choice of further face-to-face or online teacher support and CPD courses to support the new specification, from Autumn 2015.

For further information please contact AQA:
E: sociology@aqa.org.uk
T: 01483 477822







WJEC/Eduqas GCE Sociology for first teaching in 2015

In common with the other exam boards, WJEC has revised GCE Sociology for first teaching in 2015, first GCE award in 2017 (AS in 2016). The England qualification, regulated by Ofqual, uses WJEC's new brand, Eduqas, introduced so that teachers may clearly distinguish between specifications for use in England and in Wales.

Those centres already familiar with the WJEC specification will find little to disturb them in the changeover to the new specification. There are obvious differences common to all exam boards' specifications resulting from regulatory requirements. In practical terms however, the content has been both simplified and clarified for teachers in a way which ensures that much previous

material produced by centres will still be useful provided that it is still relevant.

Changes to the specification

The major change common to all new GCE specifications for use in England is that AS is now a standalone qualification which does not contribute to the overall A level award. Otherwise, the biggest change for the new Eduqas specification is the prominence of Research Methods. This has become a standalone topic (component 2) with a separate examination just on methodology at both the AS and A level.

This change was prompted as a result of WJEC's consultation with teachers. Many regretted the loss of coursework in

the previous specification reorganisation, so it seemed appropriate that those who wish to teach methodology through project work can still do so, and prepare students for examination. However, it may also be taught alongside existing topics and integrated into teaching content.

The route through the specification is simple and is reflected in the papers. In AS component one, there is short introductory element on culture and identity. This is followed by options on either families and households or youth culture in section B and options on either education, media or religion in section C.

Component 2 will focus on methods of sociological enquiry.

At A level, component one will look at key concepts and processes of cultural transmission and the acquisition of identity. Section B will offer a choice between families and households or youth culture and options on either education, media or religion in section C.

Component 2 will focus on methods of sociological enquiry.

The third component focuses on power and stratification and includes a choice from one of four options: crime, health, politics and world sociology. A level candidates will need to answer a further question on the theme of stratification and differentiation.

Question papers will look broadly similar, but there is much more choice introduced into the options, so candidates will have compulsory knowledge questions, but can choose from essay questions for their extended writing.

In terms of content, the WJEC GCE specification in Wales will look broadly similar. However, the AS will contribute 40% to the overall award. Further details of the accredited qualification will be posted on our website shortly.

Training events

A range of training events are planned across England and Wales. We will be running free CPD meetings in the 2014/2015 academic year to help teachers prepare to teach the new specification. Centres should look at the Eduqas/WJEC website in the first

instance, or contact the subject officer, Jo Lewis, whose contact details appear below, for further information.

Support and resources

There are a range of existing resources tailored to the existing WJEC specification that will remain useful and relevant. A teacher guide is being prepared and a textbook will be available in 2015. There will be a very detailed online resource available on research methods that has been tailored to this specification, but which will support generic teaching. All of this material, with the exception of the textbook, will be freely available on-line on the Eduqas and WJEC websites.

For further information and support, please contact the subject officer, Jo Lewis, directly on joanna.lewis@wjec.co.uk





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, website and book reviews for you to explore.

Thomas Piketty : Capital for the 21st Century

Review by Mark Kirby

In this book, Piketty has taken large-scale datasets on income and wealth distribution and used this as the basis for an analysis of the structure of contemporary capitalism. All the data is online and apart from one minor spat with the FT his data seem to have been accepted.

Piketty provides a brief history of the treatment of inequality finishing with the ideas of Simon Kuznets. He argues that : "Turning from the 19th century analysis of Ricardo and Marx to the 20th century analysis of Simon Kuznets, we might say that economists' no doubt overly developed taste for apocalyptic predictions gave way to a similarly excessive fondness for fairy tales, or at any rate happy endings." (p.11).

Kuznets had analysed income data for the USA and on the basis of this concluded that the level of inequality under capitalism which was initially high would decline. As a result all we needed to do was wait and help economic growth as this would help all due to shift to a more equal distribution. The evidence for this is a fall in inequality in income between 1913 and 1948.

Kuznets used this data to deliver a speech arguing that inequality everywhere would follow a Bell Curve where it first increases and then decreases as economic development occurs.

Piketty points out that the figures Kuznets used point to an unusual period covering the two World Wars where inequality did fall but this was unusual and as a result not a good basis for a wider theory.

Piketty uses his data to show that in fact the trend over time is quite the reverse of that suggested by Kuznets. He argues that where we did see falls in inequality these were due to particular tax and state investment policies that meant that productivity growth in the period 1950 to 1980 was 2.3% annually while in the period 1990 to 2010 it was only 1.4% annually.

Since 1980 it is clear that there has

been a resurgence of inequality and Piketty points to the way the income accruing to capital has gone up from between 15 to 25% in 1970 to between 25 and 30% in 2010 for rich countries.

The key reasons he gives for this are the reductions in income tax and the greater returns offered to investment income as opposed to more productive uses of capital.

Piketty points out that the return on investment is currently of the order of 4-5% annually while the level of economic growth in advanced industrial countries is only of the order of 1-1.5%.

He argues that when this occurs, capital ownership becomes more concentrated and therefore society more unequal. Inherited wealth becomes more important as a result.

He provides the following as a summary of the results: "The history of inequality is shaped by the way economic, social and political actors view what is just and what is not, as well as by the relative power of those actors and the collective choices that result." (P.20)

He points out that as well as the processes tending towards greater inequality there are also countervailing factors leading towards greater equality, mainly the diffusion of knowledge and the development of skills. This can be seen in the emergent economics such as China and India. However this is swamped by the forces pushing for more inequality.

He points to the level of private wealth being equal to about 6-7 years national

income in Europe in 1910, down to about 2-3 years in 1950 and rising again to 4-6 years in 2010.

Thus although maybe when we were doing our Sociology A level it was possible to believe that there was progress, it has clearly very quickly gone into reverse and we are indeed moving back to the kind of society portrayed on Downton Abbey.

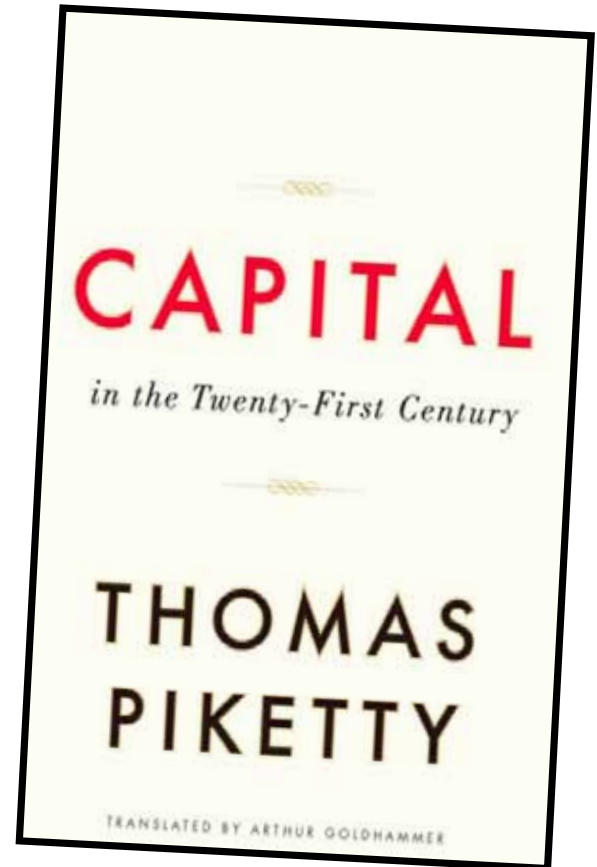
What is to be Done?

Piketty argues for the importance of a proactive state and raising the top level of income tax. He also calls for a tax on capital and on financial institutions.

Unlike Marx and the capital of the 19th century, this book's prescriptions are essentially a Keynesian critique of rentier type capitalism. There is nothing necessarily wrong with that compared to a lot but it is not a call for revolution.

The important question of who might be the agent to create this proactive state is an important one for the UK with the general neo-liberal approach of the labour party.

However if you wish to explore levels of inequality and some of the reasons for it, the book and the associated online database will be very valuable resources.



Collins have produced a very good Sociology resource that aims to use comic book style layout and visualisation to present key terms and ideas to students.

Each book has 48 pages that covers a wide range of concepts and ideas such as “culture”, “globalisation” and “questionnaires”. Each word/term gets a page in which the concept is defined and points made that link to the A Level and GCSE specifications for all exam boards.

I think the illustrations are excellent: I like the style of Matt Timson's artwork very much, as did the students that I used the book with in lesson time. For example, to illustrate the idea of “post-modern feminism”, Matt Timson drew five different women who portray the wide diversity of femininities in society today. This is thoughtful and stimulating, allowing students a chance to visualise ideas well. The illustrations are consistently high standard throughout both books but if I was to be picky, the portrayal of “J.T” in the “Gang Leader for a Day” study by Sudhir Venkatesh isn't accurate.

On pages 2-3 of the Methods book “J.T” (the leader of the “Black Kings” gang that Venkatesh studied) is depicted with “bling”, shades and a bandana but Venkatesh describes “J.T” as the opposite to the “bling” stereotype of gang leader in his work.

This book is not aimed to be a textbook that offers the depth of understanding needed for extended essays (it's a quick read) but can be used as a revision stimulus or a quick recap read through source. Very useful to have a class set that can be used in quick, short moments of lessons. Students who are fans of comics will naturally connect with it. It is well written and very accessible.

The textbooks come with Teacher Guides that have a range of questions that could be used in class discussions or used as part of a worksheet that teachers could construct, based on the pages in the textbook. These would be very useful for the non-specialist teacher of Sociology. There are detailed references and biographies of key sociologists that can be used to find further reading.

Reviewer: Patrick Robinson Resource: Collins, Sociology in Pictures Textbooks.

Two different titles available:

For Theories and Concepts,

ISBN : 978-0-00-754266-6

Teacher's Guide:

ISBN: 978-0-00-754267-3

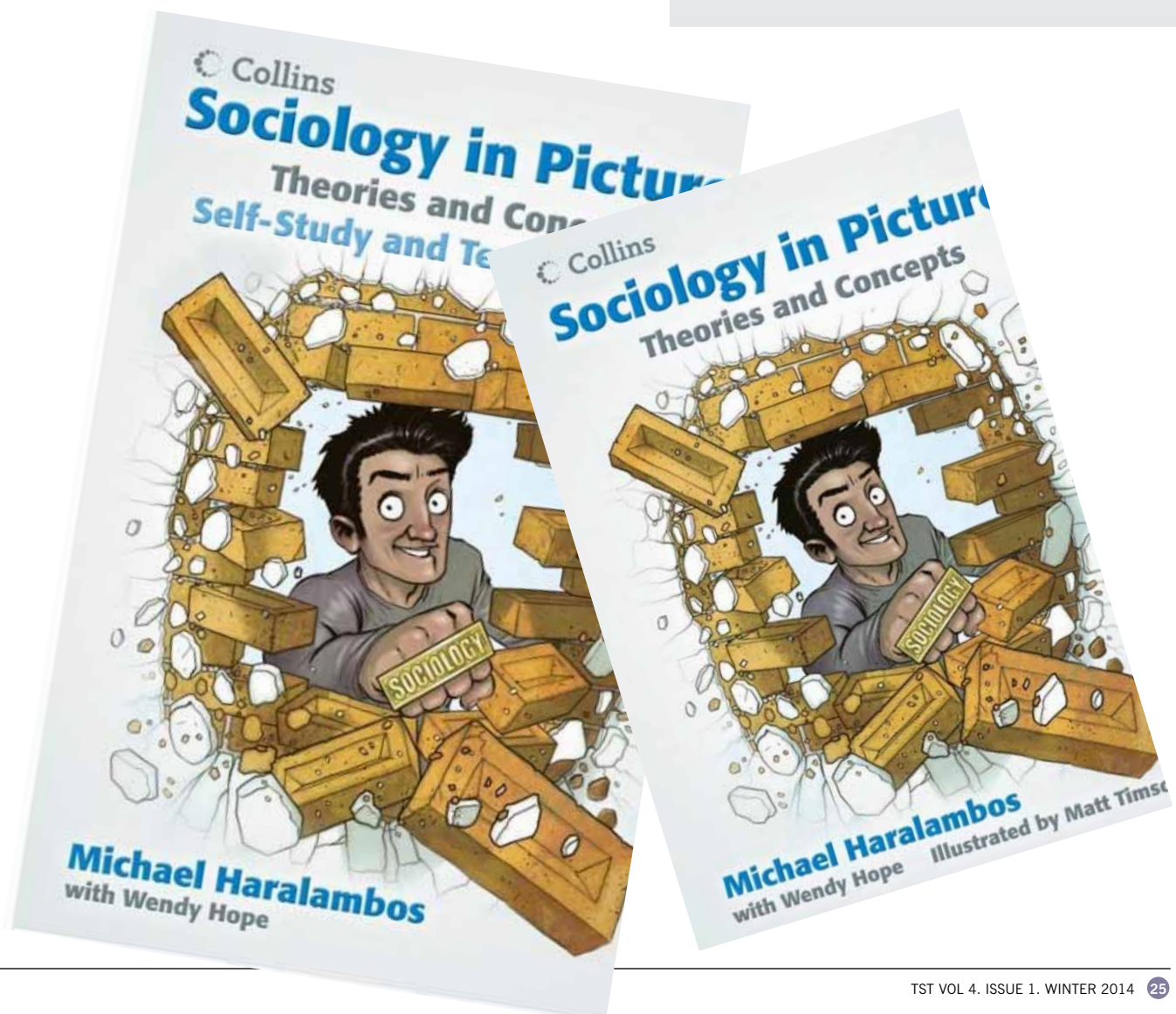
and Research Methods:

ISBN: 978-0-00-748193-4,

Teacher's Guide:

ISBN: 978-0-00-748283-2

Made By Michael Haralambos
with Wendy Hope, Illustrated
by Matt Timson



BSA Teaching Group National Sixth Form Sociology Competition - Autumn 2014

Win yourself an iPad Mini and £250 for your school!



If you are aged 16-19 and think you can answer this question in a 2000 word essay or 10 minute podcast/YouTube clip, you could win yourself a fabulous Apple iPad Mini as well as whopping £250 for your school!

“Why might sociologists think social inclusion is important?”

Our National Sixth Form Competition, sponsored by Polity, 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 you to be as creative as possible with your answers!

The closing date for entries is **Friday 12 December 2014**. For further information please email bsatg@britsoc.org.uk or telephone: (0191) 383 0839.

How to enter:

Please email your entry with a completed entry form to bsatg@britsoc.org.uk or post it to: BSA Teaching Group, 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).
- Essays must not exceed 2,000 words (excluding bibliography, figures, tables etc.).
- Filming for podcast / YouTube entry may 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.
- Essays must be written in the English language.
- The judges' decision is final.

Entry details

Title _____ Surname _____ First name(s) _____
 School / College name _____
 School / College address _____
 _____ Postcode _____
 School / College Year _____ Email address _____
 Tel. no. (Day) _____ Mobile No. _____ Date of birth _____
 Entry format: Essay () Podcast () YouTube clip ()
 Teacher's name _____ Teacher's Email address _____ Date _____



BSA Teaching Group Regional Conference

Expanding the Sociological Canon

**Saturday 28 February 2015
Birmingham City University**

The BSA's Teaching Group is pleased to announce a regional one day conference hosted by the Department of Sociology at Birmingham City University. This event is aimed specifically at sociology teachers and will bring together a variety of guest speakers.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 9.30 | Registration, tea & coffee |
| 10.00 | Introduction and welcome to Birmingham City University by Dr Kehinde Andrews |
| 10.15 | 1st Lecture (Gender and activism) |
| 11.00 | Examination board presentation |
| 11.30 | Break, tea & coffee |
| 11.45 | Examination board presentation |
| 12.15 | Lunch with networking time – delegates will be invited to bring at least one resource with them which they find useful in the classroom. |
| 13.15 | 2nd Lecture - Patrick Robinson (Subject update on Global culture and Social Networks) |
| 13.45 | Postgraduate Micro-lectures |
| 14.45 | Break, coffee & tea |
| 15:00 | 3rd Lecture (Whiteness) |
| 15:45 | 4th Lecture (Black Studies) |
| 16:30 | Close |

Delegate rates:

BSA Member £50; Non-member £70

BSA Concessionary (student) member £35; Non-member (student) £40

Registration: <http://portal.britsoc.co.uk/public/event/eventBooking.aspx?id=EVT10386>

For further information please contact the BSA: bsatg@britsoc.co.uk or Tel: (0191) 370 6639

For academic enquiries please contact: kehinde.andrews@bcu.ac.uk

Sociology teachers in schools and sixth form colleges, are now offered full BSA membership at the concessionary rate of £57pa (Jan to Dec), with the following benefits:

- Exclusive access to the BSA members area <http://www.britsoc.co.uk/>
- Huge discounts on conference and event registration
- Up to 50% discount on selected SAGE Publications books and journals
- FREE access to SAGE Sociology Full-Text Collection with over 45,900 articles
- Choice of international BSA journals, 'Sociology' or 'Work, Employment & Society'
- Three issues per year of the BSA's popular magazine, 'Network'
- Exclusive eligibility for BSA National Sixth Form Sociology Competition and funding opportunities
- And of course existing, valued Teaching Group member benefits, which include:
 - FREE subscription to The Sociology Teacher, the online journal published three times a year which includes articles written by leading academics in the Social Sciences, reviews of recently published books and other informative editorial.
 - Regional staff and student events which include member discount
 - Regular news and views, ideas and proposals for lessons and a range of useful resources
 - Support enabling you to raise the profile of Social Science teaching in your own region



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