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ABSTRACT

This new British journal is a medium of communication for those involved in teaching social science and social studies at the secondary and elementary levels. The first article in this issue, Ian Shelton's "The Sociology of Everyday Life," describes an experimental short course in secondary sociology. The course is designed to produce an understanding of sociological methods and methodological problems through first hand investigations of the taken-for-granted rules which underpin all everyday life. The second article, "The Place of International Relations in Training Teachers of World Studies," by Peter Bradshaw and Norbert Briemann, purports the usefulness of international relations as an area of study from which teachers can derive an understanding of contemporary world society. The third article, Roland Meighan's "How Do You Start...?" suggests using attitude scales, self-assessment schedules, and questionnaires to test the adequacy of students' "common sense" ideas about social behavior. Examples given assess attitudes toward immigration, communications, national stereotypes, and crime. A special interview with the chief of "A" level sociological exams explores the new syllabus to prepare secondary students for examination as well as the history of the exam, first instituted in 1965. Book review and correspondence sections complete the issue. (Author/JH)

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EDITORIAL

The Social Science Teacher

The publication of this edition marks another significant milestone in the development of ATSS. Following a series of very good conferences at Worcester, Manchester and London it became even more important to develop other services quickly. Publications had a clear priority.

The Monograph series has been launched and, with this edition, the Social Science Teacher takes on the format of a conventional journal. Aimed at teachers in schools, F.E. and teacher education it will contain papers concerned with both substantive issues in the social sciences and the 'nuts and bolts' of classroom practice as well as correspondence and reviews of books and resources.

Its main function will be to provide a medium of communication for those involved in the teaching of social science and social studies. Diversity of viewpoint is common in any area of the curriculum and these areas are no exception. Ultimately it can only be healthy for education in general and profitable for students and teachers in particular if new (and not-so-new) ideas are given public expression, no matter what their popularity, in order that they may be developed, modified, qualified or discarded as the case may be. Such is the task of the Association and of this journal.

Please may I leave the room ?

There can be few social studies courses in schools which do not include the term ' responsibility,' explicitly or implicitly, somewhere among their aims, objectives, purposes or justification. Yet one cannot but feel sceptical about the chances of achieving such aspirations while the attitudes of those at the apex of teacher training remain as they do. When a senior member of staff from an institution of higher education suggested recently to a distinguished professor of education (who was also director of his school and director of a Schools Council project) that he was willing to travel some ten thousand miles abroad at his own expense, to undertake research for his master's degree, what was the professor's first concern ? That the ' student,' who was studying in his own time, should write to another tutor, currently overseas, seeking his permission to be absent for the one lecture involved. Role model ? ? ?

THE SOCIOLOGY OF EVERYDAY LIFE

* Ian Shelton

The following is a description of a short course which some college of education students (1) and myself designed for, and used in, trials with over 60 5th Form girls from a local grammar school. The course took place during one week after the girls' 'O'-levels were completed; we were thus prompted to build into the course not only what we hoped were worthwhile issues, but also something approaching entertainment. In no way should this course be regarded as a model; our intention in reproducing it here is that teachers might offer constructive suggestions (gratefully received) and perhaps even feel able to try out some of the ideas in their own courses.

We committed ourselves to exploring issues not normally raised by current 'O' and 'A' level Sociology courses or, for that matter, in non-G.C.E. courses; specifically we wished to try and incorporate some features of interactionist and phenomenological perspectives (2) rather than notions of societal structure, institutions and the like. Thus we avoided orienting our course towards substantive institutional areas such as the family, or to such social 'problems' as crime, poverty or drug-taking. Given the recent reorientation of the literature within these latter areas, they might have been a strong candidate for inclusion in our course, but in the last analysis we wanted to avoid giving the impression that all sociologists are interested in are the seamier, juicier aspects of social life, true though it may be! The course should not, however, be judged too fiercely by the extent to which it tightly follows either or both of these 'new' perspectives; the students concerned, all 2nd Year students, had yet little experience of their basic assumptions, concepts and areas of concern. Consequently they were simply experimenting with a few ideas which seemed interesting to themselves, and which we all, intuitively, felt would interest pupils. (How we came to so 'intuite' might be worth a research paper in itself!). Finally, two further governing principles were evident: firstly, the need to experiment with type of materials, i.e. presentation, and secondly, the need to involve the girls in some direct experience of 'doing Sociology'.

The course as presented is of about twelve hours duration, although there are ample opportunities for expanding many sections. Broadly, our intention was to explore 'behind the scenes' of everyday life; we assumed that the day-to-day situations in which we all routinely participate embody a fine web of social rules which we take for granted, and the extent of which we are not always aware . . . except when the rules are broken. By the end of the course, we hoped that

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the girls would have developed some understanding of

(a) how sociologists might analyse aspects of human behaviour in everyday situations;

(b) the network of taken-for-granted rules which underpin all everyday life;

(c) some of the methodological problems in observing everyday situations.

Course Programme

Session 1a: Introduction to the course; an initial talk on the variety of rules underpinning everyday situations, e.g. rules of space and territory, of talk, of body movement; the nature of the 'taken-for-granted'.

Session 1b: Small group work using illustrative materials to analyse the above rules.

Session 2a: Small group work on the difficulties of interpreting rules within strange societies.

Session 2b: Full session with films analysing different interpretations that can be placed on identical events (depending on whether one is an outsider or an outsider) and the difficulties of standing outside our own social world and looking at it as would an outsider.

Session 3a: Small group work planning the observation session of the following day.

Session 3b: Meet in groups for planned activities — venues include the centres of Manchester and Altrincham.

Session 3c: Reconvene in school for (a) group analysis of the observation, and (b) full plenary session to report 'findings' and discuss difficulties encountered in observation.

Session 4a: Feature film selected to explore the breakdown of social rules.

Session 4b Small groups for the analysis of the film.

Session 4c: Full session to discuss how rules might break down in unusual circumstances, and questionning whether all social rules (at a taken-for-granted everyday level) could ever break down.

Session 1a

TAKEN-FOR-GRANTED RULES

This session commences with an 'experiment' in which one member of the team delivers a lecture designed to be excruciatingly boring. This experiment is an attempt to spontaneously explore the rules present in such audience situations. For example: what is the girls' initial response? how much boredom will be routinely accepted

and 'politely' tolerated? are there any rules for contravening rules (e.g. permissible side-activities)? what are the indications of boredom? does an audience try and normalise and make sense of what is really incomprehensible material presented in an incomprehensible manner? (3).

The above issues are briefly introduced to the students after the five-minute experiment. A second speaker then indicates that the purpose of the short course is to study taken-for-granted rules in such everyday situations, the kinds of rules we follow day in, day out: that our concern is less with murder and theft, and more with smaller rule-breakings. The following is the second speaker's text.

What then does it mean to talk of the taken-for-granted? It means that I assume that you see and understand the world in the same way that I do, or more crudely, I assume that everyone knows what I'm talking about. These kinds of assumptions we make only forcibly come home to us when they are broken:

> The subject was telling the experimenter, a member of the subject's car pool, about having had a flat tyre while going to work the previous day.
>
> (S) I had a flat tyre.
> (E) What do you mean, you had a flat tyre?
> She appeared momentarily stunned. Then she answered in a hostile way: 'What do you mean, "What do you mean?" A flat tyre is a flat tyre. That is what I meant. Nothing special. What a crazy question!' (4).

And

> On Friday night my husband and I were watching television. My husband remarked that he was tired. I asked, 'How are you feeling tired? Physically, mentally or just bored?'.
> (S) I don't know, I guess physically, mainly.
> (E) You mean that your muscles ache or your bones?
> (S) I guess so. Don't be so technical.
> (After more watching).
> (S) All these old movies have the same kind of old iron bedstead in them.
> (E) What do you mean? Do you mean all old movies, or some of them, or just the ones you have seen?
> (S) What's the matter with you? You know what I mean.
> (E) I wish you would be more specific.
> (S) You know what I mean! Drop dead! (5).

To illustrate the assumptions that we all make in the course of everyday living, one has only to question people about what they mean and quite quickly disorderly interaction ensues. The 'questionner' may well be seen as unwell, insane and certainly abnormal.

Furthermore, we all tend to agree in a taken-for-granted way that we perceive situations in the same way. A lecture is, indeed, perceived as a lecture by all of us. If, however, one challenges this basic interchangeability of standpoints, then, again, disordered interaction ensues. In one experiment (6) students were asked to spend a short time in their homes imagining that they were boarders and acting out this assumption. In many cases, family members were stupefied; "they vigorously sought to make the strange actions intelligible and to restore the situation to normal appearances. Reports were filled with accounts of astonishment, bewilderment, shock, anxiety, embarrassment, and anger, and with charges by various family members that the student was mean, inconsiderate, selfish, nasty or impolite. Family members demanded explanations: What's the matter? What's gotten into you? Did you get fired? Are you sick? What are you being so superior about? Why are you mad? Are you out of your mind or are you just stupid? One student acutely embarrassed his mother in front of her friends by asking if he could have a snack from the refrigerator. "Mind if you have a little snack? You've been eating little snacks around here for years without asking me. What's gotten into you?" One mother, infuriated when her daughter spoke to her only when she was spoken to, began to shriek in angry denunciation of the daughter for her disrespect and insubordination and refused to be calmed by the student's sister. A father berated his daughter for being insufficiently concerned for the welfare of others and of acting like a spoilt child". (6)

Deliberate misperception of situations clearly defined in other ways by other people can create interactional problems of considerable seriousness. Similarly, if we challenge the assumption that the social world is as it seems, if we refuse to accept things at their face value, if we, in other words, decline to trust routine behaviours by others, then similar problems arise. To illustrate this one would only have to engage another in conversation and to imagine and act on the assumption that what the other is saying is directed by hidden motives which were his real ones. For example:

Passenger: Does this bus go to Piccadilly?
Conductor: Yes, hop on . . .
Passenger: Are you sure it goes there — straight there?
Conductor: Look, I said it did, didn't I?
Passenger: You're not having me on, are you . . . it does go there now?
Conductor: Look, any more funny cracks from you and you're not getting on this bus at all . . .
Passenger: I'll just check with the driver . . .
(ding-ding).

We can now turn to examine the specific rules which underpin everyday action. There are many, for example, connected with talking.

A normal telephone conversation might open like this:

(ring-ring)
Called: Hello, 26373
Caller: Hello, it's Jim . . .
Called: Oh, hi . . .
Caller: I just thought I'd ring to check if . . .
etc.

Now such a routine interchange which most of us have experienced can become problematic if the normal sequence of conversation is revoked, i.e. if the called person does **not** speak first. For example:

(ring-ring)
(telephone is picked up)
(silence)
Caller: Hello, is anyone there?
Called: Yes.
Caller: Who is it I'm speaking to?
Called: Fred.
Caller: Fred Smith?
Called: Yes.
Caller: Oh, good, it's Jim here . . . I thought I'd got a misconnection or something . . . anyway, about tomorrow night . . .
etc.

Similar problems can be caused if the caller does not reply to the called's 'Hello' for it is usually incumbent upon him to reply; also if the caller does not provide the major topic of conversation, or specify that there is no particular topic but simply a chat. Failure to offer the topic may prompt enquiries about it, or may leave the called with a feeling of unease or dissatisfaction once the call has ended.

Rules also exist ensuring that only one speaker speaks at a time: interruptions are carefully dealt with by speakers. If interruptions are intended, then they may be skilfully managed (according to rules) to ensure the minimum conversational damage. Additionally, when talking, certain side activities are permissible whereas others are not: one can knit, but not pick one's nose, wave to someone else (without comment), or read a newspaper. Finally, there are rules governing the ending of conversations: try walking away from someone to whom you have been talking **without** indicating that the conversation is coming to an end, and without offering any farewells!

Obviously there is more to such a routine activity as having a conversation than meets the eye. Equally there is more than meets the eye in body movements and gestures. We all know that we can manipulate parts or all of our bodies to deliberately give information to others — we can close one eye, or raise an eyebrow, put a finger to our lips, pucker our lips, or raise our hands palmwards to another. Indeed there are rules about what to do with our bodies to affect communication. One fictional example perhaps not too far from the

truth is Preedy, a vacationing Englishman, making his first appearance on the beach of his summer holiday in Spain:

> But in any case he took care to avoid catching anyone's eyes. First of all he had to make it clear to those potential companions of his holiday that they were of no concern to him whatsoever. He stared through them, round them, over them — eyes lost in space. The beach might have been empty. If by chance a ball was thrown his way, he looked surprised; then let a smile of amusement lighten his face (Kindly Preedy), looked round dazed to see that there **were** people on the beach, tossed it back with a smile to himself and not a smile **at** the people, and then resumed carelessly his nonchalant survey of space.
>
> But it was time to institute a little parade, the parade of the Ideal Preedy. By devious handlings he gave any who wanted to a chance to see the title of his book — a Spanish translation of Homer, classic thus, but not daring, cosmopolitan too — and then gathered together his beach-wrap and bag into a neat sand-resistant pile (Methodical and Sensible Preedy), rose slowly to stretch at ease his huge frame (Big-Cat Preedy), and tossed aside his sandals (Carefree Preedy, after all).
>
> The marriage of Preedy and the sea! There were alternative rituals. The first involved the stroll that turns into a run and a dive straight into the water, thereafter smoothing into a strong splashless crawl towards the horizon. But of course not really to the horizon. Quite suddenly he would turn onto his back and thrash great white splashes with his legs, somehow showing that he could have swum further had he wanted to, and then would stand up a quarter out of the water for all to see who it was.
>
> The alternative course was simpler, it avoided the cold-water shock and it avoided the risk of appearing too high-spirited. The point was to appear to be so used to the sea, the Mediterranean, and this particular beach, that one might as well be in the sea as out of it. It involved a slow stroll down and into the edge of the water — not even noticing his toes were wet, land and water all the same to him! with his eyes up at the sky gravely surveying portents, invisible to others, of the weather (Local Fisherman Preedy). (7).

Molesworth had some idea of the rules with his Maths master:

> The only way with a Maths master is to hav a very worred xpression. Stare at the book intently with a deep frown as if furious that you cannot see the answer, at the same time scratch the head with the end of the pen. After 5 minits it is not safe to do nothing any longer. Brush away all objects which hav fallen out of the hair and out up hand.
> 'Sir?' (whisper)
> 'Please sir?' (louder)

'Yes, molesworth?' sa maths master. (Thinks: it is that uter worm agane).
'Sir I don't quite see this'.
(n b it is essential to sa you don't quite 'see' sum as this means you are only temporarily bafled by unruly equation and not that you don't kno the fanetest about any of it.
(Dialog continue:)
'What do you not see molesworth?' sa maths master (Thinks: a worthy dolt who is making an honest effort).
'number six sir i can't quite make it out sir'.
'What can you not make out molesworth?'
'number six sir.
'it is ail very simple molesworth if you had been paing atention to what i was saing at the beginning of the lesson. Go back to your desk and think.
This gets a boy nowhere but it shows he is keen which is important with maths masters.
Maths masters do not like neck of any kind and canot stand the casual approach.

HOW NOT TO APPROACH A MATHS MASTER

'Sir?'
'Sir Sir please?'
'Sir Sir please Sir?'
'Sir Sir please sir sir please?'
'Yes molesworth?'
'I simply haven't the fogiest about number six sir'.
'Indeed molesworth?'
'It's just a jumble of letters sir i mean i couldn't care less whether i got it right or not but what sort of an ass sir can hav written this book'.
(Maths master give below of rage and tear across room with dividers. He hurl me three times round head and then out of window). (8).

But not only can we deliberately give information about ourselves by virtue of what we say — and do, much of our body movement can give information without our being very much aware of it. For example, sitting with legs outstretched may indicate that a person feels at ease and confident, whereas sitting with legs and arms tightly compressed may indicate the opposite. Sitting with legs crossed towards someone may indicate a higher degree of friendliness than sitting with legs crossed away from the other.

There are also unwritten rules about eye contact. Over-protracted eye contact is defined as 'staring', but avoidance of any eye contact equally creates problems. Try having a conversation with someone without any eye contact — or in a more limited way, try to say goodbye to someone without eye contact. Normally in encounters with people

in public places (on streets, in shops etc.) we drop our eyes or avert them; to maintain eye contact signifies interest in precipitating conversation. Usually people go to extraordinary lengths to avoid contact, however, witness where people look when they are seated opposite others in train compartments or at cafe tables.

Eye contact may well be just one kind of territory we encounter or occupy during everyday life. There are 'public' territories such as parks which are open to all for most of the time; there are 'home' territories like hawkers' patches and children's dens; there are interactional territories like the space between two people conversing at a party. Try having a chat with someone in a crowded place and see how many others intrude on the space between you. It may be that eye contact is crucial here. There are further 'body' territories violation of which can cause discomfort. These territories cover both the body itself which others are not allowed to touch without permission or in clearly defined situations, and the surrounding area around the body. This latter surrounding space is not a fixed amount: sitting on the grass in a thinly populated park, one might feel affronted if a perfect stranger sits three feet away. In a crowded bus or train during the rush hour, another standing three inches away might be permissible so long as neither party gives indications of awareness of the other. Touch significantly varies between members of the family, strangers, males and females. And as indicated above, it varies in different situations; note how close to each other people stand in bus queues when (a) the weather is fine, and (b) the weather is wet! Clearly there are unmentionable ways of finding out for yourself the extent of the body territory claimed by others; obviously violations of certain touch rules invoke normal law enforcement procedures! So beware!

Session 1b

RULES AND STRATEGIES

This small group session is devoted to the analysis of some materials selected to illustrate some issues which have arisen in the first session (1a).

A. Telephone Conversations

Discussion of the following extracts. (9). They might raise such issues as: what happens when the person called does **not** speak first? or what happens when the person calling does **not** respond to the called person's opening words? or how do people cope with interruptions or with simultaneous talk?

Bill makes a telephone call to Sue. The ringing ceases when the receiver is lifted, but there is a silence.
Bill: Hello?
Sue: 5742.
Bill: Hello, this is Bill Frenton, is that Sue?

Called: Lost Property Office.
(pause)
Called: Lost Property Office.
(pause)
Called: Hello, Lost Property.
Caller: Hello
Called: Hello
(pause)
Called: Lost Property Office.
Caller: Pardon?
Called: Do you want the Lost Property Office?

*

simultaneously
Janet: Hello, 5072
Betty: Say, what's this I hear about
Janet: Hello
Betty: Janet?
Janet: Yes
Betty: Betty here . . . what's this I hear about . . . etc.

B. Body Movement and Gesture

Take for example cartoon-drawings of the 'masculine approach' as characterised by James Thurber (10). These could be used as a prompt for discussion of the ways in which we contrive to present ourselves so as to give others particular impressions of ourselves. Note:

The I'm-drinking-myself-to-death-and-nobody-can-stop-me method.
The you'll-never-see-me-again tactics
The unhappy-childhood story.
The man-of-the-world, or ordering-in-French, manouvre
The I'm-not-good-enough-for-you announcement
The just-a-little-boy system

C. Personal Space and Body Movement

The groups examined photographs of such social situations as a crowded underground train-carriage, an informal conversation between three people, a party, and a card-game across a table. (11). These provided various indications regarding body and interactional territories, regarding impressions 'given off' through body movement and gesture.

If time permitted, the groups could explore (a) how they themselves were seated in the room — how close to each other, and how close to the leader; (b) what impressionists on television pick up about people, e.g. Yarwood on Wilson and Heath. In addition, group leaders had the option of challenging the meanings of comments made by group members.

Session 2a

PROBLEMS IN OBSERVING AND INTERPRETING EVERYDAY LIFE

This session features group work on the difficulties of interpreting the rules within societies. The students examine Horace Miner's study (12) of 'Body Ritual Among the Nacirema', which is a description and analysis of certain American rituals but presented as a conventional anthropological study. The point of the exercise is not to reveal to the students the true nature of the analysis immediately, specifically that 'Nacirema' is 'American' spelt backwards, but only when you and they have commented on the strangeness of the 'primitive' tribe. They are often surprised, for example, at the way Nacirema women bake their heads in ovens, without realising that this is American women at the hairdresser.

The objectives of this section are to (a) illustrate the concept of 'ethnocentricism' and the idea of objectivity, (b) indicate that all our taken-for-granted assumptions and knowledge about the world are suspended when we are strangers to societies, or even strangers to different situations, and (c) illustrate that there are different ways of looking at the same situation. This means that from the students' point of view they should see that the outsider, stranger and sociologist can take nothing for granted in their observations and analyses, although they frequently do so; that interpretations depend upon who is observing and analysing, and the purpose of the observation and analysis. We take the everyday rules of our culture for granted and it is difficult to step outside and look at social life objectively.

Session 2b

PROBLEMS IN OBSERVING AND INTERPRETING EVERYDAY LIFE (Cont.)

Here we show films which might show how different interpretations can be placed upon the same event or situation, and to show how there is a great deal worthy of analysis around us of which we are normally unaware.

Firstly we show a 4-minute film (13) which contains everyday scenes from Manchester and District. The film is then re-shown under the title 'Ret-seh-cnam. The Divided Colony', and with a commentary which treats the visual material as would a stranger, particularly an anthropologist. The commentary is reprinted below together with indications of the visual 'shots'.

Ret-seh-cnam: The Divided Colony

"During our travels to the colder regions of the island, we came across a large settlement known to the natives as Ret-seh-cnam. We managed to penetrate into the centre of the settlement where amid the many dwellings of the tribesmen we found several sacred totems and idols. The guardians of the idols live nearby in small cavities in the earth, into which they are frequently seen entering and later re-appearing.

Statues in St. Peter's Sq. and Albert Sq. Public toilets.

Frequently we encountered hordes of natives dressed in their distinctive but strange costume, leaving and entering the nearby dwellings, even wandering aimlessly around. Here we see vivid illustrations of their peculiarities of dress.

Shops. Piccadilly gardens.

It took us a long time to realise that, although the inhabitants are all members of the same species, there are three major tribes living in the area. These tribes mix freely with each other during the hours of daylight, but at sunset they all wander back to their various types of dwelling.

The first of these tribes, the Temple-Dwellers, live in enormous temples which must surely reach the sky-gods. We understand these temples have a large number of inhabitants, mainly children. We were, however, inhibited from further observations by the dramatic and unaccounted for disappearance of one of our expedition in a small cave at the base of the temple. Perhaps he encountered the anger of the temple-gods by trespassing on sacred ground.

Multi-storey flats.

The lift

The second tribe, the People of the Long-Houses, display strange rituals entering and leaving dwellings. Despite the multiplicity of entrances into the long-house, individuals are restricted to but a few entrances. This may have something to do with the type of family structure.

Terraced houses

Hearsay suggests that the long-houses are partitioned into smaller family units. It does seem that only a ritual beating of the wooden entrance or the ceremonial use of magical metal can affect an entry into the hut.

Knocking on door. Using key.

This tribe seems to be declining, possibly due to the systematic destruction of their dwellings by the

temple dwellers, who overlook their scenes of devastation. It was rumoured that these temple-dwellers were using the much-feared 'destruction priests' to perform their terrifying acts, often using awesome apparatus the likes of which we had never seen before. These experts have already devastated large areas of land and are starting to threaten the stockade-dwellers.

Corporation demolition men, using mechanical diggers.

We were fortunate enough to witness the daily exodus of chariots to and from the stockades. Curiously, on these return treks, we noticed several hermit dwellings built beside the chariot tracks; and in some of these very small dwellings we actually sited hermits conducting personal chants.

Cars. Roadside telephone kiosks. Callers engaged in conversation.

The Stockade-Dwellers appear to be a very loose-knit community living mainly in pairs in their protected stockades. Apparently this tribe is very fearful of others — they build substantial barricades around their dwellings, using baked mud, rocks and treewood for materials. Rarely indeed do the people venture outside their territory without the protection of their chariots".

Detached houses in Wilmslow

The second film is quite different. It simply provides, without commentary, material about two young women talking on a narrow pavement. The film was shot from a high bridge so as to be able to record whether passers-by walked between the two women, or whether they avoided 'trespassing' on the territory the women had attempted to negotiate for themselves on the pavement. The film also raises questions about whether men or women are more likely to so trespass, whether one trespassing seems to clear the way for others, whether adjacent doorways or cars affect the likelihood of trespass. Finally, the difficulty of the experimenters in sustaining a conversation without awareness of the camera does raise wider questions about methods of studying social behaviour.

Sessions 3a, 3b and 3c

OBSERVATION AND EXPERIMENTATION IN EVERYDAY SITUATIONS

Groups meet to plan, and then to undertake, certain observational and/or experimental activities. The first of these, mandatory for all, is to attempt to write a short piece describing a social situation in which the observer finds him or herself; for example, inside a shop or snack bar. The description, which could be recorded documentary style on cassette, is to take the form of an anthropological commentary, thus presented in terms which a stranger would use.

This exercise aims to illustrate the difficulties in observing taken-for-granted situations around, and certainly the difficulty in describing those situations in the language of an outsider. Words like shop, snack bar, customer, plate etc. are temporarily suspended.

Further observation and experimentation is left to the interests (and courage) of the student taking part. Below are indicated some possibilities.

(a) Observation of seating in parks and cafes, particularly the distance between people. How do people reserve seats by body language? How do people respond to violations of territory — by sitting in adjacent seats when others elsewhere are free, or by moving props like sauce bottles and bags close?
How closely do people stand in queues? How do they deal with others standing at the other side of the bus sign? How near does the last person need to be to be recognised as part of the queue?

(b) See how people cope with a suspension of taken-for-granted meanings in interaction by asking directions in a foreign language, and then failing to understand the instructions. What kind of frustration is engendered, what helplessness?

(c) How do people cope with an incompatability of standpoints, of situational definition? Deliberately mistake someone's identity: a customer for a shop assistant, a stranger for a friend. It may be that there are rules for getting out of potentially embarrassing situations such as these, but what happens if the experimenter persists with his mistake: does it become easier for the subject/victim to go along with it?

(d) Having a conversation on a pavement or in another crowded place such as escalator exit/entrance. How do others deal with the territory you have attempted to gain for yourself through body position and eye contact?

(e) What happens if you challenge everyday assumptions about how we conduct ourselves in everyday situations like . . . shops? Try bartering for goods rather than accepting their face value: offer 20p it it's 25p, or even 30p if it's 25p.

Obviously many of these enterprises can but be called 'fun sociology'; nonetheless at the least the students may start to think about rules in everyday life with fresh eyes. At best a few regularities may emerge worthy of further investigation. What should certainly emerge is the difficulty the students themselves will have in sustaining some of the situations they are themselves creating. Some will have great difficulty in violating such rules as those of territory without protracted embarrassment. This should be no drawback, but rather a strength: it should promote useful discussion about the forcefulness of the social rules which they are studying.

Sessions 4a, 4b and 4c

THE BREAKDOWN OF RULES

These sessions are devoted to a showing, and discussion, of the feature film 'Lord of the Flies' (14). It is the well-known, but still powerful, story of young boys coping with being wrecked on a desert island with no adults.

The film is useful for discussion not least because of its explicit references to social rules. It raises interesting questions about

(a) how children try and imitate the rules of the adult world from which they have come;
(b) how social rules may break down in exceptional circumstances;
(c) whether the rules are a superficial gloss upon us, or deeply embedded;
(d) whether, despite the anarchy, some rules will still be preserved, particularly at the taken-for-granted level which has been considered during the course. Rules of talk and movement, for example, may still be preserved.

Notes

(1) John Bewick, John Brothers, Mike Haynes, Jim Langley, Dave Moores, John Shenton, Yvonne Waring, Pat Whitteron and Christine Young, all of Didsbury College of Education.

(2) For a brief introduction see G. Vulliamy, **New Perspectives in Sociology,** (Monograph No. 2 published by the Association for the Teaching of the Social Sciences, 1973).

(3) The girls' initial response was one of amusement, but as the 'lecturer' persisted with his address, the laughter died down; the ensuing quiet, together with audience-lecturer eye-contact and the decrease in audience side-activities, indicated that maybe the girls had started to re-interpret the situation. Discussion in small groups later (i.e. Session 1b) confirmed that whereas the girls had initially thought that we were playing for laughs, as the experiment continued they began to question that initial view and to re-interpret what was happening. It had become temporarily difficult to make sense of it all.
(Because we were strangers to the school and to the girls, the attraction of 'engineering' a situation for the girls to respond to was great; but the pay-off is so unpredictable that it could hardly be recommended to others. Are there any other ways of tackling it?).

(4) H. Garfinkel, **A Conception of, and Experiments with, 'Trust' as a Condition of Stable Concerted Actions,** in Harvey, O.J.(Ed.). **Motivation and Social Interaction,** (Ronald Press: N.Y. 1963).

(5) H. Garfinkel, ibid.

(6) H. Garfinkel ,Studies in Ethnomethodology, (Prentice-Hall, 1967).

(7) W. Sansom, **A Contest of Ladies,** (London: Hogarth, 1956).

(8) G. Willans & R. Searle, **Down with Skool!** (Parrish, 1958).

(9) For an introduction to members' rules regarding telephone conversations, see E. Schegloff, **Sequencing in conversational openings,** (American Anthropologist, 1968).

(10) J. Thurber, **Alarms and Diversions,** (Penguin, 1957).

(11) Some usable photographs are included in Julius Fast, **Body Language,** (Pan, 1971).

(12) H. Miner, **Body Ritual Among the Nacirema,** (American Anthropologist, Vol. 58, June, 1956).

(13) Prepared and filmed with the invaluable assistance of John Bewick, Glynis Cooper, Janet Dunckley and Jim Langley, of Didsbury College of Education.

(14) Distributed by the Rank Film Library, P.O. Box 70, Great West Road, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 9HR. (01-560 0762/3). Rental fee approx. £9.00 for a one-day showing.

THE PLACE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN TRAINING TEACHERS OF WORLD STUDIES

Peter Bradshaw and Norbert Briemann*

The nature of International Relations

An overall commitment to further children's understanding of the contemporary world is probably shared by almost all educationalists. But how is this understanding to be achieved? What role can teachers play in this process? And if teachers are to play a role, what kinds of training should they themselves experience?

It is with a partial answer to the last of these questions that this particular paper is concerned. The main purpose of the paper is to suggest some of the advantages of using International Relations as a suitable area of study from which teachers can derive an understanding of contemporary world society.

A necessary prelude to such a task may of course be to explain in relatively brief terms what is involved in the study of International Relations. Two topics suggest themselves in this context; subject matter and methodology. With regard to the former, some indication of the kind of subject material customarily dealt with in International Relations can be gained from the accompanying syllabus (Appendix 1), which we are using for one of our courses. In essence, International Relations is concerned with the explanation of all those relationships existing between individuals, groups and governments which take place on an international scale. Relationships in this sense cover the economic sphere (viz: our interest in the international economic system), the area of social relationships (as in our interest in the potential role of personal contacts in promoting regional integration), and, most important, those relationships which are overtly political in nature.

The prevailing methodology of International Relations can usefully be introduced by examining the subject within a particular historical context. It seems to us no surprise that International Relations as an academic pursuit has increasingly adopted systematic social science forms of explanation in the post-war period. This period of history has seen many fundamental changes in world society: changes which were unprecedented in their speed and impact, and changes which have not always been adequately dealt with by traditional academic disciplines, particularly those which have not adopted systematic forms of explanation. A world in which radical, economic, political, social, legal and technological change had become almost the norm was a world in which analysis of day to day events became less and less relevant. In responding to this situation International Relations

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developed a methodology, characteristic of contemporary social science in general, and emphasising the need for a set of concepts, typologies, hypotheses and theories capable of explaining the complex fabric of social events.

The implications of this type of approach for our attempt to understand global society are considerable. We ourselves would suggest that implicit in the use of a systematic Social Science type of explanation of International Relations are certain important lessons:—

1. The importance of a skilful use of what has been termed the "language of variables". By this we mean the need to build up explanations based upon the frequently complex relationships existing between the different variables usually underlying most social events.

2. An awareness of the significance and availability of the empirical evidence needed to test our hypotheses. In many situations, of course, an awareness of the unavailability of such evidence may be more significant.

3. The importance of the rigorous use of analogies and models both in teaching and research (in their widest senses).

4. The need for a greater precision in our use of language. Social Scientists should be aware of the pitfalls of ethnocentrism and cultural bias. Unfortunately the language of many recent textbooks in our field still provides a cautionary indication of the progress still to be made in this area.

Some further insight into the nature of the subject can be obtained by examining briefly one commonly used scheme for organising teaching and research in the field. This scheme identifies three levels of analysis used in International Relations, each one being used to provide some insights which the other two cannot themselves provide. The three levels can conveniently be described as: the international system level, the collective actor level, and the level of the individual.

At the most comprehensive of our three levels of analysis we use the concept of the international system. This gives a large-scale view of the interactions of the members of that system i.e. states, international organisations, coalitions, and regional groupings such as the E.E.C., multi-national companies and significant individuals. The structure of the international system crucially affects the behaviour of its constituent elements by establishing certain parameters for action. (E.G. the present super-power dominated bi-polar structure has a fundamental effect on the incidence of collaborative and conflict behaviour.)

In the second and third levels of analysis we are largely concerned with the decision-making processes of collective actors (states, international organisations, multi-national companies, etc.) and individual actors (statesmen and members of the public) respectively. The decision-making approach is a particularly desirable form for study in that most of human behaviour can be described as resulting from decisions. Two important academic corollaries follow from this suggestion: firstly, all those subjects such as Psychology, Sociology and History which often deal with concepts of choice and preference, perceptions and values, power and interest can be used to contribute to our ideas on this topic; and secondly, in so far as decision-making is important to all of us in our daily lives, an understanding of this area is highly desirable for all teachers dealing in any way with human behaviour.

The three levels of analysis outlined above cannot of course be applied too rigidly. Many of the themes discussed in the subject overlap the different levels to such a degree that they cannot be fitted into such a scheme. One such theme, a theme given particular attention in our courses, is the study of regional integration processes. A large amount of literature has been developed on this topic during the last fifteen years, much of which is theoretical employing, for example, functional and neo-functional explanations, communication models, etc. In our courses this theoretical material is combined with a case study of the processes of integration in Western Europe. In such a study it becomes clear that all three of the levels of analysis are relevant. A particular form of international system provides an environment for the integration of Europe; individual states pursue their own policies within Europe; and finally, individual statesmen, elite groups and whole populations play their role in the integration process.

Academic and vocational aspects of the Chorley course

It might now be useful to turn from the somewhat rarified atmosphere of International Relations methodology to a somewhat more mundane examination of the relevance of this to the training of teachers in world studies. In order to do this it might be useful firstly to refer again to the syllabus reproduced as Appendix I.

From this syllabus it can be seen that we attempt to provide a largely conventional exploration of the academic discipline known as International Relations. The subject matter studied shows little variation from that covered for example by most of the British and American university departments offering courses in this field.

In terms of the academic worth of our course we have no reason to doubt that the subject of International Relations can provide a body of ideas, concepts, empirical findings and explanatory structures on which a teacher's academic training can successfully be based.

The exploration of the subject provides ample scope for the development of all those skills of analysis, expression and normative judgment which are regarded as being the essential academic attributes of trained teachers.

For this particular paper, however, the suitability of International Relations as a discipline for developing the skills of trainee teachers is perhaps a less important issue than the feasibility of using this subject as a focus for training teachers in "world studies" or "education for international understanding". In this context the major strength of International Relations seems to be, as the term "International Relations" semantically suggests, in the subjects emphasis on the **relationships** existing between individual and groups of individuals on the international scale. The significance of such an emphasis becomes apparent when one considers the increasingly important part played by international relationships in affecting the basic ways of life of almost all mankind. Much of the impetus for teaching world studies seems to originate from the increasing political, economic and social inter-dependence of the modern world, and it thus becomes one of the major advantages of International Relations as a focus for world studies that the subject examines exactly how this global interdependence is structured. Other subjects and emphases may help us to understand the peoples with whom we are becoming interdependent, International Relations has the potential to examine the very nature of that interdependence and its impact on our daily lives.

As an illustration of this point one might suggest for example that when British children study the way of life of an Indian villager, it would be both academically realistic and socially desirable to draw the child's attention to the role of the international trade system (in which the child's government is an important actor) in setting some of the more important parameters of the Indian economy. In short, International Relations may have the ability to bring home to us all just how people at the other side of the globe are relevant to us and we to them.

Unfortunately, while a sophisticated understanding of our global relationships may be desirable, it is by no means easy to attain. Most children, students and teachers lack the necessary motivation and/or the necessary cognitive skills to make real sense of a highly complex and rapidly changing international environment. It is only too common for many teachers and older children to resort to the insular delusion that nation states are self-contained units, or to the kind of simplistic notion which for example characterises the E.E.C. as being the major source of rising prices in British shops. There are also those, who full of good intentions but somewhat naively embrace such causes as world peace or international understanding but who may not have any clear conception of how these aims are to be achieved.

In order to remedy this kind of misunderstanding or naiveté there is a need in our present educational system for the kind of systematic explanation of how global society operates which International Relations as a discipline provides.

Relating this claim to our own experience, we would suggest that our former students have found the opportunity to use their training in a vocational context and have found this training to be useful in furthering children's understanding of the world around them. With regard to these two assertions we do not unfortunately have any empirical evidence concerning improvemtnts in children's understanding, but we are able to list some of the situations in which international relations concepts and findings have been useful in a variety of teaching situations. Examples would include:

1. Opportunities to incorporate International Relations into secondary education courses in social studies.
2. Using International Relations findings to provide an extra dimension to understanding in well-established fields such as Geography or History.
3. Providing a more subtle interpretation of the world around us to primary school children at a time of important development in many of their political and social attitudes.

Our experience therefore has been that there is already a considerable vocational justification for training teachers with a competence in the field of International Relations. One important consequence of this for our students has been that an attempt has been made, particularly in our non-degree courses, to develop student expertise in the teaching of International Relations topics in schools. Some of the more important teaching methods commonly discussed in this context can be listed as follows:—

1. The use of case studies and projects. Project work in this sense might cover activities as diverse as the collection of foreign food labels by junior school children and studies of an on-going international dispute by sixth-form students.
2. The use of "discussion groups" ranging from primary school discussion of events in the previous evening's television viewing through to the "Stenhouse" approach to discussion of important social issues by secondary school children.
3. The availability and usefulness of existing text books in the world studies field.
4. Contributions to an understanding of International Relations arising from the creative arts.
5. The possibility of exploring student behaviour as an analogy of behaviour in world society (and vice versa).
6. The use of role-play, games and simulations. Students are exposed to existing exercises such as "Starpower" (a game for examining social stratification in domestic or world

society), "Prisoner's Dilemma" (an expression in mathematical terms of the problem of mutual trust) and "Crisis in Lagia" (a role-playing exercise developed by the "War and Society" team of the Schools Humanities Project). In addition, students also discuss the construction of similar exercises on an ad hoc basis to suit their own particular needs.

Education for International Understanding

In conclusion we need to say that the purpose of our study is not merely to analyse, to understand and to see relationships in a detached way. We are members of society, our society and international society. Students should, therefore, not only be able to observe political, economic and social developments in an informed manner but should be able and ready to participate as citizens. In the end there are values which cannot be demonstrated scientifically, they need to be argued, honestly and with serious intent. No social theory has been able to prove — and there are good logical reasons for this — that there is a basic underlying harmony of interest in human affairs or, on the other hand, that there is a basic condition of conflict. Much teaching which tends to present a world of harmony may lead to cynicism if the world persistently refuses to come up to expectations. Neither apolitical cynicism nor political extremism will advance the human cause.

Most central political decisions, e.g. about entering the E.E.C., about sanctions concerning arms to the Middle East, etc. are controversies which base themselves on contrasting points of view. Such conflicts of interest are resolved in the domestic sphere by particular institutions and processes. International Relations has a different and distinctive system of conflict resultion. The U.N. Assembly, for example, aids in the resolution of some disputes but it is not a parliament and cannot be better than its members allow it to be. Similarly one result of the nuclear parity between the super-powers has been to eliminate big wars as a means of resolving differences. However, other problems such as small wars, social injustice, poverty, over population or despotism still pose enormous problems for mankind to solve. Their solution depends on our capacity to learn, to control and to institute change. In deciding our attitudes as teachers of world studies some advice from the sociologist Raymond Aron seems particularly appropriate "It would be shameful to let ourselves be overcome by the woes of our generation and the dangers of the immediate future to the point where we abandon hope. But it would be no less so to abandon ourselves to Utopia and to ignore the wounds of our condition.

Nothing can prevent us from having two duties, duties that are not always compatible, toward our people and towards all peoples: one is to participate in the conflicts that constitute the web of history, and the other is to work for peace".

How we do this is open to doubt, whether we do it is not. In a limited way we would see the study of international relationships as providing more people, including schoolchildren, with the accurate understanding of world society needed if we are to cope with the major problems confronting us. The need for such understanding will, to quote Aron once more, "end only when man has finished with violence, or with hope".

APPENDIX 1

International Relations as an academic subject has been offered at Chorley College of Education since 1967. Initially the courses were provided for main subject and subsidiary subject students taking the Certificate of Education. Since 1971 courses leading to B.Ed. degrees from the University of Lancaster have also been offered. The syllabus reproduced below has been proposed as a revision of our Certificate (main subject) course, and is awaiting final approval.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AS A MAIN SUBJECT:

The aim of the course is to provide a systematic explanation of international relationships. Rather than dwelling on day to day events, the course attempts to provide an explanatory framework applicable to international affairs at any time past, present or future.

(1) Introduction

i) Forms of explanation in International Relations
ii) The nature of the contemporary international system

(2) Major actors in the international system and their behaviour
In this section of the course our examination of world society focusses upon the major participants in the contemporary international system. Some of the actors or participants discussed in this context are nation states, international organisations, multi-national corporations and terrorist groups. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of decision making processes, both in general terms and as they apply to specific actors. Also included in this section are a discussion of the general concepts of power and influence and an examination of the specific techniques of influence used in international relationships. Some examples of such techniques are the use of military force, propaganda, manipulation of economic relationships and diplomatic bargaining.

(3) Interaction patterns in international relationships
This part of the course supplements the insights gained from studying the behaviour of particular actors by providing an examination of the overall interaction patterns which characterise the international system.

Topics covered include:

—interaction patterns in crisis situations;

—past and possible future patterns of international interaction;

—the nature of the international economic system.

Additional topics dealt with in some depth are the integration of Western Europe and the role of the United Nations in international society.

(4) Special study

A piece of work involving personal research or critical analysis of any topic from the field of International Relations.

HOW DO YOU START . . . ? ONE APPROACH TO BEGINNING THE STUDY OF A TOPIC

by Roland Meighan*

Theme:

One way of starting a lesson, a series of lessons or a group or individual project on a new theme is the use of attitude scales, self-assessment schedules and questionnaires as a means of questioning the adequacy of 'common sense' ideas about social behaviour.

Introduction:

Since my remarks will appear to apply mostly, though not exclusively, to relatively formal lesson approaches, I feel it is important to stress that I see effective teaching as the use of a repertoire of techniques including formal, informal, class, group and individual, and 'open' and 'closed' approaches. The judgments as to the selection of the appropriate mix are, as I see it, heavily constrained by the situation in which one happens to be teaching. I want to deal with the situation that arises when a judgment has been made that a formal lesson is appropriate in a particular situation and a lesson has to be started.

A Range of Possibilities

In this situation, several choices are open to a teacher. These include the use of a game, a film, an 'impact' photoplay, a speaker, a simulation, a duplicated sheet, a radio or T.V. programme, a case history or a visit. Another possibility is to use an attitude scale or a self assessment schedule. What are the advantages of this last approach?

"But I already know all this . . . "

A common problem in the teaching of social science in schools is the belief, held by children and teachers that the existing stock of common sense and folk concepts children have is good enough. One advantage of the questionnaire, scale or schedule approach is that it increases the chances of laying this particular ghost—for a few hours at least. In addition it can arouse interest because the inadequacy of this existing stock of common knowledge may become exposed.

Example One: Topic—Immigration

(Source: "Foreign Places, Foreign Faces". Penguin Connexion Series 1968 P. 27)

*Roland Meighan is a lecturer in the School of Education, University of Birmingham

Quiz

This is a quiz with some general questions about foreigners in Britain and some questions just about our coloured population. I have included questions on colour in spite of the fact that large numbers of Britain's coloured population are not foreigners at all: they are British and hold British passports: many of their children will have lived in Britain all their lives.

Nevertheless, there are probably more strange ideas around about coloured immigrants than there are about less conspicuous foreigners from Europe.

How much do you know?
Test your knowledge here, and add up your score at the end.

Sample questions:

a) We usually think of Britain as an over-crowded place. But is it true that more people now come into the country than leave? Yes or No?

b) Anybody in Britain, foreign or British, can claim family allowances. True or false?

c) What percentage of Britain's population do you think is Jewish? (a) 0.8%; (b) 1.8%. (c) 8%.

d) How many coloured people do you think there are in Britain today? (a) 1 million; (b) 3 million; (c) 10 million.

e) The present population of Britain is 54 million. By the year 2000 it will be 70 million. How many coloured people do you think there will be by then? (a) 3 million; (b) 7 million; (c) 15 million.

f) How many Commonwealth immigrants do you think were refused entry to Britain on health grounds in 1966? (a) 50; (b) 1658; (c) 5476.

g) What percentage of Britain's hospital doctors do you think are foreign? (a) 2%; (b) 18%; (c) 33%.

h) There are more coloured nurses in British hospitals than coloured patients. True or false?

i) The average British white family has 2.5 children. How many does the average coloured family have? (a) 3.5; (b) 5; (c) 6.
This 'quiz' is then scored to give a crude indicator of how well informed the respondent is and how free from prejudice.
(Answers to sample questions incidentally are No, False, 0.8, 1 million, 3 million, 50, 33%, True, 3.5 and falling).

The quiz ends with this comment:

Now add up your score.

If you scored between 0 and 20, you are very well informed and free from prejudices against people of different nationality from your own.

If you scored between 25 and 50 you need to get fact sorted out from fiction, even though basically you do not mean foreigners any harm.

If you scored between 55 and 105 you have some very strange ideas! You are just believing what you want to believe instead of looking at the facts. You are probably telling yourself now that you don't believe the statistics in the quiz are accurate. They are accurate as far as it is possible to be. All the figures come from official sources of one sort or another, mostly from the Home Office.

Example Two: Topic—Communications and Language: The Use of Language to Mislead

(Source: Schools Council Sixth Form General Studies Project "Conflicts" Unit entitled 'Studying Conflict' P.5)

EMOTIVE LANGUAGE EXERCISE

The object is to describe as briefly as possible, the same phenomena from contrasting points of view. Do not turn the page until you have tried every question

Examples

We make concessions / They back down.
He is stubborn / I am firm.
We question / They interrogate.

Sample statements

a. We are backing Britain.

b. They investigate terrorism in freedom-loving countries.

c. Their fanatical suicide-squads rampaged through Saigon.

d. These wild-cat strikers are sabotaging both the economy and the Unions.

e. The Welfare State mollycoddles the lazy and the feckless.

f. They fritter away free periods in idle gossip and daydreaming.

g. I drive the Jag with flair and verve.

h. I respect tradition.

A Comment on the Vocabulary used in this Exercise

The language used here is appropriate for sixth formers but for use with other children, this idea might have to be adapted by a careful re-writing using language familiar to the particular group being taught.

Example Three: Topic—Nationalism and National Stereotypes

(Source: "Foreign Places, Foreign Faces". Penguin Connexions Series 1968 P.35)

Experiment 1

Try this quiz. You may prefer to do it as a group rather than individually. Below are a list of nationalities and a list of qualities. Rearrange the pairs of qualities to match the nationalities you think they best describe. Then turn to P.36. Here you will see the nationalities paired with the descriptions that British people most often use.

Sample items:

Nationality	**Qualities**
Chinese	passionate, intelligent
English	scientifically minded, tough
American	war loving, efficient
Russian	cowardly, warm blooded
German	mean, poor
Italian	cruel, hardworking
Scottish	sly, polite

Example Four: Topic—Attitudes to Crime

(Source: Schools Council Sixth Form General Studies Project "Crime" Unit entitled 'Crime : Facts and Attitude Tests' P.9)

ATTITUDES TEST

Instructions

This test tries to find out not what you **know** but what you **feel.**

You are therefore asked to give your opinion about various controversial matters connected with crime and criminals. It is not a question of giving right or wrong answers. It is a matter of **opinion.**

You will probably find it interesting to compare your opinions with those of other members of the class and also to compare your opinions now with those you hold at the end of the course when the test will be repeated. The test should also give you a fore-taste of the sort of arguments that will arise in discussion meetings.

Twenty-five controversial statements follow. You are asked to express an opinion about each statement by deciding which of the following responses most closely represents your feelings—

strongly agree
agree
undecided
disagree
strongly disagree

For each statement choose **one only** of the five possible responses and place a tick in the appropriate box.

You are allowed **ten minutes** for this test and there are twenty-five statements to consider. So don't ponder any of them too deeply or you won't finish.

Sample Items

1. The type of punishment an offender receives should be determined by the seriousness of the offence.
2. Capital punishment for murder should be brought back.
3. Sexual offenders against children should be severely punished.
4. The primary consideration in all types of prison should be to prevent escapes.
5. Knowledge of child behaviour is more important to a juvenile court magistrate than knowledge of the law.
6. Giving a violent offender a taste of his own medicine is not likely to stop him repeating the offence.
7. Parents who neglect their children should be punished.
8. Prescribing the right treatment for an adult offender is more important than meting out justice.
9. A person who refuses to work should receive no further help from society.
10. An offender who commits another offence after being given one chance has only himself to blame.

Final comment — a warning

The quality of schedule and questionnaires varies considerably. Those designed by a recognised social scientist are likely to be reliable and valid but those that appear from time to time in newspapers, women's magazines and colour supplements may often be suspect especially if they are put together by journalists. If you are not sure of the material or of your ability to handle it effectively, then there are reasons for deciding to keep away.

You could do more harm than good.

Postscript — Some Other Examples

Criminal Stereotypes in Connexions **Foreign Places, Foreign Faces.** P.38 Penguin 1968 price 40p.

National Stereotypes as above. P.38.

T.V. Advertising in Connexions **Break for Commercials** P.24 Penguin 1970 Price 40p.

Work in Connexions. **Standard of Living.** P.22 Penguin 1969. Price 40p.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Manchester Council for Community Relations,
44 Brazenose Street
Manchester M2 5AP

The Editor, The Social Science Teacher

Dear Sir,

In recent years, the presence in certain parts of Britain of a substantial coloured minority has encouraged a growing number of teachers to alter their syllabuses to include such topics as race; world religions; prejudice; black studies; the geography, history and literature of Asia, Africa and the West Indies; the social and cultural background of immigrants; etc. In multi-racial schools, in particular, people feel that introducing such topics can lead to greater understanding. Others in all-white schools also feel that it is important that all children should be aware of the multi-racial nature of British society today.

Judging by the numbers and types of request that we receive at the Manchester Council for Community Relations, it is clear that some teachers of the Social Sciences are aware of the place that topics like race and community relations can have in a social science course. It is also clear, from meetings with teachers, that many are not aware of the existence of local community relations councils and of the assistance that they can offer to teachers. At MCCR, we have a collection of books, slides, filmstrips and films on community relations issues. We can provide speakers and arrange visits to local places of interest such as the Hindu Temple or the Mosque. We can provide advice to teachers who wish to introduce work on race into their courses.

I should be pleased to hear from any social science teachers or lecturers in the North West who are interested in MCCR and any of the facilities we can offer, and I will gladly supply them with further details of our educational work. Teachers in other areas might like to contact the Education Department, Community Relations Commission, 15-16 Bedford Street, London WC2E 9HX for information on what is going on elsewhere.

Yours faithfully,

LYDIA WHITE (Mrs.)
Community Relations Officer (Education)

BOOK REVIEWS

HAPPILY EVER AFTER? PEOPLE AND WORLD PROBLEMS

by Brian and Pauline Matthews

Edward Arnold £0.65. Cloth 64pp.

In this interesting little book, Mr. and Mrs. Matthews have not attempted the impossible. They make no claim to have written the definitive text. Rather, from the outset, their major intention has been to provoke thought and stimulate interest. Although they do not say so, we presume that they are catering mostly for 4th and 5th year pupils. The presentation of materials is very well suited to this age and ability range. The text is informative without being condescending and at almost all points happily counterpointed by cartoons, drawings, maps and diagrams. For us, one of the most refreshing things about this book is the authors' willingness to make what are obviously their own teaching materials, available to everyone.

The major thrust of the book is to raise, as issues for discussion, several interrelated problems. What are the nature and causes of the population explosion? the energy crisis? pollution? (Indeed, the whole point of the book is that they can only be understood if they are seen as interrelated). Given the size, scope and imminence of the problems, what can be done about them by governments and individuals? This last point is most important, for governments are responsive to demands made upon them. Brian and Pauline Matthews deliberately set out to make the pupils aware not only of the problems and consequences but also of some of the solutions. They declare that foremost among these is the responsibility of the individual to contribute to population control. After all, people, like charity, begin at home. Such a stance will inevitably lead to controversy in the classroom. They deal scathingly with the short-sighted self-interest of indivduals and nation states, thereby raising the perennial moral dilemma of self v. collectivity.

This book, then, is an introduction to and a resource book for discussion about the major environmental problems. These limited functions it fulfils admirably. However, it is to be hoped that the next edition will rephrase some of the definitions (e.g. of Algae and Phytoplankton) to clarify them; give more space to the notion of 'ecology' which is mentioned without explanation on P.42; deal more satisfactorily with the processes of goal displacement and depersonalisation in government and large organisations. In short, to provide more depth! But this is nit-picking. For those teachers who believe that Education is about awareness of issues as well as the learning of skills, this book will be a valuable asset. Let us hope it is the first of many.

PENNY & BOB ANDERSON

"PEOPLE IN SOCIETY"

by P. J. North

Longman. £0.85

A problem with many textbooks is that, despite the author's claims to have written for a specific audience, one feels that certain parts are either too simple or too advanced for that audience. No such criticism can be made of this textbook. North writes in the introduction that his book is designed as a basic introductory text for G.C.E. 'O' level candidates and for 'A' level candidates without previous experience of sociology. He is, he says, particularly concerned that students at this level are introduced to current theories as well as to empirical studies.

The book is divided into two parts without any clear link between the two. The second is very good, the first a disappointment. In the first part North does a whistle-stop tour of research methods, social differentiation and social change. In his effort to cover as much ground as possible he fails to do justice to anyone. In his chapter on social differences, for example, approaches to stratification are hurried through without any clear theme linking them together. More important, it is never asked why sociologists are interested in stratification. Instead, after the different approaches have been outlined, the reader is asked, at the end of the chapter, almost as an afterthought, "Does it really work like this?". This is not the sort of approach that will develop the, "attitudes of critical awareness", that North believes are of paramount importance in the sociology student; neither will his often reasserted statement that sociology is a value-free science nor will his uncritical treatment of the lengthy quotations from Stacey's, "Tradition and Change". This latter point is a pity for critical comments or pertinent questions on these passages would have increased their value tremendously; as it is they are simply the one theme providing continuity between concepts.

In the second part of the book North looks at the structure of society and here he achieves a pleasing balance between his own text, summaries of research and theoretical explanations. This may best be illustrated by reference to the chapter on "Work and Industry" in which he discusses such areas as the changing pattern of industry in England from the early days of the industrial revolution, the ways in which the organisation of industry has changed and the different attitudes of workers in different modes of organisation, the extent of the managerial revolution, differences in leisure patterns and the various types of trade unions. He illustrates his argument by quoting the research and theoretical work of Goldthorpe, Lockwood, Florence, Barrett-Brown, Mayo and Weber and with several useful and easily understood graphs, tables and diagrams.

If you want a book that clearly introduces the most important concepts, research and theories in the areas of population, family, education, work and industry, government, and attitudes and beliefs you will find it hard to find a better one than this. (It also has the advantage of being inexpensive at 85p for 210 pages yet is relatively strongly bound for a soft-covered book). But unless you want to confuse and bore your students please ask your bookseller to glue together, paint black or tear out the first forty-eight pages.

M. A. TAYLOR

THE NEW SOCIAL STUDIES — A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS IN PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND FURTHER EDUCATION

by Denis Lawton and Barry Dufour
Heinemann Educational Books £5.00. Paperback £2.50

Given the current climate of debate without the social sciences, readers could be forgiven for anticipating that a book entitled "The New Social Studies" was indeed a contribution to that debate. That it is not, means the authors, Denis Lawton and Barry Dufour, are seeking to further legitimate a view, which emerged in the sixties, of social studies grounded in social science as an academic discipline, and now incorporating a "humanistic" stance via literature and film. Hence they seek to institutionalise this approach rather than engage in questioning the nature and status of sociological knowledge and its place in the school curriculum — issues which are at the forefront of the controversy within the broader arena of sociology. Although their stance could be accorded to historical circumstance given the book's preparation during an era of greater confidence and certainty, it would, for that reason, be unfortunate if it gained the status of a set text, in any prescriptive theoretical sense, for potential recruits to social studies teaching. It could rather be seen, in its basic tenets, as marking the end not heralding the beginning of a "new" approach to social studies in schools.

The book is divided into five main sections, in the first of which "Hisorical and Theoretical Perspectives", the authors outline early attempts to develop social studies, describe recent trends based more specifically on social science, and state the types of courses in existence from primary schools to further education. There follows under the heading "Content of the New Social Studies" an outline of each of the main social science disciplines and their relationship to classroom practice, accompanied by recommendations for relevant reading for teachers and pupils. Stemming from this is a review of "New Methods and Materials" — audio visual aids, resources and curriculum project materials —a precursor to the more substantial section "Topics and Themes". Here consideration is given to 37 topics and themes which the authors regard as important in a basic social studies curriculum for all pupils. Various modes of assessment and examination are then detailed in the chapter on "Evaluation".

Although throughout these sections the authors provide few explicit statements of their position, they do express the hope that social studies will "bring about greater awareness and therefore freedom of choice and action on the part of pupils" rather than produce "slaves to a social system". However in their statement that for young people "to think intelligently about society" they should be "led to acquire a true knowledge of social structure and social processes", there resides a strong belief in the initiation of pupils into the world as seen by professional social scientists. What then is the status of pupils' own

experiences which Lawton and Dufour ask teachers to include? Are such contributions half-truths to be remedied? Is their inclusion only a pedagogical device, a motivational ploy? It would seem that the fundamental weakness of the approach in the Topics and Themes section is this positing of the unquestioned supremacy of the social scientist's view embodied in the "generalisations to be encouraged". For, despite the injunction to teachers and pupils to develop other questions and generalisations than those advanced by the authors, (they rightly acknowledge the rigidity and anti-educational consequence of seeing their own as a blue-print), the very format is constraining, even dehumanising: it sees knowledge as external, divorced from the pupil.

The topic, Youth Culture, for example, rich and exciting, and immediately available to pupils begins by framing the question "What is meant by Youth Culture?" with the accompanying generalisation to be encouraged "Some sociologists suggest that the life style . . . etc." Does this approach not potentially deny the pupil's experiential world by the imposition of a sociological construct rather than provoke his critical reflection, illuminate his own meaning — making activities, and how they are generated and grounded.

Setting aside such reservations, it is within this section that useful references to books both fiction and non-fiction, films and other resources are made. For teachers about to embark on a social studies programme and for those using project work, this area is both informative and valuable.

Likewise the section on Evaluation is pertinent. The inclusion of Mode III syllabuses, which are not readily accessible to teachers, together with the review of the variety of techniques of assessment and their relative merits should provide a stimulus, even model, for those dissatisfied with conventional Mode I examinations and in need of examples from which to formulate alternatives. In that the book claims to be a handbook concerning itself with practice, the delineation of the basic rudiments of introducing a Mode III would have been a welcome addition, as would examples of strategies for implementing innovative schemes in schools where courses are ill formulated or have become entrenched.

The recommendation for more individualised assessment of pupil's thinking via the compilation of profiles of social understanding using interview techniques is the authors' final and most radical proposal. With the emphasis on pupil's "responses" which can be seen to be "in some sense peculiarly his own" rather than on "answers", the authors appear to take seriously a desire to explore how pupils organise experience and give meaning. This view, committed to seeing pupils as well as professional social scientists as authors of the social world, could be the beginnings of a justifiably "new" social studies.

JOAN WHITEHEAD

POLITICS: COMPROMISE AND CONFLICT IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

by W. N. Coxall

Pergammon Press £0.90

The problem with writing a book aimed at a multilevel audience is that, too often, one fails to strike the balance between filling in the necessary detail and belabouring the obvious. "The purpose of this book," according to Mr. Coxall's introduction, "is to introduce Politics to students in sixth forms, further and higher education". Further, he hopes "that the book will prove useful to everyone who takes courses in General, Liberal, Modern and Contemporary studies". This is, then, intended to be a book for all seasons, and to be fair, one must admit that in certain parts Mr. Coxall magnificently achieves his purpose. Alas, at others he does not. This book is conceived as an exposition of the nature of the political process with specific reference to contemporary Britain. In those places where it markedly differs from the traditional texts on British Governmental Institutions, it is highly effective. In particular, those chapters dealing with Political Culture, Class and Representation (chapter 3), Mass Communications in a Parliamentary Democracy (chapter 4) and Politics and the Individual (chapter 6) are outstanding. Each contains lively and informative discussion and chapter 6 could become essential prior reading for a serious discussion of the issue of participatory v. representative democracy. The section on Pressure Groups might have been strengthened by the inclusion of a case study of the organisation and operations of a successful (or perhaps more illuminating an unsuccessful) Interest Group. The reality of politics: of negotiation, compromise and decision making: of knowing the difference between what you want and what you are prepared to accept would become immediate to the student. It was in this context that I regret the deliberate omission of all but passing reference to local politics. Chapter 4 suffered in that, although bias and propaganda are discussed, no space is given to the conforming and controlling aspects of television. The recent work by Halloran and Galtung is surely of interest? Despite such flaws, however, these chapters provide excellent class-room material.

The rest of the book is far less successful. Chapter 1 on "What Politics is" is an arid journey through concept after concept despite the refreshing willingness to encourage in schools the serious discussion of Marxism as a political theory. Nonetheless, this chapter does contain some remarkable statements such as that to be found on P6. "All human societies are based on some degree of concensus or agreement on norms relating to fundamental aspects of the political system". Either this doesn't **mean** anything or the author would be hardpressed to explain the stability of contemporary Greece, Spain and U.S.S.R. let alone Tibet, Algeria prior to 1959, or Vietnam and Cambodia. Chapter 2 contains the ritual obeisance to Institutions and

could well have been left out, since because of its lack of depth, it leaves many questions unanswered and at times might be misleading. For example, there is no discussion of alternative electoral systems and in the light of recent events, some doubt must be cast on the first sentence on P52. "No Labour leader would find it easy to admit that Party Programmes do not irrevocably commit Labour Governments". Further the implications for democracy of candidate selection procedures at the Constituency level are ignored. Mr. Coxall asserts that his work has been informed by a belief in the processes of liberal democracy. At times, his belief compels him to re-assert the democratic nature of our Parliamentary system when his arguments seem to be leading the other way.

On the evidence of chapter 6 (Politics and the Individual) Mr. Coxall would add significantly to the stock of books available, if he attempted a further work, a collection of essays on contemporary issues where his clear style and sound reasoning would enable the student to find the nub of the essential arguments stripped of all rhetoric. Should he attempt such a venture, I look forward with interest to reading the result.

BOB ANDERSON

"HUMAN SOCIETIES"

by Geoffrey Hurd et. al.

Routledge and Kegan Paul. Cloth £2.95. Paperback £1.30

Those who endeavoured, for so long, to teach "O" and "A" level Sociology without an adequate textbook for their students may well have found a most welcome addition to a steadily growing list. Following several years in which they had to "make do" with a variety of American texts and a text written by a chief examiner but, on his own admission, written for university undergraduates, teachers are now faced with a plethora of publishers' advertising, all claiming to have the solution to their students' problems. Some of the books listed are highly theoretical and written at a level of abstraction far higher than that which is appropriate for students who are coming to the discipline for the first time; some are totally descriptive and lack an adequate conceptual framework. This one appears to have avoided these difficulties successfully.

The authors are all members, or ex-members, of the Sociology Department of the University of Leicester, with a common interest in teaching Sociology to newcomers to the field. They entrusted their contributions to Geoffrey Hurd who successfully achieved "The unity of approach and style" which he felt would be lacking in a "mere collection of essays". It is certainly a book which can be read easily.

Providing the sort of coverage demanded by G.C.E. syllabuses, it includes chapters on economic and political aspects of social development, urbanisation, population, family, socialisation, education, stratification, race, religion, crime, industrial relations and the professions. The approach used is probably the most valuable for younger students. Rarely using basic concepts like culture, function and role explicitly, the authors provide useful insights into pre-industrial and industrial societies with a wealth of 'concrete' developmental (historical) and comparative data, concentrating on the regular and predictable. This approach provides opportunities for the teacher rather than dictating the path he should take.

Concentrating on societies and macro sociology, it is essentially positivist in its approach. There is no reference to interactionist, ethnomethodological or phenomenological perspectives. Equally, there are very few references to sociologists. It seems strange to read twenty full pages on social stratification without reference to the theories of Marx or Weber or Davies and Moore. This, in itself, is not a fault, for it is the store of data provided in a coherent framework which opens the door for the teacher in a way which no previous British text has done. At the price, it seems exceptionally good value.

CHARLES TOWNLEY

SPECIAL ARTICLE

'A' LEVEL SOCIOLOGY
INTERVIEW WITH CHIEF EXAMINER, TONY MARKS

Chris Brown*

When the first eight candidates for A-level Sociology licked their lips and turned over the first ever GCE question paper in that subject they quite certainly had no thought that they were the forerunners of what was to be the most rapid rise in popularity of any new GCE subject. That was in 1965 and one wonders where those candidates are now. Eight years on, in 1973, some ten thousand sat the exam of whom just over half were successful. The table below shows the annual entry.

ENTRY FOR A-LEVEL SOCIOLOGY SINCE INCEPTION

1965	8	1969	2,946
1966	72	1970	4,342
1967	517	1971	6,530
1968	1,466	1972	8,500
	1973 c. 10,000		

It is clear from these figures that A-level sociology is a numerical success. Coupled with the existence of one other syllabus and the active interest of at least two other Boards it is clear that schools and colleges, as well as universities, must now take GCE sociology seriously.

The success of the AEB in thus establishing sociology was in many respects due to the enthusiasm and tact of Stephen Cotgrove. His work in designing and selling a syllabus which would calm the fears of sceptical administrators, critical teachers and lofty academics has made possible the mood of confidence and experiment which is now being felt in the field of GCE sociology. Evidence for this growing confidence is the rise, both proportional and absolute, in the number of school centres entering candidates for both A and O-level. FE centres remain predominant, mainly perhaps because it is easier for FE colleges to accommodate new subjects, but the recent rise in school centres relative to FE is significant.

School Entries for Sociology A Level

1968 — 17 schools out of 132 centres — 12.9%
1970 — 72 schools out of 270 centres — 26.6%
1971 — 91 schools out of 390 centres — 23.3%
1972 — 115 schools out of 425 centres — 27.1%
1973 — 183 schools out of 510 centres — 35.9%

Source: A.E.B.

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The interest of other Boards is also significant. The new JMB syllabus was due to be submitted to Schools Council in November 1973 and, if approved, will offer a very different type of syllabus organisation to AEB. The University of London Examinations Board has also recently set up a committee to consider a sociology syllabus.

Further evidence of the new mood of confidence is the recent change in the AEB syllabus and, more particularly, the form of the two question papers which will be effective from the 1974 exam. The greater flexibility and room for specialisation could not have been part of the pioneer syllabus.

Along with the new syllabus comes a new Chief Examiner — Tony Marks. From the world of the technical college Mr. Marks brings a wealth of teaching experience to the job instead of the academic background of Prof. Cotgrove — another sign of a new maturity in the history of the subject. As a member of the AEB committee which proposed the changes in the A-level syllabus, Mr. Marks had a hand in shaping the new look, but he first joined the Standing Advisory Committee for Sociology when he was a lecturer at Bromley Technical College. Now he is Head of the Sociology Section of the Dept. of Teaching Studies at North London Polytechnic. He, too, is at home in the academic world: he is also Honorary General Secretary of The British Sociological Association.

It seems appropriate that in the first issue of a new style 'Social Science Teacher' the new AEB Chief Examiner should talk about the new syllabus. But first he discusses the background to A-level Sociology.

To what do you attribute the rapid growth in A-level sociology since 1965 ?

In the first place there has been a marked growth in sociology outside A-level — particularly in tertiary education. This has led to the increased interest of the population at large. It has also produced a large number of people who want to teach sociology. Then again, sociology has become a subject written about in popular journals; it is fashionable. At the level of students themselves I suspect that much of the popularity of sociology is that it is the devil you don't know.

Do you regard sociology as being a potentially subversive devil?

Yes, I think it can be; but on the other hand it is often seen as a panacea for rebellious or troublesome students. I have no evidence for this but I believe it is often seen as mildy radical but capable of being used as a subtle form of social control. Which effect it has, subversion or conformity, is largely determined by how it is taught.

But you would agree that sociology is a potentially powerful means of altering people's views?

Yes, I would, but I would not say that it is any more powerful than say history or english.

Would you not say though that whereas history is about the past and english is deliberately subjective, the more self-conscious, objective way in which sociology studies the present can make it much more of a 'de-bunker' of established social and political myths than other subjects?

As I have already said, sociology is not necessarily subversive at all. It is perfectly possible to teach a highly conservative version of sociology — a string of 'facts' explaining why things are and must always be so. The sort of thing that springs to mind is the way economics is taught. I have talked to economics students and they seem to me to be far more opposed to, say, industrial action by workers than the average sixth-former. So, while you can see sociology as potentially capable of relaxing a school system, paradoxically it can also be a form of social control. It depends in large part on the way it is taught.

I think this issue would be raised less often if the events of 1968 had not happened. Because of them it is certainly true that in the minds of many commentators sociology has been associated with sit-ins and student agitation. There are several things to say about this. Firstly, it may not be that sociology has a radicalising effect on students but that radical students take sociology. This was certainly true of me. I was a radical before I was a sociologist. Secondly, the apparent association of sociology with student activists has been greatly exaggerated.

So would you say that sociology has a place in the average elitist and authoritarian English school?

Certainly it has. For one thing the elitist nature of schools is changing. But, in any case, the fact that sociology **is** being taught in a large number of schools, from trendy comprehensives to the old established grammar school, is enough evidence that it has a place in schools. I am not saying it is widespread and very often it is only included in the curriculum as a response to competition from the local technical college. Nevertheless, it is there in a growing number of schools.

Do you find there is any resistance within the school system to the introduction of sociology?

Yes, there is. There is probably more prejudice than there would be against other new subjects. I also think there is resistance from RE teachers and history teachers. Both of these areas see themselves as

rivals in some sense to sociology for scarce school resources. Experience in the schools, so far as I know, does not suggest that the introduction of sociology has the dire revolutionary consequences which some people might prefer.

Do you anticipate a continuing increase in candidates taking A-level sociology?

Yes, I certainly do. I would still be certain of it even if there were not to be new syllabuses coming on the market.

Some people argue strongly that sociology is not suitable for schoolchildren; that you cannot expect immature school pupils to cope with a subject requiring knowledge and understanding of adult society.

This is both true and false but if it is true it is also true of, say, history. In this respect it is not possible to make out a special case for sociology apart from other subjects which require you to think about society. What could be more thought-provoking than English Literature taught properly, or history? What could be more anxiety-making than to study, say, D. H. Lawrence with adolescents? If anything, the study of, say, the family is less likely to engage the genuine concern of pupils, if it is taught in an unimaginative way, than the study of Lawrence might.

Insofar as it is harder to get away from political positions in a study of contemporary society than in studying past society or individual dramas, is sociology not more difficult with younger students who perhaps do not have a very sophisticated political understanding?

I would not say that it was any more difficult to teach well than other subects but it is more difficult to disguise, were that desirable, its political nature. On the other hand there are whole areas which can be presented in an apparently non-political way.

Another frequently voiced criticism of sociology is that it is a 'soft option'. Why do you think we hear this so often? Is there any truth in it?

To test this empirically presumably you would look at the passmarks for sociology and compare them with other subjects for similar batches of students and teachers. So far as I know this work has not been done. But also, so far as I know, there is no evidence that our pass levels are higher or lower than other subjects. I think the reason why it is sometimes said that sociology is a soft option is that whereas everyone is not their own physicist, everyone is their own sociologist. What might take us quite a long time to find out in physics appears to be common knowledge in sociology. I do not think it is true.

From a professional sociological point of view would you accept the argument that in view of the extreme dissensus within sociology regarding the very nature of the subject we are more likely to confuse students at the GCE level than enlighten them?

I'm very pleased you raised this question. There are two things here. I agree there is a great deal of dissensus in sociology. It would be foolish to deny it and in some senses it should be welcomed. But not only do I think it is unnecessary to hide this fact from children but also I cannot see that such a situation is peculiar to sociology. What do English teachers teach any more? There is as much disagreement between them as to what constitutes the teaching of english as there is amongst sociologists about the nature of sociology.

What is important is to recognise that sociology is not a set of facts to be handed out and to take pains to present to students insofar as is possible, a non-partial view of what sociologists do. I remember the definition of economics which irritated me most as a young school student — 'economics is what economists do'. I thought this was a thoroughly frivolous waste of time. It now seems to me quite the best definition of economics and for that matter of anything else, especially, perhaps, of sociology. You are doing students a disservice if you present them some package which is phoney or if you ignore the diversity of the subject and its practitioners. Having said that, I recognise that the syllabus points in a certain direction and so will the wishes of individual teachers.

Would you say that in principle all sociological perspectives should be treated equally in teaching A-level?

No, because I do not think they are treated equally anywhere else and because some traditions are more worthy of examination than others. It is of course possible to split up the various schools in sociology into several organising principles. Until recently the conflict/consensus dichotomy was such a principle. More recently notions like positivistic/non-positivistic have been promoted. However, what is important is that students should be aware of the diversity of views in sociology.

In the past some universities have indicated a reluctance to accept sociology as an entrance qualification. Is this still true ?

I know of no cases where this is explicit. Formerly the situation seems to have been a classic one of bureaucratic inertia. In brief, the Board's experience with most universities was that people said 'No' because sociology did not appear on a list. They normally said 'Yes' without too much prompting if asked to put it on a list of acceptable subjects.

Have you come across criticism of the A-level syllabus from university departments where the sociological orientation differs sharply from the A-level course? They might regard AEB students with some suspicion.

What you say sounds plausible but I have no evidence. You may be referring to departments which are very strongly phenomenologically orientated but it is perfectly possible to be phenomenologically oriented and still pass, indeed excell, in the A level. Obviously the present system does not point in that direction but the new question papers will be much more explicitly open to different perspectives than has previously been the case, though I must say that they were never as closed as is often suggested. But even if you were going to a university where the conception of sociology began with Becker, went via Garfinkel and finished up with Harvey Sachs, it would be useful to know the enemy. One of the saddest things in my own undergraduate course was the way lots of us wrote essays about how dreadful functionalism was without knowing anything about it. I am sure this is true of some students at A-level.

Sociology is now well established in further education but will it ever achieve the same status in schools as say history and geography?

That is difficult to say. Secondary school curricula are now more susceptible to change than they ever have been, or so it seems to me. On the other hand fundamental questions are being asked about the whole notion of A-levels. By the time sociology 'catches up' they may not be there. But if they are I see no reason why sociology should not have the same status as, say, economics. However, it should not be forgotten that sociology is particularly well placed to take advantage of the developing trend towards integrated curricula.

In an article in New Society in 1968 Philip Abrams wrote — "When the possibility of economics as a school subject was discovered a generation ago, the schools simply took over the sort of courses going on in universities — and taught them at a simpler level". To what extent has this been true of sociology?

I think it was very largely the case. The old LSE Sociology syllabus especially that part based on contemporary Britain was very influential.

Was this a good thing?

It was better than some alternatives and probably inevitable then.

Do new syllabuses being introduced by other Boards stand a better chance of getting away from the university formula?

I think they may and I welcome the idea of new syllabuses. The moderately revised AEB syllabus would certainly not have been possible in the late sixties. I don't advocate either the 'One Tune Exam' or the 'One Tune Sociology'!

But surely the major change has been in relation to the organisation of the question papers rather than in the subject matter? The actual syllabus still appears to reflect almost precisely the same concerns as before the revision.

I would agree with that. But I would enter one caveat — the implication I think I detect behind your question is that the syllabus somehow requires or suggests that students should produce certain sorts of answers; this is not so.

Nevertheless, the way that the syllabus is still organised strongly suggests that its presuppositions are functionalist.

I take your point. However, I would like to take this opportunity to stress that there really are no particular theoretical prescriptions within the exam however the syllabus might look. Sociologists with an empirical, a functionalist, a conflict or a phenomenological orientation are welcome to teach our syllabus and their students will not be penalised.

Let us take a case. If you were faced with an answer to a question on the family which was thoroughly marxist in its approach would you be able to regard it in the same way as one which was thoroughly functionalist?

Regardless of one's personal preferences what one would like above all, in all answers, is an awareness that the particular perspective, explicit or implicit, in the answer was one amongst several. The good answer for an examiner is the one that is aware that there is more than one side to a question.

So what you are saying is that despite the apparent systems approach of the syllabus and its empiricist bias you are nevertheless looking for answers which are aware of different perspectives and rooted in theory.

Yes, certainly.

What can you do to dispel the view that the AEB syllabus is based on consensus sociology ?

I can hope people read this article. Also, since I have become Chief Examiner I have spoken at several meetings attended by a large number of teachers where I have said the same thing. I have stressed and will stress it in the reports I write after each examination.

Some teachers regret the emphasis in the syllabus on Britain. Would you find a larger comparative element in teaching acceptable?

Yes.

Could a slight change be made to the syllabus to cover this matter?

A working party of the Standing Advisory Committee is working on this at the present time but it is only really a question of making what is already there explicit. What I think will happen is that in the questions phrases like 'contemporary Britain' will diminish and phrases like 'in any one society with which you are familiar' will increase. If you take a question like the frequent one about the relation between work and leisure, studies of societies other than England and the United States would be welcome. But people who want to carry on doing much the same thing as hitherto should not be discouraged.

Do you regard the distinction between school students and technical college students as important?

No, although I think a distinction may be made between mature students in FE and school students. But I do not think there is a significant difference between adolescents whether in schools or colleges. When I am devising questions I do not consider different groups of students. The criterion is simply, what is a good question? For example, it must not be too obscure. It must be reasonably predictable but, of course, not totally so. The SAC would soon make it plain if they thought a question was not suitable. I do not see a lot of point in considering different types of students, whether school or FE, girls or boys or whatever. It really depends on whether you believe an exam should relate to the life experiences of the people who are taking it. While there is a lot to be said for such a view there is also a case for saying that an exam should be about things they have no immediate knowledge of and can only learn about vicariously. That is why I favour the growth of some sort of anthropological insight.

What are your views generally on an interdisciplinary approach to teaching social science?

I think it would have all the difficulties initially which A-level sociology has experienced. It would be difficult to find teachers and texts and difficult to get universities to accept it. But it is something I would personally welcome very much. I agree with a letter Stephen Cotgrove wrote in New Society some years ago when he said there is room for both single discipline and inter-disciplinary approaches.

Do you expect many centres to take up the option of a project under the new regulations?

My guess is that very few will and these will be polarised between the very good and the very bad

Is there a danger that the project option will encourage a flood of young and amateur researchers to descend on homes and factories?

Yes, there is that danger. In the notes for guidance which the Board has issued we have stressed that people engaged in investigations should have, at least, some limited guidelines on how they ought to proceed and what sort of things they ought not to do. It is also worth stressing that projects do not necessarily involve anybody talking to anybody. The variety of style of sociological research is such that it is perfectly possible to conduct research in The British Museum, as at least one 'founding father' of sociology did. On the other hand one does not want to discourage particular styles of research. Postal research is often a grim way of finding out about things but it does have some limited usefulness. I think in the last resort it is a question of putting responsibility on people. But I fully expect several rude letters a year.

What are the principles on which the new syllabus and exam are based?

There is no statement formally agreed by the Board but what I like is the increased freedom it gives teachers to diversify what they teach and how they teach it. Of course, this makes the examiners' job more difficult. The greater potential diversity of responses from centres will make it more difficult to moderate between them. It will not be easy to ensure that a grade B from one centre with say a traditional approach is the same as a B from another centre with a different technique. Another very important thing to be said of the new system is that it adds new features without losing any of the old. No one **has** to specialise. If a teacher has a class which wants to concentrate specially on theory this will be possible within generous limits. But if the class want to focus on the two most popular areas of the syllabus — family and education — they can. And if they decide to undertake the work involved in a project they can do so knowing that it will count as one quarter of the final marks rather than just one-eighth.

A further major advance is that the number of questions to be answered on each paper has gone down from five to four. This is something I have been in favour of since I began teaching sociology at this level.

May not the fewer number of questions to be answered penalise weaker students?

I suppose it is possible. The examination which 'passes' everyone is not usually seen as a very valuable acquisition. Four questions will, I think, enable the best students to do better. I don't expect the currently marginal students to do worse in future than they do now.

Would you say that this shift from five to four questions is evidence that standards have risen since the inception of the exam?

Yes, you could say so.

Are you confident that the new style of question paper is a good one?

Of course I am. Perhaps two points should be made. Firstly specialisation is possible — not compulsory. Secondly, as regards the project, if I were choosing one I would make sure it related to those areas of the syllabus on which I intended to focus. It would be silly to do otherwise.

Changing a GCE syllabus is a long and complicated business but the developments in sociology are especially rapid. Is it not possible to recognise this by making minor modifications in the syllabus more frequently?

What one can do in the absence of syllabus change is to change the questions. Obviously questions must relate to the syllabus and it would not be fair to ask a lot of questions which had no recognisable predecessors. But it is nevertheless possible to make marginal amendments. Chief Examiner's reports, conferences and articles like this help already.

Would this sort of process be relevant to a case such as deviance where new ideas have arisen to challenge conventional approaches but they are not explicitly enshrined in the syllabus?

Yes, I would say that is a good case in point.

But despite what you have said one might well hesitate before launching into a specialist study of the new deviance theories. The orientation of the syllabus towards conventional criminology is so obvious that it inhibits proper study of alternative approaches.

Well, another way of amending things between syllabus changes is to alter booklists. On the question of deviance you will find that the current list issued by AEB includes Jock Young's book on drugtakers and Stan Cohen's collection called 'Images of Deviance'. This indicates very well what sort of approaches to a deviance question would be permissible.

How do you devise questions?

When I come across interesting quotes or questions I note them down for future reference. When it actually comes to setting papers, first I look at past papers and then I look at the syllabus and make a list of topics which I think ought to be asked each time which will be both fair and move the thing in the particular direction I am interested in. And then I just sit in my room and think. It is quite a long job actually, much harder than I expected.

As Chief Examiner how much real power do you have? I assume you prepare detailed marking schemes for your examiners which effectively determine how marks will be allocated on particular questions.

I prepare moderately detailed schemes and I suppose I do have substantial power to decide what the marks are. But I cannot imagine a situation where I said that a particular answer was worth an A grade and forty-two other examiners said it was a fail.

But in using the questions to make small changes in the direction of the syllabus, as you have said you do, you are surely exercising significant power.

Yes, I suppose so, and this may not be a bad thing. I do not think I know what the limits of my power really are.

What criteria are used to allocate candidates to different grades?

These can only be intuitive and not differ widely from year to year or from Chief Examiner to Chief Examiner. For what it is worth A — C candidates are seen as likely to do well in higher education though, given what we know about the relationship between A-level grades and first degree performance, it is a tenuous judgement. D — E are marginal in this respect. O-level passes and F grades speak for themselves.

How is the marking of all the assistant examiners checked?

For the summer exam there are four senior assistant examiners who moderate some of the ordinary assistants. It is not a perfect system but it is difficult to see what you can do when it is essentially impression marking. If the computer analysis shows really wide discrepancies between one group and another one might look carefully into those groups later on. Discrepancies do occur between the marks of a particular examiner and the general norm; in these cases I have to decide whether the centre or the examiner was idiosyncratic. The moderating is basically done on a sampling basis. The assistant examiner sends in ten scripts initially for checking — some should be good passes, some fails and some on the borderline. If I do not regard these as satisfactory I ask for another sample. If there are still problems I say to the examiner concerned — 'your marking is lousy: do it this way and remark all those you have done', or you allow him to carry on and at the end adjust all his scripts by however much you think is necessary.

Do you ever sack examiners?

Yes, we have had to refuse to reappoint two this year.

It is widely believed that a specific percentage of passes is predetermined. What would happen to the pass rate if one year all the best teachers were shot and sociology was taught that year by mainly incompetent teachers?

What I would hope would happen is that the number of passes would fall. One is very conscious that it is not just the ability of the students one is measuring; all too often one is measuring the teachers' abilities as well. It is really distressing to have fifteen out of twenty scripts from one centre all incorporating the same wrong information.

Would you say that A-level Sociology could be taught satisfactorily by people who lacked a sociological training ?

By and large I would think that was not the case.

Do you in fact have much evidence of non-sociologists teaching it?

By virtue of my regular job, yes I do and it's disastrous. People who do not know any sociology very rarely teach it well, which is not surprising.

Do you think that more sociologists are now teaching A-level rather than biologists, geographers etc.?

Yes. Teachers are now more likely to have degrees in sociology or to have done a relatively sophisticated course in sociology at a College of Education. Unfortunately it is still true that too many institutions are using non-specialists because they think anyone can do it. Some of these teachers work at it and convert themselves into sociology teachers sufficient to get by, some prove excellent. Also, of course, you cannot expect to find first-rate teachers of sociology all the time any more than you could in any other subject. But nevertheless the proportion of relatively competent teachers has gone up and this is in some part due to the work of organisations like ATSS. Sociology may still suffer more from non-specialists than some other subjects but I think this situation will now be short-lived. I doubt if we are worse off in this respect than, say, mathematics.

Are you happy with the situation regarding books for A-level?

I am not ecstatic but I am happier than I was. There seems now to be a proliferation of suitable material which just was not available even three years ago. It is not only of an appropriate standard but there is also a pleasing diversity of perspectives.

That may be true but there are still virtually no books written specifically for A-level.

That's true, and by and large the material I know which has been written specially for A-level is not the best anyway.

Maybe but apart from a few good old favourites like the Bethnal Green studies, Ronald Fletcher on the family and Jackson and Marsden on education, most books put in the way of the average A-level student are very difficult because they are written for the relatively more sophisticated university market.

Some may be rather difficult but one would not want sociological research written up especially simply just for A-level. There are plenty of reasonable books which provide summaries of other work.

What are your views on the use of magazines and other popular media as material for A-level?

I certainly used them when I taught sociology at A-level but there are problems in doing it. Students should not get the impression that sociology is something you do on a Sunday morning without getting out of bed.

Are there any other comments you'd like to make?

Yes. It's easy for teachers to underestimate the large amount of very good work they do. I've no doubt that many students do benefit substantially from the careful teaching they receive within this framework — for a **terminal** sociology course.

It is easy, and usually proper, of course, for teachers to be discontented with boards and examiners. They should not, however, be paranoic. I shall endeavour to promote a pluralist view of sociology at A-level which I think reflects the discipline as it is. I don't want to play a part in the promotion (or suppression, for that matter) of sociological sects or denominations.

In general, criticism is welcome and constructive suggestions especially so.

The opinions expressed in this journal are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Association.

The Association exists to provide a medium for the expression of views about social science and social studies teaching. The editor welcomes correspondence and papers on any matter of interest to social science teachers, at all levels, as well as on those matters stemming from this issue.

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