

The Mass-Observation Project

Spring 2004 Directive

Part 1: Using numbers

We often ask you to talk about writing, but this time, we want to ask you about your awareness and use of numbers. This may seem at first quite an abstract directive. Take your time, but please do have a go. Usually we provide examples to prompt you in your writing, but the whole point of this directive is to see just what YOU count as numbers and calculations.

Numbers Day Diary:

Choose a day - any day (it doesn't have to be special or typical)

Keep a record of all the uses of numbers that you notice during the day.

Nothing is too trivial.

(No calculations need to be involved)

As usual, please start all three parts of your reply on a new sheet of paper with your M-O number, (NOT name), sex, age, marital status, town or village where you live and your occupation or former occupation.

Remember not to identify yourself or other people inadvertently within your reply.

Your feelings about numbers

What is your response when you see numbers

in shops?

in newspapers?

in advertisements?

in other contexts?

Using numbers in everyday life

Which calculations do you use when you are shopping:

addition?

subtraction?

multiplication?

division?

other

Please describe briefly but vividly any incident(s) in which you are aware of having a method of doing something involving numbers.

Finally, has answering this part of the directive made you think about all the different ways you estimate space, time, quantity and so on that you do all the time, possibly without consciously thinking that you are using numbers? If so, please comment.

Part 2: You and the BBC

It has been hard to escape from the recent news coverage about the Hutton Enquiry and criticisms of the BBC.

What has your view been of recent events involving the BBC?

What do you think of the BBC - now and in the past?

Do you count yourself as part of the BBC's audience? If so, think back over your life: what radio and/or TV programmes do you remember? Perhaps you could write a "Me and the BBC" piece for us? Make sure to mention which channel you mostly watch/listen to and describe whether this has changed over the years. The more you write the better.

Can you recall one single BBC programme that had a major effect on you? What was it? (Details please)

Part 3: Going to University

Another big issue in the news has been "top up fees" and the whole question of who should pay for higher education.

Please you start by telling us about your personal situation. Did you receive any higher education? If so, where? when? what kind of course was it? Who paid the fees? Did you have to borrow money during your studies? Who paid for your maintenance and living costs?

If you didn't receive higher education, please say so. Was this something you considered and rejected? Did finances play any part in your decision?

The issue may affect you indirectly - if you work in education, or have children, other relatives or friends at university- please mention here anything you might feel is relevant to your own perspective on the debate.

What are your views about higher education in general? Who should have it? Who should pay? How do you feel about student loans and grants?

DS/March 2004 Dir. No. 71

The Mass-Observation Archive ~ FREEPOST BR2112 ~ The Library ~ University of Sussex ~ Brighton BN1 1ZX

email: moa@sussex.ac.uk
