

The Mass-Observation Project

Spring 2005 Directive

Part 1: The Asian Tsunami

Hearing the news

Describe how you heard about this news - where you were, was it radio, TV, newspapers or word of mouth?

What was your reaction? What was the reaction of people around you (friends, family, workmates)?

What did you think about the way the media covered the tragedy?

The response

What do you think about the response by countries and by individuals?

How do you think the response will affect other charities and causes?

Personal involvement

Did you have any personal involvement? For example, had you visited any of the places affected by the tsunami? Was anyone you know involved directly?

Have you personally sent money or aid?

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, the town or village where you live and your occupation or former occupation.

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

Part 2: Charles and Camilla

Star-crossed lovers together at last or "boring old gits to wed" (*Daily Star*)?
What's your view?

As some of you may know, Mass-Observation has been recording people's views on royal occasions since 1937. In fact it was the controversy about the Abdication Crisis in 1936 that prompted the original Mass-Observers to get together to study the whole impact on these national events on people's everyday lives. How important is royalty? What do people really feel about these national events? Is all the fuss generated by the press? Do people really care?

So in the Archive we have boxes of day diaries for the 1937 Coronation, the 1953 Coronation, the Royal Wedding (Charles & Di) of 1981 and Diana's death. It would be good to continue the tradition so please tell us your views.

Day Diary for the wedding day

Please keep a diary of what you do that day (even if it has nothing at all to do with Charles & Camilla). Start when you wake up and note down everything until you go to sleep that night. It doesn't matter how boring or routine the day is, we still want to hear about it. Also if it's very untypical, still write about it. It can be as detailed as you have time for.

Part 3:

The best thing that happened to you in 2004

We thought we'd ask you to tell us about something good in your life that happened last year.

If you've had a rotten year and this makes you feel worse, then my apologies. We'd still like to hear from you if that's the case but if you can think of anything that lifted your spirits, made you laugh, gave you a buzz, reinforced your faith in life....however fleeting or trivial, please tell us.

So pick one (or more) memories from 2004 and write as much as you can about it - what it was why, why it was significant, where and when it was, who else was involved, why it happened and so on.

Just to see how hard a question this is to answer, I asked other members of the team and also some of the researchers visiting the Archive today. These are a few of the things they said:

- seeing the snowdrops come in the Spring
- meeting a famous person (Bob Hoskins actually!)
- meeting his girlfriend for the first time
- getting her first job
- seeing her little boy take his first steps
- going to the cinema with his family
- going to Paris for his birthday
- getting her first book commissioned
- getting her degree.....

For me, there would be two occasions in 2004: the day my son got married and the party my colleagues and friends organised to celebrate working with the Mass-Observation Archive for 30 years.