

Autumn 2015 Directive

Part 1: Fraud and scams

Cold calls, fake tickets, bogus emails and phishing...It seems that cheats are always inventing new ways to trick people into investing their own money or personal data in fraudulent schemes. In this Directive, we would like you to write about scams and include any personal experience you may have on this topic.

First reactions

Before you read on, please could you quickly jot down any immediate thoughts that come to mind when you think fraud and scams; these might be words or phrases. We are interested in your first impressions and reactions.

Signs

What signs do you watch out for to help you identify a scam? Where did you gather this knowledge from (e.g. personal experience, television, internet, conversation etc.)?

Can you think of any famous news stories about fraudulent schemes? What were they? Did these stories worry you?

Personal experiences

Have you, or anyone you know, ever been a victim of a scam? What happened? How did it affect your/their:

- Physical health
- Mental health
- Relationships with families and others
- Financial activities
- Lifestyle

We would be interested to hear about accounts from the past as well as more recent cases.

If you have not been scammed, has an attempt been made to scam you, or someone close to you? How was this avoided? Did this have any impact on your/their health or relationships?

Do you think scams have changed in the last 5 to 10 years? Perhaps they have become more sophisticated or easier to identify? Please share your thoughts.

Please start each part of your Directive reply on a new sheet of paper with your MO number, 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. It is best to use initials instead of real names.*

Safeguarding

Do you worry about being scammed? Or do you worry about your relatives or friends being tricked by fraudsters? What are your concerns?

What strategies do you adopt to avoid scams?

Where would you go for help regarding scams or being scammed? What interventions do you think should be in place to address scams and help people who have been scammed? Who should deliver them and how should they be delivered?

Observation task

For a week please record any mention of scams or hoax schemes that you hear about, either in the news or in conversation with others. Please give details about the case and your reaction to it. We would be interested to know if these incidents affect your health or encourage you to behave differently.

Part 2: Bonfire Night

“Remember, remember the fifth of November...”

In the second part of the Directive we would like you to share your experiences of Bonfire Night, also known as Guy Fawkes Night or Fireworks Night. This Directive includes a diary for the day which we hope everyone will complete, regardless of whether they celebrate Bonfire Night or not. We also welcome any reflections on celebrations where fireworks are involved, even if this is not related to Bonfire Night.

Please start each part of your Directive reply on a new sheet of paper with your MO number, 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. It is best to use initials instead of real names.

Early Memories

What are your early memories of Bonfire Night? Was it celebrated by your family? Is there a Bonfire Night in your past that is particularly memorable? Please describe this.

Were there any cultural, religious, social or regional factors that affected (or continue to) your involvement in Bonfire Night?

Are there any activities or rituals that you undertake to make your Bonfire Night successful? Please share these with us.

Education

Do you remember being taught about Guy Fawkes at school? How was this?
Should school children today continue to be taught about the history of the Gunpowder Plot?
Are there any issues that teachers should be aware of when conveying this information to young people?

Keeping safe

What dangers do you associate with bonfires and fireworks? Do you think that celebrations of today have become safer than those in your past?

Are there any public or government safety warnings that you remember? Please give details.

Is there anything you do on Bonfire Night to keep yourself and those close to you safe? This might be wearing gloves, protective ear-wear or securing your house.

Have you, or someone that you know, ever been injured by a firework or as part of bonfire celebrations? Please explain what happened.

What about looking after animals and pets? Are your animals stressed by Bonfire Night celebrations? What do you do to care for them, or any animal you have looked after in the past?

Controversies

Lewes (a town near where the Archive is based) is often in the news for burning effigies of notable figures such as Alex Salmond, Vladimir Putin and the Pope as part of their Bonfire Night celebrations. What do you think about this? Are some effigies too controversial to burn, or is it just "good fun"?

Bonfire Night day diary

Please keep a diary for the 5th November 2015 (or any other date that you attend a bonfire or firework party). Even if you don't do anything to mark this event, we are still interested to hear how you spend the day.

Remember to make a note of everything you do from the moment you rise to going to bed and record any references to bonfires or fireworks that you notice. We would also like you to document any preparations you do for the day; this might include arrangements to help you join in the celebrations or ignore them! We welcome photographs along with your diary, but, as always, please remember not to reveal your identity in these images.

Part 3: The Refugee Crisis

In recent weeks the plight of Syrian (and other nationalities) refugees making their journey to Europe has made international headlines and been debated by European leaders. As the situation continues to develop, it seems an essential topic for Mass Observation to cover. We would like to hear about your thoughts and experiences. Here are some prompts for you:

- What do you think about the recent events so far?
- Views on publicity and media coverage, or memorable images/stories.
- Reflection on the actions of the UK government and of other European nations.
- Charitable appeals, petitions, local collections, or offers to house refugees in private homes. Have you been involved in any of these?
- Effects on you personally, family, friends, travel plans.
- Experiences of protests, campaign or petitions relating to refugees.
- Comments on the idea of a national quotas for refugees.
- Have you noticed any changes in your local area as a result of this crisis?
- Concerns or hopes for the future.

Please post your response to: **Freepost: RTGU-AYJE-YSSC, The Mass Observation Archive, The Keep, Woollards Way, Brighton, BN1 9BP** or by email to: moa@sussex.ac.uk JS/KP Autumn Directive/No. 104