Digital Teens and the 'Antisocial Network':
Prevalence of Troublesome Online Youth Groups and Internet trolling in Great Britain

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ABSTRACT

A concern shared among nearly all generations of adults is that they must do something to tackle the problems in society caused by young people. They often forget that they were once young, and all too often blame young people for all of problems in their community. This paper challenges this view and shows how the blaming of Internet trolling on today's young people – called digital teens – is probably inaccurate. What might otherwise be called Troublesome Online Youth Groups (TOYGs), this paper looks at data collected from subjects in three UK regions (n=150 to 161), which includes young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs). Unlike might be typically thought, the data shows that far from these NEETs being the causes of Internet trolling it is in fact the areas with high levels of productivity, higher education and higher intelligence that report lower perceptions of quality of life that these electronic message faults (EMFts) most occur in.

INTRODUCTION

As one passes though time there is a common theme that young people are the masters of new technology and that because of it, it seems they are both to blame for the social ills in communities. Research has been carried out into 'television and delinquency,' the dangers of 'video nasties' and most recently the dangers of internet use in terms of cyberbullying, Internet trolling and online predators (Halloran, 1970; Na, 2008; Petley, 1994). Recent research has looked at concepts such as online youth groups and digital teens (Cavagnero, 2012) as well as in relation to troublesome youth groups, such as gangs, that exist offline (Decker & Weerman, 2005; C. Williams, 2009). This paper extends this research by bringing the two concepts together to consider 'Troublesome Online Youth Groups' (TOYGs) as being distinct from those

young people who are simply not in education, employment or training (i.e. NEETs) who may not have problematic Internet use. Young people who are NEETs are often seen as being outside of society, when in fact this paper hopes to show that the opposite is the case.

Internet abuse has existed as long as the technology itself. It has come in many guises and been called many names. To the digital natives in the 1990s there is a clear distinction between those messages which are abusive, called 'flaming', and those which are simply provocative, called 'trolling' (Porter, 1996; Wallace, 1999). Today there have had to be distinctions devised because the word 'trolling' has come to mean the posting of any content on the Internet that is either provocative or offensive. Flame trolling refers to that which is intended to abuse and offend others and kudos trolling that which is intended to provoke someone for mutual enjoyment. However as some kudos trolling can be done for unjust reasons, such as to gain the trust of someone to groom them in order to sexually assault them, a clear and distinctive term is needed. The posting of wrongful content for the purpose of damaging others reputation, wellbeing or privacy, can be referred to as '*electronic message faults*' (EMFts). Internet trolling (i.e. the communication of EMFs) refers to the posting of provocative or offensive messages on the Internet, often for humorous effect. Those trolling posts that are not faults, and are instead free speech could therefore be called '*electronic message freedoms'* (EMFrs).

PROSECUTION OF INTERNET TROLLERS IN THE UK

The courts of law in the UK are on the whole the competence of the UK Government, but certain powers exist for devolved administrations to provide guidance to the Courts, something it has been argued could be helpful in terms of how Internet trollers are dealt with in the case of Wales, where the Welsh Government can issue guidance on the welfare of digital teens and other young people (Bishop, 2012). Table 1 provides a guide on how EMFts can be classified according to the type, the severity of the offence and the appropriate legal provision for a trolling offence of that kind (Bishop, 2013a; Bishop, 2013b). It also provides a 'CPS score' which is the rating given by the UK public prosecutor (Starmer, 2013), and the fortitude of a victim must be before any legal action.

A CPS score of 1 is met if an EMFt may constitute credible threats of violence to the person concerned or damage to property. In the case of the trolling magnitude scale in Figure 1, this only falls within a TM of 2.00 to 2.49. This is because the appropriate action is to detain the person so they cannot carry out further offences. A CPS score of 2 is for an EMFt that specifically target an individual or individuals. This correlates to TMs of 2.50 to 4.49. As can be gathered from this, there is such a wide scope to this CPS score, that law enforcement authorities might want to use the TMS for more specific guidance in order to be proportionate. The CPS score of 3 only applies to a TM of 4.50 to 4.99 and a PS score of 4 applies to TMs of between 1 and 1.99. The CPS score of 3 applies to those EMFts that may amount to a breach of a court order and thus fall into the maximum of the TMS (TM 4.50 to 4.99). This is likely to be where the person before the court meets 'pertinax reus', through committing previous offences at a lower TM. According to Starmer (2013), a CPS score of 4 refers to those EMFTs which are not severe enough for the other grades, but which nevertheless may be considered where victims are below normal fortitude. In the TMS

Table 1. The trolling magnitude (TM) scale and offence matrix

Type	Fortitude Required	Severity	CPS score	Appropriate legal provision
TM1 – Playtime Cyber-bantering (Cyber-trolling)	Disincentivising action required in support of any victim that should reasonably be expected to be of below normal fortitude (e.g. children and vulnerable adults).	**Minor** (TM 1.00-1.49)	4	Fixed penalty notice of £75
		Major (TM 1.50-1.99)	4	Fixed Penalty Notice of £150
TM2 Tactical Cyber-trickery (Cyber-trolling)	Minimal action required in support of any victim that should reasonably be expected to be of normal fortitude (e.g. persons who have little contact with members of the public).	**Minor** (2.00-2.49)	1	Common law detention for breach of the peace as permitted by s.40(1) of the Public Order Act 1986
		Major (TM2.50-2.99)	2	ASBO under s.1 the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
TM3 – Strategic Cyber-bullying (Cyber-stalking)	Moderate action required in support of any victim that should not reasonably be expected to be of a person of above normal fortitude (e.g. people who are not in public-facing roles).	**Minor** (TM3.0-3.49)	2	Harassment warning under s.4 or s.4A of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 or caution under relevant legislation.
		Major (TM3.50-3.99)	2	Custodial sentence under s.127 of the Communications Act 2003 or s.1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988, of 26 to 52 days or up-to 18 weeks.
TM4 – Domination Cyber-hickery (Cyber-stalking)	Significant action required for any victim that should not reasonably be expected to be of beyond normal fortitude (e.g. people who are not public figures).	**Minor** (TM4.0-4.49)	2	Restraining order under s.5 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 or related court orders, such as under The Family Law Act 1996.
		Major (TM4.50-4.99)	3	Custodial sentence under s.127 of the Communications Act 2003 or s.1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988, for up to 6 months for each act. Related custodial sentences for breaching a court order.

these correlate to a TM of 1.00 to 1.99, which are best suited to a fixed penalty notice rather than criminal action.

TODAY'S DIGITAL TEENS AS PART OF THE 'BABY BUST' GENERATION

It is a premise of this paper that the generation one is in is based not on the year range one was born per se, but the technology one had access to as a teenager or otherwise when the development of one's prefrontal cortex was in flux, which can be up to the age of 25 (Homae, 2013). On this basis this section will argue one needs to differentiate between Analogue Teens and Digital Teens. Analogue Teens have little or no control over the technology they consume, either because media was broadcasted or their access to information was controlled by a dif-

ferent force – such as a dominating parent that insisted on maintaining their power-base in the home. Digital Teens on the other hand will have had access to media on demand, where they control what they consume. Many people may conceptualise this as referring to the Internet, but there were earlier developments. A person who had access to Teletext could choose what news or other content they consumed, such as horoscopes a parent might object to or play interactive games like 'Bamboozle' on one's own terms. Use of video game consoles and microcomputers would also make one a Digital Teen as the choice over what to use would be more often than not in the hands of the teenagers that mastered them where their parents failed.

Analogue Teens might therefore be thought to encompass those whom are called the 'Baby Boomers' who were in their prime with the launch of Telstar and 'masters' of the radio, without realising their minds were being programmed by others due to their relative lack of choice. The following generation – Generation X – might be a mixed bag of Analogue Teens and Digital Teens. This is because whilst there was huge technological change in their time there was not equal access to it for cost reasons. The Baby Boomers can thus be characterised as those post war teenagers that were exposed to broadcasted information, such as print and radio news and autocratic teaching styles (Tapscott, 1998). It has also been argued that Generation X who directly following those from the Baby Boomers can be thought of as 'Baby Boomlets' for the reason that they did not bounce back from the Baby Boomers dominance (Tapscott, 1998).

What to call the generation that followed the Baby Boomlets has been a hot topic. Much of the debate has been around the date range of these youths being born between (Bishop, 2004; Tapscott, 1998). To date they have been called

the Net Generation, Millennials, Generation Y, among others. This paper prefers to refer to those who followed the Baby Boomlets as the 'Baby Bust' generation. This is because regardless of whether or not they had access to the Internet in their teens they will have suffered the consequences of the global financial crisis of around 2008 that resulted from the Baby Boomers having more than their fair share of the cake.

THE BABY BUST GENERATION AS 'NEETS'

Many young people from the Baby Bust generation are 'not in education employment or training,' (i.e. NEETs). NEETs are regarded as being in need of more education and training, as they struggle to cope with a rapidly changing educational and occupational environment, brought about by the Baby Boomers, who see them as being engaged in a systematic coarsening of culture (Rodger, 2008).

As discussed briefly earlier, much of the media and other sources have focused on young people as being NEETs and as being an apathetic and disaffected group of people outside of the society constructed as imaginations through that media. An article in the Scottish Express for instance questioned youth unemployment, saying: "*Maybe the unions and public sector workers should think of these unemployed and count their blessings. Also I notice the troll tormenting bereaved families on the net was jobless. Says it all.*" This implied it was NEETs that were to blame for the abusive trolling of others, more so than other generations. Those youths that are NEETs on the other hand often lack Interest in the use of technology to engage with society, using the Internet as a means to access information, such as job opportunities,

as opposed to it being a lifestyle choice in itself (Nardi et al., 2013).

It has been argued that given the significant number of NEETs in the UK (over 1 million) and the FE system's capacity and capability to address them, future research into the provision of '*spiritual, moral, social and cultural education*' (SMSC) may be seen as a priority (Grayling, Commons, & Wise, 2012).. This might seem insulting to younger people who are outside of the job-market because of Baby Boomers taking more than their fair share of the job market for too long. Also, the access to the Internet by the Baby Bust generation as 'digital natives' immersed in online culture is leading to a breakdown in the old power structures belonging to authority figures like teachers. One could therefore argue that it is the Baby Boomers who need SMSC education, on how to respect the opinions and experiences of others younger than them who may have access to information sources and opinions in general they are unlikely to have had. The most common complaints in the media that youths need "discipline" in school because teachers can no longer "control" them, is indicative of the Baby Boomers who were subject to broadcasted information not accepting that the digital teens of today are knowledge producers and not just knowledge consumers.

CONSIDERING THE IMPACT OF THE MEDIA IN INTERPRETING THE NATURE AND SEVERITY OF INTERNET TROLLING IN GREAT BRITAIN

If one were to believe the news media in Great Britain then one would assume that young people under 25, called digital teens, do most trolling. The media seem to want to demonise digital teens as trolls as part of the cycle of juvenile justice. This is where the newspapers and other media go from making attacks on youths by presenting them as the cause of broken societies, to attacking others for not protecting youths from that broken society. The demonisation of digital teens as trolls by the media provides a useful way to propagate the cycle of juvenile justice. Indeed, to many people, 'troublesome youth groups' and 'youth gangs' as phrases have been synonymous, whereas others have thought it is important to make a distinction between the two (Langston, 2003).

Digital teens who are abusive online have been referred to as Snerts, or Snotty Nosed Egotistically Repressed Teens (Bishop, 2008; Bishop, 2013c; Ivens & Barich, 1997; Shariff, 2008). The term troll (with a lower-case t) has come to be a word to encapsulate all the harmful kinds of troller. It might be that while Trolls (with a capital T) still reflect those provocative characters that unite and bind communities through facilitating rituals such as initiation of novices into the community (i.e. trolling for newbies), the use of the term 'troll'(with a lowercase t) reflects all of the harmful types of troller just named.

With the increase of attention towards Internet trolling many Digital Teens have had to bear the brunt of increased pressures from the public and politicians desire for them to be subject to the full force of the law as if it is only young people who take part in trolling. Some legal jurisdictions, like those in Great Britain, have had statutes relating to abuse over telecommunications platforms, like telephone and the Internet, since the 1980s (Bishop, 2013a; Bishop, 2013a). These include the Telecommunications Act 1984, which was replaced with the Communications Act 2003. Laws affecting offline abuse and harassment, namely

the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and Protection from Harassment Act 1997 have had to be updated to clarify and extend their use in dealing with Internet trolling (Bishop, 2010; Bishop, 2013a). Other jurisdictions such as Australia are finding they do not have dedicated laws, so have to decide between making specific laws against EMFs or use existing laws on public order and harassment, which has also happened in the UK in some situations, such as with the Public Order Act 1986 in the case of Swansea University student Liam Stacey in 2012. In Great Britain and Ireland there are a number of complex legal jurisdictions. In Great Britain (i.e. England, Scotland and Wales), there is Scottish Law, Welsh Law, and the Law of England and Wales. In Ireland there are the Laws of Northern Ireland and Irish Law in the Republic of Ireland. Great Britain and Northern Ireland at present constitute the United Kingdom (UK), an independent state legal jurisdiction in itself, and the Republic of Ireland is also an independent state. Both the UK and the Republic of Ireland are independent members of the European Union. England is the only part of the UK not to have its own dedicated legal jurisdiction, but the laws relating to the United Kingdom as a whole are said to be part of the 'English Legal System.' To further complicate things, England is split into 9 administrative regions, which include London, which has its own self-governing Assembly, and various regions of differing economic profile with the most prosperous outside London being the South East and the most economically disadvantaged being the North East.

THE PROSECUTION OF YOUTHS AS 'TROLLS' PRIOR TO 2013

Prior to the publication of the guidelines on prosecuting electronic message faults (Starmer, 2013), it was clear that the 'cycle of juvenile justice' focused on digital teens as being trolls (Bishop, 2014). By the middle of 2013 these attacks had reduced coverage in the media, and instead the focus was on tackling 'web porn.' This even led to the UK Prime Minister calling a summit to deal with the problem (Bishop, 2014), but with a lower profile. The attacks on the Baby Bust generation of Digital Teens by the media and others as being "undisciplined" is part the unrelenting victimisation of the Baby Bust generation who believe they have as much right to an opinion as those trying to push opinions on them, such as teachers. Describing them as "trolls" in a villainous way is an easy get-out for the Baby Boomers who have left little in life for these digital teens to build a life around. Table 1 below was compiled and calculated by the author using the secondary sources listed below it. Using various data it shows that the commonly held view that it is NEET youths that commit most trolling offences is not true. It provides support for a case that this claim could only be if there were to be 150% more incidents of Internet message faults in Wales, and about 50% of the incidents in Scotland would need to have been committed by youths. In order to support this negative attitude towards NEETs about 2 in 5 of every Internet message fault in the South East of England would have to have been committed by a youth. It therefore is necessary to investigate the Baby Boomers and the affect their characteristics might have in terms trolling among all youths and not just NEETs.

Table 2. Statistics for Wales, Scotland and south east regions of Great Britain

British Region	Incidents of Electronic Message Faults	Internet access rate	Adjusted Trolling Incidents	Actual NEETs	Calculated TOYGs
Wales	135	78.00%	173.08	23.80%	366.16
Scotland	475	83.00%	572.29	18.30%	281.54
South East	690	87.00%	793.1	15.50%	238.46
Totals	13000	82.00%	1538.47	19.20%	886.16

Sources: Eurostat, UK Police forces (FOI), LexisNexis

PARENTAL CHARACTERISTICS AND THE EXTENT OF EMFTS IN WALES, SCOTLAND AND THE SOUTH EAST OF ENGLAND: AN INVESTIGATION

The cycle of juvenile justice is a well-documented phenomenon where extremes exist in the application of law: the law is loosely applied at one stage to being moderately applied to the point of overuse and misuse (Bernard, 1992; Y. D. Williams, 2013). Different parts of Great Britain look at youth policy differently. In Wales, most youth policies emanate from the Welsh Government. In 2007 they released a 'National Youth Service Strategy for Wales' (Davidson, 2007). This acknowledgement of the importance of the ages 11 to 25 to building active and engaged citizens in Wales seems to have been absent from the way the law enforcement authorities deal with these young people in relation to Internet trolling. Since May 2011 there has been little excuse for the Welsh Government not using its new powers to issue guidance to them (Bishop, 2012). Scotland's central government, The Scottish Executive, has nearly all authority for dealing with young people, including young offenders, due to Scotland having its own criminal law system. In 2008 they produced a strategy for preventing young offending (Smith & Whyte, 2008). The strategy suggests that seeing youth offending from the point of view of an economic and educational perspective will help reduce youth offending. However, as can be seen from Table 2 earlier, Scotland has some of the most favourable education results, which has a GDP comparable to the South East of England, yet has a higher number of incidents of trolling than Wales, which scores poorly on these factors. Unlike Wales and Scotland, which have legislative assemblies, the South East of England is under the direct control of the UK Government. Because of this, youth strategy is not as locally applicable as it could be, as policies are generally made on an England-wide basis.

One might consider the time we are in now to be the most severe application of the law against young people, whose offensive messages are prosecuted as if they were grossly offensive. Young people are particularly at risk of victimisation in general (Pittet, Berchtold, Akré, Michaud, & Suris, 2010; Turner, 2007), and with the rise in adoption of social networking technologies youths who are most able to adapt to technologies have become cast as the demons of this platform, often called "trolls." With the Internet gradually becoming an important tool in the youth's lives, study, entertainments and

Table 3. Statistics for parents over 50 in relation to incidents of internet trolling

Variable	N	Wales	Scotland	South East	CV	F	d.f.N	d.f.D	p-value	SE
Trolling Incidents (Adj)	-	237	365	10201	-	-	-	-	-	-
Productivity	-	164	212	320	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education Level	161	2	3	3	3.07	6.63	2	158	<0.003	0.11
Intelligence	150	92	102	105	3.07	4.27	2	147	<0.003	0.62
Quality of Life	150	33.11	32.01	30.05	3.07	3.11	2	147	<0.017	0.5
Rooms in House	161	5.96	5.05	5.09	3.07	4.45	2	158	<0.014	0.01

Sources: Eurostat, UK Police forces (FOI), LexisNexis, UKDA

communication, it increasingly impacts on youth groups in other ways (Na, 2008).

METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this study was to assess whether there are any links between established economic and social indicators and incidents of trolling. To avoid duplication of research much of this data was acquired through a dataset looking at regional differences in Great Britain provided by the UK Data Service (Elliott, Savage, Parsons, & Miles, 2012). This was put together with other secondary data from the European Union's Eurostat data archive in addition to the collection of incidents of Internet trolling on a regional level through directly contacting UK police forces for data on electronic message faults, and accessing those requested by others through reference to the websites of these police forces and reports of them by the newsmedia. Whilst one might criticise the use of secondary data use, it has less risk and cost than duplicating information that is already available to those skilled in the art of bringing disperate data sources together.

A data analysis using one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was then conducted to explore the differences between the incidents of trolling in these specific regions and the differences between the population of those groups in terms of socioeconomic and other factors. Subjects (Ns between 150 and 161) were divided into three groups (k=3) according to whether they lived in Wales, Scotland or the South East of England. A number of variables were analysed before smaller number above were selected, with only the best p-values being considered. The most relevant factor discovered in relation to possibilities about the effect of the backgrounds on flame trolling propensity were productivity of the region, the education level of participants, their intelligence, self-perceptions of their quality of life, and there was an unusual link between number of rooms in the house and flame trolling propensity.

PARTICIPANTS

The study used a survey of the opinions of 161 people aged 50 in Wales (n=50), Scotland (n=55) and the South East of England (56). In order to ensure the most comprehensive dataset all participants were interviewed between 6 and 9 times. Out of the sample of 161, 49.7% were male and 50.3% were female. The social

mobility factors of the participants varied. Exactly 16.1% (26) participants were classed as 'stable service,' 16.8% (27) were classed as downwardly mobile and 33.5% (54) were upwardly mobile and another 33.5% (54) were stable. Exactly 26.7% (n=43) of respondents did not take part in any community groups, such as discos or youth clubs, while 62.7% did (n=101) and only 10.6% did not respond to the question at all. A large proportion of the participants were active in the democratic system with 82.6% (n=133) voting in the general election, which compared favourably to the 61.28% national turnout.

RESULTS

The numbers of trolling incidents that are shown in Table 8 were calculated from incomplete data from the police authorities, which was collected through Freedom of Information Requests. The calculations were made by using the actual trolling figures for a Police Authority area within a NUTS 2 region (such as Wales), followed by adding the populations of the available areas together, and then re-factoring the number of trolling incidents for the limited populations to what they could be for the larger population all things being equal. Productivity was calculated by dividing the population of the region by that region's gross domestic product (GDP) measured in euro.

The differences between education level in Wales, Scotland and the South East of England were significant (p=<0.003), and as the CV was 3.07 and the F was greater at 6.63 it is safe to conclude that the locality in which one lives has an effect on education outcomes. Clearly this is not likely to be because of geographical reasons per se, but the geodemograpics of the region. For instance in Wales jobs are generally low skilled and education outcomes less essential to success, which might suggest why qualifications tend to be held at level 2 in Wales, whilst being level 3 in Scotland and the South East of England. It could be argued that the limited education reform in Wales since the 1990s, with it still being predominantly based on the 'comprehensive' one-size-fits-all approach may be taking its toll. This seems to be strengthened by the differences in intelligence in the region. The differences between the areas were found to be significant (p<0.003) and as the F was 4.27 and also greater than the CV of 3.07 it was suitable to accept the claim that intelligence differs by geography. This is unlikely to be down to any biological differences in the localities, but that those who achieve higher qualifications are more likely to be well practised in the skills that form part of intelligence testing.

Trolling is highest amongst those in the South East (10,201 incidents), as is the productivity measure (i.e. 320). However, the South East has the lowest perception of quality of life (30.05) and the lowest number of NEETs recorded (15.50%). This has shown, using the earlier data, that it is wrong to claim that it is lack of education and ability amongst NEETs that causes flame trolling behaviour, and that it is more likely to be other factors that are to blame. Indeed the study finds that the poorest areas have a higher perceived quality of life, which might be due to welfare dependence meaning that inhabitants in those areas have more time available to spend on leisure activities.

IMPLICATIONS OF TROLLING IN THE SOUTH EAST OF ENGLAND

If one considers the remaining data in Table 2, it might also be possible to provide further

explanations as to why trolling is highest in the South East. There is a significant difference between the regions (p<0.017) in terms of perception of quality of life, and as the F of 3.11 is exceeded by the CV of 3.11 then it is acceptable to accept that a difference exists. This quality of life may correlate to the productivity levels as the higher productivity figures seem to be directly proportional to lower quality of life.

The number of calculating trolling incidents per productivity in Wales is 1.45 (n=237), in Scotland it is 1.33 (n=282) and in the South East of England it is a whopping 32 (n=10207). This provides a clear indicator that increased productivity does not result in reduced cybercrime. The extreme number of incidents of flame trolling in the South East of 10,201, as adjusted, suggests that the police authorities in the region are not taking EMFts seriously, and not that it is Troublesome Online Youth Groups (TOYGs) that are to blame for the flame trolling. In fact, the number of Internet trolling prosecutions involving youths in Wales is high, even though the number of overall EMFts is lower in the country. One might therefore argue that the perception of youths being to blame for flame trolling is more down to the media and public not analysing the problem properly as opposed to any actual breakdown in society. The 'society fallacy' is the term used describe this process of assuming what happens in one group is generalisable to a wider population. It is therefore necessary as an outcome of this study for the police to consider the most effective means for ensuring that youths do not bear the brunt of the moral panic around Internet trolling, and that justice is administered fairly to all.

DISCUSSION

This article set out to see whether the claims by the media and others that young people are the cause of Internet trolling as is often presented in the media. Such young people can be seen to be 'Troublesome Online Youth Groups' (TOYGs). Those young people not in education, employment or training (i.e. NEETs) are often get portrayed as TOYGs in relation to Internet use, but the results of this study suggest that this is a strong misconception. The study found that areas that have the highest number of youths that are not in education, employment or training (NEETs) are not the areas with the highest number of reported incidents of Internet trolling, or more technically, electronic message faults (EMFts).

An ANOVA was conducted, which compared a number of variables within three regions in Great Britain, namely Wales, Scotland and the South East of England. Whilst the South East had the highest education and intelligence outcomes and the highest productivity, it also had the highest number of EMFs, the lowest number of NEETs and the lowest perceptions of quality of life. It was also found that in the South East that the police are less likely to bring prosecutions for electronic message faults.

Every so often another revolution of the cycle of juvenile justice occurs, where a moral panic ensues about how teens are causing the downfall of society and the education system must be failing as a result. So-called lack of 'discipline' is more to do with the frustrations of youths being ignored and treated like they do not matter than any deep-rooted social ill, such as 'Broken Britain.' One might argue that it is the system that is broken and people are responding to in to maximise benefit for them, as has been characteristic of homosapiens since

they existed as a species that co-operates only to serve their own puposes. This has not changed in 200,000 years and there is little point continuing this attack on youths over each generation and allowing the failed systems in each jurisdiction to continue. As human beings we are the only species on the planet that can substantially design and redesign our environment. On this basis we should change the system used in so-called democracies to encourage people to act in the interests of others and not just themselves. A system that relies on greed, laziness and other undesirable social orientation characteristics will produce undesirable outcomes, unless that system is designed to mitigate the negative aspects of these human traits, as opposed to the system relying on these to work. In essence one might conclude that in order for homosapiens to show humanity the system needs to change to bring out the best in us and not the worst.

It might therefore be important for policy makers to consider the impact of the findings of this study on how they approach problems such as youth unemployment and social exclusion. The data collected during the study was on the whole done during the final years of the New Labour Government of 1997 to 2010, which focussed on the redistribution of wealth to parents and young people through the welfare system – a policy reversed by the Coalition Government that came to power in 2010. The so-called bedroom tax is has led to evictions of young families who cannot afford the costs of a room deemed to be in excess of their needs due to their children having to share. When that evicted family is older there will be overcrowding to to the lack of appropriate bedroom space. This may mean that the problems solved under New Labour in relation to reducing youth poverty will resurface under future governments due to the Coalition's policies. The unexpected finding

in the study – that low levels of Internet trolling are associated with high number of rooms per house will need to be considered in more depth should the number of incidents increase in loacities where it was found to be absent in this study which used data prior to the Coalition government's Welfare Reform Act 2012 coming into force.

LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study was based on secondary data from a longitudinal study collected between 2008 and 2010 of people who were aged 50 put together with secondary data from police records between 2009 and 2011. The assembly of the data was effective, but it might be that a further study would be necessary using original data to replicate the findings. One might argue that the age of the police data – as closely matched to the other data as possible - might reflect actual Internet trolling as opposed to the media driven moral panic from 2011 onwards. However one might also argue that by not using the data between 2011 and 2013 that the study might not reflect the true picture where so many people now use social media, something a replication study could look at. Another problem with the data was that of all the participants more than 80 per cent of them were engaged in the democratic process in some way. This may mean the data collected may not be reflective of the wider population, which might be more apathetic and uninterested in party politics. It would also make sense to see whether the findings of the study can be replicated on an international level, as this study online investigated Great Britain. More longitudinal studies might want to look at whether concepts such as gamification, which is an approach of applying gaming

principles to non-gaming environments could produce positive changes in the way we use computer systems. At the time of going to press the UK Government was pursuing a 'bedroom tax' policy, which means that impoverished families receiving state aid to support their housing costs would have to pay for the rooms the government deemed surplus. The factor in this study that low levels of trolling correspond with more rooms per house would need further investigation to see if this 'bedroom tax' could result in increased incidents of trolling due to overcrowding of houses limiting essential values of Digital Teens such as their privacy and individual development. Investigations should also look at how the results of the study would change if those young people in South East of England not in education, employment or training, but who are subsidised by their wealthy parents, counted towards the figures for 'NEETSs.'

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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