

BSA 2012 Paired Peers Symposium: 'Studying in austere times: University students' classed financial survival strategies'

Employing data from a three-year research project funded by The Leverhulme Trust, *Paired Peers: the impact of class on the experience of university students*, this symposium demonstrates the impact of undergraduates' classed backgrounds in several key areas. The project compares experiences of students studying similar courses at two very different universities in one English city, the 'elite' University of Bristol, and the 'post-92' University of the West of England.

1. Mellor, J., Bradley, H. and Bathmaker, A-M. (2012) 'Unequal peers: the impact of class on student budget management at university'.

The Mellor, Bradley and Bathmaker paper outlines the field of concern, sketching out how students from contrasting working- and middle-class backgrounds manage their financial resources. The paper both outlines how many students from poorer backgrounds restrict their involvement in what might be considered 'traditional' university life, and celebrates the resourcefulness and resilience of those students, and considers how this offers a greater insight into life's realities.

2. Waller, R., Mellor, J. and Hoare, A. (2012) 'UK university students and paid work'.

In Waller, Mellor and Hoare's contribution, the role of term-time working for the participants is explored. The manner that paid employment whilst studying is a necessity for some working class students, but perhaps only 'desirable' rather than 'essential' for their wealthier counterparts, and a useful extension of their social life is examined.

3. Ingram, N., Abrahams, J. and Beedell, P. (2012) 'Students' Engagement in Extra-Curricular Activities: Constraints, Freedoms and Class Background'.

Ingram, Abrahams and Beedell focus upon how financial constraints often restrict students' opportunities for extra-curricular activities within and without the university. The strategic utilisation of such activities to develop both social and cultural capital are discussed, and the manner that a student's classed background may influence the value attached to such activities is explored.