

SOCIOLOGY NEWS

Students meet the original reality TV star

The Sociology department was delighted to welcome Tony Walker, an original child from the Granada Television documentary *Seven Up*, which has been screened on both ITV and BBC. The programme took the remark "Give me a child until he is seven and I will give you the man" (attributed to the founder of the Jesuit educational system, Ignatius Loyola) as its primary inspiration. It started by tracking the lives of fourteen seven-year-old British children from a wide variety of social and economic backgrounds. Since then, it has reported back on them at seven-year intervals, with each episode cumulatively presenting extracts from previous programmes.



Tony came to speak to Year 12 and 13 Sociology students, who used extracts from the programme when studying the changing nature of family in Britain and the impact of the education system.

He talked about his involvement in the documentary series; he was one of the original children, who at the age of seven when the series started, was growing up in the East End of London.

Students were treated to a very open question and answer session where they were able to ask questions such as, 'Has being part of the programme affected your life?' 'Do you keep in touch with the original characters?' and 'Have you enjoyed being part of an award winning documentary?'



Tony was happy to answer all of their questions and gave a real insight into changes in society and his experience of growing up in Britain. Students were touched by the honest and emotional accounts given by Tony.

"It was a fantastic experience to meet someone who was actually part of a long standing documentary we have studied in class," said Shanice (Year 13).

"It was interesting to be able to ask questions about growing up in the East End of London. Tony has lived a very interesting life and he made us laugh with his stories," said Charlie (Year 12).

The Sociology department would like to thank Tony for giving up his time freely and for giving us an incredible insight into such a long-standing documentary and plenty of discussion points for our future Sociology lessons.

