

What is social order?



Drawing on what you have learned about City Road from the Making Social Lives DVD and Learning Companion 1, describe some of the ways in which order is made and repaired on the street which you know. The purpose of this assignment is to compare and contrast the social order of City Road with a local road to demonstrate how order is made and is continually repaired over time. Abington Street, has changed considerably over the past 50 years, from a quiet street of individually owned shops such as, Halford Jewellers, Benefit footwear, and only one a big convenience store.

Today, you will find fewer individually owned and many more big name high street shops, such as Primark and Tesco Express. Firstly, I will compare Abington Street, and how it has changed to City Road. Abington Street used to be the main thoroughfare to the town centre, with a tram running down the centre of the street creating “invisible order”, nowadays the street remains invisibly ordered but is used differently as it is now completely pedestrianised. It is both a daytime shopping zone and a night time social space.

Meanwhile City Road has changed from a simple country road to a busy town through road, however similarities still exist with Abington Street as both are now shopping and social spaces, as City Roads 1960's car showrooms, have been replaced by shops, cafes, takeaways and restaurants designed for a wide range of people. With the changes in use, have come the changes in visible order, Abington Streets use changes throughout the day, in a very similar way to City Road.

Shopping is the daytime occupation, with people eating and drinking in the cafes, visible order is demonstrated by adherence to the society's rules as

people queue in orderly fashion to purchase goods. Disruption of social order occasionally happens when for example, shoplifting occurs, however this is deterred by CCTV keeping invisible order and is repaired by the presence of security guards preventing further incidents. Social order is present at night in Abington Street as well as in City Road, at night the shops close, as the takeaways, pubs and clubs open. Young people then use Abington Street for entertainment rather than for shopping.

Although, Abington Street brings in different types of people during the different times of day, different shops and venues are aimed at certain groups of people. The younger generation use fast food takeaways or go to socialise at the pubs at night, whilst in the DVD Jose Romas Surez, from Taste bud cafe talks about how mostly elderly customers regularly come back to his cafe during the day, because they feel secure in there this could be to do with the types of people using the streets during a day - the elderly or school children (Making Social Lives on City Road DVD, 2009, scene 3).

Most invisible social order at night in Abington Street is maintained by the use of CCTV, whilst visible night time order is maintained by the presence of club bouncers, the police and local community support officers. Young people may see the presence of the police and community support workers as a deterrent to them having fun, whilst the shopkeepers rely on the police to maintain social order and protect their property from drunken or accidental bad behaviour.

Social order is also affected by the influx of big business; this is demonstrated in the DVD, which shows how the arrival of Tesco Express to City Road results in the closure of smaller businesses. There are inequalities

between local shops and the big named supermarkets on both streets. On Abington Street there are two very dominant stores, Tesco Express again as well as Marks and Spencer's. Both of these shops have a large variety of products on offer at competitive prices; these stores also have a wider range of goods for the convenience of the customers.

In City Road, like in Abington Street, the smaller business owner reports adverse affects, an example of this is Colin Butwell (the newsagent), he described how he had been affected, saying that Tesco moving in close to his store has resulted in a reduction in trade. On the positive side the opening of well known chains can have a positive effect on remaking society, and social ordering, as it can bring about more jobs, and encourage people to use the area more resulting in other places such as cafes, restaurants being busier.

As Georgina Blakely point out some people gain from the reshaping and some people lose (Making Social Lives, 2009, Scene 5). In conclusion, social order will always need to adapt, change and be continually restructured, and repaired to meet society's requirements. The effects of a single change can have a massive impact on a street and the people that it involves. This can be seen in the effect that pedestrianisation had on Abington Streets main uses, it is also clear to see that the slightest change can have a massive impact on the social ordering of the area. This can be applied to any street in the world. 814 WORDS

Bibliography, * Blakeley, G. , Bromley, S. , Clarke, J. , Raghuram, P. , Silva, E. and Taylor, S. (2009) Learning Companion 1, Introducing the social sciences, Milton Keynes, The Open University. * 'The street' (2009) Making Social

Lives [DVD], Milton Keynes, The Open University. * What have you enjoyed about starting this module? I have enjoyed getting back into studying again, after leaving college. I'm definitely looking forward to the rest of this course. What have you found difficult? Time management is my main difficulty, juggling working and writing an assignment but I'm sure I will find this easier as time goes on.