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Equality Literacy: Daring to Do Equality Based Practice and Research

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This morning: what and why?

- Explore our educational experiences through the EQL model so that:
- Enhance your awareness of self, reflexivity, the start of the research journal
- Increasingly familiar with the (mostly) sociological theoretical framework
- Begin to develop a sense of how you might view the narratives – no matter who they are and what they say
- Grow an awareness of the tensions inherent in having any theoretical framework

Examples of inequality in the UK education system

11.2% of all 16-24 years olds are NEET (House of Commons Library, 2018)



Drop outs and early school leavers from upper secondary education



18% in the UK
23% in Norway
20% in Denmark

4.5% of children have absences from school
10% of those miss 10% of school (DfE, 2017)



54% of school pupils report being bullied (UK Annual Bullying Survey, 2017)



10% of children under 16 experience a mental health issue. Only 30% of them receive treatment (NHS England, 2018)



UNICEF (2018) An Unfair Start

Primary rankings

- Norway 7th
- Denmark 12th
- UK 23rd

Secondary rankings

- Denmark 4th
- UK 16th
- Norway 20th

Despite the complexity of the challenge, educational inequalities can be reduced. We can create policies and practices to help all children realize their full potential.

Guarantee

high-quality,
early-childhood
education and
care to all children



Ensure

all children
achieve a good
minimum level
of core skills



Reduce

the impact
of socio-economic
inequalities



Close

the gender gaps
in achievement



Produce

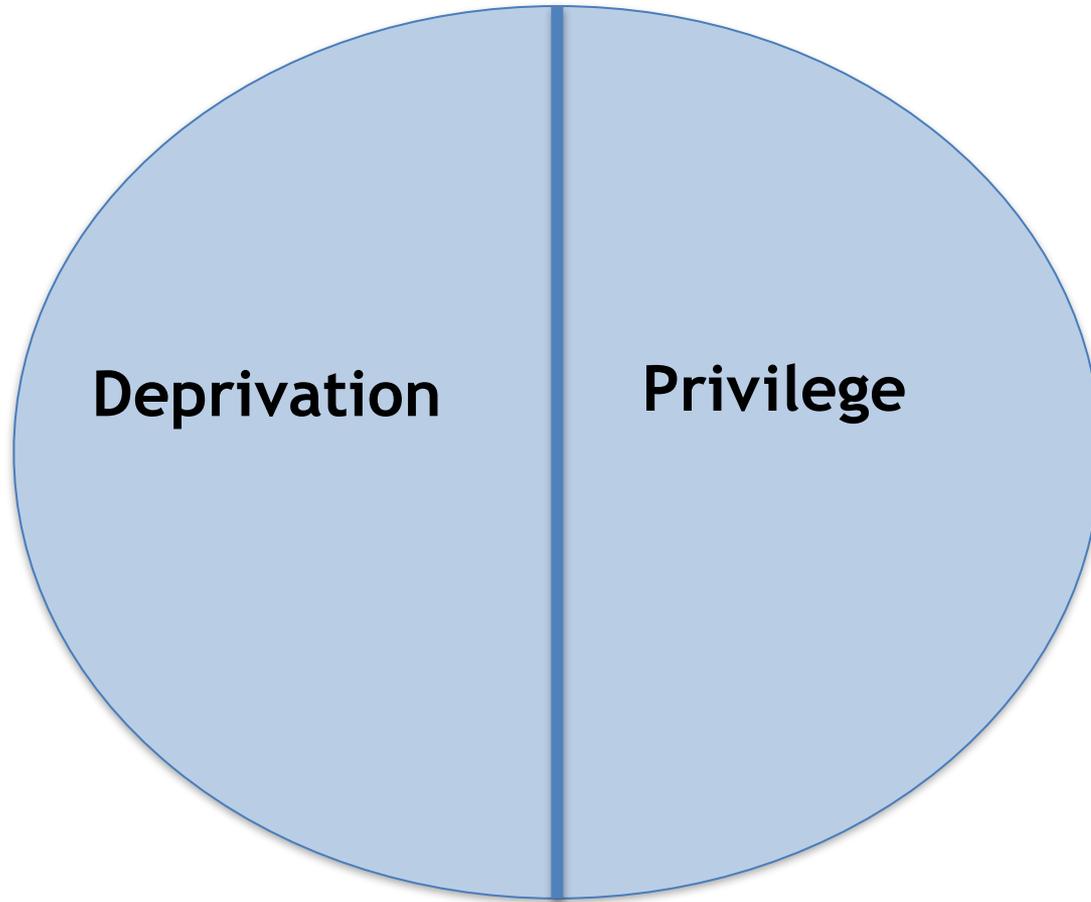
better, longitudinal
data

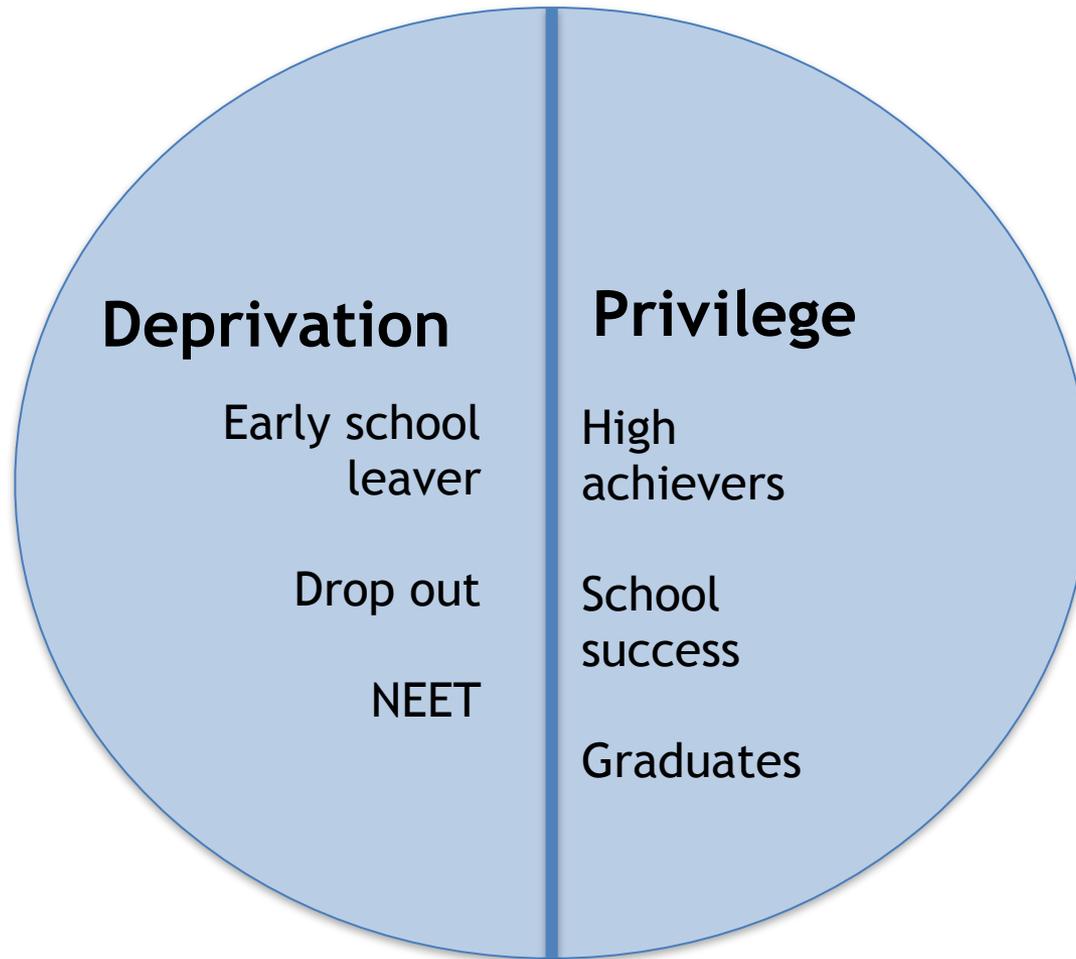


Focus

on equality,
not just averages







Equality

Every human being has an absolute and equal right to common dignity and parity of esteem and entitlement to access the benefits of society on equal terms.

Equity

Every human being has a right to benefit from the outcomes of society on the basis of fairness and according to need

Social Justice

Deliberate and specific intervention to secure equality and equity

An Equalities Literacy Tool

Understanding ourselves and others in context is vital in order to understand the relative nature of equality and equity.

Context is king

- Anthropology / sociology / education / youth work perspectives state context matters, we are socio-culturally shaped
- Social and cultural production and reproduction, through habitus and hegemonic structures (Bourdieu)
- Humans are socially and culturally embedded (Thompson, 1997; Bronfenbrenner, 1979)
- Inequalities have always existed (Dorling, 2010)

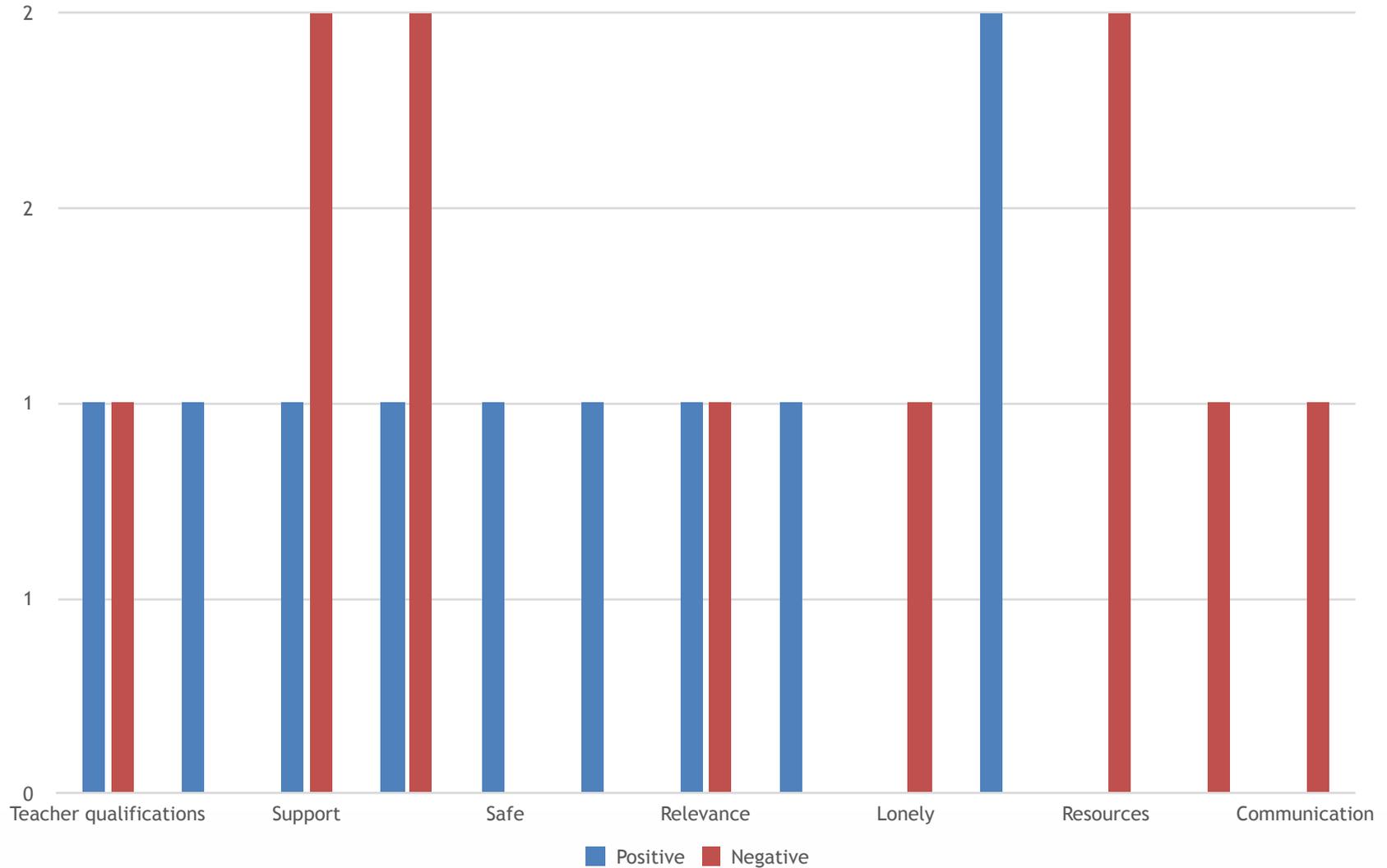


Erasmus+

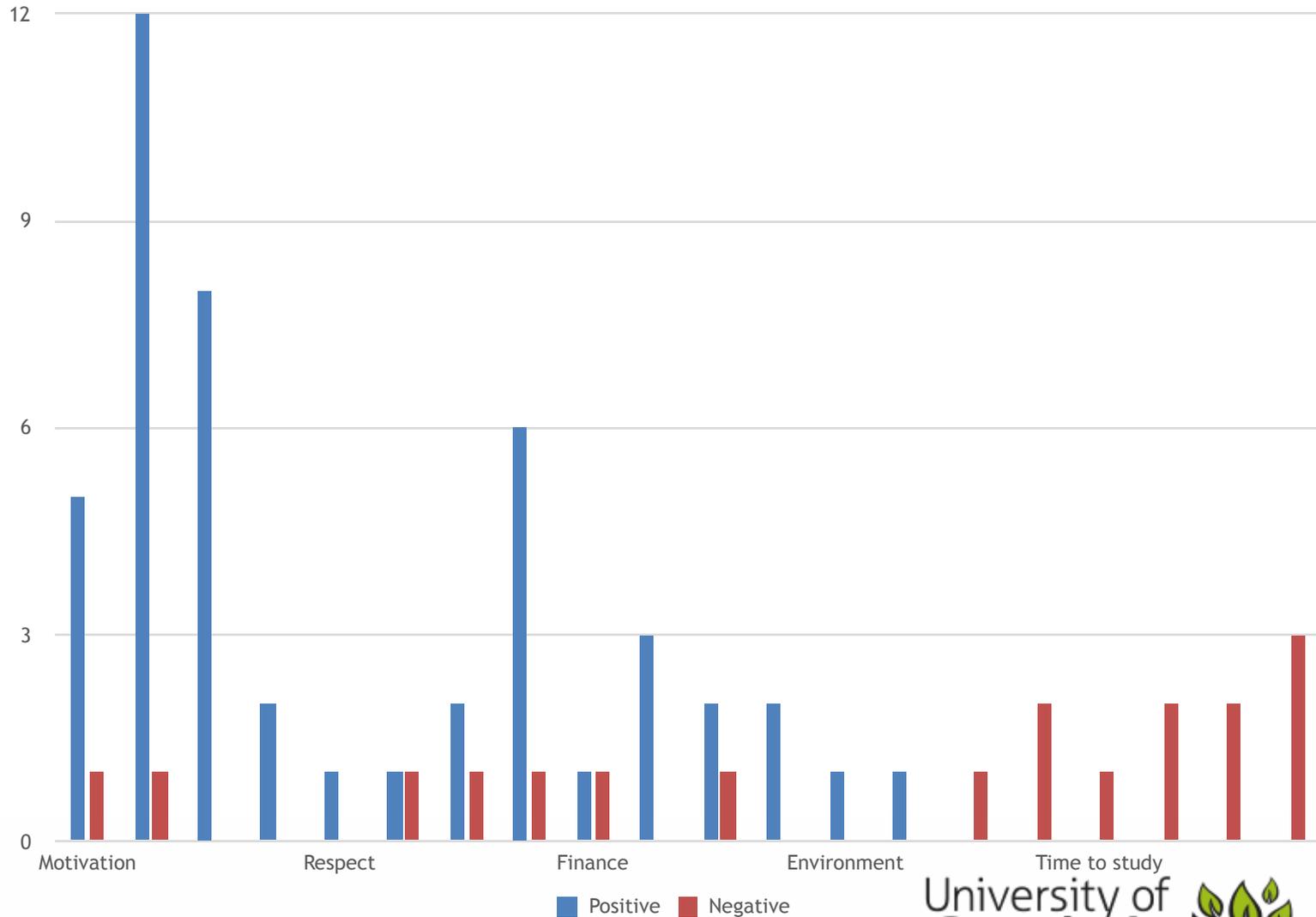
Context



Overall quality of higher education



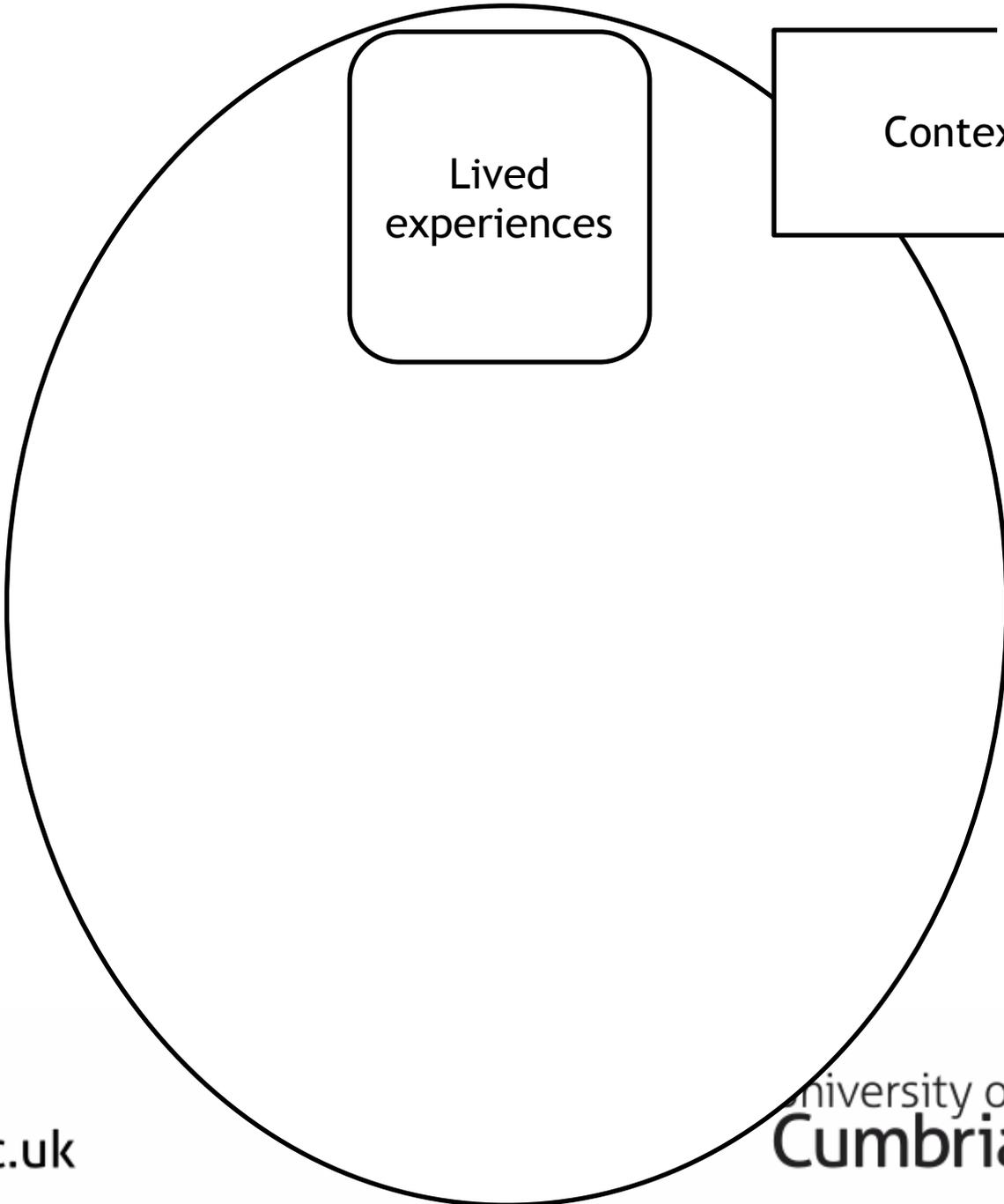
Factors that affect learning in HE



Educational Contextual Questions

- What sort of school did you go to?
- How big was it?
- What sort of area was it in?
- Who went to it?
- How well was it resourced?
- How varied was the curriculum?
- How well staffed was it?
- How long did it take you to get there?
- How high quality was the teaching?
- What additional opportunities were there?

- The reality of living in this space will vary - people respond in different ways
- May be affected by comparison
- Often summarised as ‘quality of life’ - a self-perceptual measure of how good your life is (ONS, 2018).



Lived
experiences

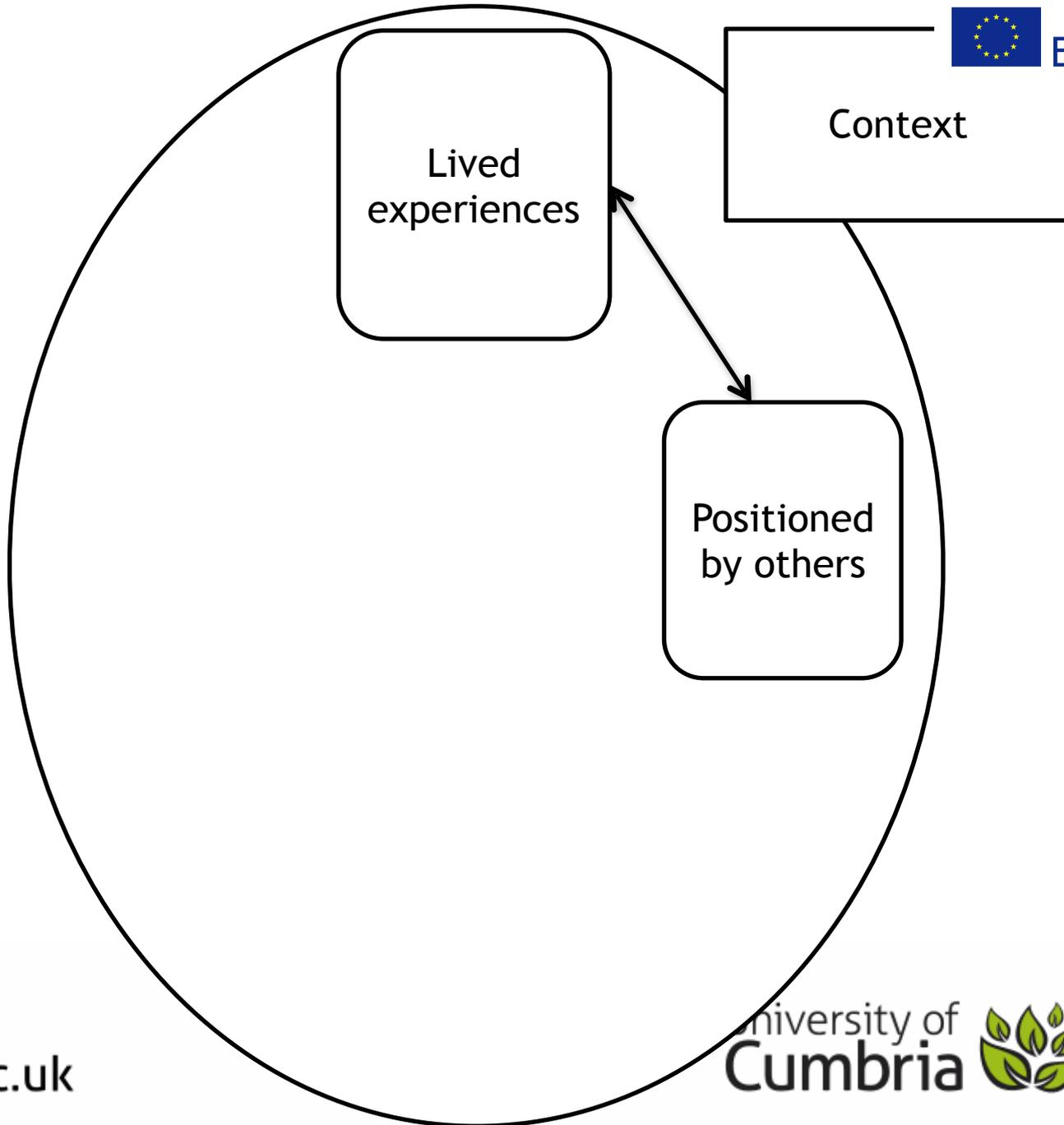
Context

Your Educational Experience Questions

- How much did you enjoy school?
- How did you feel about going to school?
- What did you like / dislike?
- Did you feel popular / unpopular?
- Did you feel successful / unsuccessful?
- Did you feel included / excluded?
- What other feelings did you have about school?

Positioning by others

- People in society position 'other individuals and groups in relation to themselves
- Positions are created by state, media and society (Jones, 2015; Bourdieu, 1999)
- Reproduction in society (Dorling, 2010; Fox, Piven and Cloward, 2015)
- Hegemonic (Gramsci, 1971; Ledwith, 2005; Wearing, 1998)
- The positioning protects the interests of the advantaged from the disadvantaged (Tyler, 2013; Dorling, 2010, Blackman and Rogers, 2017)

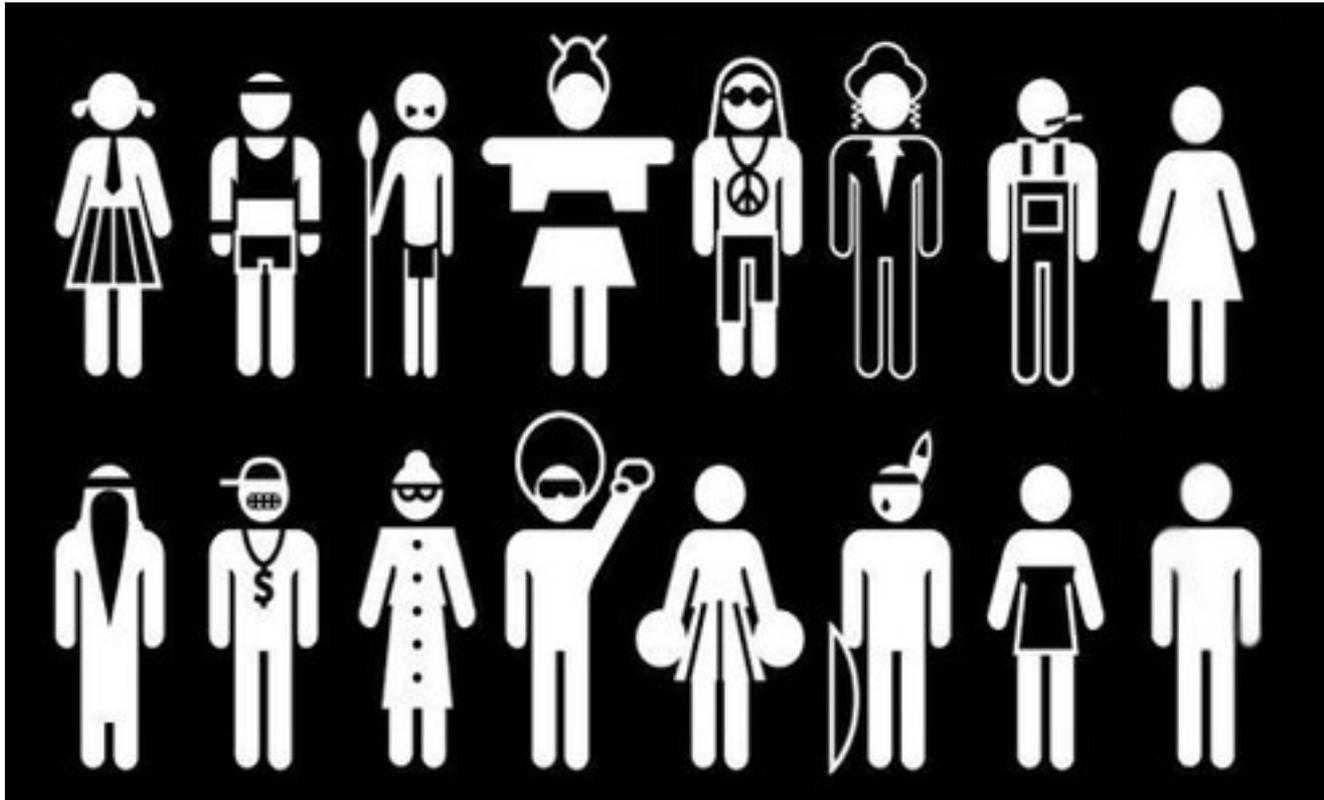


Educational position questions

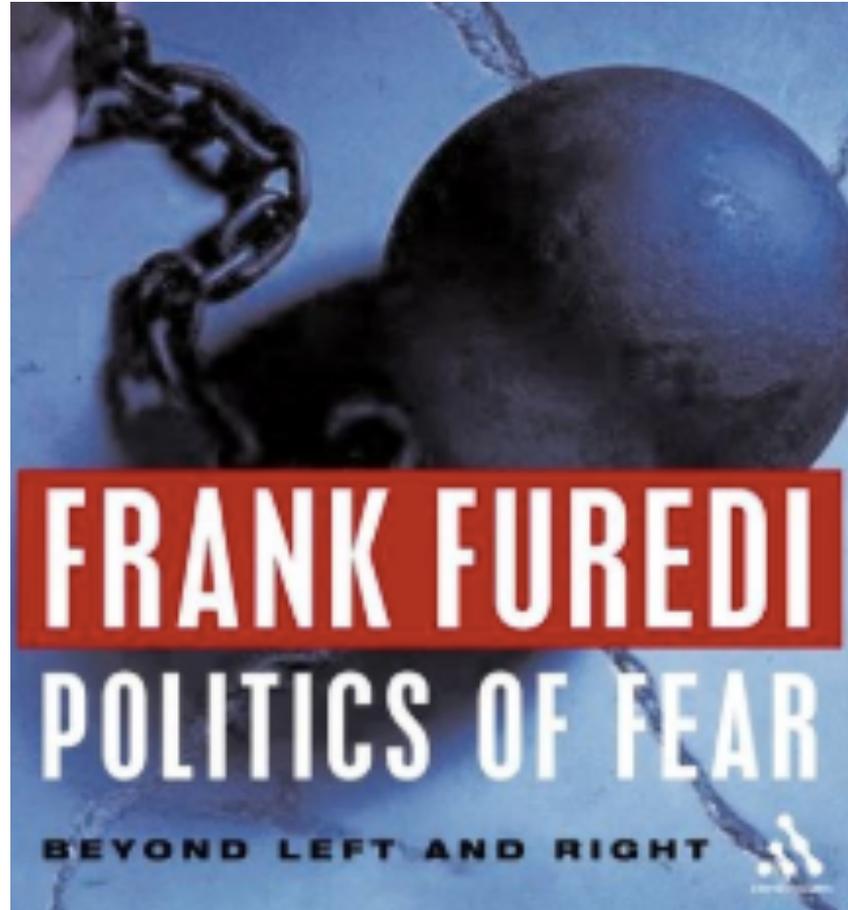
- What positions were you given?
- What labels did you get?
- What names were you called?
- Who gave you those labels?
- How varied or consistent were they?
- Parents....teachers....siblings.....peers?

Technologies of oppression or liberation

Stereotyping and labeling (Dorling, 2010)



Fear (Furedi, 2005) & insecurity (Lorey, 2015; Butler, 2006)

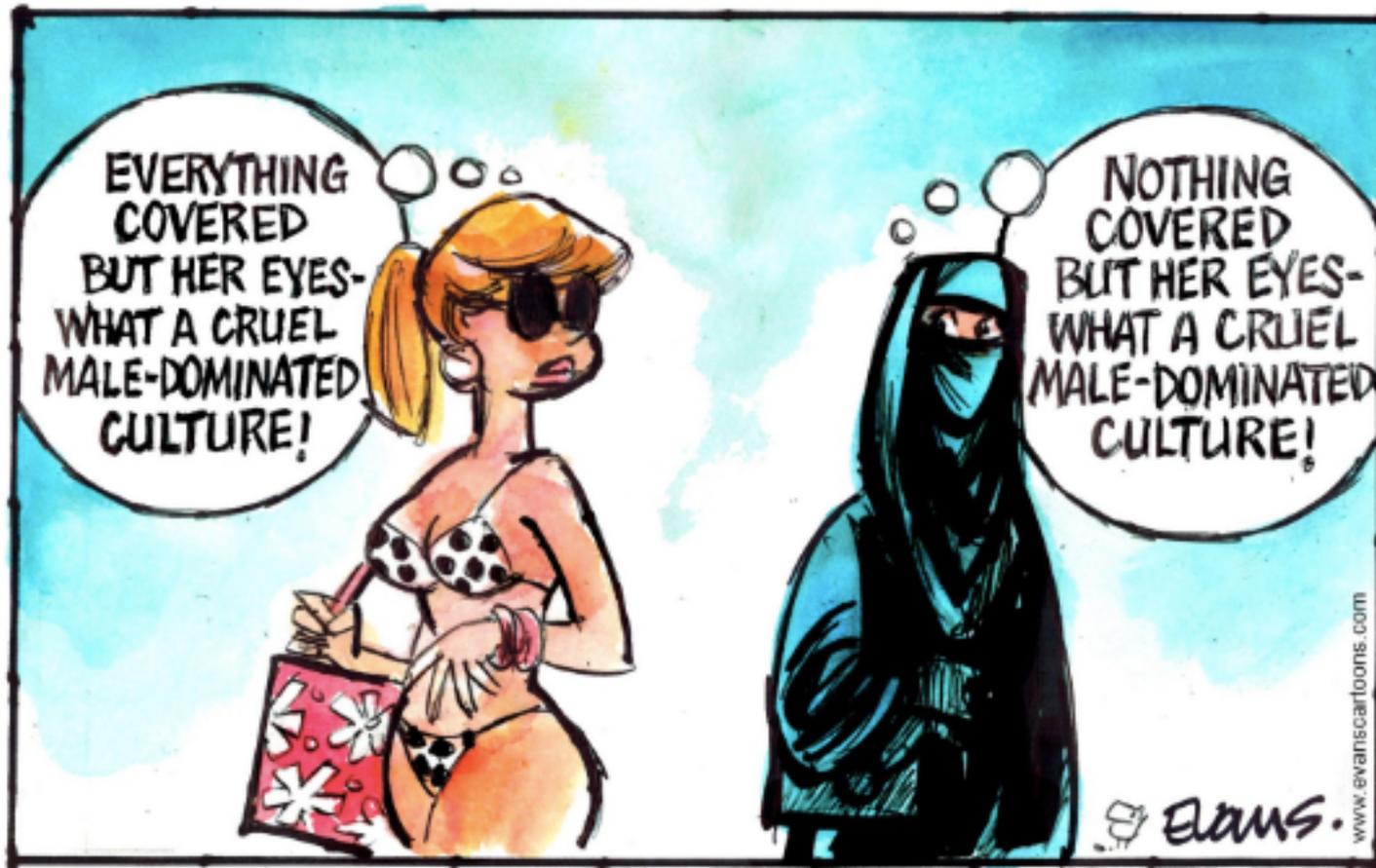


Objectification (Bourdieu, 2003) and dehumanising (Nussbaum 2004)

- Objectification is the act of treating a person, or sometimes an animal, as an object or a thing, leading to dehumanising.



Othering (Foucault, 1979; 1982, Lacan, 1988; Lévi-Strauss, 1955; Said, 1994)

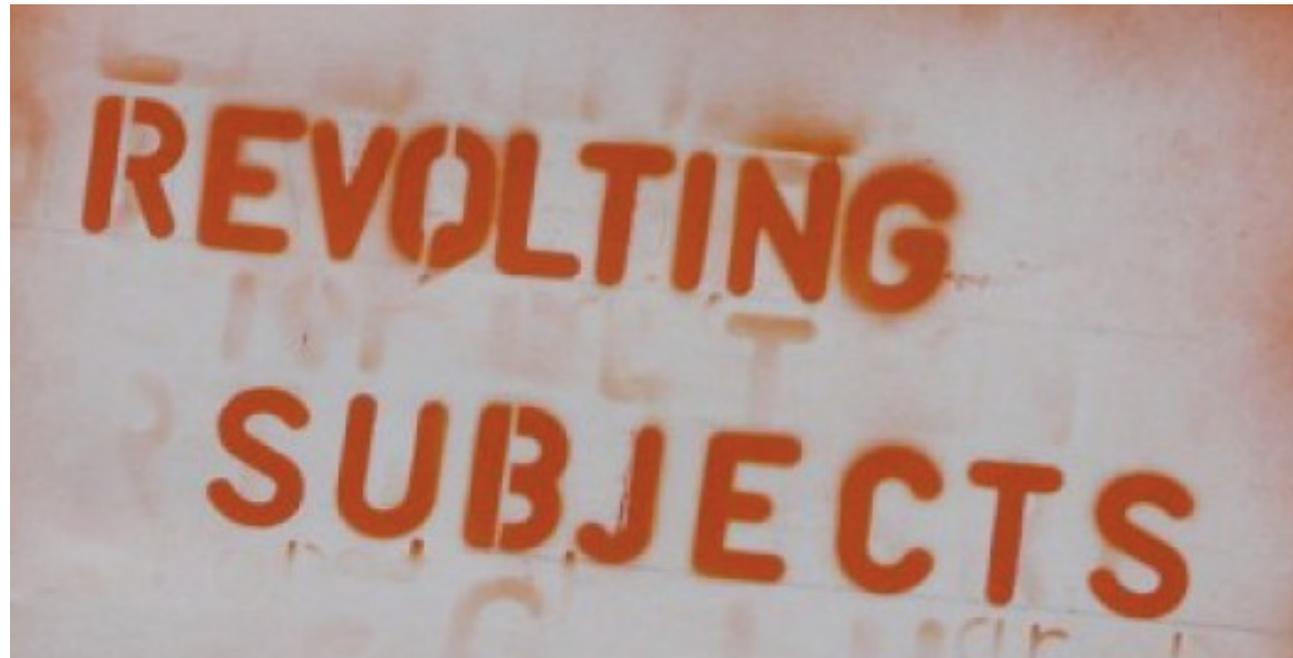


Shame & stigma (Nussbaum, 2004| Brown, 2010)



I define shame as the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging - something we've experienced, done, or failed to do makes us unworthy of connection.

- Social Abjection is a concept and theory which I developed in my book *Revolting Subjects* (2013) to describe how power is constituted through forms of ‘inclusive exclusion’.



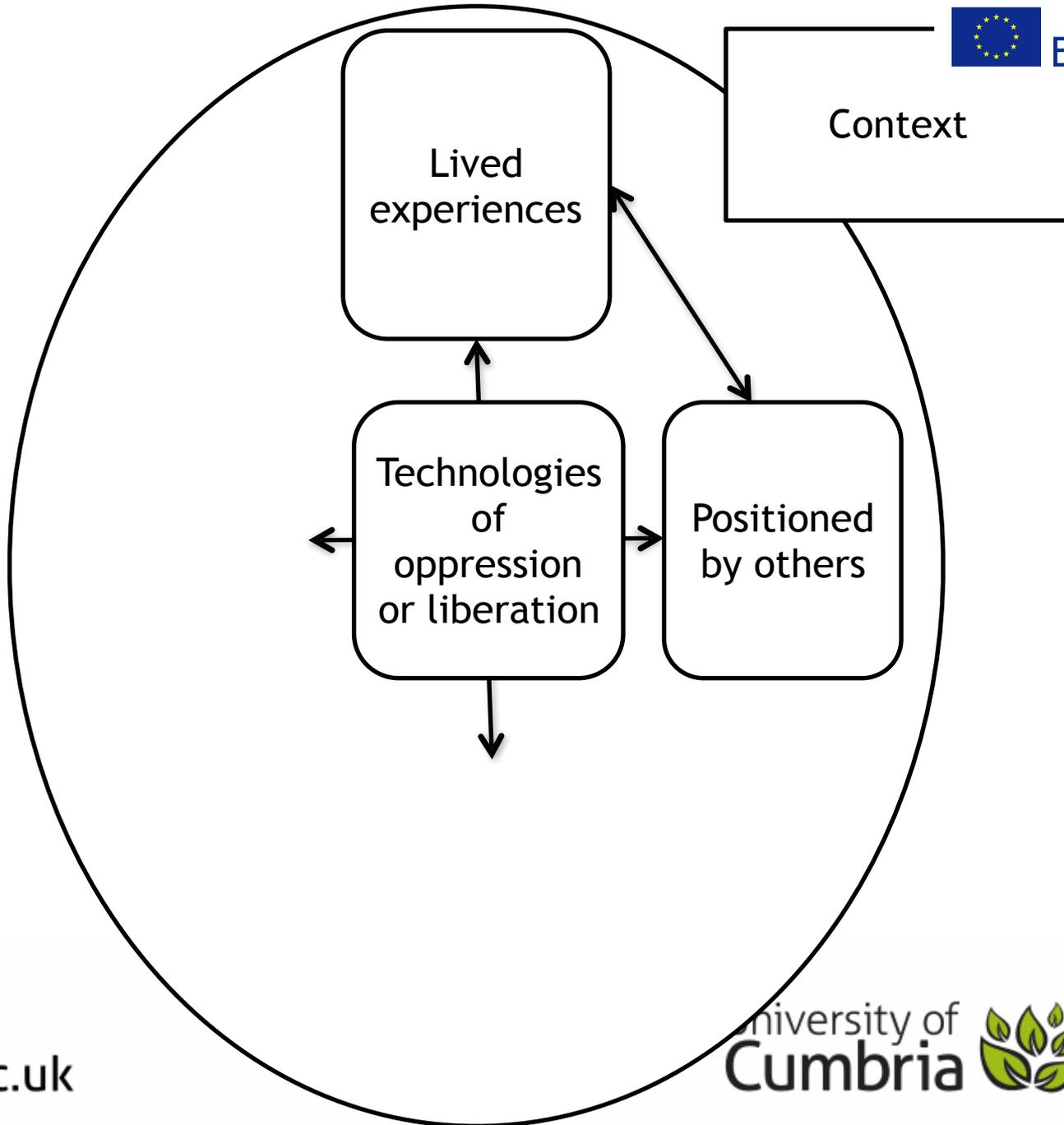
- Any situation in which people intentionally turn their attention away from an ethical problem that is believed to be important by those using the phrase (for instance, because the problem is too disturbing for people to want it dominating their thoughts, or from the knowledge that solving the problem would require extensive effort).



Legislation (Bauman, 1989) & surveillance (Foucault, 1978, 1982)



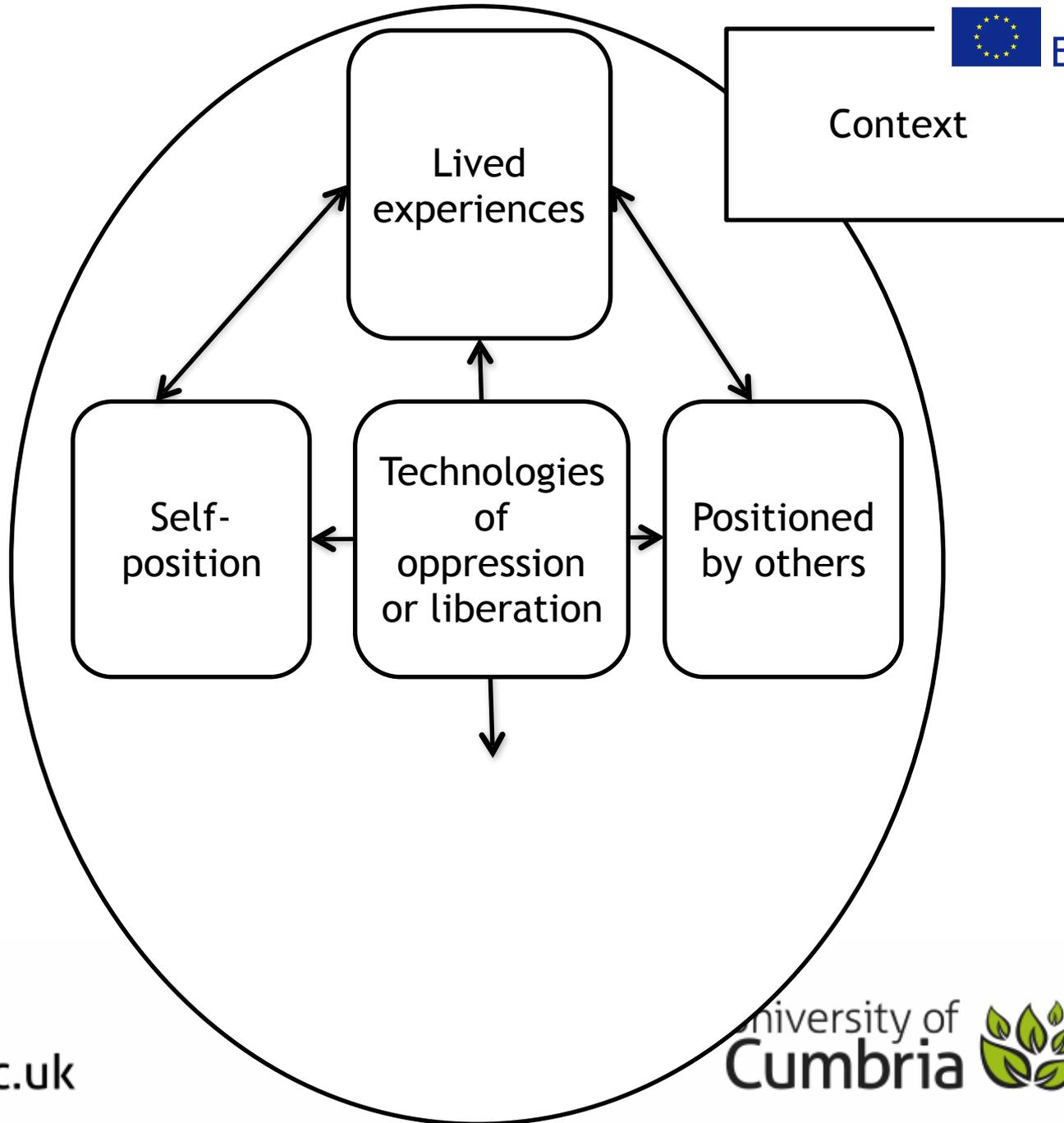




- How did people put you down in school?
- How did people make you feel good or powerful in school?
- When / why were you ignored or silenced?
- How did other people make you do what they wanted you to do?
- How did other people make you feel bad?
- What did teachers, friends, parents say to you about your education?
- When did you feel good as a learner? What did people do to make you feel good?

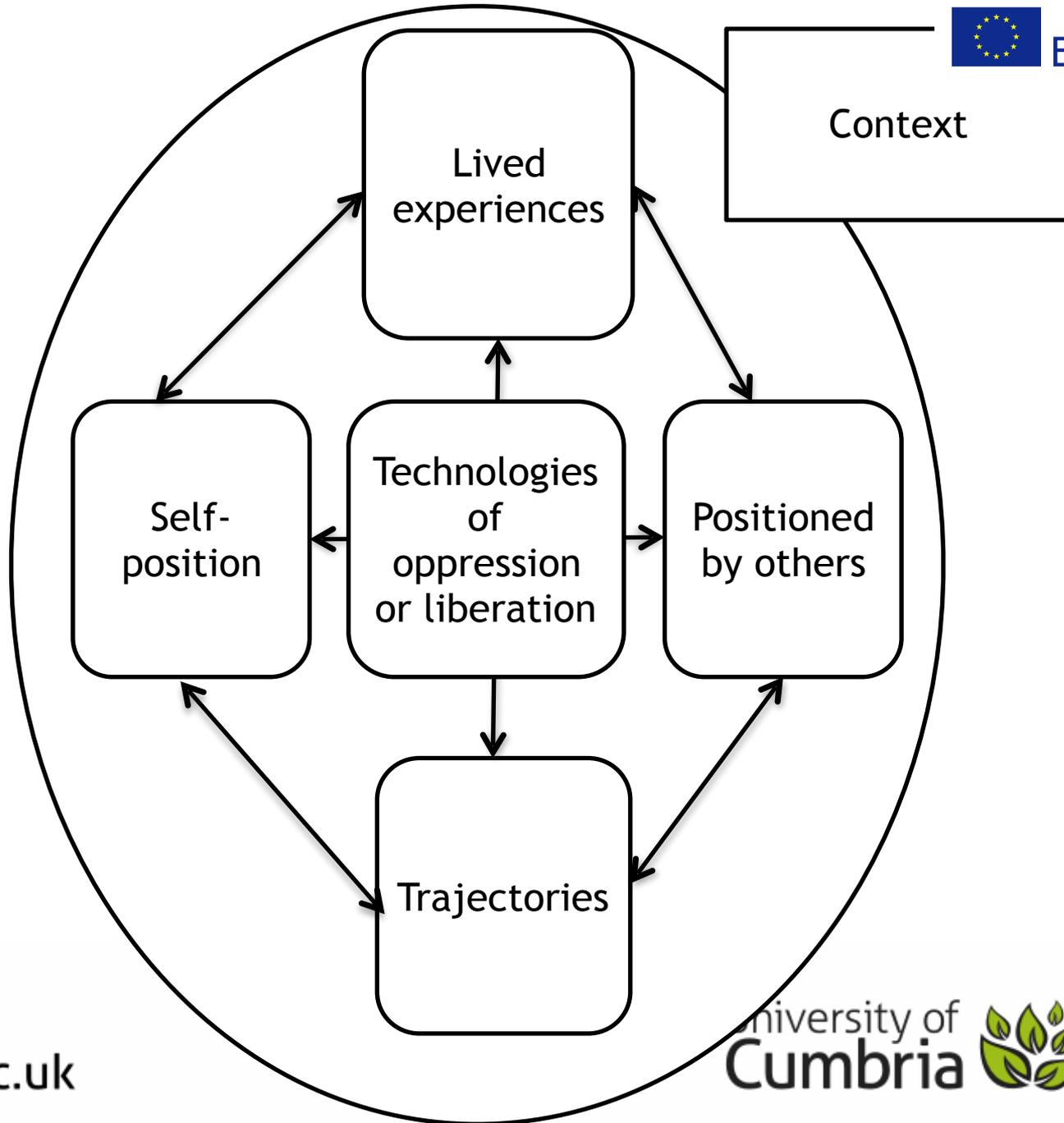
Self position

- Status is socially inscribed and self-ascribed
- The 'have's' and 'have not's' the 'not normals' or 'super rich' adopt positions relative to this framing
- These can be positions of compliance and acceptance, victimhood, rebellion, deviance etcetera.
- This has a major impact on the identity, agency and social mobility then experienced (Cote and Levine, 2002; Lawler, 2008)



- How do you respond?
- How do you feel about yourself?
- What do you think about yourself?
- What are your self-beliefs?
- What are your critical messages about yourself?
- How do you behave?
- Do you rebel? Act the victim? Comply with what they say?

- Intrapersonal impact of these technologies e.g. low self-esteem, self-efficacy, identity, agency etc. (Bandura, Giddens, Archer)
- Interpersonal impact e.g. low trust, fear, insecure, shame, stigma (Nussbaum, 2004)
- Supporting further self-positioning and further positioning by others in on-going cycles (Bourdieu)
- Nested poor outcomes intergenerationally



Trajectory questions

- What impact does your education have?
- Where do you think you are heading?
- Where do you want to be? Is it the same place?
- What could you change to make it different?
- What do you need to do to keep it on track?

The complex locus of in/equalities

- We all have multiple identities / subjectivities, therefore inequality is:
- Intersectional (Collins, 2015, bell hooks, 1994, Crenshaw, 1989)
- Intersubjective (Hegel, 1908; Habermas, 1987)
- Constellations (Hart, 2015)
- Matrices of deprivation / oppression / injustice (Collins, 2015; Ledwith, 2005)

Without equalities literacy people can:

- Make faulty assumptions / work from biases
- Disempower and disable (Illich, 1971; Le Grand, 2003), assistentialise / rescue (Jefferies, 2011)
- Blame, label and withdraw services (it's their fault mentality)
- Unconsciously reinforce existing power relations and therefore positions of inequality (Bourdieu, 1979)

Review of learning

- What have you learned about yourself?
- What have you learned that can support your interviews?
- What have you learned that can support your analysis and write up?
- What have you learned that can support your work as a practitioner?
- What implications do you think there are for schools, colleges and universities from this model?
- How does the model complement / clash with the indirect method?
- How do you think the model needs to develop?

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