

Project Title: Sociologies of Health and Illness ELearning Databank (SHIELD)  
Project Reference: 05/S/02  
Project Leader: Ms Dawn Leeder  
Institution: University of Cambridge  
Project Manager for C-SAP: Helen Howard

## Progress Report – 28 November 2002

**SHIELD** is an interdisciplinary project to create a sustainable and content-rich databank of reusable e-learning resources which may be shared between disciplines and across institutions, supporting staff and students to embrace technological change and embed it into their practice.

### The team

Department of Social & Political Sciences

Professor Bryan Turner, - Editor [bst22@cam.ac.uk](mailto:bst22@cam.ac.uk)

Areas of research: Sociology of ageing and generations; the body and society; medical sociology; citizenship, philanthropy and voluntary associations

Dr Darin Weinberg - Author/Evaluator [dtw23@cam.ac.uk](mailto:dtw23@cam.ac.uk)

Areas of research: Medical sociology, sociology of science, urban sociology, deviance, social theory, qualitative research methods

Kathy Maguire - Reviewer & Resource Selector [km261@cam.ac.uk](mailto:km261@cam.ac.uk)

Areas of research: Relationship between lay and medical knowledge, internet as a source of medical knowledge

Department of Public Health and Primary Care, Clinical School

Dr Tom Davies - Author [twd10@medschl.cam.ac.uk](mailto:twd10@medschl.cam.ac.uk)

Areas of research: Public health, cancer, epidemiology, quantitative methods, evaluation

Dawn Leeder - PI & ELearning Developer [dcl25@cam.ac.uk](mailto:dcl25@cam.ac.uk)

Areas of research: re-usability of e-learning resources, navigation of information space, appropriate media choices for e-learning, computer as medium, pedagogical issues of e-learning

### Background

A 6 month project, SHIELD was initially intended to run from June to November 2002. Due to slight delays in the initial application process, the project actually commenced in July. The first steering group meeting was on 30 July 2002, where it was agreed to develop the new materials as reusable learning objects (RLOs).<sup>1</sup> RLOs are stand-alone digital chunks of interactive multimedia (in this case, web-based) supporting a single learning objective. Each RLO explains/explores a 'stand-alone' concept or idea. The project plan was to disaggregate a number of the existing Medical Sociology Interactive<sup>2</sup> modules into their component parts (updating where necessary) to repurpose them in this fashion. Additional material could then be commissioned and developed to create a coherent collection.

### Selection of materials

Kathy Maguire has now conducted a thorough review of the existing site, and catalogued sections suitable for RLO development. She also identified sections that require updating or altering. Bryan Turner and Darin Weinberg have identified additional subject areas requiring resource development and these will now form the RLOs commissioned from other subject experts. Dawn Leeder has provided support materials such as the RLO specification template, a structured

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<sup>1</sup>A discrete reusable collection of interactive content used to present and support a single learning objective

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.medgraphics.cam.ac.uk/medsoc/>

document to help subject experts organise their material into a format suitable for multimedia development. A project website<sup>3</sup> has been set up to house all project documentation and dissemination materials as well as the resources.

Kath Maguire has now provided 8 RLO specifications:

Parsons' sick role 07/08/02

Learning objective: Understanding social roles

Summary: The concept, sources, criticisms and strengths of the sick role as developed by Talcott Parsons.

Keywords: Talcott Parsons, temporary sanctioned deviance, functionalism, psychoanalysis, authority

Doctor/patient relations 21/08/02

Keywords: Social roles

Social class 21/08/02

Learning objective: Understanding the concept of social class, how it is modelled and some of the problems attached.

Keywords: Class, Conflict, Occupation, Inequality, NS-SEC

The Black Report and Inequalities in Health 02/09/02

Learning objective: To understand the role of social class in health inequalities.

Summary: Shows the persistence and complexity of the social class/health gradient.

Keywords: Black Report, Class, Inequalities, artefact, social drift, culture, materialism, social capital

Gender and health /09/02

Learning objective: This explains the distinction between sex and gender and opens a discussion of the impact of gender roles and gendered power relations on medicine and health

Keywords: Sex, Gender, Patriarchy, Power, Inequality Morbidity, Mortality

Social Capital 24/09/02

Learning objective: To understand the concept of social capital and how it might impact on health outcomes both positively and negatively.

Medicalisation 01/10/02

Learning objective: To explain the concept of medicalisation and the role of the medical model in the enforcing of social norms.

Keywords: Scientific, Discipline, Norms

Death 01/10/02

Learning objective: To explain the centrality of the knowledge of mortality and the need for its social integration. To consider different views of death, natural, magical and pathological. Examine the impact of modern technologies on the experience and expectations of death. Introduce the concept of 'social death' and its possible nocebo effect.

Of these, Social Class has been developed into RLO format and is available on the website<sup>4</sup>. This was viewed by the group, and broadly approved at the steering group meeting of 23 October 2002. and the activities and assessment it contained were noted as being useful learning aids. The group agreed that this should become an exemplar for development of the whole RLO

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.medgraphics.cam.ac.uk/shield/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.medgraphics.cam.ac.uk/shield/class>

collection and this approach has now been adopted and will be implemented for the rest of the project.

### **Topics & commissioning of content**

At the next steering group meeting on 3 September 2002, it was agreed that topics needed to be prioritised to fit the scale of the project. Agreed topics were: medicalisation, gender/ethnicity (stratification), social capital, death/dying, profession. It was also agreed that approximately 10 – 12 RLOs would be appropriate for the scale of the project. Thus, at the subsequent steering meeting on 23 October 2002, it was agreed to commission additional content from two subject matter experts: Oonagh Corrigan (Genetics/social policy) and Jeremy Caddick (Informed consent). Each would be requested to provide two RLOs. There was difficulty making contact with Jeremy Caddick, so at the most recent meeting on 27 November, Darin Weinberg suggested another expert, Liz Chapman, and agreed to contact her. Both Oonagh Corrigan and Liz Chapman will contact Dawn Leeder directly and a deadline of 13 December 2002 has been set for the receipt of their expert content.

### **Conclusion**

Broadly, the project has progressed well. The specifications produced so far are of high quality and the exemplar RLO that has been developed from the Social Class specification has been well received. Subsequent student evaluations will provide both quantitative and qualitative evidence. There was a slight delay in starting which has had a small but significant knock-on effect as the project now spans the Christmas holiday period, which will inevitably lead to a slight overrun. The team are confident, however, that they can deliver early in the new year, in time for the Lent term (Jan – Mar 2003). Dawn Leeder has assured progress with RLO development throughout December.

The inter-disciplinary collaboration has been and continues to be an enjoyable and rewarding one for the team members and they are keen to collectively disseminate their results. The mood is upbeat and positive, and the team look forward to delivering a useful resource which they hope the wider academic community will consider to be of value. They are most grateful to C-SAP for their support of this project.

Dawn Leeder  
Cambridge Clinical School  
November 28, 2002