

SOUND:

Intro music

Dave:

Hi, and welcome to the PodMag. I'm Dave Middleton.

Karen:

And I'm Karen Foley.

Dave:

Well, it's been a busy week hasn't it Karen?

Karen:

Still can't believe it's nearly Christmas.

Dave:

Yes, it's this time next week in fact. It doesn't seem a year since the last one.

Karen:

So I take it we'll be having a little break from the PodMag then Dave?

Dave:

Yes, the OU closes over the Christmas break and this cupboard will be locked, so we'll have to go back home to our families and return in the New Year.

Karen:

I must admit I'll miss this old place, though not that terrible musty smell.

Dave:

Hey steady on! That's my new after shave.

Karen:

It's funny though isn't it, that although the OU closes many students have TMAs due in early January, so they may still be working over the Christmas break.

Dave:

Yes, that's true. And it's an odd time to be working at all. Especially when you could be watching Celebrity Great Escape on the beeb.

Karen:

Now I come to think of it, perhaps I might be able to get on and do a bit of marking over Christmas.

Dave:

But what can we say to those students who are a bit worried about having to juggle the Christmas festivities with writing their next TMA.

Karen:

The PodMag is meant to be helpful Dave, so how about you go and interview someone for us so that our students can get some good ideas about planning their time?

Dave:

Are you kidding? It's nearly Christmas Karen, the whole place is emptying faster than a pub with no beer.

Karen:

I thought you said it was the Faculty Christmas Party tomorrow.

Dave:

It's no use going on about an invite. You won't be going to the ball, Cinders.

Karen:

Ah. Why not Buttons?

Dave:

Because I forgot to buy the tickets. Anyway, enough of this what shall we do to help our students. Back in a minutes Karen.

Dave:

Ok so I've come to into the faculty Kitchens to have a quick look around and see if there is anyone I know who is here. Ah Rob there is someone I know over there in the corner... Hello Rob.

Rob:

Hello Dave, how are you?

Dave:

Can I just pull you away from what you are doing over there.

Rob:

Ah, yes

Dave:

Do you know Rob Christmas is coming – Merry Christmas

Rob:

Thank you

Dave:

Many of our students will be wondering what they should do over Christmas, they can get a bit stressed by this because they may be a bit behind with some of their studies or they may have TMA's to write, and they have the lure and pull of all the Christmas festivities. Now you have been programme director of Social Sciences and have a long history of writing modules and being a tutor yourself. What would be your advice?

Rob:

Well my advice – its holiday period, so give yourself a bit of a break. Eat, drink and be as merry as you can be. I think that everyone is aware that studying with the OU can be a bit of a treadmill at times it can be important to back away from it a little and have a bit of a rest. I will say though that if you are seriously bothered about falling behind or being late the most important thing you can do is speak to your tutor, but as I said at the outset it's a holiday period so give yourself a little bit of a rest.

Dave:

That's brilliant Rob. Well I'm off out now, what are you finishing off here?

Rob:

I'm doing the Brussel sprouts for the Christmas Dinner...

Dave:

Well I'll leave you to get on with that.

Rob:

Okey Doke. When the Dean asked me to do something on Brussels, I thought that was going back to the days when I was writing on social science European politics course and do some updating, or perhaps revise the European constitution... I didn't know he wanted me to prepare the sprouts for the Christmas dinner...

Karen:

I think the main message is to make sure you have a break and fit your work in around your life not the other way round.

Dave:

Actually Karen, that brings us in a roundabout way to the subject of Peter Redman.

Karen:

Ah yes Dave, our second keynote speaker at the conference.

Dave:

Peter Redman is the co-author of "Good Essay Writing", a very good study skills book.

Karen:

But just as interesting as essay writing skills, Peter's research interests are based on psychoanalytic principles such as the unconscious and its relationship to social formations such as cultural identity.

Dave:

I suppose that you would need to be good at essay writing with research interests like that.

Karen:

So you caught up with him recently Dave?

Dave:

OK so I've got to get to Peter's place... He lives in a little cottage I think just down here. Now I'm walking through the fir tree forest... and oh there's the wood chopper over there... Give him a little wave, oh and there's Red Riding Hood – Hi Red, and ooh there is his cottage over there, it's hard to describe... it is literally a gingerbread cottage. Let's knock on the door and see if he is in..

Peter:

Come in

Dave:

Ah Hi Peter, thanks for seeing me – it's really nice of you to spare the time.

Peter:

No problem Dave it's good to see you.

Dave:

OK, and I'll take this opportunity to wish you season's greetings.

Peter:

Thank you and a Happy Christmas to you too.

Dave:

Well were here to talk about the Student Connections conference and you are going to be a keynote speaker, and people are going to be wanting to know what it is that you're going to be talking about.

Peter:

I'm going to be talking about Alfred Kinsey, my title is "Alfred Kinsey does he still matter?" But he became extremely famous for doing the ever first large scale survey of sexual behaviour. He started this in the 1930's and he interviewed about 18,000 people.

Dave:

His books came out at the end of the 1940's

Peter:

Yes his books came out in 1948

Dave:

And so what did he actually say that makes us think its worth studying today?

Peter:

Um, Peter Kinsey was important because he was the first person ever to ask people personally about their sexual behaviour, so the huge number of interviews that he carried out was significant in itself. So for example he found out that the percentage of people that had had premarital sex was much much higher than people had imagined. He found very high levels of same sex sexual behaviour, some of those figures have been contested subsequently, but anyway there was a whole range of sexual behaviours that people were engaging in everyone imagined were terribly marginal that turned out to be far more prevalent than people believed.

Dave:

Now students often ask when they are studying – why are we studying Social Sciences, and so would you say that Kinsey has a good answer about the impact of what social sciences could be?

Peter:

Kinsey is a very interesting answer, and this is one of the reasons why I want to talk about him. There is a good case for saying that it fuelled what in the 1960's and 1970's became a sexual revolution. It was certainly part of that, but at the same time it changed how people thought about themselves, this was an unintended consequence of Kinsey's activity. And Kinsey wasn't alone in this, there was a huge upsurge of quantitative social surveys that were done commercially and by social scientists and it's arguable that they had a significant impact in terms of shaping how people saw themselves and society. And the simplest way of thinking about this is that people started to think about themselves in terms of averages which they never had thought before. Kinsey was central to the process by which people started to measure whether they were average or not.

Dave:

OK well we have got Meg Barker talking about sexuality, and you're going to be talking about Kinsey, some of our students may wonder, Do those people in Milton Keynes think about anything other than sex?

Peter:

Um... they might be right I suppose – I don't know.

Dave:

OK – I can hear the woodmen outside your window chopping down the fir trees for the Christmas party, there.... So final question then – and this relates to the conference, We've not had an online conference for students, or any sort of conference for students before, students may be wondering why would I want to go to such a thing. What would be your advice to students who were a bit reticent about coming to that sort of thing?

Peter:

It should be fun I think. This is what academic life is about. It's a chance to share ideas, hear other people ideas and do something that broadens your thinking a bit. Why not?

Dave:

Peter Redman, thank you very much.

Karen:

He sounds really nice Dave.

Dave:

Yes, Karen, he's a really nice guy. Very genuine. I like him a lot. And, he was so quick to say 'yes' to the conference. He actually sounded quite excited about the whole thing.

Karen:

Just in case you've forgotten: the Student Connections online conference takes place in July 2014 and we'll be telling you how to get involved in the first New Year edition of The PodMag. The email address if you want to get in touch with us is podmag@open.ac.uk [Tip: hold Ctrl and click a link to open it in a new tab. ([Hide tip](#))] . Okay, so what's next?

Dave:

Last week, we released This Student Life.

Karen:

So what's happening on next week's episode?

Dave:

Well in the second episode our students are all beginning their first module, DD101. Let's have a quick preview.

PREVIEW:

This Student Life

Dave:

Anyway, how is your degree going?

Neil:

Great so far, I'm loving it.

Dave:

Well what have you learnt?

Neil:

Well it's been mainly introductory stuff so far. It's a bit early to say what I've learnt

Ted:

OK I'm off – see you later

Donna:

Don't rush back.. Now. Let's see if I can get onto this welcome forum. What should I say, lonely woman wants likeminded friends?

K:

I don't want a night on the town. Just a couple of hours that's all and I can't have it because of her. And I've got a tutorial in a couple of weeks, and I can't go because of her.

Cheryl:

Let me have Jade and you go off a be a student. How does that sound?

Karen:

I can really identify with what Donna was going through. It's so worrying when you use somebody else's computer and you're not really sure what you're doing.

Dave:

I cant imagine you've ever not been sure about what you are doing.

Dave:

Yes, hopefully This Student Life touches on issues that are really common. Remember we are always interested in featuring your stories, so let us know if you feel a particularly strong sense of identification with one of the characters.

Karen:

Yes, let us know if there's something you can relate to, email us at podmag@open.ac.uk.

Karen:

So Dave, who are you going to interview for us this week?

Dave:

Well Karen – I was hoping that you would make our announcement for the third keynote speaker

SOUND:

Music

Karen:

I'd be delighted to Dave... We can confirm that our third keynote speaker is Jonquil Lowe.

Karen:

I'll look forward to hearing that interview with Jonquil next week.

Dave:

OK. So, that's all we have time for this week.

Karen:

We hope you've enjoyed this episode of The PodMag. Catch you next time!

Dave:

And have a good break!