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## **The Social Construction of Contemporary Classroom Boredom**

I am a Phd student in my final year at the University of Liverpool. I would like to present my research which examines the social construction of classroom boredom. I have conducted focus group interviews at 3 secondary schools documenting the social construction of classroom boredom as reported by school pupils aged between 14-16.

Following the ideas of Goodstein (2005) I will argue that boredom is a subjectivity emergent out of socio-historically-situated discursive context. Her main argument is that emotions, rather than being the stuff of evolution and biology, are characterised by a unique 'rhetoric of reflection'. This is the prism through which socio-historically located subjects articulate their own sense of selfhood as both coherent and 'rightful'. Goodstein maintains that the 'twin revolutions' of 'science' and 'enlightenment', the industrial revolution and the establishment of the French republic respectively, established a modern rhetoric of reflection from which Boredom emerged.

My primary research aims to explore contemporary classroom boredom as a socio-historically-situated subjectivity, a rhetoric of reflection, in one particular environment - secondary school education in the UK at the beginning of the 21st century and as emergent from a 'neo-liberal' moment. My argument is that contemporary classroom boredom can be usefully understood through a sociological imagination approach which links the private concerns of school pupils to public issues, most notably neo-liberal educational reforms. My operationalisation of neo-liberal is drawn from the work of Stephen Ball (2000; 2003a; 2012; 2016a; 2016b) as manifest within the impact of three pedagogical management technologies, Marketisation, Managerialism and Performativity.

Accordingly, my primary research found that contemporary classroom boredom was technology of self-care and a response to pressures of neo-liberal educational reform and was formed around four stories, Endemic boredom; Predominant boredom; Contingent boredom; Non-bored. Each of these stories was further divisible in terms of social class and gender and was responsive to stratified experiences of education. I will conclude by arguing that contemporary classroom boredom can be usefully regarded as a contextually situated phenomenon emergent from neo-liberal educational reforms.