



# MORE INSIGHT

Academic Newsletter  
of  
The Sixth Form College, Colchester

## SPRING TERM 2020

Welcome to *MORE INSIGHT* the academic newsletter of The Sixth Form College, Colchester. The aim of the newsletter is to showcase the great work produced by the students at the College, and each piece has been selected by a teacher as an academic example. The work has been anonymised to spare student blushes.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

### Essays and Written Work

The following essays are from the Arts subjects of Classical Civilisation, Early Modern History, and Geography:

#### **The Iliad would be more exciting if it contained fewer long speeches: Discuss**

For some readers, such as people during the Renaissance, the Iliad would be considered a lot more exciting if it contained fewer longer speeches. However, these long speeches are often very engaging and they reveal a character's judgements and thoughts about events which would otherwise remain hidden. With the developments in oral-formulaic theory since the 1930s, we can now see that the repetitive nature of long speeches is merely evidence of the text's oral composition and not proof that Homer was an incompetent author.

Many Renaissance critics would argue that the long speeches in the Iliad make the text boring. Rapin proclaimed in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century that Homer was the 'biggest talker in Antiquity' and his contemporary Vires agreed with him by saying that the Iliad was 'too wordy'. These criticisms have some basis in the truth. Long speeches such as the Bellerophon digression in Book 6 in which two enemies Diomedes and Glaucus, meet on the battlefield and discuss their grandfathers at length, could be seen as boring and out of place in such a fast-paced battle. Glaucus' grandfather Bellerophon was entertained by Diomedes' grandfather Oneus for 20 days and Glaucus recounts this story and the myth of his grandfather's life in a long speech that takes up three pages in the modern version of the Iliad. The Renaissance critics would use this digressive and out of place speech in the middle of an action-filled battle scene as evidence that without long speeches the Iliad would be more exciting.

The Bellerophon digression, however, is actually a great example of how interesting and welcome long speeches are to readers of the Iliad. This speech in particular breaks up the monotony of constant battle (as war is one of the main themes in the Iliad) and instead puts the focus on *xenia* (the code of hospitality) which was displayed between the grandfathers and friendship. After a few books of near-continuous fighting, lots of dead and gory details of wounds, this speech (which introduces a myth new to most modern readers) offers a welcome relief from the tragedy of battle. The critic Griffin said in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the speech and the following peace between the men (they even go so far as to swap armour to show their

newfound friendship) was 'articulate and moving' and it is hard to disagree with that. This long speech brings emotion and a break from the relentless fighting to the Iliad, as do countless long speeches, therefore showing that long speeches can be exciting and interesting.

Furthermore, long speeches are often exciting and necessary as they drive the plot forward. In Book 1, the long speeches between Agamemnon and Achilles, after Agamemnon demands the prize of Achilles for himself (a slave girl named Briseis), are very exciting because they highlight the tension and extent of the disagreement between the two men. Achilles attacks Agamemnon calling him 'shameless, self-centred' as he always takes the 'lion's share' of the spoils of war, leaving the warriors with the scraps and his long speeches really convey to the reader just how deep his anger goes. His pride has been publicly hurt and his time (honour) damaged and the speech gets across why he subsequently refuses to fight for Agamemnon. The narrator, who remains aloof throughout the text, does not usually pass comment on the characters and instead tries to let the reader make up their own mind, so here in Book 1 it is vital that Achilles is given long speeches to get across his feelings and hatred toward Agamemnon. If these speeches showing the passion of the character were not included, we would not understand why Achilles would take such drastic action against Agamemnon and refuse to fight. Thus, the long speeches in Book 1 are very exciting and indicate just why the two men even fell out in the first place, therefore getting the plot moving to begin with.

Often the critics unfairly find the long speeches boring simply because they lack diversity. In Book 9, for example, during the 'Embassy to Achilles', Odysseus repeats the lists of gifts to Achilles that have just been read out by Agamemnon, almost verbatim. This could be argued to be unnecessary and boring, as we have already been told the list in full detail only pages before. The arguments between the gods also contain long speeches with repeated phrases, such as Hera telling Zeus 'do what you want, but not all the rest of us gods will approve'. This lack of variation and repetition in long speeches is often used as evidence that the Iliad would be more exciting if it contained fewer long speeches.

These arguments, however, fail to take account of the method with which Homer composed and declare long speeches boring without knowing the reason behind the repetition. With developments in oral-formulaic theory since the 1930s by Milman Parry, we now understand how Homer composed. Many analysts believed the Iliad to be the work of many different poets, but oral-formulaic theory proved that it was the work of one person who learnt certain phrases, called formulas, and weaved them together as he composed orally. Due to the nature of his composition, Homer only had an active vocabulary of roughly 5,000 words which explains why long speeches may seem repetitive – he was restricted with his phrases. This lack of variation in speeches does not diminish Homer's achievement, as he still uses many techniques to make the speeches engaging and beautiful, however. In Book 22, ring composition is used to convey the tragedy of Hector's death. At the start of the Book, Hector's family implore him not to fight Achilles and then the duel occurs, Hector is killed and the family, including his parents, wife, and Helen each mourn his death. The speeches are almost symmetrical to the start of the Book and they emphasise the finality and sadness surrounding Hector's death. The long speeches create a beautiful Book and show that Homer may have been restricted by the amount of phrases that he knew, but he still had the artistry to weave them together effectively and make long speeches exciting. In addition to this beautiful composition of long speeches, their performance would have also made them interesting. Homer would have read out each speech in a different tone to engage the audience and breathe life into each character, therefore making them exciting.

In conclusion, many of the critics, such as those in the Renaissance period, who described Homer as 'too wordy' in reference to the long speeches, died long before the discovery of oral-formulaic theory. They were therefore not sympathetic towards his method of composition. Since the 1930s, we have been able to see why the speeches are so repetitive, but this does not prevent them from being exciting. They are often dramatic, helping to move the plot along and interesting, breaking up the monotony of the fight scenes and describing interesting new myths. Even without experiencing the Iliad as a performance, we can see just how engaging long speeches actually are.

## **'The Treaty of the Pyrenees was the most significant event in French foreign policy between 1643 and 1661' - assess the validity of this view**

Overall, the Treaty of the Pyrenees was the most significant event in French foreign policy from 1643 to 1661 because it marked the end of Spanish dominance and Habsburg encirclement of France. Other events, including the Peace of Westphalia, the Thirty Years War, the Ongoing Franco-Spanish War, The League of the Rhine and The Treaty of Westminster played a significant role in French foreign policy including the rise of French power, however the Treaty of the Pyrenees was the concluding factor and therefore the most important factor in why France's power considerably rose and matched the once-dominating Spanish power from 1643 to 1661.

Regarding the security of France's borders, the Treaty of the Pyrenees was the most significant event in changing the threat of the Habsburg encirclement in 1643 to a strong French border in 1661. The French gained military control of Lorraine which meant that, even though Lorraine was restored back to the Duke of Lorraine, France demobilised his army and was allowed to march her troops across the duchy, giving more access to France along the East and giving them a better advantage of blocking the Spanish Road and preventing the access to the Spanish Netherlands, strengthening the border further. The Treaty of the Pyrenees also gained Roussillon for France which is along the Pyrenees, therefore strengthening the Southern border, securing more of France against the Habsburg encirclement. The League of the Rhine can be seen as important even though, initially Mazarin wanted Louis XIV to become the new Holy Roman Emperor, because German princes saw France as an ally/friend who's aims were to seek protection for them rather than an Emperor who would've been seen as dominant who's aims was to better France and undermine the German States, therefore the League was very successful as the Germans felt more loyalty was deserved to a 'protector' rather than an 'emperor'. This meant that France protected the long stretches of the Rhineland, which therefore strengthened the border and gave an opportunity for pre-emptive military strikes against the Habsburgs. The Peace of Westphalia also was important as it laid a foundation for this as the French gains from the Thirty Years War were Metz, Toul, Verdun, Breisach and Philippsburg and Dunkirk but it's not as important as the treaty because these places weren't secured. For example, Dunkirk was recaptured in the Ongoing Franco-Spanish war showing how unsecure the Peace of Westphalia was at securing the French border; luckily in the Battle of the Dunes, it was won back securing the north-east border from naval threat of the Spanish. Although, the Peace of Westphalia and the League of the Rhine helped strengthen the Eastern border, the Treaty of the Pyrenees was more significant because it also strengthened other areas of France's border so it was more successful in minimising Habsburg encirclement.

In terms of the balance of power in Europe, the Treaty of the Pyrenees is, again, the most significant because it's the point where France finally realises that she has reached complete balance of power between Spain and herself. The Peace of Westphalia, however, was the starting point for this new balance of power because France became protector of the German States and Sweden. Sweden gained many territories in the Peace of Westphalia due to their success in the Thirty Years War, such as: Stettin, Wollim, Wismar and Western Pomerania. Larger German States like Brandenburg gained power in expense of the smaller units like Saxony and so expanded and gained lots of power. This helped the Balance of power because, not only did France therefore gain more respect and dominance, there was a distribution of power to smaller places meaning that the Habsburgs' power (especially the Holy Roman Empire which was Spain's main ally) weakened considerably resulting in Spain's power starting to be less dominant than it was in 1643. Although this meant that Spain's allies were weakened and France's allies were strengthened, the treaty is more significant because it's the first time France uses this new-found power against the Spanish and recognises this shift from 1643 to 1661. This is because France is able to secure all of her gains and gain more territory whereas Spain renounces Alsace and has to allow France to take her new benefiting territories; the only "loss" for France is that she abandons her claim to Catalonia and her Portuguese allies which on the whole doesn't really affect her anymore because they're only useful in war. This shows that the Treaty of the Pyrenees is more significant because France is putting her power into use and is recognising that she is level with Spain and the domination of the Habsburg encirclement is level with the power of her allies and now secure borders highlighted in the Treaty of the Pyrenees.

As for the weakening of the Spanish Military, the Thirty Years War is the most significant event for this because it highlights the fall of the infamous Spanish tercios. Although, you could argue that the Franco-Spanish war was the event that finalised the fall of the Spanish military because of the victory at the Battle of the Dunes (led by Turenne) where France managed to recapture Dunkirk, it actually started out quite badly for the French because at the start Spain had the upper hand and it looked as if they were going to win which doesn't prove that the Spanish were actually being weakened. This could be due to the fact that Conde had now joined the Spanish side and (at the start) Turenne wasn't fighting at all due to the Fronde and so was a small strengthening that prolonged the overall weakening of the Spanish military and so therefore isn't as significant as the Thirty Years War. The Battle of Rocroi, 1643, was a massive victory for the French and initiated the fall of the Spanish army because Conde and his men defeated half of Spain's army. This is due to Conde's tactics because he set his army up on a ridge (higher ground) and then led a cavalry encirclement around the tercios. This changed the French's mindset that the Spanish were undefeatable giving them a strong position for their own army in strengthening. Also, the Battle of Lens was a very significant battle in the war because, again, the Spanish lost half their army to a cavalry charge by France, led by Conde. Overall, this shows that the Thirty Years War was the most important because the first and last major battle for France against Spain in the war ended with the same results showing the consistency of the rise in French military's power and the fall in Spanish military's dominance and that the Battle of Rocroi wasn't just a one off. Even though in the Treaty of the Pyrenees Conde was pardoned, which can be seen as a defeat in the Spanish military because Spain could've kept him for their military and so France would've lost their top general, it wasn't as significant as the war. The reason why it wasn't as significant is because it focuses more on territories and peace rather than military factors.

In regards to peace, The Treaty of the Pyrenees was defiantly the most significant event in creating peace. Although the Peace of Westphalia meant peace with lots of countries (France signed a peace treaty between the German States, Sweden and the Holy Roman Empire) the Treaty of the Pyrenees meant peace with Spain which was France's main enemy who held more threats against them and so was more important. Similarly, the Thirty Years War sought peace between Denmark and Sweden in the Treaty of Bromsebro, 1645 so that Sweden could then focus her fighting against the Habsburgs. This also meant more allies for France and created peace between more countries and herself resulting in less threats and more defence of threats. Similarly, the League of the Rhine secured an ally with the German States creating peace with them, however both of these events are part of wars (the first is within the Thirty Years War and the second within the Franco-Spanish war) which undermines the whole purpose of peace because these allies and peace makings were made for military purposes.

The Treaty of the Pyrenees is overall the most significant because it marks peace with Spain which now meant France had no enemies at all and so for the first time since 1643, France was at peace. Also, the marriage under this peace treaty meant an alliance with Spain because the daughter of King Philip IV (Maria Theresa) and Louis XIV were betrothed. Originally, Mazarin wanted to do this in order to let Louis potentially become King of Spain and the Habsburgs however Philip didn't allow this (Maria had to renounce her claim to the throne), but this is seen as creating more peace because if this did happen there would be threats of Spanish uprisings which would cause more wars, therefore the Treaty of the Pyrenees sought the most peace out of all treaties between 1643 and 1661.

By 1661, France was finally at peace and the Treaty of the Pyrenees was an event in history which marked the complete balance of power between Spain and France – Spain was now no longer the dominating country it once was in 1643 showing the success in foreign policy. Regarding military weakening of the Spanish, the Thirty Years War is undoubtedly more important than the treaty because the victories from France was the start of the fall for the tercios and the treaty focused mainly on peace. The reason why this war and the other events weren't as important as the Treaty of the Pyrenees is because it thought about the future as well, the Peace of Westphalia only made temporary gains and the League of the Rhine was to die of apathy in 1668 but the treaty made permanent territorial gains along the East, securing it for good. The ongoing Franco-Spanish war was very successful, especially in the Battle of the Dunes, Conde was on the opposing side but the Treaty of the Pyrenees welcomed him back and restored his titles meaning that they had regained their top general. All of this shows that on the whole the treaty did more in changing France's security and position in Europe from 1643 and 1661 and so is the most significant event in foreign policy in that period.

## GEOGRAPHY COURSEWORK EXTRACTS

To what extent do demographic factors influence the place profile of Colchester?



Figure 21 Percentage of Degree Qualifications in Lexden

Figure 22: Christ Church

(Lexden Road included Age Structure)

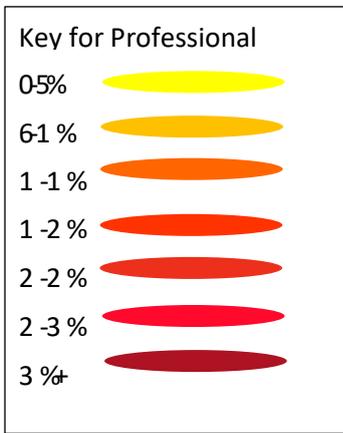
Looking at figure 21 which spatially represents the percentage of degree qualifications gained in that area, it is clear that there is a strong modal class of 31-40% indicated by the medium dark pink. It is not necessarily arranged in terms of roads or streets as it seems to represent the common standard of education in the area. The data sits between 21-50%; the difference between is the same as New Town however New Town's data is centred in the lower percentage range of 0-30%. This clear contrast shows that if a person is living in Lexden, they are statistically more likely to have a degree.

Looking at figure 22, there seems to be little spatial correlation between housing quality and degree qualifications. However, when comparing the results to New Town, it is clear that a higher housing quality will lead to a higher likelihood of having a degree. The percentage data of degree's attained is equally proportioned in New Town where as in Lexden there is a large percentage of the area which is covered by the middle pink colour.

This suggests there is less variation in terms of degree's attained than in Lexden. UCAS published an article titled 'A record percentage of young people are off to university' in 2018, potentially suggesting there is a younger population living in Lexden as there is a trend to attend university. On the converse side, it could also suggest the opposite as the most recent trend according to the guardian in 2019 is that 'young people are more sceptical of need to go to university'. The likely probability is the latter.

### Age structure

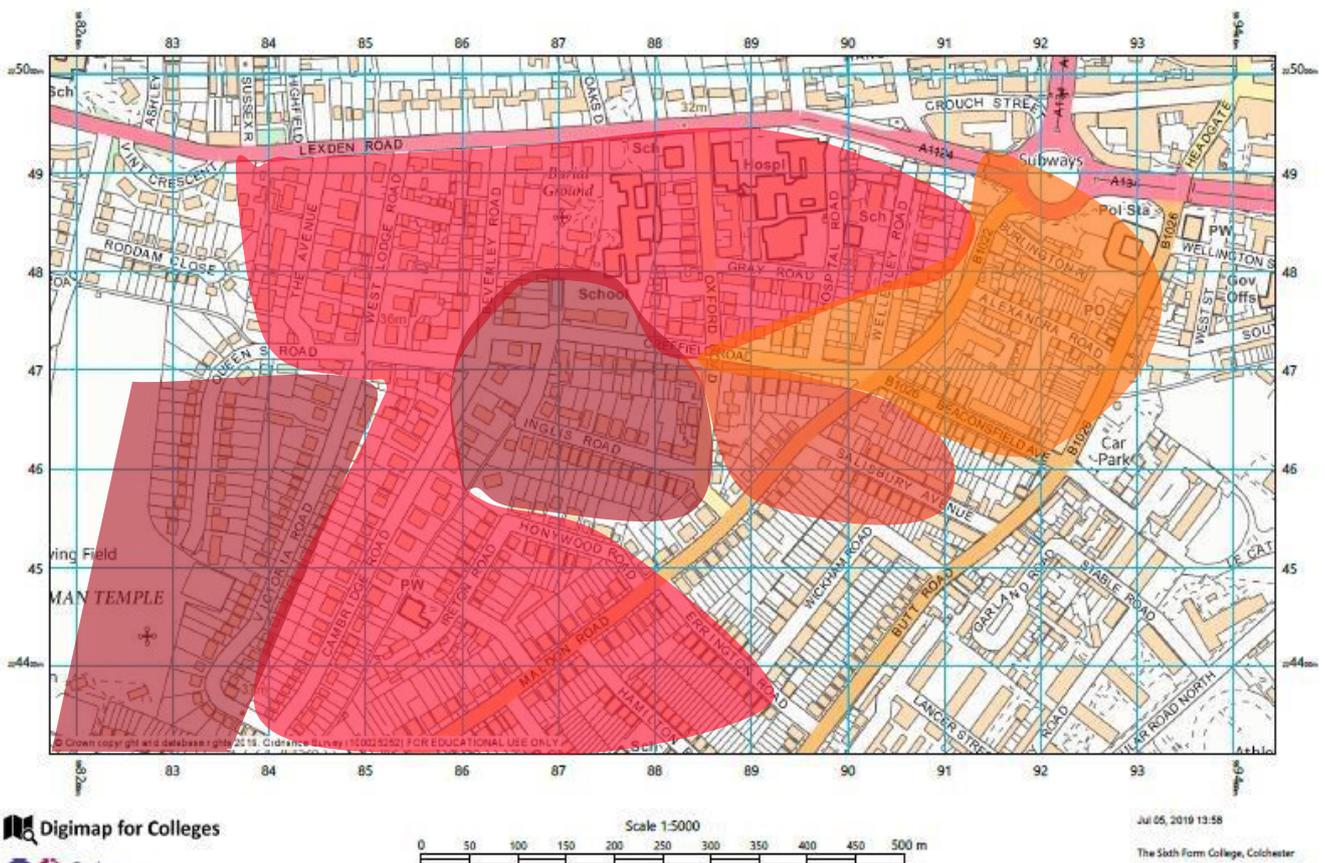
	Persons	
	count	%
All usual residents	10,682	100.0
Age 0 to 4	832	7.8
Age 5 to 7	324	3.0
Age 8 to 9	143	1.3
Age 10 to 14	392	3.7
Age 15	80	0.7
Age 16 to 17	198	1.9
Age 18 to 19	251	2.3
Age 20 to 24	1,433	13.4
Age 25 to 29	1,452	13.6
Age 30 to 44	2,986	28.0
Age 45 to 59	1,443	13.5
Age 60 to 64	350	3.3
Age 65 to 74	439	4.1
Age 75 to 84	271	2.5
Age 85 to 89	47	0.4
Age 90 and over	41	0.4
Mean Age	32.9	-
Median Age	30	-



The higher quality housing in Lexden has a higher price attached to it and as younger people are finding it increasingly harder to get onto the property market, it is doubtful that they would choose a grand, expansive Victorian mansion as their first house. Additionally, the age structure of each area shows the average age along Lexden Road is 38 where as in New Town it's 33. This is also interesting in terms of the fact that it suggests older people are more likely to have a degree than their younger counterparts and that they will rent/own higher quality houses.

In reference to sub question 3, how do the socio-economic conditions vary in Colchester, they vary in terms of percentage of degree's attained in accordance with the spatial variation in housing quality. The variation of degree's attained suggests wider social implications. A person with a degree is statistically less likely to be unemployed, earn more than their peers and have a higher retirement pension. This suggests that the inhabitants in Lexden can afford a higher standard of living and most likely a higher quality of life as they have more disposable income to enjoy on leisure activities.

### Professional Qualifications Gained: Lexden



Digimap for Colleges

Ordnance Survey

Figure 25 Professional Qualifications Gained,

### Lexden, Percentage

Fig 25 shows the percentage distribution of qualifications gained in Lexden, this includes teaching, nursing and accountancy. When looking at the spatial variation of qualifications and degree's, it is noticeable that they spatially correlate, suggesting an area with higher level of postgraduates also has a higher percentage of professionals. Like degree's, there is no particular spatial qualification between housing quality and professional qualification except for the overall trend that, when compared to New Town, that Lexden has higher quality housing and a higher percentage of professional qualifications.

This suggests that gaining higher qualifications is key to living in a nicer area for a variety of reasons. Firstly, more education means generally means a higher income so the ability to afford a nicer house is granted. Within the UK, it has been found that those who have done an apprenticeship earn a higher wage at the age of 21 than those who graduated university however this quickly reverses after graduates reach the age of 24 (national office of statistics). Professional qualifications may encompass an apprenticeship as part of the course; in relation to the above research it suggests they bring a less affluent lifestyle than their post-graduate counterparts however compared to a person that has only completed their education to GCSE level, it is better income wise.

Looking at the overall trend, Lexden has higher housing quality, higher percentage of degree's and professional qualifications leading to the assumption that a higher level of education grants you access to the job market and within that well-paying jobs in order to afford a nicer house. On the scale of research done, it seems people with professional qualifications will earn less than their degree counterparts however this has no impact on the house quality.

It is clear when comparing the two maps, New Town has a higher variety of land uses other than residential that includes a range of services, religious sites, supermarkets, restaurants and cafes, and petrol stations. The only exception to the trend is schools and arguably green space. Although in New Town there is green space dispersed within the residential areas and just outside of the surveyed area is a recreational ground similar to Lexden's greenfield to the left of Mersea Road. There is no green space located within the residential areas of Lexden, this can be partly attributed to the extensive gardens which are owned by the individual houses. This is the antithesis of New Town as there are fewer personal gardens allocated and therefore communal ones are needed; when the survey was being carried out, the area was being used extensively for small children and new mums. Although we did not give a numerical value to this, it was easy to distinguish that the green spaces were vital for family living. This could infer that people in New Town may have a greater sense of community as they are using the same space, were as in Lexden, the green space is kept privately within homes; this draws the conclusion that New Town may experience a better quality of life owing to the public allocation of land.

The overwhelming access to services in New Town from hairdressers, boutique shops to car dealerships suggest the area holds the possibility for entrepreneurs to set up a successful business in the local are. This is also true of the bars, restaurants and cafes of which there are several. The wide range of enterprises means the economy must be viable and the business themselves bring growth and innovation to the local community as well as tax revenue to pay for national services like healthcare and education. This coupled with the community spirit brought about by the intimate nature of small shops make New Town seem more attractive to live in, both mentally and socially.

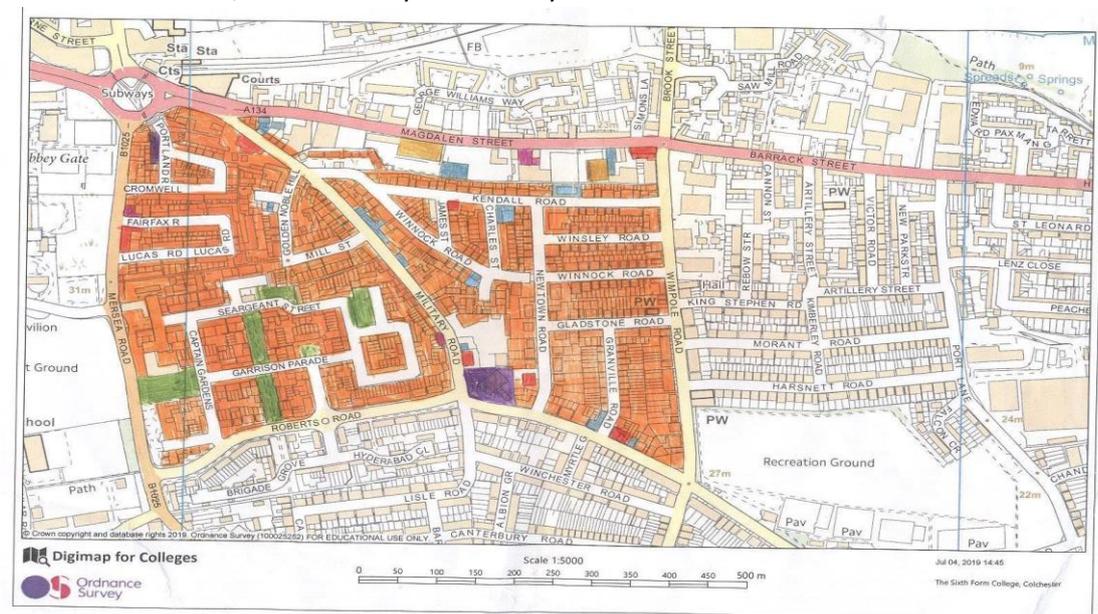


Figure 27 New Town Land use

Lexden, on the other hand has little access to services, however it has 4 schools in its local vicinity, all of which are private bar one all-boys grammar school. These institutions require wealth and certain values to fund their existence and this is perhaps reflected in the residents living in Lexden. Looking at the overall grand, elegant houses in the area's surveyed, there is reason to support why the private schools have chosen to have their location here. Lexden's environment reflects its historical wealth and this continues today with its high housing prices so it would be logical to suggest that owing to the nature that private schools operate in (i.e. privately funded by parents with a larger than average income) they would prefer to be located in a richer area to reflect their exclusivity. It could be suggested that the parents of the children attending these schools live close-by and therefore they may live in higher quality houses than their New Town counterparts.

The overall question of this investigation is 'To what extent do demographic factors influence the place profile of Colchester?'. From preliminary research, it was concluded that housing quality does have a huge effect in terms of impact on education, career and continues through the generations but it is only one factor among a multitude: deprivation, low socio-economic status for example. The hypothesis was then based on the concluding research informing the opinion that 'housing quality is not the most important factor in influencing quality of life'. This has been proved correct to a certain extent which will be divulged on later in this conclusion. The three sub-questions were used as criteria for the overall question and hypothesis.

Below, I will attempt to extract conclusions from my data in reference to each sub question and evaluate its overall relevancy in answering the question.

#### 1. How does quality of the built environment vary around Colchester?

The data collected relevant to this question was in the form of housing quality and environmental quality surveys as well as annotated photographs. It was made obvious in the form of isoline maps and photos that Lexden had an overall better housing and environmental quality than New Town. Bearing in mind that only a small proportion of each area was used, it may have been a misrepresentation of the area; however, alongside the census data and other forms of primary data the issue raised becomes less significant.

Lexden's mode of housing quality is in the penultimate highest range of 61-65 highly concentrated towards the west of the sample area and accounting for over half of the locations. Spatially it is less sporadic in terms of variation, the majority of the blue colour representing 61-65 is concentrated in Victoria and Cambridge for example. In Lexden there is a clear norm of what is expected of a house and what sort of quality is perhaps more acceptable in the area which is fairly high. Whereas in New Town there seems to be an even split towards the lower end of the scoring range. It seems that, contrary to Lexden, there is not a normal standard of housing except that it is generally lower in quality than that of Lexden.

The environmental quality surveys were also used to assess the built environment of Colchester and, like housing quality it did show variation across New Town and Lexden. There was a similar trend to the housing quality in that Lexden tended to have a smaller concentrated range towards the high scores. 75% of the scores lie between 51-60 and when compared to New Town of 4%, it is clear that overall Lexden has a generally better quality of built environment. New Town's modal classes are 31-40 and 41-50 making up 83% of the area studied suggesting that across New Town there is similar standard of the built environment similar to Lexden. Overall Lexden and New Town had similar standards of environmental quality but Lexden's average quality was a significant degree higher.

Overlaying the housing and environmental quality data, it is clear that the separate deductions over the higher average scores in Lexden across Housing and Environment correlated spatially. Where the housing scores were below 45, indicated by the lighter green, the environmental quality scores also

dipped, shown by the neon green. Additionally, Wellesley Road and Victoria Road both scored high in each survey suggesting that those roads have a particularly good built environment. In contrast the spatial correlation in New Town was not as clear. The lowest and highest scores of each survey did not correlate, however the general trend of medium to low scores was the same.

The annotated photos helped to visualise and confer the conclusions made by the surveys. It was clear from the street views and the individual houses that Lexden had a grander repertoire of period housing which had been maintained since the construction of it in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. New Town's 19<sup>th</sup> century housing was sparser and much more new builds had been constructed; they tended to be without personality with little green space and were proportionally much smaller. There was noticeably a difference in greenery; many of Lexden's houses has well established tree's in their front garden and the road surrounding was cleaner and better cared for. Additionally, the cars parked along the road, seemingly belonging to the houses, were larger and newer supporting the suggestion that the house owners are wealthier; this comes with a host of other implications from better jobs, to better health care, to better standard of living but simply from the variation in the built environment, it is not enough to conclude the above using just my own evidence.

Looking at the surveys and photos together and separately, there are several conclusions to be made. Lexden has an overall higher standard of the built environment, that includes housing and environmental quality. It does however vary within the selected location, although this is to a limited degree as the range in the surveys tended to focus on the higher end of the scores and the abandoned building along Creffield Road is an anomaly among grand Victorian and Edwardian constructions. Having said that, there was evidence of smaller terrace housing in Location 23 continuing along Maldon road, however they were spacious and had some evidence of a back garden. The patterns of environmental quality and housing quality correlated spatially leaving the conclusion that where there is a good standard of housing there will also be a good standard of urban environment. The penultimate highest class was the modal category for both surveys suggesting the there is a constantly good standard of the urban environment and there is little deviation around that. New Town has a lower standard of the built environment; photographically it is evident in the smaller, more unkept houses. These houses tend to be more modern than Lexden and are more likely to be terraced. Spatially there is a weaker correlation in housing quality and environmental quality so having a good quality house does not exclusively mean the person will have a good quality garden.

It is not relevant to say that using these pieces of data, the hypothesis has been proven right or wrong as the above data only answers what the variation of housing within Colchester is and does not compare it to other factors that may influence quality of life. However, as summarised in my analysis, the average house price for Lexden and New Town greatly varies suggesting the variation in the built environment is attached to a monetary sum. It is a given that a larger amount of money affords a better standard of living, for example, holidays, healthcare, entertainment. Although standard of living is not synonymous with a good quality of life, they are heavily interlinked. It leaves the suggestion that the homeowners of Lexden are wealthier than New Town as they have paid for the privilege of a large, good quality house and neighbourhood and therefore may be able to afford a better standard of living. Additionally, the obvious has not been stated; a better quality house is a more pleasant place to live in and considering it is a daily feature in a person's life it will affect their quality of life significantly. It is hard to say with certainty however if a house in New Town or Lexden is better to live in. From the external appearance Lexden seems the best but the study does not explore the practicalities of living within that space. Either way, housing is a significant part of a person's daily life as it sets the atmosphere of domestic life outside of societies view.

## 2. How does the land-use 2a. Nature of industry 2b. Access to services vary around Colchester?

The second question is important to assessing quality of life because it looks at community, local employment and the mental, social and physical health of the residents.

It is important to remember that both locations are in very close proximity to Colchester Town. Potentially, this leads to the conclusion that businesses and other services would spread from the town centre as the Town expands. Seeing as Colchester is the fastest growing town in England, it would be fitting for the residents to have access to enough services to cater for the growing population and thus improve or maintain a good quality of life. Conversely it could mean businesses only invest within the town centre itself. Both hypothetical trends were true to some extent.

Lexden is by far built almost exclusively for residents only. The land-use, apart from residential, was predominately used for educational purposes, of which a significant proportion was grammar or private; Colchester Royal Grammar School, Oxford House School and nursery. This draws two conclusions; that there is adequate school's but access to the most prestigious of them can only be provided through extreme intelligence or the funds to provide children with satisfactory tutoring to pass the entry exam. It seems that there is exists a form of elitism and comparing the variation in housing quality in favour of Lexden, the area of which a person chooses or more accurately has the means to afford to live in, determines the access to a broader higher range of educational options. Considering transport options available to students, this is a slightly weaker conclusion. Although perhaps not supported extremely strongly in this study, it has been shown in the study cited in the introduction that there is clear link between poor housing and poor access to services, not only because poor housing is often afforded by poorer individuals that cannot find the money to pay for private education but that these commodities, arguably redundant, are not based within these areas. Grammar schools and other prestigious institutions follow Lexden road.

The predominant land use, with the exception of residential buildings in New Town was shops and services. This is in contrast to Lexden which had none. The fact that New Town can support multiple small businesses as well as major supermarkets like Aldi and Tesco Express, suggests the overall economy is successful. The benefits of having a local successful economy can be felt in the community spirit, the tax given back to the community and the lives of the people who use and run the business. The absence of this in Lexden would suggest that there is less of a social attraction to the area and less of a community; this conclusion is tentative however as there is the centre of town within a five-minute walking distance. However, this is the same for both areas looked at and it is New Town rather than Lexden which has multiple successful enterprises.

The nature of industry within New Town was predominately services related such as shops, hairdressers, restaurants and cafés. In Lexden however it was private school institutions. Neither had primary or secondary industries. New Town's industries are obviously geared towards leisure activities while Lexden is towards educational purposes; by their very nature, New Town's businesses encourage socialisation and a sense of community. One could argue that schools do the same through friendships between parents, however the private and grammar schools open in Lexden are exclusive and target a specific high-income earner demographic. This is in contrast to New Town, where businesses are open to everyone. This creates a more inclusive atmosphere and in terms of how this effects quality of life, it affects more people positively than Lexden which affects positively a minority that can afford to pay for private schools and tuition.

There was a clear variation in access to services between Lexden and New Town; it is clear that New Town offers more services, including local and commercial services for example Aldi and Yak and Yeti (a one-off Nepalese restaurant) where as Lexden offers more exclusive services in relation to education. Within New Town there was higher accessibility to places of worship such as the Buddhist centre,

2 places compared to 0 in Lexden. There was still access to services in Lexden, they tended to be garages where as in Lexden there was more boutique shops.

In relation to the hypothesis, with further evidence the hypothesis could be proven wrong. The evidence required would be personal surveys to the residents. However, looking at the land-use and the positive implications of having local businesses geared towards the service sector, it appears that the nature of industry in New Town could have a large positive effect on a person's life, socially and economically. The housing quality of New Town was poorer than that of Lexden however it seems to have a local economy which supports the growth of enterprises and businesses which has the possibility to generate a multiplier effect between the residents themselves. Potentially the grand historic nature of Lexden interferes with the building of businesses in Lexden as it may seem out of character to the surroundings and therefore the priority for the land use is residential. In conclusion, housing quality may be an influencing factor in where a business or enterprise will set up and this in turn will boost employment etc however the contenders against housing quality being the most important factor in influencing quality of life includes local employment, access to services and community spirit.

### 3. How do the socio-economic conditions vary around Colchester?

This question considers the land use survey and the qualifications gained in Lexden and New Town as they relate to ability to access services, local employment and level of education. It was clear that New Town had a higher level of employment opportunities in the service sector such as restaurants, cafes and bars while Lexden is primarily concerned with private or grammar education. This indicates the social status of areas as it seems it is more probable that wealthier people who can afford to pay for private tuition will be more likely to situate themselves closer to the schools themselves. This in turn means the area itself will exponentially grow wealthier due to the influx of wealthy people who also have the ability to demand higher quality, more expensive houses and hence why Lexden has generally higher standard of housing and the environment. However, the influx of wealthy people will also mean landlords will be able to charge higher prices for houses as more people can afford them and therefore many locals may be outpriced. In contrast to Lexden where wealth has come from external sources, New Town has several businesses which promote the local economy and generate a multiplier effect between the residents themselves while also providing employment.

In terms of qualifications gained, Lexden had a higher percentage of degree's attained; Lexden's data sits between 21-50% of people with degree's whereas New Town's is 0-30%. This clear contrast shows that a person is living in Lexden is more likely to have a degree. A person with a degree is statistically less likely to be unemployed, earn more than their peers and have a higher retirement pension (Thoughtco) which are factors that increase quality of life and therefore people in Lexden are perhaps more likely to have a better quality of life. Having said that, Colchester is renowned for being a commuter town and therefore, a person with a degree may commute to London, for example, 24% of people working in Canary Warf commute from Colchester. Commuting is shown to increase anxiety and stress within daily life (guardian) and therefore the high quality of life experienced in high income may be counteracted by the hours of commute necessary. Despite this, inhabitants in Lexden are more likely to have a higher earning job thanks to their degree qualification and therefore can afford a higher standard of living with more disposable income. In terms of looking at this from a generational perspective, the children of high-income earners will have more financial support, potentially more holidays, a healthier diet and a higher quality house which will increase quality of life significantly. Degrees are not only a capital investment but an investment for the social wellbeing of an individual. Additionally, the potential to earn more money as a woman with a degree increases by 28% (BBC news). In answer to sub question 3, it seems Lexden is more educated and thus have the ability to earn more money is high.

This is the same scenario as Professional Qualifications. When comparing the areas within Lexden, there is spatial correlation between the areas with a higher percentage of degrees attained and a higher percentage of professional qualifications however it does not correlate to the differences in housing quality. This is the same with New Town. It looks like there is not a direct correlation when looking at specifics but when comparing the two areas with each other, the lower housing score seems to lead to a lower percentage of qualifications attained and vice versa. The relationship between housing and education is inextricably linked as education influences the type of job and therefore the type of salary a person is able to achieve which will dictate the type of house a person can afford.

In relation to the overall hypothesis, education is likely to dictate the level of income a person receives, particularly for women, as it allows a person to access highly skilled jobs with high incomes attached and therefore as a secondary bonus, there is the potential to spend more money on higher quality house. This could explain why Lexden has higher quality houses and a higher percentage of people with degree's and professional qualifications. Therefore, it is arguable that education, instead of housing quality, is the biggest factor influencing quality of life however they are so intertwined as shown in the introduction that it is difficult to distinguish the biggest impactor. The location of a person's house will affect the educational achievement of the children (Atkinson 2008) and this makes sense potentially in accordance with the data set as Lexden is clearly a wealthier, more expensive area to live in and therefore the percentage of degree's earned could reflect this. However, Atkinson's study also showed that the poorest people have the poorest access to services. (Atkinson 2008) which is in opposition to the data which shows New Town has higher access to services like shops, restaurants etc. On the other hand, Lexden has access to high end services like private and grammar education which is completely different to the public services offered in New Town.

## THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION SECTION

The Extended Project Qualification or EPQ is a project that the student develops, researches and writes on their own, with input from a supervisor. The EPQ is highly regarded by universities and employers because it is 'all their own work', and it really gives the student the chance to carry out independent research on the same lines as a university undergraduate dissertation or even a PhD. At the Sixth Form College, we have many students taking an EPQ, and the range of their research interests is extremely wide. Featured below are some examples of these projects.

### English Literature

One student has taken a literary route through the EPQ, with the Creative Writing EPQ class. The novel, which will be over 20,000 words, is called 'Osyth' and is centred on the local historical figure of St Osyth.

The novel is set in Anglo-Saxon Britain, about a young girl who is struggling with her royal status whilst fighting against a number of forces set to destroy her claim to the throne. The novel follows the pattern of many historical novels of the Dark Ages/ Early Medieval period, and has plenty of character development and action in a tight plot, set against a background of political turbulence in England.

### Biology

One of our students completed an EPQ about the causes of the Quaternary extinction event, which saw the disappearance of many megafaunal species. He found that two of the most popular accounts of the extinction were the 'overkill' hypothesis – the view that humans drove many species of megafauna to extinction – and the climate change hypothesis. The 'overkill' hypothesis insists on the proof that humans had in fact hunted the now-extinct species, which included the mammoth, the spotted hyena and the woolly rhinoceros. The climate change theory focuses instead on the evidence that the world was warming up quickly in the Quaternary, placing stresses on large animals, which were well-suited to cold climates but ill-adapted for a warmer climate. The student delved into the supporting arguments for both hypotheses, and concluded –

despite his initial belief that 'overkill' was the overriding factor – that it was possible to understand the extinction event only by combining elements of the two theories.

Another of our students completed an EPQ on the likely future feasibility of transplanting organs grown or produced outside of the human body. Her research took her into some interesting areas of medical research. For instance, she found out about 3D and even so-called 4D printed organs, which would be able to change shape to fit predetermined blueprints inside the human body. The topic also involved engagement with tricky ethical issues, such as the possible use of human stem cells to grow organs intended for transplantation.

Another student produced an EPQ about the effectiveness of current treatments for macular degeneration, cataract and glaucoma. In the course of her research, she found that there are a wide range of procedures for these eye problems, including laser treatment, surgery, drugs, injections and drops. It is not always the case that the most recent development in treatment is the best. The student discovered that several of these treatments are very expensive, and others (eye injections, for instance), while effective, too uncomfortable for many patients to endure.

## THE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE - SPEAKERS AND VISITS SECTION

This section is for information about academic speakers to the College and visits by students to other places of academic interest.

### **'THE NOT-SO SECRET BARRISTER' the Bar Council 2019 - Bar Placement Essay Competition - Winning Essay**

**14 July 2019**

Waiting inside the Central Family Court on a Tuesday morning at around 9am, my barrister mentor turns to me and simply asks: "so, why do you want to become a barrister?". A million scenarios and different options offer themselves in my brain, but I stay silent. Because, to be frank, I am not certain of it. And, in many respects, it is one of the reasons why I am here, why I want to discover and indulge in the great area that is the law, by seeing it first-hand, without any blinds, hidden facts or closed doors.

Being in a court is a different experience than just reading about individual experiences. From here, you see everything. It fills you with anxiety, as you ask yourself: "is this really what I want to do?", "will I be strong enough to do this?", "will I make it a week without crying about the cases I come across every night?". From here, the screams of parents, children, or lawyers seem much more real, the floating in between hearings seem interminable.

The smell of fresh coffee, tea, sweat, boiled eggs that a social worker just grabbed out of her bag and paper fill the air, and I look around the court. Individuals come in and out of rooms, on the phone, laughing, crying, looking anxious or just perplexed.

The simplicity in which I was simply observing individuals whose lives may change at any moment, whilst having no real impact, was fascinating. And whilst I was waiting patiently for our parties to show, I learned. I learned that the couple sitting next to me were waiting to adopt a child, and that maybe tonight, they would have dinner for the first time as a family. On my left, a father had just lost custody of his four children due to his ever-growing drinking problem. His hands were shaking, and his voice was monotone, as to say, "I knew this would happen and there is nothing I can do now". In the back of the corridor, an elderly woman was inquiring about her late husband's house, and whether or not his will was legitimate. The suits and ties blended into this sea of people who were here for many different reasons, but whose lives would be affected by this very day.

The legal jargon also filled the space: "wills, assets", whilst other, less pleasant terms were present "abuse, rehab, addiction, sex exploitation, death, rape, domestic violence". And in this simple, yet odd moment, I finally found the answer to the question I was asked the previous day. I do not really know why, or whether there's a right or wrong answer, but the reason I want to be a barrister is this: the feeling of being able to guide

people through what will probably be the highest highs of their lives, or their lowest lows. Having the opportunity to convey not only my love for the law, but my love for people too.

And if there's anything that this week has taught me, it's that not only I want to be a barrister, but also, that I would be a great one too.

## **A VISIT OF PROFESSOR DANNY DORLING TO COLCHESTER SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020 12:00 Lecture Theatre 219**

The College is extremely fortunate to have had Professor Danny Dorling presenting a lecture related to some of his current research that relates to the geography of Brexit. Professor Dorling is a human and social geographer who holds the post of Halford Mackinder Professor of Geography in the School of Geography and the Environment at the University of Oxford. He is nationally known for his appearances on radio and television and for the publication of numerous books, including *"Inequality and the 1%"*, *"Population: 10 billion"* and *"The 32 stops"* (a social transect along the Central Line).

The lecture provided a context for the current political landscape, focusing on the social and demographic geography of voting patterns in the 2016 referendum, why this happened and what some of the consequences might be of the UK leaving the EU.

The students found his discussions not only stimulating and thought-provoking, but greatly encouraging for their further geographical studies.

The visit to the College was arranged by an ex-student of ours who works with Professor Dorling.

*Thank you for reading our Newsletter*