Poverty, Shame and Social Exclusion

Working Paper 4

The role of society in shaming people living in poverty Norway

Erika Gubrium

Ivar Lødemel

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Dr. Erika K. Gubrium, Oslo & Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, Norway. <erika.gubrium@hioa.no>
Professor Ivar Lødemel, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, Oslo, Norway. <ivar.lodemel@hioa.no>

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1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a concept loaded with meaning. It has been operationalized within the framework of varying agendas and predicated upon the use of differing indicators (Hagen and Lødemel 2010, Murray 1984, O'Conner 2004, Room 1999, Townsend 1979, Wacquant 1996, Walker 1995). The meaning of poverty extends to identity. We establish who and what we are – our selves – through social interaction (Mead 1934/2003). Who we are draws from, and reflects in complex ways, where we are in social life – we reflexively construct our experiences and our selves in relationship to available and prevalent social identities (Blumer 1969, Rose 1997). Studies in social psychology have demonstrated this, suggesting that the phenomenon of shame is both externally generated and internally felt (Adler and Adler 1993, Becker 1963, Goffman 1963). Within the context of poverty, Sen suggests that a key capability is one's ability to live without shame, arguing that the experience of shame and being shamed or stigmatized may reduce one's agency and capability to act, and as a result, may increase one's social exclusion (Alkire, 2002, Sen 2006).

1.1 Discourses concerning poverty and the poor among the general public

In conjunction with the Norwegian component of ESRC/DFID project, "Shame, Social Exclusion and the Effectiveness of Anti-poverty Programmes", this report traces the discursive representations of poverty, shame and social exclusion within focus group discussions conducted with members from Norway's general public – people who are in full time work and not receiving social assistance or disability pensions. This work is grounded upon the idea of an intersubjective and relational nature of the poverty. Thus, this report is informed by the social interactionist understandings described above. Given a relational understanding of the poverty experience, an investigation of the preconceptions, attitudes and actions of the general public concerning the issue of poverty and those defined as living in poverty provides a more nuanced way of understanding the nexus between poverty, social exclusion and shame/social shaming.

The core portion of this report provides an analysis of how poverty and individuals living in poverty are connected with ideas of shame and social exclusion in these discussions with the Norwegian public.[1] The report concludes with an overview of the key messages from this analysis: these findings will sensitize the Norwegian team when we later explore media representations of and policy approaches toward poverty and the poor.

1.2 Everyday perceptions of poverty

The report describes and analyses data from six focus groups (FGs), focusing on public perceptions of poverty and those living in poverty. The sites of recruitment for these groups have mostly paralleled the three study site locations for interviews with individuals living in poverty from WP2: two focus groups took place in a small north western coastal town, two took place in rich suburban areas just outside Oslo and two took place at the Oslo and Akershus University College, with participants recruited primarily from Oslo's East side.[2]

Informed by the discursive themes identified by the analysis conducted in WP1 and WP2 we conducted focus group discussions with 23 participants in Norway – these individuals were between the age of 18 and 67 and 1) not receiving social assistance or sickness/disability pensions and 2) were at the time of the study employed full time. Focus groups focused particularly on participants' understandings concerning poverty and who was defined as "poor", as well as their thoughts

[1] Appendix B provides an overview of methods and methodology.

[2] Demographic specifics are described in Appendix A. Oslo's East and West sides are used as names for the two parts of the city that are formed by the economic and socially segregating separation line that has historically passed through the city. The distinction between east and west also concerns ethnic demographics, life expectancy, use of disability pension and self-experienced health conditions.

concerning the economic and social challenges met by individuals living in poverty and the effects of these challenges. Additionally, the moderator asked participants to reflect upon the sources for these ideas (i.e. work, media, observation, or cultural understanding/expectation). The broad working question was "What does it mean to be poor in today's Norway?" Special attention was paid to the terms of reference and responsibility for poverty, especially as these articulated public understandings concerning individuals living in poverty. An analysis of these discussions – and the discourses generated within – allowed us to trace the possible social and cultural attitudes concerning poverty in Norway.

2. FINDINGS: GENERAL PUBLIC UNDERSTANDINGS OF POVERTY IN NORWAY[3]

The six focus group discussions produced similar themes concerning the definition and meaning of poverty and causes (individual, structural, cultural) of poverty. Groups – including groups across sites – also reflected strikingly similar attitudes toward poverty and those living in poverty and discussions largely adhered to a narrative that described the poverty experience according to hierarchy of deservingness, as well as according to a broadly changing poverty experience. These themes are each considered in turn below.

2.1 Who are the poor?

When FG participants were asked to describe who they identified as living in poverty the discussion in many of the groups began with a focus on the "visible" poor. Drug addicts were cited as Norway's most visible poor because they "live in shit" and thus stood in "incredible contrast to the rest of society" (6/64-66(R4). FG participants also included other visibly marginalized groups, among them individuals with more general physical and mental health issues. One participant described this sort of marginalized individual as "not a completely normal person…who sickness is associated with" and "outside work life" (6/436-439(R2). The visible poor, thus, were described as being beset by a complex set of issues, beyond merely economic challenges. For these individuals there was "more that stood behind [one's poverty] that was stigmatizing than just not having money" (1/132-133(R3).

The conversations also suggested another group of individuals who were economically challenged but not necessarily completely marginalized. This group included families with children, single parents, low-status/low-paid workers, and immigrant families, asylum seekers and immigrant workers. Unlike the discussion surrounding the visibly poor, these economically challenged groups did not stand out immediately as poor and the discussion surrounding them focused less on the material aspects of poverty and more on the social-psychological dimensions associated with poverty as a relative phenomenon. The relational nature of this poverty was suggested in the terms used to express the connections between social expectations, social/peer pressure and status pressure and one's economic challenges – these individuals tried to "hide their poverty" (1/314-318(R6), it was "important in school" for the children coming from economically challenged families "not to be stigmatized" (2/178-184(R2R1), yet often children from these families could "fall a little out (of mainstream school culture)" (6/98-102(R4). Economic challenges were also linked to low level employment status, including the oft-cited checkout cashier at the local grocery who "just had a very bad job" (5/387-388(R2) was "placed low [on the social hierarchy"] and "looked down upon" (4/142-144(R1) and therefore possibly "felt shame" (6/686-693(R1R2) due to their low social status.

Finally, Norway's street dwelling Roma population[4] was cited within the context of poverty, but in this case their inclusion as "the real poor" was either directly called to question by FG participants or

[3] For the purpose of presenting a simplified overview of findings for comparative use, an overview of empirical evidence has been moved to a separate appendix (C).

[4] Norway has two distinct Roma populations – 1) the "sigoynere" Roma, many of whom have been in Norway for decades, originally of northern Indian descent, with permanent addresses and housing in the countryside and 2) the "reisende" (traveling) Roma, many of whom

was described by participants as an issue for many others in the Norwegian public. As will be described in more depth below, Norway's Roma population lies so far outside the norm of Norwegian society in both a material sense and in terms of social status that participants appeared reluctant to include them within the category of "our poor"(1/748-751(R5R3R8).

2.2 How is poverty described?

Focus group participants drew heavily upon personal and professional (employment) observations and experiences in their discussions of poverty and those individuals living in poverty. Several participants described past economic struggles or challenging circumstances earlier in life (often in contrast to an improved living situation today). Several participants worked in the field of poverty-relief (the local welfare office, vocational rehabilitation, training centres, and the child welfare system) and this work brought them into close contact with economically challenged individuals. Several participants were teachers and their comments suggested that their notions of child poverty were informed by this identity and experience. A theme in over half of the focus groups was that participants described how their understanding of poverty was shaped via media reports and features, which while not casting negative aspersions on the poor, still served to reinforce a social hierarchy of deservingness by "positioning the rich as wonderful, as if they had…good morals" and presenting them as a matter of public interest "merely because they are rich" (2/518-523, 534-543 (R2R1). Participants described any negative media focus on the poor as being directed either at the Roma or on the cynical "calculations" associated with claiming disability benefits (5/391-394(R4).

Group participants described poverty as a phenomenon that was more than an economic concept, but as one that was shaped according to social, cultural, and economic expectations and norms. Somewhat unsurprisingly in Norway, where the public may adhere to a broader narrative of a generous welfare state ensuring social mobility and economic security for the country's residents and where the "poor" represent a relatively marginal group, poverty was described as a phenomenon shaped according to psychosocial dimensions as much as economic ones. FG participants described poverty as "complicated" (6/795-796(R2), "confusing" (1/138(R7) and the result of a bad cycle of a difficult situation wherein one's "self-image grows worse" (1/349-367(R4R5). In this complex interplay between cause and effect, one FG participant suggested, the cause of one's poverty "can be worse and more stigmatizing than exactly how much money you have" (3/552-558(R1). In a country where few live in conditions that might be associated with absolute economic despair, poverty was described as "not being just about how much money you have", but about "low status and the problems associated with that" 6/121-128(R1).

While FG participants applied more indirect references to and descriptions of situations leading to poverty and situations surrounding poverty, they did not frequently apply direct descriptions of individuals living in poverty, possibly due to the cultural norm of equality in Norway and a reluctance to use pejorative terms when describing groups of individuals. Those terms that were directly applied were not explicitly connected to poverty, per say, but to the situations and activities conducted by those identified as economically challenged. Thus, individuals living in poverty were living in a situation that was "awful to look at" (Roma) (1/765-767(R7) or "degraded" (drug addicts) (5/61-66(R4). The idea of being unclean and engaging in distasteful activities was applied via the image of poor individuals "sitting and smoking" (3/586-594(R2R4), (4/66-68(R1). Interestingly, some groups of individuals living in poverty were, on the other hand, described in positive terms as "proud", "resourceful" and "strong" (1/150-156(R5), 1/899-905(R3), 2/400-403(R2). This positive connotation was typically used to positively contrast the rather ascetic living standards of the deserving poor (those who were poor in yesteryear, families struggling economically today –

live on Oslo's streets and have since the early 1990s moved from Romania to Norway on short-term, 3 month tourist visas and who constitute Norway's poorest group of people (Engebrigtsen 2012).

especially immigrant families) against the disdain aimed toward today's "consumption society" (see below) and those individuals "choosing" to be poor via excessive consumption (3/140-151(R2R4R5).

2.3 What are the causes of poverty?

Focus groups primarily focused on individual causes for poverty, both within their descriptions of a cycle of poverty in which the cause and effects of poverty were intermixed and in a focus on the motivational status of individuals living in poverty. Focus group participants also described cultural causes for poverty, but here also focused overwhelmingly on the individual level rather than on systematic influences or obstacles related to culture. Participants did refer infrequently to structural causes for poverty, often in relation to a changed labour market or to discrimination within the labour market.

Focus group participants spoke of a cycle of poverty, describing it as a "chicken and egg" phenomenon (1/925-928(R6) in which if an individual lost motivation to "get up in the morning" and wasn't able to "manage" then one would "begin to give oneself bad instructions" and inevitably feel "not worthy" (2/591-597, 617-631(R1). Participants noted that the combination of mental and physical health issues with economic challenges left these individuals with "little possibility to change their own economic situation" (5/380-383(R4). Thus, participants referred to a back and forth effect between a bad situation and the lowered self-esteem that minimized the ability to address the situation.

Group participants also moved beyond focusing on individuals unable to grapple with difficult situations and spoke of poverty as the result of one's cultural position (ethnicity, generation, location) and of the negative influence that one's networks and culture might have on one's ability and motivation to tackle a difficult situation. This discussion was, however, also predicated upon a focus on the individual or people living with economic challenges, rather than a focus on structural causes of poverty. Across most of the focus groups, participants spoke of a generational cycle of poverty, noting that poverty was often "inherited" (3/131-138(R2R1). In this sense, a "tradition" (6/440-443(R1) of poverty was reproduced via one's local environment – "inheritance and milieu" (5/121-124(R2R1R4) – in which individuals continued to do what they "liked to do" and whose destructive actions followed the "values" they and those around them had long had (5/138-144(R2).

In tandem with discussion focusing on cultural/environmental causes for poverty, participants in all of the focus groups suggested that poverty was contextual. In this sense, they suggested that the ways in which one defined one's economic status and the experiences one had connected with this status depended to a large part upon where one lived and that, therefore, poverty and the poverty experience were "relative concepts" (5/33-38(R1) wherein it was "easy" for individuals living and struggling in wealthy areas "to *feel* poor" 5/167-171(R4) – a theme most strongly noted by those FG participants living in wealthy areas. Additionally, participants in many of the groups spoke of one's categorization as "poor" depending on one's life situation. For example, a student earning low wages and "eats spaghetti for dinner every day" is "okay" whereas an individual having to do the same "with children…to have to say no and no all the time" experiences something "much worse" (3/723-729(R1). In this sense, participants suggested that the cause of one's poverty – the definition of poverty, in fact – and the resulting effects of one's status as "poor" was situation according to context and life course position.

Several group participants also described a generational difference in values attached to work and poverty. These participants suggested that younger generations had a changed attitude concerning their own poverty and dependence on public support. Participants noted that younger generations who benefited from the struggles their parents had made had both "enormous expectations of what would come to them" given that their parents had experienced social mobility (5/187-192(R4), and

had therefore fallen into a culture of dependence in which "they could easily receive support for the life" they lead (1/226-240(R1).

Two participants contrasted Norway with other countries that they described as having "class differences" and "structural differences…a segmented system" (5/468-473(R1R3) and reflected the larger trend to rely less frequently on structural explanations for poverty. Some participants, however, described a connection between structural and individual causality. For example, one participant linked what they described as an overly lenient Norwegian welfare state to what they described as individual lack of motivation, noting that the welfare state needed to "set requirements for all people…because there's really something in all people" (3/655-663(R1R2). Participants in several focus groups described a changed labour market in which jobs were less stable and with greater economic challenges – "as a society", Norway has not "succeeded very well" in moving people into the labour market who "don't have such good qualifications" (2/264-271(R2). Additionally, participants in half of the focus groups described a labour market and welfare system in which immigrants are "stigmatized" and automatically categorized into the social assistance system (1/677-690(R8), and thus pushed into "ghettos" in the margins of society (5/70-75(R1). Thus, structural explanations were reserved primarily for immigrants who might be new to the Norwegian welfare state. The tendency to *not* apply structural explanations to individuals in general is perhaps a reflection of the expectation that the Norwegian welfare state had successfully addressed the structural causes of poverty (more on this below).

It is worth noting that the tendency to refer to individual responsibility and explicitly blame individuals for their economic challenges was more pronounced for those participants who did not have personal experience or know someone with personal experience of poverty. Participants who noted that they "didn't know anyone really poor" (4/178-180) or had had little experience with poverty or poor people were more critical of those individuals claiming to have economic difficulties and tended to rely on the idea that poverty was a choice for those experiencing this phenomenon in today's Norway. There was also a shift in focus groups from more critical towards the poor to less critical when one member mentioned a personal story of own poverty or knowing someone in poverty. Interestingly, however, one individual referred to her own transition from difficult childhood to professional success to reflect upon Norway's egalitarian society, suggesting that her own experience confirmed that the "class journey was possible" and that class differences were less "visible" as a result today (5/478-485, 516-522(R2). In this way, a past history of economic struggle – in contrast with today's high status – was used to support the claim that to be poor within the strong welfare state setting of Norway today was a matter of individual choice and action.

2.4 Where is the responsibility for poverty placed?

Poverty/Social exclusion as a choice

Most of the focus group discussions suggested that in most cases poverty and social exclusion were identities that were assumed by those affected. In this sense, poverty was described as a "choice". The tendency to focus on the idea of poverty as a choice was especially common in the beginning of discussions and changed according to how near to poverty group members were and if personal experiences with poverty were mentioned during the discussion (although see above for an interesting exception).

The theme of poverty as a choice was reflected in participant comments that individuals living in poverty had chosen not to and/or were not motivated to take part in valued everyday activities: prioritizing children, attending events, working, participating in the activities that made one a social citizen. Focus group participants noted that it was likely that these individuals did not take part in these activities because they had lost the motivation to tackle their problems or, rather, chose to participate in activities that were self-destructive. The idea of choosing poverty or marginality was a common theme used in response to two vignettes that we used in our focus group discussions,

describing individual incidents in which a person felt shame or was shamed as a result of her life situation. Focus group respondents suggested that the struggling woman in the vignette was overly focused on what "they" (her peers) thought about her, that she merely "defined herself as *other* and had economic difficulties" (1/90-94(R6). Participants in this focus group agreed with this idea, noting that the woman had likely chosen to "take herself out" of society (1/138-142(R7R8) as a result of the shame she felt connected with her situation.

This focus on choice was also reflected in discussions wherein focus group participants noted their irritation with people who failed to take sufficient responsibility for their difficult situations. Here social marginalization was the result of a cycle in which an individual "went around feeling…poor" and consequently life "became very difficult" (3/74-81(R6). Poverty was a choice insofar as it was the result of "prioritizing beer drinking…and football" over one's own children (4/205-211), choosing to live in Oslo – "centrally in the world's richest country" (5/335-344(R3) – or choosing to spend one's money "on the wrong things" (6/133-144(R2) or spending "too much of [the little money] you have" (over-consumption) (1/457-460(R7). Many of the discussions revolving around poverty and choice described the alternate actions that were possible. Within this context, a single mother could choose to be "resourceful enough to cook good food and give her children clothing" (4/236-238), one could choose to live "just outside the city where it's much less expensive" (6/454-463(R1R2), and one could have the wherewithal to "create a value system" that was less focused on material possessions (5/418-432(R1). This preoccupation with choice allowed focus group participants to place responsibility (cause) for poverty in the hands of the individuals experiencing difficult circumstances, in accordance with the aforementioned tendency to focus on individual level cause and effect. As will be described in more detail below, the tendency to focus on individual causes for poverty is perhaps not surprising given the context of a Norwegian setting in which a strong welfare state has ostensibly succeeded in broadly ensuring economic and social equality and opportunity. As one participant noted, "in Norway or Scandinavia, one really doesn't need to be poor…there really *are* opportunities" (6/110-113(R2).

Hierarchy of "deserving" and "undeserving" poor

Attitudes in most of the focus groups pointed toward a hierarchical system in which individuals struggling economically were placed in categories of more and less "deserving". Lødemel (1997) notes that Norwegian law has had a long tradition of distinguishing between the deserving and undeserving poor and, while an explicit distinction was taken out of the law in the mid-20th century and replaced with a paragraph noting that the "cause of need was irrelevant", this distinction is nevertheless still held by many. A hierarchy of deservingness was reflected in discussions reflecting upon the shame that individuals might connect to their low status or difficult circumstances. Here, feeling shame (caring about one's status) was better than "shamelessness" (having given up or not caring about appearances or status) (1/353-354; 394-396(R5R4R3) and those who were least deserving were those who were shameless enough to "have the attitude…that it's not their fault" (3/280-287(R1R2) and instead "complain" about how it's "another's fault…if they have a problem" (3/624-640(R6R5). Mirroring the earlier noted focus on individual de-motivation, shamelessness was cast as the attitude that "takes away people's desire to act" (1/525-546(R6R7R8).

The idea of choice was also used to distinguish between those who were "really" poor and those whose poverty was described as merely the result of bad choices. One focus group participant stated that an individual was not poor if he or she could prioritize to spend money on "a place to live and to bad food" (4/43-48). Another participant explained that she reserved the term "poor" for the very few in Norway whose poverty was not by choice: "can you really call a person poor… if they are poor because, for example, they are lazy or are too good to work?" (6/154-158(R1). Focus group participants noted that this ranking system was pervasive in Norway's welfare system (if not in the media), wherein those on disability were in need of support due to unavoidable health issues and were thus seen as more "normal", and thus deserving, than social assistant claimants (1/672-

675(R6). At the very lowest ranks of the hierarchy, FG participants also distinguished between "our poor – i.e. drug addicts, who some personally knew (1/748-751(R5R3R8) – and the Roma, who might be said to represent Norway's only group of absolute poor. Within this context, Roma beggars were described being part of a larger, corrupt network and as "being placed" strategically to "play" disabled or poor 3/570-574(R4R2R5). Therefore, the ranking system of "real" and "fake" poverty (1/717-723(R3R5) was often attached to the image of "us" and "them".

Within this hierarchy of deserving ("real") and less deserving ("fake" or "by choice") poor, two groups – families with school-age children and immigrants/immigrant families – were highlighted as those for which economic challenges were quite real and who also, for this reason, felt poverty the hardest in a psychosocial sense. These were the "deserving" poor, and interestingly, it was these groups that FG participants most often suggested felt the shaming effects of their situation. Participants noted that parents with school-age children "were more pressured in relation to society to follow up activities" (1/314-318(R6). Frequently cited sites of pressure included buying birthday gifts for children's peers, attendance at school meetings and social events, buying sports equipment and dressing children according to prevailing local standards. School was also cited as a place where children with economically struggling parents might be "outed" as poor and thus "stigmatized" and shamed for their family's circumstances (2/178-184(R2R1), a theme that most commonly highlighted by those focus groups conducted in Oslo's wealthier suburbs.

Focus group participants also included immigrants and immigrant families as the "deserving" poor, who might most likely experience shame attached to their situation, due to loss of status and systematic discrimination. It is noteworthy that several FG participants used the image of the hardworking, resourceful immigrant as an image to contrast to "other" poor ethnic-Norwegians. Immigrant families had "no family network…no security and no backup" (2/167-170(R2) and likely felt great "shame" from "having moved…from a position where you had responsibility for your family" to a position "where you in fact can't take economic responsibility for your family" (2/118-124(R2), yet immigrant children were also "much better…to do something, learn something" because their parents had "another discipline" wherein, if one was not "rich in money", one still held onto one's values (3/140-151(R2R4R5). The placement of immigrants into a category of "deserving" is perhaps not surprising given a larger narrative in which Norway's people have now benefited from the securities of the welfare state – within this context, more newly arrived immigrants might be cast as an exception to the general expectation of full employment and social participation. It is interesting that the Roma, however, do not fit within this exception.

2.5 The changing poverty experience

One theme running throughout all of our focus groups supported our findings from work package 1 (WP1), which had suggested a broad public narrative concerning social mobility after the development of the Norwegian welfare state and the marked changed in the poverty experience in Norway over the past several generations. Along with a shift in expectations surrounding normality in Norway, group participants described a shift in how poverty was defined and, following this, how individuals living in poverty were considered by their peers.

Poverty "before"

Participants in most groups described a differing poverty experience in Norway according to *before* and *now*. Typically "before" was used to describe the time before or just after the WWII – broadly conceived, the period before Norway's welfare state was established – or during one's childhood, in comparison to one's current life situation. Participants described a poverty experience in the Norway before that was closer to absolute – wherein poverty was "obvious" and "clearer" (6/45-56(R1) and where many families were only able to "avoid the poor house" by dint of having enough "flour and salt" to cook with (1/213-225(R8). These sort of severe conditions were similar to how many participants defined "real" poverty today. With a wide gap between rich and poor, class differences

were more clearly defined and more visible, but at the same time, there was a do-it-yourself/independent ethos, a "strength" and "pride" in being self-sufficient (1/150-156(R5) that made simple living culturally acceptable.

Many participants focused on situations of absolute poverty outside Norway and contrasted this against what they felt was a lack of poverty in Norway in more recent times. One participant noted: "If you think 'poverty', access to clean water and fundamental health access…is [what you think]…there's none of [these issues] in Norway" (5/56-59(R3). Another participant contrasted the inability to "pay for electricity, to have to sit with candles" as "real" poverty versus the "little bits we apologize for" (5/264-272(R1R2) and another noted that, "there's not one family [in Norway] who doesn't have the money to buy a loaf of bread" (6/895-896(R2). Several participants described how Norway's welfare state provisions and strong union movement had "eliminated poverty" (1/589-594(R5) and removed clear class differences. In contrast to, for example, the UK – where one participant described "generations upon generations who are without work" (6/95-98(R2) – such class differences could only be found in Norway "before the war". Participants in several groups emphasized that now there was nothing that "could be called classes" (5/492-493, 500-502(R3R2). Fitting with what we found in WP1, this equalization of opportunity was attached to an idea that it was now possible for anyone to stake out his or her preferred identity – despite perhaps "having relatively little money", individuals could "assert themselves" (1/899-905(R3). Given the opportunities provided by the welfare state and the absence of class divisions, participants attributed poverty now in Norway to a matter of choice – "completely marginalized groups…have almost surely chosen this themselves" (5/56-59(R3).

Poverty "now"

In addition to reflecting changing expectations concerning social mobility and what it meant to be poor in today's Norway, participants in three of the focus groups also explicitly described a shift in expectations over the years. Within the context of a fully developed welfare state, it was "within our culture" to focus on the fact that "everyone has…the same opportunities…we have all these choices and you feel unlucky if you've made a choice that you don't become an economic success". In this sense, these participants suggested, it was easy to "direct shame toward those" who had not fared as well, and suggest that it "was their own fault" 5/402-423(R2R4). In other words, the sense of shame was perhaps heightened for those made to feel they had not made the most of the opportunities that were at hand.

Another participant noted that the expectation of wide social mobility and locus of responsibility for poverty being placed at the individual level meant that poverty now was more hidden in public discussion as the idea of poverty in Norway did not fit with the "new society" notion of equality. This participant also suggested that, as opposed to a "real" impoverishment that existed in earlier times – a matter of "not having money" – the "poverty term had undergone change" in more recent years. The presence of the welfare state meant that those who were economically challenged in more recent times represented "very different groups" and the lack of strong public identification with the term poverty and led to "the term disappearing" (1/653-660(R6). This fits our understanding from the outside literature and from WP1, in which we have seen the idea of poverty dropping from the public imagination in Norway, and accordingly, a lack of coverage of this issue in Norwegian literature, media and policy discussions for decades after WWII until 2000s, with the upsurge of a moral panic surrounding poverty (see Hagen and Lødemel, 2010). With the lack of public focus on poverty, the term "poor" was "quite negatively loaded", it is "a curse word" and so "we don't use the word". In this way, these participants suggested, poverty had become almost a taboo subject in "welfare state Norway" where "we should not have poverty" (2/45-64(R1R2). In this sense, the extreme stigmatisation and marginalisation of being poor in Norway meant that one was not merely placed into a negative category – the idea of individuals living in poverty "disappeared" in the sense that one became a topic or reality to be actively avoided.

Most of the focus group discussions in fact mirrored this described tendency to remove the idea of poverty in Norway from the public discourse. While drug addicts were recognized as perhaps one instance of those living in visible poverty in Norway – they were "our poor" (1/748-751(R5R3R8), there was more often a refusal to admit to absolute poverty now in Norway, again corroborating our WP1 findings concerning the expectation of full social mobility. One notable example in which this tendency took place was during mention of Norway's Roma population, who are among the more visible poor who live on the streets and panhandle for money. One group spoke about the Roma man who "begged in one moment" and "in another moment…went and…smoked purchased cigarettes and so went into the wine store and bought some". These "scary" people who "were placed outside" to "play the part" of disabled beggars (3/570-583(R4R5R6R2), who would "beg and smoke" but "are not really poor" and "aren't considered poor" (3/586-594(R2R4). Another group referred to a broader understanding that saw the Roma as the "fake" poor who were "not poor" but "had Mercedes…we don't think they're poor…they just come here to get our money", noting that "there have been myths built around this" (1/717-723(R3R5). The participants in this group reflected upon how and why it was that the Roma – who "were really poor people were trying to make it in Europe" had instead "become accused of having brought mafia traffic to Norway". Several participants suggested that perhaps this accusation was a "defence mechanism…we can't imagine it or we will protect ourselves…we'll have none of it, really" (1/731-738(R5R3). As several other participants explained, "we don't recognize them because if we…thought of them as genuinely poor then we'd have a duty to help them. And we don't want them around us" because they're "horrible to look at…you see poverty right in front of you. And you don't want to see that" (1/755-767(R6R3R4R7). In other words, these participants seemed to suggest that to recognize the sort of absolute poverty that the Roma represented would be to acknowledge the limitations to the story of full social mobility for all. It is this sort of failure to recognize poverty that adds to the marginalized position of those living in extreme poverty in Norway.

New inequalities: the new consumption society

Interestingly, focus group discussions suggested a U curve in which social inequalities decreased via the welfare state (into the 80s?), but had more recently resurged due to a new "consumption" society. A majority of the group focus referred to the increasing need to meet (or compete against) social norms via the purchase or maintenance of material possessions. As one participant put it: "before…the threshold for living normally maybe wasn't so high…it's higher now for those who end up on the outside" (1/891-892(R6). An increasing focus on consumption was contrasted against the simpler, do-it-yourself society of the past, wherein one "always learned how to take care of one's things…to mend one's own socks, if you will" as opposed to the "vulgar" new "use and toss mentality" (6/345-352, 382 (R2). Shame was directed at individuals who consumed too much: both toward those who had no money and those who had a good deal. Poverty was said to arise from over-consumption (individual blame) and many of the psychosocial dimensions of poverty (for example: shame from relative disparity in material possessions) was heightened by increased expectation for consumption. Group participants suggested that the newer tendency to consume meant that those who did not have the means to meet rising material standards – those that didn't have "a PC with internet…telephones…everything that costs and costs and costs" were further marginalized and stigmatized – the "consumption perspective" meant that one "almost wasn't allowed" to "be that way" (2/278-283(R2R1). Along with a focus on consumption was a focus on consuming the "right" things – those cultural identifiers (brand names, the latest technology) that marked one as being a member of a higher status category. One participant described how this focus was especially heightened in the school setting, in which "children…are especially perceptive in relation to what's attractive" and this "lies implicitly in popularity" to "these [cultural] codes" (5/224-234(R4).

Supporting our findings from WP1, participants suggested that today's poverty, therefore, could be marked both by a lack of material and cultural capital, in which one's relative poverty and social

exclusion were associated with the lower status of bad economic and cultural decisions or know-how. Thus, these focus groups suggested, the newer consumption society meant that that "the difference between poor and rich had become much more clear…the gap has become larger" with an increase in "[material] items to choose" (6/400-407(R2R1). With the resurgence in status inequalities, participants suggested that it was now easier to "feel poor" or marginalized and feel the shame of not faring as well in today's materially-focused society. In today's consumption society it was "much more stigmatizing and much tougher to experience that one stood below others [on the social hierarchy]" (3/466-470(R6).

2.6 Improving anti-poverty policies

Among group participants, there was widespread support for Norway's work approach to "activate" welfare beneficiaries and move them back into the labour market. As one participant put it: "it's necessary to create a combination of work and education" in order for beneficiaries to foster "the value of contribution…to be an active participant [in society]" (2/669-673(R1). That said, several participants, while supporting the work approach, also described how the welfare system could work more effectively to help people back into economic stability. One participant noted that as "we have…money in Norway" that perhaps "we could think bigger" in terms of providing service and more extensive support to those in need of more help (5/764-770(R3).

Two themes running through a majority of the focus group discussions were a critique of and suggestions for how to improve NAV. Several participants described how the experience of receiving support from NAV could be demeaning. One participant, relying on her own employment experience and personal history as a beneficiary of state support, described the experience of receiving economic support as "like the old poor house…you have to come in with your hat in your hand" (1/104-106(R8). Two other participants also spoke of this demeaning experience as they described the process of fighting one's way out of being placed on a lower level of the welfare hierarchy (receiving SA and not being diagnosed with a condition in order to receive disability), due to inclusion in the social assistance category being "very stigmatizing", as if one had "received the label 'incompetent'" (3/507-519(R1R5). Additionally, the labour activation measures available to social assistance claimants – work internships – were described by several participants as demotivating if they failed to lead to longer term work. One participant noted that "there must be a carrot to [longer term work]" otherwise "people give up" (1/987-998(R8). Internships were also described as exploitative by two participants in the same group, as "a goldmine [for businesses]…to take in an entire employee, who can do a job just as well as anyone, maybe better…and to get this for free" (1/1067-1091(R3R8).

Tied to the possibility of claimants feeling demeaned, stigmatized and exploited, while simultaneously framing "success" according to one's level of participation in the labour market, participants suggested that NAV would do well to offer the sorts of follow-up services and programmes that would translate to longer term labour participation. One participant noted that extensive follow up would require better cooperation between national and local governments in order to lower the employers' risk should they make real long-term hires, because "it's only the state that has deep enough pockets to put an effort into such a project" (1/1111-1120(R6). Several participants also suggested that the feeling of stigmatization was also perhaps due to beneficiaries not all fitting neatly into the pre-established categories presumed by NAV. Participants suggested that NAV's services and benefits should be designed in such a way that they were more flexible to the particular cultural norms or needs of beneficiaries, for example, as one participant suggested, acknowledging that "you have a gender role pattern…in a good portion of minority families…women…who see it as an important job to take care of the family…and who don't see themselves as someone who should go out to work". To avoid this "collision of cultures" and reduce

further "stigmatization", the participant suggested, the Norwegian system would need more flexible measures that fit with expectations and gender roles of minority populations (2/685-706(R1R2).

Participants in one group also focused on the potential difficulties that immigrant claimants might encounter when navigating the NAV system and that many of these claimants "weren't able to orient themselves in the system" and therefore, the system "didn't manage to take them in". These participants criticized what they felt was a "bureaucratized" system in which claimants "must use all their resources" and "feel that they must fight so darn hard to get the help measures they need" (5/665-671(R4R3). Instead, participants suggested, the focus should be on developing systems that were "more informal" and "less bureaucratic" in order to prove more accessible to users (5/290-299, 304-307(R3R1R2), possibly by following the model of "volunteer organizations…where the work is less bureaucratic" and it was therefore possible to "meet people…on a personal level and succeed in solving problems" (5/698-708(R2).

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Appendix A: Demographic Specifics

The data structuring this report has been drawn from six (mini) focus group discussions, with an average of four participants in each group. Focus groups were mixed in terms of gender, with approximately one-third of group participants being men and two-thirds women. The ages of participants ranged between 15 and 62 years, with the average age being 46 years old. Focus group participants were almost all ethnic Norwegian, with one participant (a long-time Norwegian resident) being a Swedish Finn. Two of the focus groups took place in Lillefjord,[5] the small fishing town on the west coast of Norway that was one of the study sites for WP2. One focus group took place in the relatively affluent West Oslo suburb of Eiketangen, also a study site for WP2, and one in a similarly affluent West Oslo suburb. The two remaining focus groups took place at the Oslo University College and were composed of a mixed group of residents, most residing either near the Oslo city centre or in industrial suburbs East of Oslo.

[5] Pseudonyms listed for all study sites.

Appendix B: Methods

Focus group discussions were held with people not living in poverty, in order to gauge wider public perceptions of those facing hardship. For inclusion into the groups, participants were to be permanent Norwegian residents, between 18 and 67 years of age (of working age), with full-time employment (or on parental leave) and not currently receiving social assistance or disability benefits. Six focus group discussions were conducted, with an average of four participants each and with a mixed composition of genders in most. All efforts were made to attempt to mirror the demographics of the participants in WP2 in terms of study site: two focus groups took place in wealthier suburbs west of Oslo's city centre, two took place at the Oslo University College with participants from a mix array of settings (from city centre as well as from industrial suburbs east of Oslo), and two took place in the same north western coastal study site as WP2. Group participants were recruited using snowball sampling: a key informant from each study site was recruited and this informant subsequently helped to recruit additional participants to groups.

Group discussions followed a semi-structured approach (Morgan 1988) and loosely followed an interview guide with a list of topics related to poverty, shame, and shaming, vignettes collected from WP2 interviews, and some related questions to serve as prompts. Group participants were asked to explore how they might act or feel given the circumstances and situations described. Discussions lasted between one to two hours covered topics according to the proposed research agenda, but moderators also allowed for flexibility for discussion of related topics to emerge. The data emerging from each discussion were transcribed and interactions noted. Transcriptions were subject to a content analysis in which data was coded to identify key themes, as these related to several predetermined areas of focus. The themes produced by focus groups in WP4 will subsequently be compared and contrasted with those identified in WP1 in order to provide triangulated validity for what will be described as "public" or "dominant" discourses in WP4.

Appendix C: Overview of empirical evidence

2.1 Who are the poor?

Drug Addicts

1/131-134(R3): drug addicts
1/353-354; 394-396(R5R4R3): drug addicts
5/61-66(R4): drug addicts
5/90-93(R4): drug addicts
6/24-29(R1): mostly drug addicts

Families

3/700-706(R2R1): single parents
4/236-238: single mothers
6/24-29(R1): some single parents
1/116-119(R8): families with children
1/314-318(R6): families with children
1/834-845(R7R5): families with children
1/803-807(R8): families with children
2/25-30(R2): families with children
2/70-76(R2): families with children
4/69-73: families with children
5/235-236(R5): families with children
6/322-327(R1): families with children
2/178-184(R2R1): children/teens
2/574-581(R2R1): children/teens

Immigrant families and workers

2/118-124; 382-395(R2): immigrant families
2/400-403(R2): immigrant families
3/140-151(R2R4R5): immigrant families
5/70-75(R1): immigrant families
5/98-102(R4): immigrant families
1/677-690(R8): immigrant workers
2/167-170(R2): Immigrant workers
6/24-29(R1): asylum seekers

Low status workers

4/142-144: grocery store cashier/low status workers
5/387-388(R2): Rimi cashier
6/686-693(R1R2): Rimi cashier/low status workers

Mentally/physically disabled

1/349-350(R4): psychological issues
1/363-367(R5): psychological issues
2/591-597(R1): psychological issues
2/617-631(R1): psychological issues
5/150-154(R2): combination of mental, physical, social
5/380-383(R4): combination of mental and physical health issues
1/321-328(R6): social excluded
3/552-558(R1): social exclusion

Roma
6/154-158, 171-175(R1): "poor" only if not by choice
1/717-723(R3R5): Roma
1/718(R3R5): Roma
1/731-738(R5R3): Roma
1/765-767(R7): Roma
1/748-751(R5R3R8): Roma
3/570-574(R4R2R5): Roma
3/586-594(R2R4): Roma

2.2 How is poverty described?
Sources
2/477-491(R1): Understanding of difficulties children face in poverty – job: child welfare
2/651-661(R1R2): Labour market more difficult for youth/those without skills – job: child welfare/teacher
2/465-466(R2): Political understanding of poverty from newspaper
2/518-523; 534-543(R2R1): Media doesn't bash the poor, but praises the rich to set valued standard – rich famous/valued for being rich (consumption society)
3/600-609(R2R5R1): media stories on Roma influence popular understandings/presumptions
4/163-168: media focus on welfare leeching
5/391-394(R4): Aftenposten article mentioned about the calculation entailed in staying home
2/737-744(R2): The Populist Right (Fremskrittspartiet) shames the poor
2/461-469(R2): Personal experience of poverty – grew up in poverty in Norway – contrast to today's environment
4/150-154: ideas concerning the poor from leftish politics and union family background

Descriptions of the poverty phenomenon
1/138(R7): "confusing"
1/321-328(R6): Not necessarily only economic, also lack of networks/experiences (job informed)
1/349-350(R4): situation leads to bad self-image leads to worse situation (family experience)
1/363-367(R5): reinforces idea of cycle – lower self-worth due to situation (personal experience)
3/552-558(R1): social exclusion-poverty-shame nexus
5/150-154(R2): multifaceted reasons for poverty
6/121-128(R1): poverty a mix of economic difficulties and low status/capital in broad sense
6/795-796(R2): poverty is complicated

Descriptions of individuals living in poverty
1/718(R3R5): Roma = others call them "fake" poor
1/765-767(R7): Roma = "awful" to look at (recalls Hamsun – visible poverty)
3/586-594(R2R4): Roma "beggars" who "sit and smoke" – not really poor
4/66-68: undeserving poor – "sitting and smoking"
5/61-66(R4): drug addicts live in filth, in degraded state
6/436-439(R2): poor are "not normal"

2.3 At what level are the causes of poverty described?
Individual – cycle of poverty
1/131-134(R3): Actual cause of poverty (drugs) more stigmatising than economic poverty that results
1/925-928(R6): "Chicken and egg": must address both economic poverty and low self-worth
2/591-597(R1): Empathetic focus: why get up if nothing to get up for? – low motivation
2/617-631(R1): Psychological low self-worth/motivation leads to downward spiral of SE and more psych issues
5/380-383(R4): Those with combination mental/physical health issues find it difficult to change

situation
5/738-739, 747-750(R1R2): Calculation regarding motivation important when designing measures – important not to provide *too* much support

Cultural (individual)
1/226-240(R1): younger generations othered – a culture of dependence/support
1/269-275(R5): small town poor are children of widespread drug culture in the 1970s – disability
1/333-341(R4): drug milieu encourages continued drug use – networks on the margins (family experience)
3/131-138(R2R1): generational poverty – deterministic
3/244-258(R5R4R1R2): one's environment affects one's choices and resulting economic situation
4/33-37: poverty result of inherited social problems or lack of motivation
5/121-124(R2R1R4): cultural causes for poverty – generation and environment – reproduction
5/129-135(R1): biological inheritance of risk factors for poverty and environmental causes
5/138-144(R2): bad choices might be what you're used to – environment/culture
5/187-192(R4): youth have high expectations of social mobility given mobility of their parents
5/459-467(R4): lower expectations for life if have grown up around social assistance users
6/224-227(R2): who one's surrounded by determines choices – culture of poverty
6/440-443(R1): observations of generational poverty – "family tradition" of poverty

Structural
2/320-325(R2R1): interplay between structural and individual causality
1/677-690(R8): immigrants treated poorly/stigmatized, quickly categorized by welfare system into SA 2/167-170(R2): Immigrants have lack of networks/resources (job informed)
2/264-271(R2): changed labour market means greater economic challenges
2/633-640(R2): Welfare system doesn't focus enough on transition to adulthood
3/400-406(R5): changes in labour market – more stable jobs before
3/655-663(R1R2): welfare system encourages dependence
5/70-75(R1): immigrants can't access welfare offers, live in ghettos

Contextual (cultural)
1/82-87(R2R7): Know everyone in a small town, but not open to everyone
1/254-258(R5): N. Norway was a poor area
2/39-41(R1): Need money to meet local norms for children
2/160-164(R2): Shame connected to economic challenge heightened in rich area (personal experience)
2/875-885(R2): Middle class shame in rich area of not being good enough
3/82-86(R1R5): Context and life course position important – poverty is situational
3/87-100(R5R1R6): Poverty experience worse if surrounded by wealthy community
3/723-729(R1): Poverty not just relational, but situational – depends on circumstances
4/53-59: Students not really poor because they expect more later
5/33-38(R1): Poverty experience (whether one is, indeed, poor) changes depending on location
5/167-171(R4): Poverty felt if not meeting peer norms – if living in wealthy area, easy to feel poor
6/205-211(R1): Shame from econonomic challenges depends on one's surrounding peers
6/266-274(R1): Strong local norms can heighten shame of sticking out

Depends on level of personal experience with poverty
4/156-161: shifting views on responsibility for poverty through own life course
4/178-180: doesn't know any poor people (more critical of marginalized or those claiming difficulties)
5/17-18(R2): refers to own childhood in rough area to discuss mobility in Norway
5/478-485, 516-522(R2): Norway's egalitarian society reflected in her own experience – class journey

possible and class differences have decreased
5/598-601(R3): little experience with poverty/poor people (uses idea of choice throughout, econ def)

2.4 Where is the responsibility for poverty placed?

Poverty and social exclusion as a "choice"

1/138-142(R7R8): social exclusion as a choice due to self-shame, pulling oneself out of society (after vignette)
1/457-460(R7): poverty a result of choice to over-consume
3/74-81(R6): social marginalization an individual choice
3/259-267(R6): annoyance with "dependence" and those who do not take responsibility for situation – refers to NAV clients – professional perspective?
3/272-279(R6): individuals who are marginalized may choose to be so – choose not to be social
3/291-296(R6): being passive and refusing responsibility – can lead to cycle of generational dependence
3/667-671(R2): poverty from lack of motivation to tackle own problems
4/17-27: shames those who choose to consume if only have a little money
4/130-134: young men who are poor choose this as the labour market is good
4/205-211: matter of making good or bad choices – i.e. if children are prioritized
4/236-238: single mothers can choose to prioritize kids
4/306-310: shames the poor for their behaviour, not their status
5/335-344(R3): those struggling economically should choose to move to a less expensive area
5/418-432(R1R3R4): one can choose not to live expensively and follow dyi ethos – response: choosing "simple living" is a cultural privilege – status from choosing this
6/110-113(R2): don't have to be poor in Norway because opportunities are there
6/133-144(R2): poverty in Norway more about bad choices than about having little money
6/215-216(R1): one's economic situation a matter of individual responsibility
6/454-463(R1R2): can choose to live in less expensive area

Hierarchy of "deserving" and "undeserving" poor

1/353-354; 394-396(R5R4R3): addict (known) feeling shame/caring about circumstances better than shamelessness (not caring)
1/525-533; 542-546; 551-555(R6R8): Shame a good thing – represents possibility/desire/ability to change situation/act – shamelessness is what takes away individual's ability to act; shamelessness is lowest position
1/672-675(R6): those on ??? more "normal" than SA claimants
1/717-723(R3R5): Roma most stigmatized – myth of "fake" poverty
1/748-751(R5R3R8): "Our" poor versus Roma
2/897-904(R2): foster daughter judging biological mother as "undeserving"
3/280-287(R1R2): shamelessness exhibited by poor who blame others for problems – refuse responsibility
3/624-640(R6R5): shamelessness is to always blame society for problems
3/570-574(R4R2R5): Roma beggars part of a large network – "playing" disabled or poor
4/43-48: describes deserving vs undeserving poor
6/154-158, 171-175(R1): "poor" reserved for the deserving poor – "poverty" only if not by choice
6/830-833, 837-839(R2): deserving vs undeserving poor – "us" vs "them"

Who are the "deserving" poor?

Families

1/116-119(R8): Not meeting norms for other parents of child's peers: parent meetings makes visible
1/314-318(R6): Difficult to hide poverty if have children – possibility for shame greater
1/803-807(R8): Giving children's friends birthday gifts over means to save face (after gift vignette)

2/25-30(R2): Economic differences made clear via birthday gifts
2/70-76(R2): Unfortunate that kids can't participate in birthday parties and ??? - empathy
1/834-845(R7R5): Status-conscious children/teens add pressure to economically challenged parents
2/178-184(R2R1): School a place for poverty-related stigma, especially in a rich town (w. oslo)
2/574-581(R2R1): High school shaming/stigma of working-class kids – taunting (w. oslo)
3/194-199(R2): School provides location for increased/equalizing opportunity
4/69-73: Shame attached to failure to meet birthday gift norms
5/98-102(R4): School makes poverty visible, esp. for immigrants who look different
5/235-236(R5): Relative poverty felt via birthdays and sports participation
6/322-327(R1): Pressure to keep up with sports equipment

Immigrants
1/677-690(R8): Immigrants treated poorly/stigmatized, quickly categorized by welfare system into SA???
1/1055-1058(R1): Unrealistic to expect employer to take on "outsiders"
2/118-124; 382-395(R2): Immigrant shame over loss of status wrt ability to carry out family responsibilities
2/400-403(R2): Immigrant fall in status buffered by strength/security from good background
2/167-170(R2): Immigrants have lack of networks/resources (job informed)
3/140-151(R2R4R5): Othering poor Norwegians through contrast to "deserving" poor immigrants
5/70-75(R1): Immigrants can't access welfare offers, live in ghettos

2.5 The changing poverty experience

Poverty before
1/150-156(R5): older generations were poor, but proud
1/213-225(R8): poverty two generations ago absolute, but sense of independence
2/801-805(R2): visible shame a generation ago now hidden
2/826-835(R2): identifies with do-it-yourself ethos to set herself apart from today's consumption society
5/47-50(R2): stigma was attached to SA recipience
5/492-493, 500-502(R2): class differences in Norway only present pre-WWII, now class differences are porous
6/45-56(R1): poverty when young (in 1980s) more visible than now

Poverty now
1/589-594(R5): Unions have lifted people out of poverty, as has WS (union worker)
1/899-905(R3): Agency to refuse norms – cultural capital/agency to take on own style/create new norms
1/915-923(R6): Cultural capital gives ability to manoeuver, but also heightens generational poverty if parents don't provide strong support/resources
1/661-667(R6R3): those identifying as poor now more marginalized/alien – now more about passivity than economic problems
1/879-882(R7): Those who don't fit in (stylewise) – lower status – less common, more marginalized
3/159-163(R2): Example of family hiding poverty via "storytelling"

Refusal to acknowledge poverty now
1/731-738(R5R3): Roma not acknowledged as poor part of refusal to admit to poverty in Norway
1/771-789(R5): Refusal to recognize Roma and others as poor b/c doesn't fit w/ big story of WS progress – leads to further marginalization
2/45-64(R2): Poverty especially stigmatized category in a country where it shouldn't exist
2/918-920(R2): Particular shame in class journey down when have good background
3/773-782(R6R1): More equality now – status differences minimal

5/56-59(R3): Feels no absolute poverty in Norway now; those who are poor have chosen to be so
5/155-157(R2): Difficult to imagine who can have such a bad economy in today's Norway
5/210-211(R3): Focus on technical definitions of poverty – poverty line to suggest little poverty in Norway (economy)
5/264-272(R2R1): Distinguishes between "real" poverty and trivial concerns of relative poverty in Norway
5/402-423(R2R4): Cultural experience of shame today from not making most of social mobility opportunities (big story)
5/450-456(R3): Disbelief that there are class differences in today's Norway
5/468-473(R1R3): Norway has low structural barriers compared with other countries
5/640-645(R2): Poverty in Oslo (compares to third world) an idea manufactured by media and politicians
6/95-98(R2): Generational poverty less a problem in Norway than in the UK
6/530-534(R2): Norway is a country of opportunity
6/895-896(R2): No absolute poverty in Norway

New inequalities: the new consumption society
1/852-861(R1R6R2R5R4): 1990s focus on consumption – "Cubus" youth – stigma attached to certain brands of clothing
1/888-894(R8R7R6R2): Need to consume more to be "normal"
2/218-221(R1); 233-237(R1R2): Shaming the consumption society of west Oslo – those "above" others
2/247-252(R2R1): distancing self from consumption society via pride in preserving "old" perspective
2/278-286(R2R1): consumption society increases stigma for those who can't keep up
2/860-867(R2R1): shame increased today win context of increased expectations of consumption
3/466-470(R6): economic inequality has increased recently – more stigma to be below average now
5/224-234(R4): poorer kids excluded in school – not able to successfully negotiate cultural codes
5/433-448(R2): Norway today – status from having things that cost a lot
5/575(R3): "Cubus" youth – stigma associated with relative poverty in a rich school
6/329-332(R2): cultural capital in using used things – old things – Norwegian culture
6/345-352(R2): new consumption society a contrast to traditional diy living
6/382-395(R2): express displeasure over new consumption society – Norway *was* special
6/400-407(R2R1): focus on consumption makes poverty now more visible – struggle harder
6/575-577(R2): social exclusion heightened if can't keep up in consumption society
6/736-738(R2): Norwegian cultural tradition of self-reliance

2.6 Improving anti-poverty policies

Improving Norway's public services
1/104-106(R8): experience with NAV counter similar to "poor house" experience (response to vignette)
1/987-998(R8): internship is only a short-term motivator, long path to a real job
1/1067-1091(R3R8): Internships can be exploitative and many give up after several tries (job experience)
1/1111-1120(R6): state should provide connection to key businesses for LT work (job experience)
1/1130-1133(R5): shaming the state: uses oil money on things other than Norwegian workers
2/137-139(R1): measures for single parents are gendered – heighten shame in male parents
2/685-706(R1R2): an inclusive welfare system would support work in the home, too
3/507-519(R1R5): NAV hierarchy creates categories of deserving vs undeserving – stigma of dependence
5/290-299, 304-307(R3R1R2): NAV system difficult for some to negotiate – should make easier
5/665-671(R4R3): NAV system difficult to negotiate – should be more flexible
5/698-708(R2): bureaucratic and impersonal public system could learn from volunteer organizations

5/764-770(R3): vs rational choice thinking – Norway has the capacity to think beyond the minimum
2/669-673(R1): work approach good for those able – activates people
2/717-729(R1R2): help to self-help, but also need follow-up

Working with the private sector
2/752-754(R2): Cooperative organization between Red Cross and municipality to provide sports equipment
2/766-776(R2): Source of used equipment matters – loppemarked/inheritance better than charitable organisation – shows have social network/less stigma