

Really Anti-Social

bristle Collective

With all the hoo-ha about anti-social behaviour and handy new catch-all laws for every occasion, politicians are falling over themselves to slap the ‘anti-social’ tag onto anything they don’t like the look of. By taking advantage of people’s real fears and concerns, and sustaining a climate of suspicion through the mass media, they coerce people into arguing for more social control and law enforcement. The definition of ‘anti-social’ used by the authorities is a predictably narrow one, and one pretty much confined (unsurprisingly) to working class communities.

So who decides what is meant by ‘anti-social’? Shouldn’t we first agree on what is ‘social’? Here’s a common dictionary definition of the word: “*social* – living in companies or organised communities ... interdependent, co-operative ... concerned with the mutual relations of human beings” (good grief – that sounds like anarchy to us!). Maybe it’s time for us to join in the finger-wagging but point the finger in the other direction, and come up with some ideas of our own about what we think is anti-social.

Anti-social?	Really anti-social
Gangs of trouble-making youth on the streets	Illegal wars, invasions, and the murder of civilians. Armed forces recruitment staff targeting poor areas, offering what seems like the only way out. Loss of public space – sold off to private companies for ‘development.’ Corporate takeover of our cities, bringing more social control. Slashed public funding for youth and community facilities. Criminalisation of young people
Street drinking	Gentrification and social exclusion. Overpriced pubs and clubs, encouraging binge drinking, alco-pop culture, and subsequent dependency. People suffering isolation, alcoholism and mental health problems as a result of insecure dead-end jobs and alienated, hopeless lives
Begging	Corporate greed and tax evasion. Massive wealth inequality. Pay rises for the rich, tax rises for the poor. Council corruption and huge payouts to consultancy firms ripping off taxpayer’s money. No affordable housing but plenty of luxury homes, as local people get priced out. Benefit cuts, and claimants treated like criminals as part of the ongoing clampdown on welfare. New anti-begging laws to punish people for being too visible about their poverty.
Flyposting and graffiti	Huge advertising companies dominating our lives and communities with billboards and adverts on every bit of space. The cosy relationship between big business and the Bristol City council. Destructive mass consumerism fuelled by the advertising industry
“Problem” families	The Royal family and other hereditary parasites. Families forced into shit housing on left-for-dead estates. The desperation of poverty which makes people go mad. A society based on profit not people. The destruction of community strength, and divisions and conflicts fostered by the mass media, government and capitalism as a whole. Sexism and the continued exploitation of women. Attacks on asylum seekers, and

	institutional racism
Street crime, muggings etc.	Big business tax fraud. Taxes - the constant theft on a grand scale of our hard earned wages to fund wars, social, control and parasitic government. Attacks on other countries to steal their land and resources. 'Get rich quick' selfish mentality and the constant need for more, more, more which the system going. Paranoia, fear and mutual suspicion brought on by years of too much propaganda, news and TV. Poverty and cheap dugs which make people turn communities against each other. Government involvement in the drugs trade. Third world debt

The list goes on why not send us your nominations for any ruling class ne'er-do-wells in need of a good stiff Anti Social Behaviour Order? Answers on the back of a *bristle* subscription form, please!

This article first appeared in bristle magazine, an alternative publication for Bristol and the South West of the UK which aims to provide a space and information for local groups and activists. More information including subscription details is available at www.bristle.org.uk