“Tough, but Good”

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE DEVIAN

LABELING OF SOCIOLOGY PROFESSORS ON RATETHEPROF.COM

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INTRODUCTION

RatetheProfessor.com (RTP) is a website where students can rate their professors on a variety of criteria. While many studies look at quality and ease, no studies currently exist analyzing certain professor actions as distinct and how student reactions to these “distinct” professors differ. This project asks you to classify different forms of discrepancy in terms of proficiencies, gaps, or overcoming and under-performing, combined with the reaction to those norm violations, which is positive or negative. The current research uses Herriot & Ricketts’ work to classify sociology professors as distinct based on their under- or over-performing norms established by students comments on ratetheprof.com.

METHOD

Sample: A stratified random sample of 263 Sociology professors was collected from RTP in June 2009. The sample was stratified by Professor Type and Course Component.

RATES FOR PROFESSOR TYPE WITH HIGHEST RATING

TABLE 4: (Mostly) Paired Norms and Differences in Comments

Professor Type: AAB

- They are superheroes. ‘They are superhero movie villains.’
- They ‘geek out’ about the material, and their passion is infectious.
- They also act in ways that make students feel comfortable with talking with them.

EAG professors, ‘want you to get an A. (They) will help you understand’ by providing a clear path to follow, and constant guidelines along the way. They are sacred about sharing their knowledge (which they have a lot of). ‘AAG professors are more unpredictable. They just do different things, changing things up to avoid routine’ (‘video clips, great discussions, entertaining anecdotes’). They are ‘access’ willing to help.’

TAH – THE BRAINiac WHO CAN’T EXPLAIN:

They have a strong “I know what I’m doing” aura. They are not malevolent, just boring and causing chaos with their off-the-rails disorganization. They are a complete mess. Very self-focused, ignoring the perspectives outside their own. Their disorganization “takes a toll on the material.” It is hard to keep up with them. They are “tall order” professors.

TABLE 2: Professor types, with over and under overall MCR

Category of comments

- Natural language
- Gap in status (Q4)
- Fair (Q2)
- Unfair (Q3)
- Disagree with other comments (Q1)
- Unorganized (Q3)
- Helpful Q3 - Not helpful Q1
- Unhelpful, nice, avoid, bad, unclear
- Easy (Q2)
- Interesting (Q1)
- Worst (Q3)
- Nice (Q2)
- Bad (Q4)
- Clear (Q3)
- Bad (Q4)
- Unorganized (Q3)
- Handouts, Too slow, Physical description (non sexual).

TABLE 3: ordered Commenting Frequencies for Linear Norms Concepts

- The concepts at the top of the list are the most frequently used concepts.
- The concepts at the bottom of the list are the least frequently used concepts.

DISCUSSION

AVE professors are highest on some concepts (such as Ego), which does not fit with Herriot and Becker’s typology in any way. They are also poorly distributed (‘all Sociology Professors’ are).

AVE – THE SUIT: Academic, Reading, Teaching. They’re electronically, detached. Steep, narrow comments. Descriptive, Distant, Academic,による、伝統的な教授の型。AVE professors have a high percentage of status (ego) and have a lot of ways, similar to TBG professors. They are an effect boss at a cattle office job “she talks fast and it is hard to take notes, but she does give you the PowerPoints regularly” and class participation seems to be an irrelevant waste of time. Much like the average suit-wearing professional, they are standard (although slightly biased as, “She talks very fast, just讲得快, always in a hurry”).

TAB – THE NEMESIS: Water, Bridge, Cold, distant, active and sometimes unpleasant. Their purpose in life is to keep the student’s life miserable in every single way. “I’ve never seen a teacher treat students with such disrespect.” They design entire courses to torture students, so you know she or he would not be able to score 15,000 nobel value points in 30 seconds.” Their disorganization ‘is always somebody else’s fault’. They are super heroes movie villains. ‘They are the plagues. Block them all out!!!’

AAB – THE TRAVELER: bridge, tall order, all over the place. They are unpredictable. They act in ways that make students feel uncomfortable with talking with them.

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