Poverty propaganda
75% ON SICK ARE SKIVING

Benefit cheats are taking us to the cleaners

LETS CUT BENEFITS FOR THOSE WHO REFUSE WORK

I've never voted Labour before, but I can see the benefits.
Living with the stigma of poverty & benefits receipt

- I feel like a bum. I feel useless. When you’re walking around the streets... everybody knows that you’re not a worker because you’re out and about through the day so you feel worthless... You feel like some people are looking at you as if to say “fucking, he’s taking piss, he’s another one that just sits about and does nowt”. And then when you go shopping and you’re having to buy all the cheapo stuff, you feel, I don’t know, you feel ashamed. That’s how it is. You see people putting nice products in their trolleys and you can’t, you’ve got to get the minimum and it’s tough if you like it or not because that’s all you can afford. (James)

- I need a job; because I’m sick of scrounging. That’s how I think of it, anyway, I’m sick of scrounging. (Sam)
The (negative) impact of poverty stigma

- On social inclusion
- On current and future employability
- On society as a whole

Survey of out-of-work benefit claimants (Who Benefits?, 2014) found 38% said that their confidence and self-esteem were harmed by worrying about what others think of them, while 31% felt their mental health was adversely affected
Beyond the propaganda

- Many pervasive myths – ‘families that never work’/‘nobody works round here’, welfare is a ‘lifestyle choice’ - obscure realities of unemployment and ‘depressed’ locales
- Myths serve clear ideological functions: ‘welfare reform’, ‘austerity cuts’, ‘workfare’ etc
- Empirically falsified (quite easily)