

On the go: conducting and representing mobilities research

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Content

- Mobile methods: the everyday lives of 'looked after' children and young people
 - 'guided' walks
 - car conversations

- Researching children's mobilities: the school journey
 - self-directed photography

(Extra)ordinary lives: Children's Everyday Relationship Cultures in Public Care

- Looked after children are consistently discussed in terms of a range of social problems.
- Aims to enable a group of these children and young people to produce their own accounts and representations of their everyday lives.
- Participants choose means and methods
- Exploration of possibilities and challenges of children's participation in full research process



Multi-media project sessions

- Enabling children and young people to develop their autobiographical multi-media identity projects
- Working collaboratively with new technologies during project sessions
- Researchers conducting an ethnography of this process

Car conversations

- Digital audio recordings made whilst transporting young people to and from the fortnightly project sessions.
- Initially the need to pick up/drop off young people was seen as a just a problem to overcome.
- Pick-up/drop off routines were established and the time and space of the car journey became an important time to build relationships between individual young people and researchers.

The mobile experience of the car journey

- young people could exercise control over the content and direction of conversations and the recording process.
- a noisy space, sounds from places passed en route and created from within, playing radio, tapes, singing along.
- interruptions and disruptions, as the researcher negotiated the route, alternating focus between being an attentive driver and being an engaged listener, active in the conversation.
- a stuttering, paused, unheard, repeated exchange, within which the intimate is interspersed with the mundane.
- the purpose of the car journey is to transport the young person, not to hold an interview, it offers choice to the young person, to talk and share details of their everyday life with the researcher.

'Guided' walks

- place importance on the everyday experiences, routines and perceptions of the young people as they make a journey around their current home locations and revisit past home locations with the researcher.
- have an unstructured, flexible format, responding to the direction and interests of the young person 'guiding' the researcher through settings familiar to them.
- the young person is given a degree of control over the research encounter, the route, the pace and the pauses, and what to record.
- have an openness and rootedness, an immediacy and connection to young people's everyday experiences.

'Guided' walks in everyday localities

Footage filmed
by young
person during
'guided' walk
with researcher
in their locality,
edited by
researcher