

DOING FIELDWORK IN A PANDEMIC

Crowdsourced document initiated by Deborah Lupton (@DALupton, d.lupton@unsw.edu.au) on 17 March 2020. Please do add comments and resources below as appropriate

Isolation measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 means that social researchers who conduct face-to-face fieldwork (interviews, focus groups, participant observation, ethnographies etc) are now faced with the challenge of either delaying or re-inventing their methods so that they can continue their research until these measures are relaxed.

This crowdsourced document provides a space for people to share their methods for doing fieldwork in a pandemic - specifically, ideas for avoiding in-person interactions by using mediated forms that will achieve similar ends.

Social research has been conducted online for many years, of course. There are many examples of using online survey tools or doing content analyses or ethnographies using existing online interactions as research materials. Interviews have been conducted by phone or Skype for a long time. This document was initially directed at ways for how to turn fieldwork that was initially planned as using face-to-face methods into a more 'hands-off' mode. However, people have added useful material about 'born digital' research (content already generated on the internet by online interactions), which provides an alternative source of social research materials if researchers decide to go down that path.

Please add your ideas below - and do share useful references if available.

NB: Deborah also curates a community Facebook page 'Innovative Social Research Methods' which may be of interest for those wanting to think about new and creative ways of doing social research . [Innovative Social Research Methods Public Group](#)

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Photo/Video/Voice Elicitation

A method that involves asking research participants to use a camera or voice recording app (often on their smartphone) to take photos or make videos or voice memos about their everyday practices and interactions that they can then share with the researchers. Researchers can provide them with questions or prompts to direct their recordings and documentations.

References

Ahlin, Tanja, and Fangfang Li (2019). From Field Sites to Field Events: Creating the field with information and communication technologies (ICTs). *Medicine, Anthropology and Theory* 6(2): 1-24.doi.org/10.17157/mat.6.2.655

<http://www.medanthrotheory.org/read/11334/from-field-sites-to-field-events>

Harper, D. (2002) 'Talking about pictures: a case for photo-elicitation', *Visual Studies*, 17(1): 13–26.

Bates, E. A., McCann, J. J., Kaye, L. K., & Taylor, J. C. (2017). "Beyond words": a researcher's guide to using photo-elicitation in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 14(4), 459-481.

Copes, H., Tchoula, W., Brookman, F., & Ragland, J. (2018). Photo-elicitation interviews with vulnerable populations: practical and ethical considerations. *Deviant Behavior*, 39(4), 475-494.

Steenfeldt, V.O., Therkildsen, M. & Lind, J. (2019). Nursing students' experiences of a challenging course: A photo-elicitation study. *Nurse Education Today* 76:31-37.

Diaries/journaling

These methods can also be combined with asking participants to complete diaries or journals using pen and paper, voice memos or online platforms or apps. Diaries can also be combined with interviews and other methods, where sometimes the diary can act as a prompt for further discussion. Diaries can be structured (like questionnaire) and aiming for quantitative analysis, or semi- or unstructured - asking for more free-flowing reflection. Keeping in touch with participants is very important, especially for longer-term studies, as this maintains participation (attrition can be an issue). Also receiving some entries early on in the process and giving feedback may help as sometimes relevance can be an issue too. Diaries can be used over months or hours, depending on the focus of the study. They can use interval-based sampling (i.e. record something every hour or every day) or event-based (i.e. record something when it occurs, which may be more irregular). Diaries can take many different forms including visual, collage, photo-based as well as written or spoken - it is important to consider the participants and what they would find easy to use (ask them - piloting is essential) and also what you will be able to analyse within the analytical approach you have chosen.

References

On using "Digital diary":

Ahlin, Tanja, and Fangfang Li (2019). From Field Sites to Field Events: Creating the field with information and communication technologies (ICTs). *Medicine, Anthropology and Theory* 6(2): 1-24. doi.org/10.17157/mat.6.2.655

<http://www.medanthrotheory.org/read/11334/from-field-sites-to-field-events>

Crozier, S. E., & Cassell, C. M. (2016). Methodological considerations in the use of audio diaries in work psychology: Adding to the qualitative toolkit. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 89(2), 396-419.

Kaur, H., Saukko, P., & Lumsden, K. (2018). Rhythms of moving in and between digital media: a study on video diaries of young people with physical disabilities. *Mobilities*, 13(3), 397-410.

[If it's ok to add some things to this - here's some more diary research suggestions - suggestions/annotations by Emily Henderson @EmilyFrascatore - feel free to contact me about diary research!]:

3 great guide books on this type of research:

- Alaszewski, A. (2006). Using diaries for social research. London: Sage.
- Bartlett, R., & Milligan, C. (2015). What is diary method? London: Bloomsbury.
- Hyers, L. L. (2018). Diary methods. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Day, M., & Thatcher, J. (2009). "I'm Really Embarrassed That You're Going to Read This ...": Reflections on Using Diaries in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 6(4), 249-259. doi:10.1080/14780880802070583 [*A useful paper on how diaries can be used - advantages as well as challenges*]

Eidse, N., & Turner, S. (2014). Doing resistance their own way: counter-narratives of street vending in Hanoi, Vietnam through solicited journaling. *Area*, 46(3), 242-248. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/24029993 [*This one picks up the complexities of both living and recording lives, particularly when on the move/living precariously*]

Harvey, L. (2011). Intimate reflections: private diaries in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 11(6), 664-682. doi:10.1177/1468794111415959 [*A fascinating method where participants keep diaries but don't show them to the researcher - the diaries act as prompts*]

Waddington, K. (2005). Using diaries to explore the characteristics of work-related gossip: Methodological considerations from exploratory multimethod research. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 78(2), 221-236. doi:10.1348/096317905X40817 [*This one really picks up how diaries can help to record data from scenarios that would not be easily researched using e.g. observation*]

Williamson, I., Leeming, D., Lyttle, S., & Johnson, S. (2012). 'It should be the most natural thing in the world': exploring first-time mothers' breastfeeding difficulties in the UK using audio-diaries and interviews. *Maternal & Child Nutrition*, 8(4), 434-447. doi:10.1111/j.1740-8709.2011.00328.x [*This one is interesting as it shows how tracking everyday experiences over a relatively short period of time reveals many different emotions and practices*]

Zimmerman, D. H., & Wieder, D. L. (1977). The Diary: Diary-Interview Method. *Urban Life*, 5(4), 479-498. doi:10.1177/089124167700500406 [*Classic paper introducing this method*]

Bartlett, R. (2012). Modifying the Diary Interview Method to Research the Lives of People With Dementia. *Qualitative Health Research*, 22(12), 1717-1726.
doi:10.1177/1049732312462240 [This one is great as it is about adapting the method in different ways for different participants, e.g. using collage]

Re-enactment Videos

Re-enactment videos have been used in ethnographic fieldwork as a way of documenting people's everyday practices (often in the home). Researchers have usually done the video-making as they follow their participants around, asking questions as they go. This method can be revised to ask the participants to make their own re-enactment videos, using their phone or possibly provided with a wearable video camera, such as a GoPro action camera (see more below) and then sharing the videos online with the researchers.

References

Pink, S., & Leder Mackley, K. (2016). Moving, making and atmosphere: routines of home as sites for mundane improvisation. *Mobilities*, 11(2), 171-187.

Pink, S. and K. Leder Mackley (2014) 'Reenactment Methodologies for Everyday Life Research: Art Therapy Insights for Video Ethnography' *Visual Studies* 29(2), pp.146-154

Pink, S. (2014) 'Digital-Visual-Sensory-Design Anthropology: ethnography, imagination and intervention' *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 13(4): 412-427

Pink, S., V. Fors and M. Glöss (2017) 'Automated Futures and the Mobile Present: in-car video ethnographies' *Ethnography*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138117735621>

Using Wearable Cameras (and other first-person perspective tech)

Using small wearable cameras such as GoPro action cameras (often used by people to film their participation in action sports) can be a way of doing 'walk-alongs' - or in the case of the project by Pink, Sumartojo and colleagues cited below, 'ride-alongs'. They gave a GoPro to cyclists to wear on their helmets during one of their regular commutes

to work. The camera was turned on by the cyclist when they were preparing to leave for work, recorded their ride and was turned off once they had reached their destination. The videos were viewed together by the researchers and the participants, with questions asked about the cyclists' experiences of using self-tracking devices and reviewing their data. This post-video interview could be conducted using Skype or similar, or could be combined with cultural probes, diaries or the like.

Think of the many possibilities of using these kinds of wearable cameras for ethnographic research - dance-alongs, eat-alongs, sing-alongs

Pink, S. (2015) 'Going forward through the world: thinking about first-person perspective digital ethnography between theoretical scholarship and applied practice' *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*. 49(2): 239-252

Pink, S., Sumartojo, S., Lupton, D., & Heyes LaBond, C. (2017). Empathetic technologies: digital materiality and video ethnography. *Visual Studies*, 32(4), 371-381.

Pink, S., A. Gomes, R. Zilse, R. Lucena, J. Pinto, A. Porto, C. Caminha, G. M. de Siqueira, M. Duarte de Oliveira (2018) 'Automated and Connected?: Smartphones and Automobility through the Global South' *Applied Mobilities* DOI: [10.1080/23800127.2018.1505263](https://doi.org/10.1080/23800127.2018.1505263)

Fors, V., M. Berg and S. Pink (2016) 'Capturing the ordinary. Imagining the user in designing and using automatic photographic lifelogging technologies' in S. Selke (ed) *Lifelogging: Theoretical Approaches and Case Studies about Self-Tracking*, Springer VS.

Epistolary Interviews

Epistolary interviews, first described by Debenham (2001), are asynchronous, one-to-one interviews mediated by technology.

The method allows both interviewer and respondent to select suitable interview times, provides time to consider questions and responses, and eliminates the need for transcription. The interviewer sets the pattern for the formality of the interview, ensuring that the online format is used to organise and facilitate talk rather than to constrain it (Ferguson, 2009). Length, aims and format of the interview, the need for spontaneous

or researched responses, and whether reference can be made to external material should be established at the outset.

As interviewer and respondent do not need to be co-present in time, respondents are empowered by being able to choose when to respond. They have time to consider their answers and can, if they choose, make reference to supporting materials. The method also allows a researcher to conduct several interviews simultaneously, so data from one interview can be tested in or used to develop other interviews.

The epistolary nature of such interviews means that, as in a sequence of written letters, a relationship between the correspondents can be established and developed. This can produce thoughtful exchanges in which both interviewer and respondent have opportunities to consider, clarify and expand their meaning.

The method does not aim for neutrality but builds a relationship between researcher and respondent that supports interpretation of the data. To give consistency to the data, the main questions can be worded in the same way each time they are presented.

Some researchers have been experimenting with messaging apps, such as WhatsApp, to conduct these kinds of interviews (see section on app-based methods below).

References

Ferguson, Rebecca (2009). [*The Construction of Shared Knowledge through Asynchronous Dialogue*](#). PhD thesis. The Open University.

[Debenham, Margaret](#) (2001). [*Computer mediated communication and disability support: addressing barriers to study for undergraduate distance learners with long-term health problems*](#). PhD thesis. The Open University.

Debenham, M. (2007). [*Epistolary Interviews On-Line: A Novel Addition to the Researcher's Palette*](#).

Online Discussion Platforms

Instead of conducting focus groups face-to-face, there are platforms available that can customise an online group discussion that can be moderated in real-time. You can upload your questions and check in to observe people typing in their answers, meaning you can ask them to elaborate or explain in real-time. Settings can be arranged so that participants can see each others' responses in real-time if you wish to encourage a group discussion. The discussion can be held over a number of days to allow people time to participate or add to their responses.

References

Lindgren, T., V. Fors, S. Pink & M. Bergquist (2019) 'Experiencing the Future Car: Anticipatory UX as a Social and Digital Phenomenon', *Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems*: 31:1 , Article 1. Available at: <https://aisel.aisnet.org/sjis/vol31/iss1/1>

Postill, J. and S. Pink '(2012) 'Social Media ethnography: the digital researcher in a messy web', *MIA (Media International Australia)*, 145: 123–134.

Lupton, D., & Turner, B. (2018). 'I can't get past the fact that it is printed': consumer attitudes to 3D printed food. *Food, Culture & Society*, 21(3), 402-418.

Cultural/Mobile Probes

This is an approach from design research, involving developing kits of materials that are left with research participants to complete in their own time. Once completed, they can be sent back to the researchers. Traditionally, these materials are analogue: paper cards with instructions for completion (invented by Bill Gaver and team). Probes may also be sent to participants, completed and sent back via mobile phones. The approach is then called mobile probes.

Probes do not provide 'information' as hard data, but rather should be seen as providing a glimpse into people's lives and inspiration for the designer. Tasks often have a creative element - and people are more likely to engage with fun tasks or tasks that give them some creative agency than with pure information gathering and diaries. But one needs to be careful that tasks do not feel overwhelming. Typical tasks can include postcards with a question to answer, a map to annotate, a task to photograph the first object one notices consciously on the way out of the house (or something in the house that has always been annoying etc), game-style elements can be used, they can include audio-recordings and so on.

Physical kits tend to work well, as the physical objects are reminders of what to do. Thus, how to do this online, might be a challenge. One way to get around this is to send materials by snail mail and ask participants to return them the same way.

References

Albrechtsen, C., Pedersen, M., Pedersen, N., & Jensen, T. (2017). Mobile Probes: Exploring the Work Processes and Everyday Life of Danish Students Writing Their Master's Thesis. SAGE Research Methods Cases. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781473971950>

Celikoglu, O. M., Ogut, S. T., & Krippendorff, K. (2017). How do user stories inspire design? A study of cultural probes. *Design Issues*, 33(2), 84-98.

Legros, C. (2018) Designing cultural probes. Available at [Designing Cultural Probes - Catherine Legros](#)

Bill Gaver, Tony Dunne, Elena Pacenti. Cultural probes. *Interactions* Vol 6, No 1 (1999), Pages 21-29 <https://dl.acm.org/doi/fullHtml/10.1145/291224.291235>

William W. Gaver, Andrew Boucher, Sarah Pennington, Brendan Walker. Cultural probes and the value of uncertainty. *Interactions* Vol 11, No 5 (2004), Pages 53-56 <https://dl.acm.org/doi/fullHtml/10.1145/1015530.1015555>

Kirsten Boehner, Janet Vertesi, Phoebe Sengers, and Paul Dourish. 2007. How HCI interprets the probes. Proceedings of SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '07). ACM, NY, 1077–1086. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.1145/1240624.1240789>

The Story Completion Method

Story completion is a writing method that can take place in face-to-face situations using pen and paper but can also be conducted using online tools such as SurveyMonkey. Alternatively, mail can be used to send the prompts to participants and they can complete them in their own time, as is often the case with cultural probe materials. The method involves the use of story 'stems', in which a fictional character is introduced and commonly, they face a dilemma they need to resolve. Participants are asked to complete the story. The completed narratives are then analysed for what they reveal about understandings, discourses or imaginaries concerning the topic of the story stems.

References

Story completion. Available at [Story completion](#)

(A recent special issue dedicated to Story Completion)

Clarke, V., Braun, V., Frith, H., & Moller, N. (2019). Editorial Introduction to the Special Issue: Using Story Completion Methods in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 16(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2018.1536378>

Gravett, K. (2019). Story Completion: Storying as a Method of Meaning-Making and Discursive Discovery. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919893155>

Lupton, D. (2020). The story completion method and more-than-human theory: finding and using health information. *Sage Research Methods Cases*. <https://methods.sagepub.com/case/story-completion-method-more-than-human-theory-health-information>

App-based Methods

Methods that use the connectivity of smartphone apps to get in touch with participants for in-situ, real-time research

References

Boase, J., & Humphreys, L. (2018). Mobile methods: Explorations, innovations, and reflections. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 6(2), 153-162.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/2050157918764215>

Kaufmann, K., & Peil, C. (2019). The mobile instant messaging interview (MIMI): Using WhatsApp to enhance self-reporting and explore media usage in situ. *Mobile Media & Communication*, Online first, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2050157919852392>

Kaye, L.K., Monk, R.L., & Hamlin, I. (2018). 'Feeling appy?' Using app-based methodology to explore contextual effects on real-time cognitions, affect and behaviours. In C. Costa & J. Condie (eds.), *Doing research in and on the digital. Research methods across fields of inquiry* (p. 11-30). Abingdon, UK and New York: Routledge.

United Nations Development Programme (2018). *Below the Surface. Results of a WhatsApp survey of Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon*. Online available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/67579>

Using Google/Microsoft Forms for Data Collection

Google forms could be used to collect basic demographic information and ask open questions.

<http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tlresources/training2/google/googleforms.pdf>

More on using the Google platform:

<https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/marketing-resources/data-measurement/google-plus-qualitative-research-best-practices/>

GDPR is important. QUALTRICS (although it requires a paid license)

<http://www.qualtrics.com>

added by Mark Wong, University of Glasgow, @UoG_MarkWong:

N.b. Google Form is not GDPR compliant in EU countries and the UK, as data is not stored on servers located within the EU.

Microsoft Forms (part of Office365) is an easy-to-use tool to set up online questionnaires, opinion polls, and quizzes. Easy to make visually appealing questionnaires quickly.

<https://forms.office.com/>

OnlineSurveys.ac.uk (formerly known as Bristol Online Surveys) is a UK-based tool commonly used to set up online questionnaires, which is more targeted towards academic research.

<https://www.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/>

Institutional/personal accounts may be required for the above tools. If you are using Microsoft Forms/Office365 via an institutional account, check with your institution data management team/guidelines to ensure data is saved within the EU only.

The Ethics of Moving from Face-to-Face Fieldwork

This section is for discussing ethical issues related to moving from face-to-face to remote fieldwork. For a start, if your human research ethics committee has already approved your face-to-face methods and you wish to modify these along the lines of some of the suggestions above, most ethics committees will require a modification request and approval process.

You will also need to consider the ‘affective atmospheres’ of conducting any kind of social research in a pandemic, when normal routines are disrupted and many people are feeling uncertain and worried, or are ill or caring for ill family members. On the other hand, with people more confined, feeling bored or restless but in good health, they may welcome the opportunity to be part of a research project. Consider your target participant group very carefully when making decisions about the best way forward.

If you decide to use online data collection methods that engage with pre-existing material people have uploaded (as opposed to material you have specifically asked them to generate following a consent process, which includes many of the methods listed here), you will need to carefully consider the ethical issues. Check the Association of Internet Researchers’ document discussing these issues, available here:

<https://aoir.org/reports/ethics3.pdf>

Some guidelines on anthropological fieldwork generally (mostly related to in-person methods) can be found at [ASA Ethics Guidelines](#)

GDPR issues: some researchers in Europe have raised concerns about how to conduct digitised fieldwork and remain compliant with the GDPR. These matters certainly deserve attention. See below for some links discussing relevant issues.

[\(PDF\) THE IMPACT OF THE NEW EU GDPR ON ETHICS GOVERNANCE AND SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY](#)

[How Has GDPR affected Market Research?](#)

[Is anthropology still legal? Notes on the impact of GDPR](#)

Books on Innovative and Creative Methods

Kara, H. (2015) *Creative Research Methods in the Social Sciences: A Practical Guide*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Leavy, P. (2015) *Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice*. New York: The Guildford Press.

Martin, B. and Hanington, B. (2012) *Universal Methods of Design*. Beverly: Rockport Publishers.

Pink, S. (2015) *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. 2nd edition. London: Sage.

Woodward, S. (2019) *Material Methods: Researching and Thinking with Things*. London: Sage.

Autoethnography (added by F. Güzin Agca-Varoglu)

The autoethnographic method gives the opportunity to create a research, where the researcher puts “self” in the process as a subject. My students had to visit places like

cafes, hospitals, tea-houses, mosques, museums etc. for their fieldwork. Because of the outbreak I want them to write an autoethnographic essay drawn on social distance experiences and also temporal/spatial change in their everyday lives. It could be a substitution for cancelled homework in this period that they should stay away from other people.

References

- Denzin, N. K. (2006). Analytic Autoethnography, or Déjà Vu all Over Again. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 35(4), 419–428.
- Ellis, C. (1999). Heartful autoethnography. *Qualitative Health Research*, 9(5), 669-683.
- Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. P. (2000) *Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject*. In N. Denzin , & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Reed-Danahay, D. (Eds.) (1997). *Auto/ethnography: Writing the self and the social*. Oxford, UK: Berg.
- Rambo, C. (2005). Impressions of Grandmother: An Autoethnographic Portrait. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 34(5), 560–585.
- Wall, S. (2008). Easier Said than Done: Writing an Autoethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 38–53.
- White, S. (2003) Autoethnography: An appropriate methodology? *Qualitative Research Journal*. 3(2): 22–32.

Duoethnography (added by Vibeke Oestergaard Steinfeldt)

In continuation of autoethnography I would like to pay attention to duoethnography. When it can be difficult for students to get access to patients or other informants they can be encouraged to investigate a phenomenon based on their own experiences e.g. by interviewing each other mutually.

References:

- Sawyer, R.D. & Norris, J. (2013). *Duoethnography. Understanding qualitative research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bille, T. & Steinfeldt, V.O. (2013). Challenging Fieldwork Situations: A Study of Researcher's Subjectivity. *Journal of Research Practice* 9(1). Article M2.

Netnography/Virtual Methods (added by Gabriella Wulff)

I often use netnography/virtual methods to conduct ethnographic research online. I also recommend my students to look into the research. Here are some reading suggestions:

Hine, Christine (2000). *Virtual Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications.

Hine, Christine. (2008). Virtual ethnography: Modes, varieties, affordances. *The SAGE handbook of online research methods*, 257-270.

Kozinets, R. (2002). The Field behind the Screen: Using Netnography for Marketing Research in Online Communities. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 39(1), 61-72.

Kozinets, Robert V. (2010). *Netnography: Doing ethnographic research online*. Sage publications.

Kozinets, R. (2015). *Netnography : Redefined* (2nd ed.).

I also found this one, that might be useful:

Hjorth, L., Horst, H., Galloway, A., & Bell, G. (Eds.). (2017). *The Routledge companion to digital ethnography*. Taylor & Francis.

Digital Methods and Quali-Quant analysis (added by Anders Kristian Munk)

I encourage my students to consider ways in which computational analysis of born digital material can complement fieldwork (e.g. as a way to map relational fields) and/or be thought of as a form of fieldwork in its own right (e.g. by locating digital traces in specific media cultures/socio-technical infrastructures or by using computation exploratively and descriptively to discover questions and concerns from actors online).

Suggested readings:

- Birnbak, A., & Carlsen, H. B. (2015). The public and its algorithms: Comparing and experimenting with calculated publics. In *Algorithmic Life* (pp. 35-48). Routledge.
- Blok, A., & Pedersen, M. A. (2014). Complementary social science? Quali-quantitative experiments in a Big Data world. *Big Data & Society*, 1(2), 2053951714543908.
- Burgess, J., & Matamoros-Fernández, A. (2016). Mapping sociocultural controversies across digital media platforms: One week of# gamergate on Twitter, YouTube, and Tumblr. *Communication Research and Practice*, 2(1), 79-96.
- Elgaard Jensen, T., Kleberg Hansen, A. K., Ulijaszek, S., Munk, A. K., Madsen, A. K., Hillersdal, L., & Jespersen, A. P. (2019). Identifying notions of environment in obesity research using a mixed-methods approach. *Obesity Reviews*, 20(4), 621-630.
- Latour, B., Jensen, P., Venturini, T., Grauwin, S., & Boullier, D. (2012). 'The whole is always smaller than its parts'—a digital test of Gabriel Tarde's monads. *The British journal of sociology*, 63(4), 590-615.
- Munk, A. K. (2019). Four styles of quali-quantitative analysis: Making sense of the new Nordic food movement on the web. *Nordicom Review*, 40(s1), 159-176.

- Munk, A. K., Abildgaard, M. S., Birkbak, A., & Petersen, M. K. (2016, July). (Re-) Appropriating Instagram for Social Research: Three methods for studying obesogenic environments. In *Proceedings of the 7th 2016 International Conference on Social Media & Society* (pp. 1-10).
- Moats, D. (2019). Following the Fukushima Disaster on (and against) Wikipedia: A Methodological Note about STS Research and Online Platforms. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 44(6), 938-964.
- Rogers, R. (2019). *Doing digital methods*. SAGE Publications Limited.
- Marres, N. (2017). *Digital sociology: The reinvention of social research*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Marres, N. (2015). Why map issues? On controversy analysis as a digital method. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 40(5), 655-686.
- Venturini, T. (2012). Building on faults: how to represent controversies with digital methods. *Public understanding of science*, 21(7), 796-812.

For our own controversy mapping students I have made the following set of tutorials centered on Wikipedia as a field and introducing a range of digital methods/techniques:

- <https://medium.com/@EthnographicMachines/introduction-to-controversy-mapping-6961f03f9a8a>
- <https://medium.com/@EthnographicMachines/mapping-controversies-with-digital-methods-scrape-rs-crawlers-apis-17e0c96c340a>
- <https://medium.com/@EthnographicMachines/visual-network-analysis-with-gephi-d6241127a336>
- <https://medium.com/@EthnographicMachines/mapping-controversies-hand-in-1-d3ec9f1d0dc0>
- <https://medium.com/@EthnographicMachines/introduction-to-semantic-analysis-with-cortex-19f355b7289a>

Using YouTube (and Online Video) for (Teaching) Observational Studies (added by Robin Smith)

YouTube (other video platforms are available...) has increasingly been used by those carrying out observational studies, sometimes as a means to access perspicuous phenomena that are hard to access, at other times as means to an end (my ethnography students are currently facing this challenge). A number of ethnomethodological studies have used YouTube and online video as data and there is no good reason that ethnographers more generally who are interested in things like interaction in public space, family interactions, public disputes, protests, the circulation of violence etc etc, shouldn't make use of the resource. Some papers (including a discussion of the ethics of 'any-misation' (Laurier, 2016) and studies indicating the kinds of possibilities and possible topics below (please add!!):

[Laurier, E. "YouTube: fragments of a video-tropic atlas." *Area* 48.4 \(2016\): 488-495.](#)
[Laurier, E. \(unpublished\) Youtube: using third party video as research data](#)

[Brown, B., & Laurier, E. \(2017, May\). The trouble with autopilots: Assisted and autonomous driving on the social road. In *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* \(pp. 416-429\).](#)

Reynolds, E. and Fitzgerald, R. (2015) "Challenging normativity: Re-appraising category, bound, tied and predicated features." in [R. Fitzgerald and W. Housley \(2015\) *Advances in Membership Categorisation Analysis*](#).

[Lloyd, M. " You just took the jump too slowly": A single case analysis of a mountain bike crash. *Social Interaction. Video-Based Studies of Human Sociality*, 2\(2\).](#)

[Smith, R. J. \(2017\). Membership categorisation, category-relevant spaces, and perception-in-action: The case of disputes between cyclists and drivers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 118, 120-133.](#)

[Sumiala, J., & Tikka, M. \(2011\). Imagining globalised fears: school shooting videos and circulation of violence on YouTube. *Social Anthropology*, 19\(3\), 254-267. \[includes a number of further readings too\]](#)

Big Brother Style Observations

If research is about people's activities and behaviour, having consent to carry out live on-line observations might work well during these times. Researcher places a camera in the home of the participants at a particular agreed room and it gets turned on and off at convenient times where a) activity is taking place and b) it's convenient and appropriate for the people being observed.

Just a thought as I read this doc. Great initiative!

Experimenting with Online Live Action Role Play (O-LARPs) (added by [Alex Taylor](#))

I've been involved in *Live Action Role Play* (LARPs) as a method for imagining futures (specifically for a project on [Algorithmic Food Justice](#)). We worked with the Arts Collective [Furtherfield](#) who have been developing this as a method. I think there might be ways to move this into the online realm. You'd need to rethink how materials can be integrated into roles and interactions, and probably experiment with different platforms. It might be interesting to take over gaming platforms, possibly something like [Roblox](#).

References

As an example, see [Planet Cashless 2029](#), via Furtherfield.

Simkins, David. *The arts of larp: Design, literacy, learning and community in live-action role play*. McFarland, 2014.

Kamm, Björn-Ole, and Julia Becker. "Live-action role-play or the performance of realities." In *Simulation and Gaming in the Network Society*, pp. 35-51. Springer, Singapore, 2016. ([URL](#))

Mitchell, L. (2016). Materiality, magic and belief: Framing the countryside in fantastical live-action roleplay games. *Ethnography*, 17(3), 326-349. ([URL](#))

LSE Digital Ethnography Collective Reading List

Available here: [Digital Anthropology/Ethnography](#)

Arts-based project combined with Skype interviews (added by Nicole Brown)

I use arts-based approaches (e.g. work with metaphors, objects, Lego models, collages, etc.) and combine that with Skype interviews, where I hold inter-views (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015) as conversations between the researcher and the participants to make sense of what the arts-based project means and stands for. Participants are given a question (e.g. Who are you? What affects you?) and are asked to find a representation of the response and to take a photo of that/collage etc and to share that via email with a very brief statement of what they are trying to say. Once you have collected all the data that way you can then arrange for that Skype call to hold a conversation. As a researcher, you can then analyse the representation and the transcript from the interview.

The basis for this approach: human understanding is embodied (Finlay, 2008, 2015) and metaphorical (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003), language is insufficient to explain or describe certain experiences such as pain (e.g. Sontag, 2003; Scarry, 1985), and arts-based approaches can bridge that gap (e.g. Leavy, 2015; Denzin, 2016).

Brinkmann, S. & Kvale, S. (2015). *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Brown, N. (2019). Identity boxes: using materials and metaphors to elicit experiences. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 22(5), 487-501. [DOI: 10.1080/13645579.2019.1590894](#).

Brown, N. (2019). "Listen to your gut": a reflexive approach to data analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 24(13), 31-43. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol24/iss13/4/>.

Brown, N. (2018). Exploring the lived experience of fibromyalgia using creative data collection. *Cogent Social Sciences*. [DOI: 10.1080/23311886.2018.1447759](#).

Brown, N. (2018). Video-conference interviews: Ethical and methodological concerns in the context of health research. *SAGE Research Methods Cases*. [DOI: 10.4135/9781526441812](#)

Denzin, N.K. (2016). *The Qualitative Manifesto: A Call to Arms*. Routledge.

Finlay, L. (2008). A dance between the reduction and reflexivity: Explicating the "phenomenological psychological attitude". *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 39(1), 1-32.

Finlay, L. (2015). Sensing and making sense: Embodying metaphor in relational-centered psychotherapy. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 43(4), 338–353.

- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (2003). *Metaphors We Live By*. (Reprinted). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Leavy, P. (2015). *Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice*. (2nd ed.). Guilford Publications.
- Scarry, E. (1985). *The Body in Pain – the Making and Unmaking of the World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sontag, S. (2003). *Regarding the Pain of Others*. London: Penguin Books.

Hacking Facebook Groups for Research

Using Facebook's Groups feature to gather data via prompts and discussions among members.

Some Benefits:

- High participant engagement
- Flexibility for participants & researchers
- Thick data
- Lots of levers for discussion
- Prolonged engagement

How to and more details here: [Anja Dinhopf](#)

Creating Social Media Platforms/ Groups for Research and Researching Social Media Platforms

Middha, B. (2018). "Everyday digital engagements: using food selfies on Facebook to explore eating practices." *Communication Research and Practice* 4(3): 291-306.

Van der Nagel, E. (2013). "Faceless bodies: Negotiating technological and cultural codes on Reddit Gonewild." *Scan: Journal of Media Arts Culture* 10(2): 1-10.

Digital Mapping and Geospatial Technologies

Tracking/ mapping how people use online systems and platforms to track movement or migration patterns, or to explore a particular phenomena

Buckle, C. (2020). "Touching, scrolling and swooping: Performing and representing migrant stories through geospatial technologies." *Geoforum* 111: 83-93.

Krieg, L. J., Berning, M., & Hardon, A. (2017). Anthropology with algorithms? An exploration of online drug knowledge using digital methods. *Medicine Anthropology Theory*, 3, 21-52.

<http://medanthrotheory.org/read/8347/anthropology-with-algorithms>

