

0Case Study Workshop with Professor Mary Ratcliffe
Thursday 13th April 2005, 9.30am to 11.30am

Key issues discussed: Group 1

- Intrinsic, instrumental, collective
- Defining your case: boundaries
- Is there a right/wrong way or just valid justification? – relates to: are case studies unique? Yes but can act as co-ordinates, transferability of findings
- Generate huge amounts of data: must make big decisions about what is left out
- End up with lots of ‘unexploited’ data – lack of cumulative research
- What is end product of case study research?
 - beware of extrapolation/generalisability
 - does it contribute to theory? Some action research – a theoretical
 - implications for practice (need to pull out general themes e.g. collective approach)
- Ethnography and case studies
 - ethnography tends to rely on obs and i/v but case study can use several methodologies including ethnography
 - ethnography is one particular perspective (culture).

Group 2 discussion

- Case Study = strategy/approach
- Instrumental i.e. use cases to tell you about a process
- Vs
- Intrinsic i.e. look at individual’s experience e.g. of cancer
- Philosophical basis? Yin Vs Stake
Strength = flexibility but can be weakness for some triangulation
- Different case studies will be informed by different theoretical perspectives e.g. phenomenology, constructivism. Does it matter?
- Case study for how and why. No right and wrong as long as you can justify it
- Ethnography and case study share commonalities – can use ethnographic methodologies in case study but can use other methodologies as well
- What is the boundary in a case study? Can’t ignore outside influences but can be bounded event, time, geography etc. Go back to research questions, sampling.