# "Qualitative methods in globalisation studies: or, saying something about the world without counting or inventing it"

Sian Sullivan and Dan Brockington

CSGR Working Paper No. 139/04

April 2004

**Qualitative methods in globalisation studies: or, saying something about the world without counting or inventing it[1]**

Sian Sullivan, CSGR, University of Warwick, and Dan Brockington, School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford

**Abstract**

This paper originally appeared as a book chapter in a volume oriented towards social science graduate students preparing for fieldwork, primarily in 'developing country' contexts. It has been reworked extensively here as a contribution for a recent CSGR seminar series by core research staff regarding our methodological approaches to research. As such, the paper provides an overview of some qualitative research methods in the social sciences, and of their relevance for conducting research in a continuing context of 'globalisation': which here refers to increasing supraterritoriality in domains of human organisation, and the relative collapsing of temporal and spatial scales that this implies. We focus on three key methodological domains: participant observation (and/or observant participation), oral testimony and the production of ethnographic texts; discourse analysis; and considerations of the subjective implied by phenomenological and embodiment approaches. We also make some comments regarding relationships between qualitative and quantitative methods and the implications of these different tools for engagement in terms of the information they yield. We observe that it is not so much research *methods* that have changed under contemporary globalisation processes. Rather, we note that *orientations* to research and to the interpretation of 'findings' - particularly in relation to certainty, to the implications of notions of difference and 'the other', and to aspirations of objectivity - have been much affected by the intertwined theoretical fields of poststructuralism, postcolonialism and feminism. Thus by highlighting the infusion of power in research praxis as in social relations more generally, we acknowledge the always politically constitutive role(s) of academic engagement.


Keywords: qualitative research methods; globalisation; participant observation/observant participation; ethnography; oral testimony; discourse analysis; subjectivity; phenomenology; embodiment; poststructuralism

*Address for correspondence:*
Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation (CSGR)
University of Warwick
Coventry
Warwickshire
CV4 7AL
Phone: +44 (0)24 7657 4420
Fax: +44 (0)24 7656 2548
Email: s.sullivan@warwick.ac.uk

---

[1] This is a reworked version of a chapter that first appeared as Brockington, D. and Sullivan, S. (2003) 'Qualitative methods', pp. 57-74 *in* Scheyvens, R. and Storey, D. (eds.) *Development Fieldwork: A Practical Guide*, London: Sage Publications. Formatting follows the guidelines used in preparing the piece for this volume.

> It is customary … to say something about what is somewhat pretentiously called "methodology". My field method could be summed up as meeting people. (Willis 1981: xx)

**'Globalisation' and qualitative research: more is different, or more of the same?**

This piece provides an overview of some qualitative research methods and their relevance for social science research praxis in a context of contemporary globalisation. 'Globalisation' here is a description of the phenomenon of supraterritoriality in domains of human organisation, and of the relative collapsing of temporal and spatial scales that this implies. We acknowledge that from a complex systems perspective that affirms that 'more is different', such increases in connectivity - and the implied possibilities for autopoesis (i.e. the creation of something new from what is already there) that this suggests (Jantsch 1980; Kauffman 1993, 1995; Geyer and Rihani 2000) - indeed may generate conditions for some sort of qualitative societal system shift (e.g. Scholte 2000). We caution, however, that we find it hard to distinguish contemporary globalising processes as embodying *qualitatively* distinct desires, intent and assumptions from those that have driven modern expansionary processes of exploration, imperialist settlement and colonialism from the dawning of the European 'Enlightenment' and the Age of Reason on (e.g. Hirst and Thompson 2002). Or to see current instances, processes and formulations of resistance and struggle as fundamentally different from those which accompanied capitalist industrialisation and colonialism, and which now accompany globalising neoliberal governance frames and US unilateralism (Fanon 1967 (1963); Biko 1989 (1978); Scott 1985; Notes From Nowhere 2003; Sullivan 2004a). Globalisation in this reading also is 'more of the same'.

Contemporary globalising phenomena present interesting 'real world' and cross-cutting problems for research - including, for example, the organisational implications of networks; cross-border chains of interaction and migration in the producing of commodities and items for exchange; hybridity in identity and community construction; and the analytical significance of multiple and interpenetrating scales of analysis, from local to global. But powerful arguments also exist to suggest that these *forms* of social production, reproduction and praxis have been present for a great deal longer than the recent historical period frequently associated with 'globalisation' (for a regional example, see Wilmsen 1989; Gordon and Sholto Douglas 2000). Indeed, for the social sciences, what perhaps is of greater interest is the question of *why* these social phenomena are seen as so new and qualitatively different in an era of 'globalisation studies'; which begs the further question of what

assumptions regarding societies and social phenomena have been made under the thoroughly modernist project of research that has driven social science research in both colonial and the post-WW2/'development' contexts.

In many respects, an established suite of qualitative research methods were both part of and have endured these modern expansionary eras, and remain powerful as research tools in the social sciences under current contexts. Indeed, it is possible to trace a qualitative orientation towards research - towards finding out about the world – to much earlier than this. Herodotus, writing in the 5th century BCE, for example, might be considered the first known anthropologist: he traveled to, and became embedded within, cultural and political contexts outside his own, using these experiences to construct rich and interpretive written discourses regarding these contexts (Herodotus 1998 (ca. 440 BCE); Thomas (2000). One could even say that historically such research and writing endeavours in themselves have helped foster a globalising, i.e. expansionary, socio-political trajectory. It is certainly the case, for example, that modern social anthropology, and its primary output of ethnography, emerged in the 19th century in part as a skill required by imperialist European governments in their colonising and administration of indigenous people (e.g. Vedder 1928; Evans-Pritchard 1940).

Today, ethnography might be generated instead through participating in the virtual spaces of internet chatrooms - interpreting the textual material thereby generated and theorising the hybrid, manipulated and cyborg identities encountered (Dery 1996; Hamman 1997; Suler 1999 Silver 2000). In many respects, hwoever, we would argue that the underlying form of an ethnographic approach, together with the techniques here of participant observation and discourse analysis, remain pretty much consistent with conventional practices of ethnographic work conducted in 'real' spaces and with 'real' people. Similarly, local contexts today might be more explicitly theorised and analysed as located within national and global discourses (Escobar 1996; Fairhead and Leach 1996; Sullivan 1999a, 2000a and b, 2001a; Brockington and Homewood 1996, 2001; Brockington 2002); thereby drawing out both the impacts of power by the latter over the former and the possibilities and practices of resistance by the former in articulating with the latter (e.g. Scott 1985; Brockington 2002; Sullivan 2002a, 2003). Again, however, the research methods drawn on represent an extension of existing realist approaches to the generation of qualitative data for interpretation and analysis.

What might speak more of *recent difference* in social science research praxis is the deployment of a poststructuralist, postcolonial and feminist analytical frame, both in the choice of questions asked, and in the interpretation of findings. This presents the social science researcher with the inescapable realisation that power permeates all assumptions regarding social phenomena, and all practices of research. This now familiar Foucauldian nexus of power/knowledge, and its implications for understanding *both* researcher and researched as implicitly located within, and maintaining, power relationships with all the attendant exclusions and privileges, establishes *responsibility* as a critical dynamic of research praxis. For us, this implies an ethically unavoidable (and hopefully reflexive) advocacy and/or 'activist' engagement with the issues and practices in which we participate in the pursuit of research and writing as knowledge production.

Qualitative methods include a variety of techniques (see Table 1). In brief, qualitative research is characterised by three commitments (e.g. Bryman and Burgess 1999). First researchers employing qualitative methods seek to understand the world through interacting with, empathising with and interpreting the actions and perceptions of its actors. Qualitative methods thus are used to explore the meanings of people's worlds – the myriad personal impacts of impersonal social structures, and the nature and causes of individual behaviour. Second, qualitative research tends to involve the collection of data in natural settings, rather than in artificial contexts (such as laboratories). Third, it tends to explore and generate theory rather than test it. Qualitative methods work inductively, i.e. building up theory from observations; rather than deductively, i.e. testing theories by trying to refute their propositions. Qualitative approaches as a formal category of methods now are flourishing as an important set of research tools and are claimed by a variety of disciplines (cf. Bulmer 1984; Smith 1994). As noted above, a particular impetus for this has been a poststructuralist analytics that problematises a modern drive to measure, categorise, quantify and manage social phenomena (cf. Foucault 1977; Sullivan and Homewood 2003).

Depending on theoretical or explanatory frames and the quality of interpretation, the data generated by qualitative research can provide powerful and critical insights into particular questions. They can be used effectively with people or places we think are familiar to us, as well as in situations somewhat removed, geographically and otherwise, from our own. Given the interpenetrating contexts generated by globalising phenomena, together with associated mobile, translocal and diasporic communities, much research conducted using qualitative

**Table 1: Qualitative Research Techniques**

| Technique | Description | Potential problems |
|---|---|---|
| Interviewing | All sorts of forms are possible, from open conversations, to semi-structured discussions around particular topics, to highly structured questionnaires (athough it is hard for the latter to elicit good qualitative data). | Recording the data is the difficulty here. Writing while people are speaking is off-putting for all concerned. Tape recording then transcribing or summarising takes time. Awareness of the possibilities of exploitation is important since interviews (as for other research methods) can result in a one way traffic of information from which only the researcher benefits. |
| Focus Groups | A group discussion of a particular issue where it is instructive to learn from the group dynamics and the way people discuss things, as much as from the details of what they say. | Best undertaken when you know people or situations well enough that you can interpret the group dynamics. |
| Conversation and Discourse Analysis | Intimate and detailed recording of conversation and dialogue where personal expressions, pauses and delivery as well as content are recorded and analysed (e.g. Spender 1980). | A research tool which requires much effort. Conversation analysis is part of Discourse Analysis, a diffuse approach employed in several disciplines and which pursues a Foucauldian analytics implying that truth claims (about the nature of reality) and domains of knowledge are infused with and distorted by power. |
| Fieldwork Diaries | A day-to-day record of events, diet, work or observations kept by yourself or an informant. | Being a good diarist is not easy and requires practice. It's worth reading published diaries (e.g. anthropologist Malinowski's private diary, 1967) to see what makes for good reading and consider whether they would also make good fieldwork notes that can be used as research data. |
| Life Histories and Oral Histories | Tape recorded histories of people, places and events. This technique provides unique insights into unrecorded situations and alternative views on written histories . | Be prepared to transcribe the tapes so that other people can have access to the raw data. This is an extremely time-consuming process. While the material generated clearly is intepretable within the context of the rationalities and experiences of those speaking, to have broader relevance it is important to seek corroboration from other sources. |
| Photographs, Film and Video and Documents | Texts such as letters, archives and diaries make useful primary and secondary sources. So too do photographs, film and video (which, indeed, can be read as different sorts of text). | Often there are voluminous quantities of images and documents available, for example, in national archives. Researching such sources requires detailed cataloguing in the context of note-taking, in order that information can be re-traced, perhaps by future researchers. |
| Participant Observation | This requires the researcher to immerse themselves in the place/societies they are researching, and to match this immersion with documentation practices that later can serve as research data. The assumption is that one is more likely to be able to understand and empathise with peoples' rationalities and ways of doing things if one lives closely with people. Frequently this requires the learning of new verbal and other languages, and continual reflexivity regarding one's own subject position, rationality and agenda. | Some people's worlds are hard and unpleasant to experience. It requires great effort and determination to learn the language and understand what people mean.<br><br>All the techniques mentioned above can be used in participant observation. The skill is combining structured data collection with relaxing and participating in the flow of events and relationships around you as the researcher. |

include the ways in which communities are both tied into and constructing trans-local/trans-national networks and discourses, for example via the Internet, such that while people might be organising and acting at local spatial scales they are consistently framing their identities with reference to larger scale and global contexts.

When is it appropriate to use qualitative methods? The simple answer is when our research questions require them. The importance of qualitative methods for the social sciences might be best illustrated by considering the questions and ideas that people have explored by using them. For example quantitative data will tell us about numbers of drug abusers, HIV infection rates, levels of street crime, the rates of urban decay and damage to housing stock and a host of other facts about problems among the urban poor in different contexts worldwide. But how do we answer questions like why do people use drugs? What do drug users make of their use? Is drug use always a predicament for users? Or can entheogenic[2] substances engender positive and transformative experiences when used in settings conducive to this? What do drug dealers think of their trade? How do human relationships and social interactions function in these circumstances? And, from a research perspective that is explicitly oriented towards understanding global interlinkages and the impacts of increasing connectivity between these links, how might these relationships extend across borders and identities? How might the policies and actions of some nations and/or institutions impact on the production and use practices of others? And how might people experience, articulate and take-up the opportunities and constraints effected by these changing contexts? For answers here we have to turn to qualitative methods[3]. To take another example, social scientists have talked about the production and reproduction of social classes/movements and the perpetration of relationships of exploitation. But how and in what circumstances might the exploited reproduce their own exploitation (cf. Bourgois 2001: 8; also Laing 1967; Foucault 1998 (1976); Bourdieu 1998, 2001)? Do they perceive it as such? And if they do, then do they resist their exploiters and how?[4] Again, for insights into these questions qualitative methods that engage with the social phenomena 'out there' in exploring theoretical articulations of how these are both reproduced and contested, are useful, even necessary. Frequently

[2] The term 'entheogen' – literally 'becoming divine within' - has been coined by entheobotanist Jonathan Ott (e.g. Ott 1996) and others to refer to substances, normally derived from plant material, that when consumed stimulate mystical and religious experiences that can have subjectively transformative effects.
[3] An extraordinary illustration of this is Bourgois' book *In Search of Respect* (1995), an award-winning and powerful but disturbing insight into poverty and drug dealing in New York.
[4] On these questions see Willis' book *Learning to Labour* (1977), about how young school leavers accept the lowest low prospect jobs, or Scott's *Weapons of the Weak* (1985), about how peasants in Malaysia resist exploitation by land owners and wealthier farmers.

qualitative research incorporates quantitative data and quantification. But as these research questions and some of the studies cited suggest, they can go beyond numbers to consider the *experienced* impacts, incorporations and contestations of measurable trends, as well as to problematise the contextual production of quantitative analyses. Indeed, because the *act* of research requires the subjective engagement of the researcher - in selecting questions, methods, locales, theoretical frames etc. and in the act of measurement and of recording data - we would maintain that it is impossible *not* to draw on qualitatively derived information in the process of conducting and interpreting research (cf. Mruck and Breuer 2003). This is as true for subatomic physics as it is for social domains: as articulated, for example, in the famous 'Schrodinger's Cat' conundrum that makes clear that observed reality is inextricably bound with the act/event of observation, interpretation of which in turn is bound with the subjectivity and presence of the observer. In other words, as objective as research (and researchers) may claim to be, the intervention of subjectivity *always* is present in the choice of questions asked, the choice of methods used and the choice of interpretation of the material thereby generated.

In the pages that follow we reflect on our and others' experiences of practicing qualitative research. This is not intended as a manual of techniques, nor is it an exhaustive theoretical discussion of how we can know anything. We focus on three key domains in qualitative research. First, we take a look at ethnographic and anthropological fieldwork, in a context of discussing the challenge of poststructuralism to such research praxis; second, we comment on techniques of discourse analysis in teasing apart discursive constructions of social reality; third, we consider phenomenological and embodiment approaches to research (which, in part, theorise and problematise the nature of subjective experience). Finally, we make some further comments regarding relationships between qualitative methods and quantitative techniques. The common thread to the paper is that although Willis' statement at the start of this chapter may sound naïve and unprofessional to some, there is wisdom and humility in it which can make for ethical, reflexive and sound research practice.

**Ethnography**

Ethnography is both a particular suite of methods used to produce a range of qualitative data, *and* the end product or ethnographic text constructed from such interactions. The key methods are participant observation and oral testimony. Participant observation, or observant

participation, implies both participating in, and observing, social phenomena relevant to research aims, with the intention of interpreting, analysing and theorising material that arises therefrom in order to generate meaning. We prefer the term and concept of observant participation, i.e. to highlight the value of participatory and experiential aspects of ethnographic research as the basis for interpretation (e.g. Sullivan 2001b; Plows 2002). This research praxis emphasises the legitimacy of a researcher's interpretation of observed and experienced cultural phenomena and events from a position of *being present* and variously immersed in/at these phenomena and events. The production of oral testimonies emphasises a researcher's ability to allow people to 'speak for themselves' – to construct their own texts – via the recording and transcription of interview material (for examples, see: Bollig and Mbunguha 1997; Brinkman and Fleisch 1999; Cross and Barker 1992; Slim and Thompson 1993; Sullivan 2002b). Overall, ethnographic approaches aim to be 'actor-oriented' in their attempts to convey reality from a subject's 'point of view', increasingly including those of the researcher as final author and editor of the ethnographic text (see below). Ethnography tends, therefore, to read as a conglomerate of interconnected and suggestive 'facts', thoughts, perceptions and contextual material, rather than as definitive analyses.

Studies involving methods associated with the production of ethnography have been reeling recently from a post-structuralist questioning of their premises, aims and circumstances. Clifford, for example, identifies:

> symptoms of a pervasive postcolonial crisis of ethnography authority. While the crisis has been felt most strongly by former hegemonic Western discourses, the questions it raises are of global significance. Who has the authority to speak for a group's identity or authenticity? What are the essential elements and boundary of culture? How do self and other clash and converse in the encounters of ethnography, travel, modern interethnic relations? What narratives of development, loss, and innovation can account for the present range of local oppositional movements? (Clifford 1988: 8)

This crisis has several strands. The economic and other inequalities frequently implicit in relationships between researcher and researched, have contributed to a serious questioning of the legitimacy of fieldwork in Third World or 'less developed' country contexts. This feeds further into critique of the very concepts and assumptions of 'the Third World' and of 'development' (Escobar 1995; Rahnema and Bawtree 1997; de Rivero 2001), both of which are inextricable as components and drivers of contemporary globalising phenomena. It also has conspired to push contemporary anthropologists/ethnographers to consider and 'unpack' assumptions built into previous analyses and to conduct new fieldwork from a position of

awareness of these assumptions. The volume edited by Dorothy Hodgson (2000), for example, conveys much about ways in which the conceptual assumptions of a Marxist and androcentric orientation to African pastoralist (i.e. livestock-herding) peoples promoted an ethnographic construction of 'the patriarchal pastoralist', thereby fostering policy and development initiatives that acted to devalue women's productive and other contributions to society.

This tendency in ethnographic work, in combination with the massively influential critique of the authority of authorship by thinkers such as Foucault, has conspired, and rightly so, to reduce confidence in the apparent authority of the academic 'expert' – who by definition is usually constructed within the particular intellectual morays of the academy and bolstered by the structural inequality that consolidates decision-making power among those already holding wealth and power. Thus, the social sciences in the 1980s and 1990s increasingly have problematised the ways that structural relations of power and inequality act to confer distance between ethnographer and 'ethnographee'. It is this distance that becomes essential to the ways in which social and economic differences are constructed and maintained: authorising dominant and domineering knowledges (or discourses) of 'the other' of fieldwork (and of modernity more generally) (e.g. Said 1978; Irigaray 1997 (1996); 2002). It thereby makes possible the disempowering transformation by which '[t]he Other's empirical presence [in fieldwork] turns into his (sic) theoretical absence [in ethnographic writing]' (Fabian 1983: xi).

A related legacy in ethnographic work has been a tendency for ethnographers to adopt an authoritative viewpoint over 'a society' or social context, and then to construct a portrait of 'its' norms and rules, often in an 'ethnographic present' tense. This reflects the structural-functionalist and organismic view of societies dominating social science research for most of the twentieth century: emphasising analysis of the rules and norms of societies in terms of their engendering of homogenous cultural identities, and fostering an approach to societies as somehow hermetically-sealed entities. The depictions which resulted tended to be timeless 'still lives' which may well have accurately portrayed interactions and interdependencies but which cannot give much insight into the dynamics and history of the people and situations researched. This blindness to forces generating change and contestation within social groupings has been surprisingly long-lived in ethnographic work, reflecting modernity's

desire-driven assumptions of social stasis and manageability (cf. Deleuze and Guattari (1980 (1988))[5].

But the criticism is not just of an apparent lack of history, social process or sensitivity to the distribution of power in ethnography. It also relates to the process of producing and creating ethnographic texts. A post-structuralist problematising of ethnography (and other research) as first and foremost a *writing* practice (Clifford 1986: 2) has generated an uncomfortable phenomenon whereby observation is reduced to 'the text' that describes it, such that written claims to empirical 'facts' are treated with varying degrees of suspicion (Clifford and Marcus 1986). A corresponding deconstruction of earlier ethnographies as socially produced texts and as building blocks in the construction of accepted discourses has been critical in both unraveling the power relations informing earlier analyses and portrayals of people and cultural contexts. Taken to its logical conclusion, however, this critique seriously challenges the mandate of ethnographers to do ethnography.

Indeed, there may also be exclusionary problems associated with a practice in social science research of simply writing about - deconstructing - earlier writing. Anthropologist Philippe Bourgois, who spent thousands of hours recording the conversations and lives of crack dealers in Harlem, thus presents a 'counter-challenge' to what he considers to be a dismaying élitism embodied by poststructuralist critiques of ethnography. He writes that:

> Although postmodern ethnographers often claim to be subversive, their contestation of authority focuses on hyperliterate critiques of form through evocative vocabularies, playful syntaxes and polyphonous voices, rather than on engaging with tangible daily struggles. Postmodern debates titillate alienated, suburbanised intellectuals; they are completely out of touch with the urgent social crises of the inner city unemployed. (Bourgois 1995: 14)

Thus, while ethnography, like other approaches to research, has had to shed old certainties as an outcome of post-structuralism and cultural relativism, there are a range of exciting research foci in the new landscape that is unfolding. As one of us has argued elsewhere (Sullivan 2002b), perhaps the time is ripe for a re-energised, even realist, validation of the way(s) 'culture' filters

---

[5] An example of recent ethnographic work which instead focuses on conflicts of interest and power within and between diverse interests pertinent to a particular cultural grouping is Hutchinson's masterly and award-winning book about the East African Nuer, published in 1996. This work begins from the humble (though by no means simple) aim of *not* seeking a homogenized image of culture and society (Hutchinson 1996: 28-9). Making such an intention explicit was necessary in this case precisely because of the generations of work which had gone into explaining the internal logic of the Nuer social system, rather than exploring the potential for change and contestation.

and moulds the hybrid worlds that we engage in and create as both participants and observers. Our field 'sites' now comprise unrelenting interpenetrations of local and global; the actors of our research, not to mention ourselves, are 'permitted' to have changing and dynamic identities; and 'the Ethnographic Other' is as likely as ourselves to experience the dislocations and interconnections generated by recent decades of mass-communications technology. This critique is important politically because it can cut through a postmodern tendency towards nihilism and negativity regarding the potential for constitutive engagement with the world; perhaps encouraging openness and the possibility of co-creation in the task of writing about and with other people. Given these circumstances, and in acknowledgement of the power and wealth differentials still afforded by access to education, citizenship, and so on, perhaps it is conceivable that an appropriate role for ethnography and ethnographers today might be the attempt to open public-spaces for views that otherwise are likely to go unheard. Undoubtedly, academic research will flavour these views with selection by the author, not to mention interpretation and context: it will be for the reader to decide if these are justifiable or not, given the material presented and theoretical frames utilised in analysis. But following Gordon (2000), we position ourselves in favour of celebrating the subversive and advocacy potential of contemporary ethnographic work - in consultation with a group, a people, a culture or counter-culture, who, due to some element of difference, lacks public voice (cf. Inset 1).

---

**Inset 1. On subjectivity and objectivity, academia and activism**

Social and cultural anthropologists have tended to work in cultures outside their own. In the contexts of post-colonialism, 'development' and a globalising neoliberalism, this frequently has meant experiencing stark political and economic inequalities, giving rise to a constant grappling with the ethical circumstances of their (our) work. For many, this has carried an attendant desire to effect some sort of 'public service': to speak out – to *do* something – about observed injustices. We become part of the contexts we work within, we are taken up as political currency within these contexts and we would be naïve to imagine that by being part of a 'northern' academic tradition our research is thereby, or should be, apolitical. But we face enormous institutional and other obstacles to our ability to contribute publicly: ranging from a lack of support from formal academic institutions to publish work in local contexts, to threats of litigation if we publish analyses that expose local resistance to powerful international NGOs, donors and corporations.

We have both been at the receiving end of such threats for published research during the neoliberal nineties in Namibia and Tanzania (cf. Sullivan 2003), and find ourselves somewhat tired of a conventional dichotomising of positions: between academia and activism, theory and practice, objectivity and subjectivity, and the traditional and organic intellectual (cf. Gramsci 1971; discussed in Barker and Cox 2003). These are categories which themselves maintain a hegemonic status quo in intellectual and pragmatic arenas. Objectivity, for example, is a constructed (and experientially impossible) analytical position that arguably is not ethically desirable, even if it remains a cornerstone for many in the social sciences. We thus are more interested, intellectually and organically, in ways of excavating and subverting these categories and their correspondences. If we validate, empower and

reflect on our experiences, it becomes clear that theory has been critical in helping us make sense of our 'real world' engagements; which at the same time have informed our readings of theory; which have influenced our 'real world' practices; which have informed our intellectual endeavours; and so on …. These are not separate domains, and if 'we' continue to think of them as separable then we simply maintain the universalist fragmentation on which modernity thrives, and on which exploitative political and economic practices feed. Instead, and echoing feminist scholar Julia Kristeva (1997 (1982)), we favour a theoretical opening of the field of active subjectivity that makes possible a corresponding opening of the hermeneutic tautology that 'theory harbours its object within its own [enclosed] logic'. This position eliminates the distance between theory and action (philosophically, between virtual and actual cf. Žižek (2004: 4); or even between implicate and explicate order as framed by physicist Bohm 2002), via the '*will*ful' possibilities created by the phenomenon of *interpretation*. As such it posits 'an ethics of the open subject': an embracing of contingency, ambiguity and agency; a discarding of an assumption that anything should be taken as given; and a strong theoretical support for our always active and *constitutive* engagement with the world (Battaglia 1999). For us this permits, and even necessitates, an approach to fieldwork that engages with both the constitutive influence of researcher subjectivity in every stage of research, *and* the impacts of the research and writing process on the subjectivity of the researcher (cf. Mruck and Breuer 2003).

Based on: Sullivan (2004b)

## Discourse and deconstruction

As noted above, the doing and writing of ethnographic research have themselves been deconstructed as practices embedded within and constructing dominant discourses. In short, deconstruction affirms the linguistic indeterminacy that exists between words (and other symbols) as signifiers and the worlds that they signify (as articulated by de Saussure (1974) and famously commented on in Magritte's painting 'The Key of Dreams'). This suggests that it is possible to deconstruct - to 'unpack' - the apparent fixity of meaning implied in language (and any symbolic medium of communication) (Derrida 1976). Further, and following Foucault, processes of both signification and meaning/interpretation are infused by power, which means that particular discursive constructions of reality become dominant or hegemonic. Knowledge thus is produced, exchanged and constructed discursively, such that inequalities are maintained and magnified by the discourses supporting particular empowered assumptions and structures. This becomes the famous Foucauldian equation that power = knowledge, with the sustained ignorance of other knowledges, both conscious or otherwise, further fostering exclusion and maintaining the power of particular discourses (e.g. Gordon 1998; Sullivan 2000b).

The production and maintenance of hegemonic discourses requires what Lacan (1977) referred to metaphorically as *points de capiton* - words and symbols that act like 'upholstery buttons' in fixing 'the fabric of meaning onto the structure of our signs or language' (Stott

1999: 22). These are the key signifiers around which discourses revolve and through which their power is reproduced. Like Kuhn's (1970) theorising of the ways in which paradigmatic 'normal science' frames are maintained, they comprise the metalanguage - the self-referential truth claims - of particular discourses. Their deployment permits, and is required by, the 'language games' through which participation in discursively empowered communities is made possible (Lyotard 1984). As de Saussure theorised, this participation engenders membership of a 'speech community' that in effect shares agreed rules of what the conventional relationships between signifier and signified is to be.

Since this calls into question the objective reality of the 'truth claims' (regarding 'reality') proposed by particular discourses, it makes possible the 'unpacking' of assertions of truth through identifying the key signifiers that hold a discourse together, locating the claims made by a discourse within the social and historical contexts that make them possible, and delineating the power relationships and structures they support. Thus, the positing of knowledge as power via the structuring but indeterminate discourses that are thereby produced, and the corresponding possibility of deconstructing empowered discourses, becomes itself extremely powerful as an orientation to analysis and understanding in research (e.g. for a brief example of this type of analysis see Inset 2).

---

**Inset 2. Landscapes: semiotics and discourse**

It is possible to consider landscapes as texts that can be read and from which meaning can be constructed. This approach views landscapes as repositories of human agency that is inscribed on, and partly constructs, the biophysical aspects of environments. Given long and changing histories of human use of, impacts on, and relationships with, landscapes, landscapes can further be read as palimpsests: as texts overlain by successive writings, the earliest writings never quite completely erased. When placed further within social and historical contexts, such readings can indicate something of the values, desires and structures influencing people-environment relationships through time and space. Further, the contested ways in which landscapes are read (as well as used and experienced) in contemporary contexts can reveal something of the values shaping and constraining current research and practice.

Representations of landscapes - through words, images, maps, etc. - also are texts that can be read and situated socially, such that they indicate something of the contexts of value in which they were/are produced. It thereby becomes possible to delineate key signifiers used in the description of environmental phenomena as symptoms of cultural, political, affective, economic and other associations with 'the environment'. When taken together, these can become and act discursively as hegemonic discourses - discourses regarding environment that benefit some interests whilst disempowering others. When elevated to the global - as, for example, in the various UN Conventions on environment and the implications these have for international donor spending and lending opportunities - these can generate significant constraints and opportunities for local contexts. For detailed examples of such an approach in the arena of political ecology - of analysis and critique of

hegemonic global discourses regarding 'the environment' and their impacts on local contexts - see the collection edited by Stott and Sullivan (2000).

The implications for research of this deconstructionist turn are many and profound. They include analysis and reconsideration of the implicit and situated assumptions built into all secondary material. They also affirm the significance for research of understanding the discourses produced when seemingly discrete statements, texts, images etc. produced in a range of social contexts are considered collectively (see, for example, Dale Spender's thorough analysis of the pro-male gender biases maintained in the social deployment of (the English) language in *Man Made Language* (1980); and John Fowler's analysis of the construction of ideological discourses in news media in *Language in the News* (1991)). Such an approach to research also is demanding of the researcher, because it implies and even demands a similar willingness to reflect on, and deconstruct, one's own subject positions and assumptions: to attempt critique of one's own *habitus* (or apparent coherence of practice, Bourdieu 1990: 13), or constrained agency/intentionality in any endeavour. One of the key exhortations of poststructuralism thus is to 'objectify the objectifying distance [assumed by the modern researcher] and the social conditions that make it possible' (Bourdieu 1990: 14). This also requires self-analysis and critique of the power/biopower (Foucault 1998 (1976); Hardt and Negri 2000) constraining all individual readings and experiences of reality, and thus again places subjectivity as central to research practice and interpretation.

## On subjectivity and experience: phenomenological and embodiment approaches to research

Subjective and experiential dimensions of research are receiving increasing emphasis in the social sciences. In these approaches, the *felt* aspects, both bodily and psychologically, of what people do become the concern of the researcher. Similarly, the bearing of the experiences of the researcher in conducting fieldwork, the interpretations of research 'findings' and, the writing-up – the metaphorical 'setting in stone' - of the work also become part of the process and primary material of research. Willis, for example, who, as noted above, summarised his methodology as 'meeting people', provides a detailed description of the psychological and 'almost bodily' tensions produced within him as he wrote down and categorised descriptions of his encounters (1981: xxi). In other words, the experience of research does not end with one's exit from 'the field': it overflows as the sensations produced by memories of place,

people and events conjured up in the process of constructing a written story from the fieldnotes and data brought home. As implied above, such a turn towards considering the power and other phenomena embodied by the act and process of writing and producing research as discourse requires a parallel reflexivity regarding one's own empowered location as a producer of knowledge (cf. Hobart 1996; Twyman et al. 1999; Sullivan 2001b).

A highlighting of the role/s of subjective experience in research can be considered in part as a response to the sense that affective and embodied experience has tended to be written out of the views of reality - the discourse - legitimised by the European Enlightenment project that took-off in the 1600s and 1700s (Porter 2000), and that has underpinned the globalising of modernity in the centuries since (Deleuze and Guattari 1988 (1980)). Building on classification and categorisation as its conceptual cornerstone - reclaiming a Platonic separation between the abstract world of ideas and the experienced world of the senses - Enlightenment thinking left behind a legacy of conventional dualisms between mind and body, culture and nature, reason and emotion, male and female, science and art, and so on (e.g. Merchant 1980). Knowledge and research built on these essential dichotomies, however, undermines the interconnections, even seamlessness, existing between these categories as perceived by those framed as 'Other'. This has been emphasised in feminist, anthropological and post-structuralist writings (e.g. Fabian 1983; Belenky et al. 1986), enhancing ideas expressed in the theoretical expositions of key thinkers critiquing a Hegelian search for a philosophy of ultimate reason and rationality. In Jean-Paul Sartre's existentialism, for example, attention is drawn to the ways that people *experience* their existence and thereby make choices based on their experiences (e.g. Sartre 1969) For Heidegger, emphasis is placed on human subjects as 'Beings-in-the-world' (or *Dasein*), thus breaking down the distinctions between individual and context or place (e.g. Heidegger 1962). Here we have the seeds of a phenomenology of being – a philosophical genre centred on the phenomena of the subjectively perceived world as generated through the bodily grounds and constraints of experienced phenomena (e.g. as emphasised by philosopher Merleau-Ponty (1962)). 'Being-in-the-world' thus is further 'concretised' as *embodied* experience – such that 'embodiment is an existential condition in which the body is the subjective source or intersubjective ground of experience' (Csordas 1999: 143). Given that we all have bodies and we all experience felt, bodily sensations as well as mental and ideational reflections regarding these, 'the body' and 'its' sensations thus can become effective means for communication and interpretation in research.

More recently such thinking has been extended by the social theorist Michel Foucault (among others), in his multiple theses illustrating the ways in which subjective and psychological experience and 'the body' also are politically and historically situated and constrained (Foucault 1977; 1990). Hardt and Negri (2000) in *Empire* continue such an analysis to include ways in which a current vesting of sovereignty in the global, like earlier equivalent processes of the emergence of the sovereignty of the nation state, is infused with and sustained by biopower: the influence and control of sovereign authority over the bodies, minds and subjectivities of all those constructed as its citizens. As a pertinent framing of globalising phenomena, this emphasises the relevance of considering, exploring and critiquing the bio- and psycho-politics located in the multiple sites and relationships of authority and resistance, taking a critical and analytical stance in considering the subjectivities that arise therein (cf. Sullivan 2004a).

Phenomenological and embodiment approaches to field-based research and writing thus have much to offer in terms of validating ways of knowing and experiencing the world that are not easily shoehorned into interview surveys and quantitative analyses. They are becoming increasingly significant in the social sciences (e.g. Bender 1998; Crouch 2001; Ingold 2000; Tilley 1994; Weiss and Haber, 1999). Inset 3 considers some methodological implications of pursuing a phenomenological approach to research.

**Inset 3. Phenomenology and embodiment: implications for fieldwork**

We all have a body, and we all have subjective experiences of ourselves. Our bodies make possible and constrain the experiences of the world that we have. The experiences that we have are integrated bodily – *embodied* – as well as psychologically in our subjective and variously conscious constructions of 'self'. Given these underlying strata of being it should be possible to draw on body-awareness as research tools. This might enhance understanding of people's actions and body language, their perceptions of their actions, what they may verbalise regarding these perceptions, and the impacts on body and self of the actions of others and of significant contexts – particularly the role/s of culture, power and ideology in 'inscribing' the body, and the ways in which people may subvert such inscriptions. A challenge implicit in such an approach to research, however, is the tension generated between the sharing of *experiences* as part of the fieldwork process – in a sense 'upfronting' the participation component of 'participant observation' – and the ability to reflect on these experiences and on their implications in relation to research aims (cf. Sullivan 2001b, 2004a). As Crouch (2001: 63) describes, the process involves both *othering* (i.e. objectifying) ourselves as researchers, and being *othered* to varying extents by those whose practices, perceptions and worlds we are researching.

David Crouch is a cultural geographer who is concerned explicitly with a rethinking of 'how people live and feel' (2001: 61). In a recent paper he draws on ethnographic work with recreational caravanners in the UK to 'explore people's accounts of what they do, their tactics, imaginations and movements' in relation to broader contexts that people may draw on in these personal narratives and actions. Importantly, by highlighting the 'existential immediacy' of the body, as well as people's 'felt multi-dimensional relationship with the world' (Crouch 2001: 62), such work renders peoples – their bodily-selves – as agentive in relation to the spaces they inhabit. Although he and his fellow researchers drew in this project on interviewing as a field technique, they also considered their own felt sensations, bodily and psychologically, as data in the processes of both 'doing' the research and of reflecting on their encounters with caravanners and their own caravanning process. The field thereby 'emerges as a site of constant renegotiation, of the self, others, researcher and researched, … through a process of uneven counter' (Crouch 2001: 72) – an acknowledgement that is extremely significant given the structural inequalities frequently encountered (and making possible) fieldwork in contemporary 'Third World' and other contexts.

As Crouch argues, such an approach to fieldwork, thinking and writing makes possible great acceptance of the nuanced complexity of what people do, and of how they explain and express these 'doings'. Given a world where differences between people are used as justifications for persecution in many contexts, such an approach to the richly varied rationalities and experiences of human action might be considered relevant indeed.

## Qualitative *and* quantitative?

Qualitative research has a reputation for producing anecdotal information rather than 'hard', secure facts, as if this means that what is produced is somehow less 'real' than something that is measured. Sometimes it is implied that qualitative techniques are tools resorted to in situations where we cannot generate more precise and focused data. Or they are thought of in terms of absence, i.e. as all that is not quantitative. What we hope to have highlighted here is that qualitative methods produce *different* sorts of data regarding 'the world' and as such are

pursued proactively as appropriate research tools given the issues and questions driving a research agenda. Indeed, given poststructuralist critique of assumptions and contingency built into the 'harder' sciences (e.g. Kuhn 1970; Lyotard 1984; Latour 1993; Nader 1996), there seems to be no real reason why the 'social facts' generated by qualitative and interpretative approaches should not be considered as 'real' and accurate as those empowered with the confidence of numbers.

There is a tendency to treat qualitative and quantitative methods as not really compatible. Smith (1994: 491), for example, writes that qualitative methods are concerned with subjective understanding rather than statistical description and analysis. But statistical descriptions cover all manner of things. As Hammersley points out, it is hard to get away from statistics (Hammersley 1992). Any form of words meaning 'more than', 'less than', 'frequently' or 'regularly' and the like are quantitative, even statistical, claims. Many could be put into numerical form. The difference, Hammersley argues, is in the high degree of precision used in statistical analysis, *not* in the fact of dealing with quantities. Conversely, however, statistical descriptions alone rarely take on board the contexts of meaning that qualitative methodologies seek to open up and explore. Qualitative methods, therefore, could be seen to embrace quantitative techniques and use them for different, and perhaps more nuanced purposes. This extends into considerations regarding the legitimacy or otherwise of reducing 'data' relating to these domains of experience into numerical 'pieces' of data that can be easily manipulated.

Qualitative and quantitative methods are both tools. They are not mutually exclusive approaches to learning about the world. In research, both can be useful or necessary given the question being asked. Both of us have combined statistical analyses of numerical data with detailed qualitative interviews to learn more about the places and people we were studying. The latter make for richer and 'thicker' descriptions of observed phenomena (Geertz 1973) such that qualitative material permits analyses of events and processes in ways that complement the minimal and measurable terms that form the basis of quantitative analyses of similar events and processes (e.g. Inset 4, for example, describes some ways in which contextual data can affect interpretations of measurement 'events').

**Inset 4. The meaning of quantitative data: impoverishment and bridewealth in pastoral societies**

Dan's doctoral thesis (Brockington 1998) concerns the impacts of eviction on pastoralists who were forcibly moved from Mkomazi Game Reserve in northern Tanzania. This eviction process was associated with global wildlife conservation discourses that fetishise a construct of pristine wilderness in the absence of people and livestock, as well as assuming the long-term degrading impacts of African pastoral practices on African dryland landscapes (Brockington 2001, 2002). Analysis was based on a range of information, including the performance of livestock herds and livelihood practices both before and after eviction. A great deal of material was available in records collected in archives over the past 50 years, written primarily by government officials with some also left by herders.

One of these reports concerned the changes in bridewealth[a] that were needed given the recent impoverishment of herders following their eviction from the Reserve and noted that instead of the norm of 15 cattle given previously, only 10 to 12 would now suffice. How should this information be used? On one level the fact of the change is interesting evidence of local adaptation to new circumstances, indicating simply that the impoverishment exacted by eviction meant that fewer cattle were now expected in bridewealth payments. But one of the examiners of the thesis objected that using this fact alone was 'thin description' – amounting to the use numbers in the absence of contextual material that might elucidate the social dynamics surrounding this shift (c.f. Broch-Due and Anderson 1999). What was needed instead was an investigation into the nature of the relationships between rich and poor herders, i.e. that might indicate how this shift was negotiated and who and how the process of eviction might thereby benefit some herders whilst impoverishing others. The context for this suggestion is that stock distribution is inherently unequal in Maasai pastoralist societies, and the negotiation of bridewealth is fiercely contested by rich and poor, with those who are poor in terms of livestock being unable to provide animals for bridewealth payments, while others with marriageable daughters being desperate to gain more stock through bridewealth. Agreeing the number of cattle and delivering them thus is an arena of contest and negotiation between men and women on both sides of the relationship. Bridewealth is never completely paid; it is the beginning of a long term relationship between two families. In short it conceals highly complex social relationships whose dynamics and conflicts could have revealed much about the differential impacts of eviction on pastoral societies. Its reproduction here as 'merely' a number provided little hint of all that was going on in terms of the differing possibilities for local assertions of agency in relation to new circumstances created by national policy and informed by international discourses.

[a] Bridewealth are the gifts of money, goods and cattle which a groom and his family make to the family, , principally the parents, of the bride.

The critical issue for research praxis relates to choosing the types of data that are appropriate for the research questions we might be interested in, and knowing how to combine different types of data into powerful and relevant analyses. As Inset 5 indicates, while it can be important to combine quantitative and qualitative methodological tools, as well as a trans-disciplinary, even a-disciplinary, approach to investigation and knowledge production, it is rarely easy. Logistically, such a multifaceted approach is extremely time- and energy-consuming. Collecting, cataloguing and entering qualitative data is exhausting work. Tape-recorded interviews need to be transcribed (preferably) or summarised shortly after they were taken. Transcriptions need to be annotated with the detail of body language and other impressions significant for the interview. Historical records need to be interrogated, written records of meetings need to be discussed with those who were there. Each encounter

generates a string of leads to be followed up and checked. Generating qualitative data that is rigorous and relevant is hard work. The production of quantitative data via household surveys etc. also is demanding. It can be repetitive and boring, and is often pressured and rushed, particularly if there is a large sample to be completed in a set time, as with repeat-round surveys. The fixed agenda of collecting a pre-established number of samples can make it hard to follow up the flow of leads and new developments as they arise. In short, combining the two approaches is difficult. Qualitative data collection does not offer a break to quantitative data collection; instead it offers new demands. At the same time, rigorous quantitative work generating meaningful samples is not to be taken lightly. Added to these difficulties, for many researchers exploring questions raised by contexts of 'development', 'globalisation' and the 'post-colonial', are the everyday problems of perhaps working in a second language, in contexts of desperate inequality and distressing poverty, and in tropical climes where, as both of us have experienced, a researcher may have to contend with a host of aggressive diseases – most inconvenient for fieldwork schedules.

**Inset 5. Combining qualitative and quantitative data: people, plants and practice in north-west Namibia – and schizophrenic theses**

Sian's doctoral thesis (1998) had two primary aims. First, to analyse patterns and determinants of natural resource-use and management by Khoe-speaking Damara herders in arid north-west Namibia. And second, to assess the ecological implications of this resource-use in the context of the unpredictable variations in primary productivity characteristic of dryland environments, as well as given a powerful international discourse of 'desertification' informing national policy in relation to land use and distribution. Given these objectives, a combination of quantitative and qualitative anthropological and ecological techniques were employed. For example, the use of gathered non-timber products for food and medicine was monitored in 7 repeat-surveys over an 18 month period for a sample of 45 households comprising 2017 individual 'diet-days'. Qualitative data derived from the experience of collecting resources with people on collecting trips within the broader landscape and from informal discussions and interactions with local people. With regard to the second research objective, woody and herbaceous vegetation datasets were compiled, the former comprising 2760 plant individuals in a stratified sample of 75 transects; the latter consisting of 48 qradrats, half fenced to exclude livestock, in which herbaceous vegetation was monitored over two growing seasons. A number of standard ecological variables, including patterns in community floristics, diversity, cover and population structure, were used to explore the prediction that concentrations of people and livestock cause measurable impacts on vegetation around settlements. More recently, recorded oral testimony material focusing on the perceptions held by individuals regarding landscape change and environmental management practices has been collated. The data thereby generated were analysed and interpreted within contexts generated by particular national and global science and policy discourses regarding both local peoples' use and management of resources and landscapes, and environmental 'problems' in the domains of 'desertification' and biodiversity conservation (Sullivan 1999a and b, 2000a and b, 2002a and b, 2003).

In other words, an attempt was made in this work to explore the multifaceted relationships between people and environment with a similarly multifarious set of research methods – combining social anthropology, human ecology and natural science tools, concepts and field techniques. While this enabled a complex analysis of complex relationships, a number of problems also were generated by the attempt to try and integrate such broadly different approaches to research. Although the thesis was passed with no changes, as one of the examiners noted in their report '[t]he result is a thesis in two halves, … rather schizophrenic in that each part is conceptually, methodologically and stylistically distinct'.

## Concluding remarks

We have argued that contemporary globalising contexts provide both rich opportunities for qualitative research, whilst necessitating critique regarding the contexts structuring both research relationships, and the production of research outputs. Qualitative methods can be considered as simply a set of ways of finding out about the world. But if we also reflect on the reasons for asking questions which require qualitative methods, as well as on the nature of the answers they provide, it becomes apparent that they also embrace significant philosophical debates regarding the nature and implications of subjective and social experience, the relationship of researcher *vis à vis* researched, and the legitimacy or otherwise of abstracting social phenomena to numerical pieces of data amenable to further analysis.

This extends further into practices of 'writing up' the material generated through these methods – of transforming and transmuting rich multi-textured field experiences into the written word - as well as into processes of dissemination of research 'findings'. Critical consideration of this process is an important element of any successful project, and particularly so given the inequalities built into the process of field research in many, if not most, research contexts. The depth of engagement that characterises qualitative research clearly thus is only as good as the degree of critical reflexivity pursued by the researcher. This inevitably means treading a fine line between this and self-indulgent naval-gazing. If this line is trod carefully however, it can be instructive and rewarding, whilst at the same time contributing to a robust range of material for interpretation and analysis. Qualitative methodology may just mean a series of meetings with people. But with self-awareness and openness towards listening and new experiences, these methods can teach us much about the worlds in which we live and with which we engage and construct.

## References

Barker, C. and Cox, L. (2003) '"What have the Romans ever done for us?" Academic and activist forms of theorising', On-line. Available HTTP: <http://www.iol.ie/~mazzoldi/toolsforchange/afpp/afpp8.html> (accessed 20 January 2004).

Battaglia, D. (1999). Towards an ethics of the open subject: writing culture in good conscience. In Moore, H. (ed.) *Anthropological theory today*. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R. and Tarule, J. M. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: the development of self, voice, and mind.* New York, Basic Books Inc.

Bender, B. (1998). *Stonehenge: making space.* Oxford, Berg Publishers.

Biko, S. (1989 (1978)). *I write what I like: a selection of writings*. Oxford, Heinemann International Literature and Textbooks.

Bohm, D. (2002) *Wholeness and implicate order.* London: Routledge.

Bollig, M. and Mbunguha, T. J. (1997). *"When war came the cattle slept..." Himba oral traditions.* Köln, Rüdigger, Köppe Verlag.

Bourdieu, P. (1990 (1980)) *The logic of practice*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1998) *Acts of resistance: against the tyranny of the market*, trans. by Nice, R. New York: The New press.

Bourdieu, P. (2001) *Masculine domination*, Oxford: Blackwells.

Bourgois, P. (1995). *In search of respect. Selling crack in El Barrio.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Bourgois, P. (2001) 'The power of violence in war and peace: post-Cold War lessons from El Salvador', *Ethnography*, 2(1): 5-34.

Brinkman, I. and Fleisch, A. (1999). *Grandmother's footsteps: oral tradition and south-east Angolan narratives on the colonial encounter.* Köln, Rüdigger, Köppe Verlag.

Broch-Due, V. and Anderson, D. M. (1999). Poverty and the pastoralist: deconstructing myths, reconstructing realities. In D.M. Anderson and V. Broch-Due, (eds.) *The poor are not us: poverty and pastoralism*. Oxford, James Currey.

Brockington, D. (1998). *Land loss and livelihoods. The effects of eviction on pastoralists moved from the Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania.* Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University College London, London.

Brockington, D. (2001). Communal property and degradation narratives. debating the Sukuma immigration into Rukwa Region, Tanzania. *Cahiers d'Afrique* 20: 1-22.

Brockington, D (2002) *Fortress Conservation: The Preservation of the Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania*, James Currey, Oxford

Brockington, D and Homewood, K (1996) Wildlife, pastoralists and science: debates concerning Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania', pp91-104 in Leach, M and Mearns, R (eds) *The lie of the land: challenging received wisdom on the African environment*, The International African Institute, James Currey, Heinemann, London, Oxford and Portsmouth.

Brockington, D and Homewood, K (2001) Degradation debates and data deficiencies. The case of the Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania', *Africa*, vol 71, pp179-227.

Bryman, A. and Burgess, R. G. (1999). *Qualitative research.* London, Sage Publications.

Bulmer, M. (1984). *The Chicago school of sociology.* Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Clifford, J. (1988). *The predicament of culture: twentieth century ethnography, literature and art.* Cambridge, MA., Harvard University Press.

Clifford, J. and Marcus, G. E. (1986). *Writing Culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography.* Berkeley, University of California Press.

Clifford, M. (1986). Introduction: partial truths. In M. Clifford and G. E. Marcus, (eds.) *Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography*, University of California Press, London.

Cross, N. and Barker, R. (1992). *At the desert's edge: oral histories from the Sahel.* London, Panos Publications Ltd.

Crouch, D. (2001). Spatialities and the feeling of doing. *Social and Cultural Geography* 2(1): 61-75.

Csordas, T. (1999). Embodiment and cultural phenomenology. pp. 143-162 *in* Weiss, G. and Haber, H.F. (eds.) *Perspectives on embodiment: the intersections of nature and culture.* London, Routledge.

Deleuze, G and Guattari, F (1988 (1980)). *A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia* (translation and foreword by Brain Massumi), The Athlone Press, London

De Rivero, O. (2001). *The myth of development: the non-viable economies of the 21$^{st}$ century.* London, Zed Books.

Derrida, J. (1976). *Of Grammatology.* Trans. Spivak, C.G. Baltimore and London, John Hopkins University Press.

Dery, M. (1996). *Escape velocity: cyberculture at the end of the century.* London, Hodder & Stoughton.

De Saussure, F. (1974). *Course in General Linguistics.* Trans. Baskin, W. Glasgow, Fontana.

Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering development: the making and unmaking of the Third World.* Princeton, NJ., Princeton University Press.

Escobar, A. (1996). Constructing Nature. Elements for a poststructural political ecology. In R. Peet and M. Watts, (eds.) *Liberation Ecologies. Environment, Development and Social Movements*, Routledge, London and New York.

Evans-Pritchard, E.E. (1940). *The Nuer: a description of the modes of livelihood and political institutions of a Nilotic people.* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Fabian, J. (1983). *Time and the other: how anthropology makes its object*. New York, Columbia University Press.

Fairhead, J., and M. Leach. (1996). *Misreading the African landscape: society and ecology in a forest-savanna mosaic.* Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press.

Fanon, F. (1967 (1963) *The wretched of the earth.* London, Penguin.

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison.* London, Penguin.

Foucault, M. (1990). *Madness and civilisation: a history of insanity in the age of reason*. London, Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1998 (1976)) *The will to knowledge: the history of sexuality*, Volume 1, London: Penguin.

Fowler, R. (1991). *Language in the news: discourse and ideology in the press*. London, Routledge.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York, Basic Books.

Geyer, R. and Rihani, S. (2000). *Complexity theory and the challenges to democracy in the 21$^{st}$ century*. Paper presented to the Political Studies Association-UK 50$^{th}$ Annual Conference 10-13 April 2000, London.

Gordon, R.J. (1998). Vagrancy, law & "shadow knowledge": internal pacification 1915-1939, pp. 51-76 in Hayes, P., Silverster, J., Wallace, M. & Hartmann, W. (eds.) *Namibia under South Africa rule: mobility and containment 1915-1946*. London, Windhoek, Athens: James Currey, Out of Africa, Ohio University Press.

Gordon, R. J. (2000). The stat(u)s of Namibian anthropology: a review. *Cimbebasia* 16: 1-12.

Gordon, R.J. and Sholto Douglas, S. (2000). *The Bushman myth: the making of a Namibian underclass.* Boulder, Colorado, Westview.

Gramsci, A. (1971) *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. by Hoare, Q. and Nowell-Smith, G. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Hamman, R. 1997 The application of ethnographic methodology in the study of cybersex, *Cybersociology* 7 http://www.cybersoc.com/magazine/1/plummer.html [accessed 23 January 2002].

Hammersley, M. (1992). *What's wrong with ethnography? Methodological explorations.* London, Routledge.

Hannerz, U. (2003). Being there...and there...and there! Reflections on multi-site ethnography. *Ethnography* 4 (2): 201-216.

Hardt, M. and A. Negri (2000) *Empire.* Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press.

Hart, K. (1982). *The political economy of West African agriculture.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and time.* Oxford, Blackwell.

Herodotus (1998 (ca. 440 BCE)). *The Histories.* Dewald, C. (ed.) Waterfield, R. (Trans.). Oxford, Oxford University Press).

Hirst, P. and Thompson, G. (2002). The future of globalization. *Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association* 37(3): 247-266.

Hobart, M. (1996). Ethnography as a practice, or the unimportance of penguins. *Europæa* 11: 3-36.

Hodgson, D (ed.) (2000). *Rethinking pastoralism in Africa: gender, culture and the myth of the patriarchal pastoralist*, James Currey, Fountain Publishers, EAEP, Ohio University Press, Oxford, Kampala, Nairobi, Athens

Hodgson, D. L. and Schroeder, R. A. (2002). Dilemmas of counter-mapping community resources in Tanzania. *Development and Change* 33: 79-100.

Hutchinson, S. E. (1996). *Nuer Dilemmas: coping with money, war and the state.* Berkeley, University of California Press.

Ingold, T. (2000). *The perception of the environment: essays in livelihood, dwelling and skill.* London, Routledge.

Irigaray, L. 1997 (1996) The other: woman. pp. 308-315 *in* Kemp, S. and Squires, J. (eds.) *Feminisms*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Irigaray, L. (2002) *The way of love.* London, Continuum.

Jantsch, E (1980) *The self-organising universe: scientific and human implications of the emerging paradigm of evolution.* Pergamon Press, Oxford

Kauffman, S. (1993) *The origins of order: self-organization and selection in evolution.* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Kauffman, S. (1995) *At home in the universe: the search for laws of self-organisation and complexity.* London, Penguin Books Ltd.

Kristeva, J. (1997 (1982)) Psychoanalysis and the polis. pp. 228-231 *in* Kemp, S. and Squires, J. (eds.) *Feminisms*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Kuhn, T.S. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions, 2nd edition.* London, Chicago University Press.

Laing, R.D. (1967) *The politics of experience and the bird of paradise*, London: Penguin Books.

Lacan, J. (1977). *Écrits: a selection*. London: Tavistock.

Latour, B. (1993). *We have never been modern.* Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Leach, M. and Mearns, R. (1996). *The lie of the land. Challenging received wisdom on the African environment.* Oxford, James Currey.

Lyotard, J.-F. (1984). *The postmodern condition: a report on knowledge.* Manchester, Manchester University Press.

Malinowski, N. (1967). *A diary in the strict sense of the term*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Merchant, C. (1980). *The death of nature: women, ecology and the scientific revolution.* New York, Harper and Row.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962) *Phenomenology of perception*. Smith, C. Trans. London, Routledge.

Mruck, K. and Breuer, F. (2003). Subjectivity and reflexivity in qualitative research - the *FQS* issues. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, [On-line Journal] 4(2). Available at: http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/2-03intro-1-e.htm [accessed 2 March 2004].

Nader, L. (1996). *Naked science: anthropological inquiry into boundaries, power and knowledge.* London, Routledge.

Notes From Nowhere Collective (2003) *We are everywhere: the irresistible rise of global anticapitalism*. London, Verso.

Ott, J. (1996). *Pharmacotheon: entheogenic drugs, their plant sources and history*. Kennewick, WA, Natural Products Co.

Plows, A. (2002) *Praxis and practice: the 'what, how and why' of the UK Environmental Direct Action (EDA) movement in the 1990s*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Wales, Bangor.

Porter, R. (2000). *Enlightenment: Britain and the creation of the modern world*. London, Penguin Books.

Rahnema, M. and Bawtree, V. (1997) *The post-development reader*. London, Zed Books.

Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York, Pantheon.

Sartre, J.-P. (1969). *Being and nothingness*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Scholte, J A. (2000). *Globalization: a critical introduction.* Palgrave, Basingstoke.

Scott, J.C. (1985). *Weapons of the weak: everyday forms of peasant resistance.* New Haven, Yale University Press.

Silver, D. (2000). *Looking backwards, looking forward: cyberculture studies 1990-2000.* http://www.com.washington.edu/rccs/ccs.html [accessed 23 January 2002].

Slim, H. and Thompson, P. (1993). *Listening for a change: oral testimony and development.* London, Panos Publications Ltd.

Smith, S.J. (1994). Qualitative methods. In R. J. Johnston, D. Gregory and D. M. Smith, (eds.) *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, Blackwells Publishers Ltd., Oxford.

Spender, D. (1980). *Man made language*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.

Stott, P. (1999). *Tropical rain forest: a political ecology of hegemonic myth-making*. London, IEA.

Stott, P. and Sullivan, S. (2000). *Political ecology: science, myth and power.* London, Edward Arnold.

Suler, J. (1999). *The psychology of cyberspace.* http://www.rider.edu/users/suler/psycyber.html [accessed 23 January 2002].

Sullivan, S. (1998). *People, plants and practice in drylands: socio-political and ecological dimensions of resource-use by Damara farmers in north-west Namibia.* Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. Univeristy College London, London.

Sullivan, S. (1999a). Folk and formal, local and national: Damara cultural knowledge and community-based conservation in southern Kunene, Namibia. *Cimbebasia*. 15: 1-28.

Sullivan, S. (1999b). The impacts of people and livestock on topographically diverse open wood-and shrub-lands in arid north-west Namibia. *Global Ecology and Biogeography (Special Issue on Degradation of Open Woodlands)*. 8: 257-277.

Sullivan, S. (2000a). Gender, ethnographic myths and community-based conservation in a former Namibian 'homeland'. In D. Hodgson, (ed.) *Rethinking pastoralism in Africa: gender, culture and the myth of the patriarchal pastoralist*. Oxford, James Currey.

Sullivan, S. (2000b). Getting the science right, or introducing science in the first place? Local 'facts', global discourse – 'desertification' in north-west Namibia. pp. 15-44 *in* Stott, P. and Sullivan, S. (eds.) *Political ecology: science, myth and power*. London, Edward Arnold.

Sullivan, S. (2001a). Difference, identity and access to official discourses: Hai‖om, 'Bushmen', and a recent Namibian ethnography. *Anthropos* 96: 179-192.

Sullivan, S. (2001b). Danza e diversità: copri, movimento ed esperienza nella trance-dance dei Khoisan e nei rave occidentali. (On dance and difference: bodies, movement and experience in Khoesan trance-dancing - perceptions of 'a raver'). *Africa e Mediterraneo Cultura e Societa* 37: 15-22.

Sullivan, S. (2002a). How sustainable is the communalising discourse of 'new' conservation? The masking of difference, inequality and aspiration in the fledgling 'conservancies' of Namibia. pp. 158-187 *In* Chatty, D. and Colchester, M. (eds.) *Conservation and mobile indigenous people: Displacement, forced settlement and sustainable development*. Oxford, Berghahn Press. http://www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/CSGR/Publications/Sullivan/Sep03.pdf

Sullivan, S. (2002b). 'How can the rain fall in this chaos?' Myth and metaphor in representations of the north-west Namibian landscape. pp. 255-265, 315-317 *in* LeBeau, D. and Gordon, R.L. (eds.) *Anthropology in the African renaissance*. Proceedings of the Anthropological Association of Southern Africa conference, Windhoek, Gamsberg MacMillan.

Sullivan, S. (2003). Protest, conflict and litigation: dissent or libel in resistance to a conservancy in north-west Namibia. In Berglund, E. and Anderson, D. (eds.) *Ethnographies of conservation: environmentalism and the distribution of privilege*. Oxford, Berghahn Press. http://www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/CSGR/Publications/Sullivan/Oct03.pdf.

Sullivan, S. (2004a). 'We are heartbroken and furious!' Violence and the (anti-)globalisation movements. *CSGR Working Paper* no. 133/04 http://www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/CSGR/wpapers/wp13304.pdf

Sullivan, S. (2004b). Barcelona 22-25 January 2004: First International Conference on *Social Movements and Activist Research*, *CSGR Newsletter* 11: 12-15.

Sullivan, S. and Homewood, K. 2003 On non-equilibrium and nomadism: knowledge, diversity and global modernity in drylands (and beyond …). *CSGR Working Paper* 122/03. http://www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/CSGR/wpapers/wp12203.pdf.

Thomas, R. (2000). *Herodotus in context: ethnography, science and the art of persuasion*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Tilley, C. (1994). *A phenomenology of landscape: places, paths and monuments*. Oxford, Berg.

Twyman, C., Morrison, J. and Sporton, D. (1999). The final fifth: autobiography, reflexivity and interpretation in cross-cultural research. *Area* 31(4): 313-325.

Vedder, H. (1928) *The native tribes of South West Africa*. Cape Town, Cape Times Ltd.

Weiss, G. and Haber, H. F. (1999). *Perspectives on embodiment: the intersections of nature and culture.* London, Routledge.

Willis, P. (1977). *Learning to labour: how working class kids get working class jobs.* Farnborough, Saxon House.

Willis, R. (1981). *A state in the making: myth, history and social transformation in pre‑colonial Ufipa.* Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press.

Wilmsen, E. (1989) *Land filled with flies: a political economy of the Kalahari.* Chicago, Chicago University Press.

Žižek, S. (2004). *Organs without bodies: Deleuze and consequences*, London, Routledge.