

## New methods in human geography

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### Introduction

- A methodological shift in the social sciences
- Framing questions
  - If the world is complex, multifaceted and multi-sensory, how might we best apprehend this complexity?
  - In particular, how might we move beyond the limitations of a reliance on linguistic narratives and retrospective sense-making?
- Acknowledging previous methodological developments
- But we argue there is a need to go further
- An example ...

### Holton Lee: a respite care centre in rural Dorset



### Research involvement

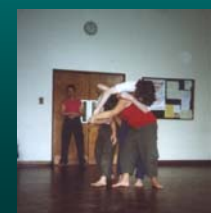
- Seeking to understand guests' embodied experiences of therapeutic landscape encounters
- A series of research visits (2004)
  - attention to organisational discourses and practices
  - in-depth interviews with staff (6) and guests (22)
- Talk very evidently only a partial register of guests' experience
- So where does this leave us?

### Some emergent issues

- Questioning representation, particularly talk
- Brain-body-world
- Limits of understanding method as extraction
- Attending to
  - Embodied skills
  - Affective encounters as basis for thinking
  - Practices

### Performance

- Embodied skills
- Manipulation of space and time
- Histories and geographies
- Participation
  - E.g. research residencies
  - Emphasis on methods for producing spaces of encounter as much as documenting these encounters



### Reanimating not so new methods

- Maps, diagrams and images as ways of performing the world
- E.g. Time Geography
- Mapping vernacular ecologies

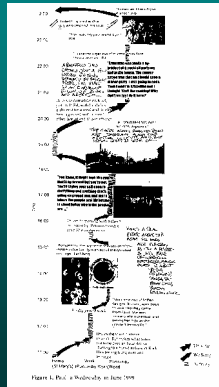


Figure 1. Photo: a Public site in June 1998

### Teaching about method and technique

- Fieldwork
- Walking, notes, photos, videos  
– e.g. rhythm
- Web-based activity
- Classroom in the city - city in the classroom
- [teaching/GEOG3003/project1/index.html](http://teaching/GEOG3003/project1/index.html)

QuickTime™ and a Motion JPEG decoder are needed to see this picture.

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### Concluding points

- Wider trends in social sciences
- Method as way of going on *in* the world as much as a way of reporting back *from* the world
- Research and teaching
- Rigour, evidence, and the politics of knowledge