



Real Life Methods

Part of the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods

We walk the walk, but can we talk the talk (with deference to John Lee Hooker): walkabouts to understand the lived environment of community

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walkabouts

- Something we *just do* as part of our investigation of networks, neighbourhood, and community and a method that:
- helps us to understand a place better
- acts as a catalyst in our research
- is used in conjunction with other methods
- helps us gain deeper sociological insight

walking the field site: something we
just do



complex places...



but *just doing* is not enough

- What are we doing?
- Why are we doing the walkabouts?
- How are we doing these walkabouts?
- What are we learning, not learning, ...?

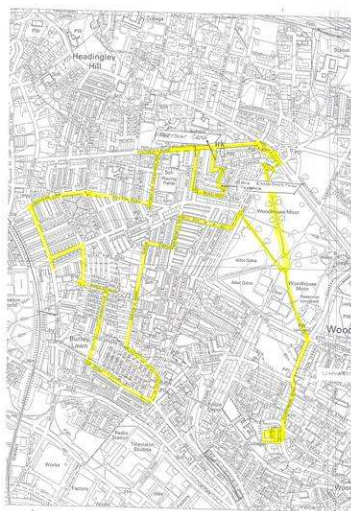
A critical reflection on our methodology.

another complex place: the field and the route

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...one aspect of complexity is history



...supplementing questions I want to ask



starting to know things about the place



the multi-sensory experience

- There are places that are quiet.
- There are places full of hustle and bustle
- There are evocative smells
- There are places that are easy to walk through, and others where you have to look where you tread
- There are places that feel safe and others that feel unsafe

case study: the playground



walkabouts as one method in the research



conclusions

- More than something we *just do*
- A way of engaging with place
- A multi-sensory method
- Additive rather than discrete modes of data
- Contribute to a deeper sociological understanding of place

and so to John Lee Hooker

