



Working with Paradata, Marginalia and Fieldnotes

The Centrality of By-Products of Social Research

Edited by Rosalind Edwards, Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology, University of Southampton, John Goodwin and Henrietta O'Connor, Department of Sociology, University of Leicester and Ann Phoenix, Thomas Coram Research Unit, Department of Social Sciences, UCL Institute of Education, UK and Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, University of Helsinki, Finland

This book asks the important question; Can the by-products of research activity be treated as data and of research interest in themselves?

This groundbreaking interdisciplinary volume considers the analytic value of a range of 'by-products' of social research and reading. These include electronically captured paradata on survey administration, notes written in the margins of research documents and literary texts, and fieldnotes and ephemera produced by social researchers. Revealing the relational nature of paradata, marginalia and fieldnotes, contributions examine how the craft of studying and analysing these by-products offers insight into the intellectual, social and ethical processes underpinning the activities of research and reading.

'Paradata will become increasingly important to researchers, both as an insight into the complexity and richness of participants and contexts, but also it has great potential to improve the quality of our research. Ros Edwards and her colleagues have provided us with a wonderfully comprehensive set of essays that are both insightful and valuable. This is a book which will have great appeal to students and professional researchers from both the quantitative and qualitative traditions.'

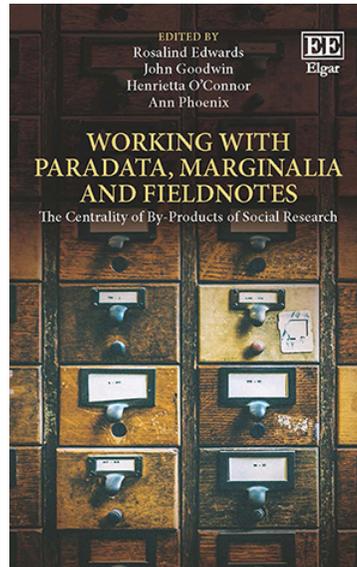
– Malcolm Williams, Cardiff University, UK

'Taking an expansive and inclusive approach to its topic, Working with Paradata, Marginalia and Fieldnotes offers a stimulating tour of a neglected domain of methodology. Readers who customarily regard paradata as a "dry and dull" element of data archiving will be delighted to read of the hidden corners of the research enterprise that this book's understanding of paradata and marginalia illuminates. Launching what is effectively a new field of inquiry, the book shows how these materials contribute to the field's renewed process of self-discovery.'

– Nigel Fielding, University of Surrey, UK

'This is an extremely important book that brings to the attention of social researchers and methodologists the fascinating potential and intrinsic interest of three kinds of by-product of the research process – field notes, paradata, and marginalia. Many of us are unfamiliar with all or some of these sources. The book is full of worked examples of their use which greatly enhances the book's utility for all of us. The editors and authors have done us all a great service in bringing to our attention research sources that can no longer be ignored.'

– Alan Bryman, University of Leicester, UK



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