Who is research for?
Temporality and ethics in qualitative longitudinal research

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Panel Session ‘As well as the Subject’

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Overview

‘Hawthorn’ (1)

1. Introduction: ethics, time and timeliness in research

2. About ‘Real Times’ – a qualitative longitudinal research study
   • context, research basis and institutional setting
   • purpose, focus, design and structure

‘Hawthorn’ (2)

3. ‘Real Times’ in practice
   • different interests and time horizons
   • some illustrative moments in the research process

4. Concluding remarks: who is research for?

‘Hawthorn’ (3)
Background to ‘Real Times’

1. A contextual baseline – ‘shaking-out’ and ‘shaking-up’ the third sector

2. Seeing things differently? snapshots and moving pictures

3. Institutional setting
   - ‘Third Sector Research Centre’
   - Changing political and funding environment for research
   - Birmingham and Southampton
   - Research ‘streams’ (e.g. ‘service delivery’; ‘social enterprise’)
   - ‘Knowledge Exchange Team’
‘Real Times’: purpose and research questions

A prospective longitudinal case study design

Overall purpose:

Understanding how third sector activity operates in practice over time

• What happens within third sector organisations (TSOs) over time and why?
• What matters to TSOs over time and why?
• How might we understand continuity and change in third sector activity?
Four focal points

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<tr>
<th>Fortunes</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
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<td>- What influences the fortunes of TSOs?</td>
<td>- How do TSOs regard and negotiate the environments in which they operate?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- How do they judge their fortunes?</td>
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<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Performance</th>
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<td>- What challenges do TSOs face?</td>
<td>- How is the ‘performance’ of TSOs understood by different stakeholders?</td>
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<td>- How do they respond?</td>
<td>- How can we understand their achievements?</td>
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How the research is structured

15 core case studies
+ Up to 3 ‘complementary cases’ for each core case

Successive waves of research

Project period –
April 2010 - August 2013
‘Real Times’ in practice

1. different interests and time horizons
   • research participants
   • research team members
   • academic colleagues (in TSRC and elsewhere)
   • research funders
   • practice and policy audiences
   • future researchers and audiences?

2. some illustrative moments
   • recruitment, retention and reciprocal exchange
   • variable access to sensitive issues (‘Birch’, ‘Cedar’ and ‘Ash’)
   • ownership and access to data
   • creating room for analysis
Concluding remarks

• Who is research for?
• What are the complex ways in which this question unfolds over time?
• The importance of contested time expectations
• Foreshortening and timeliness
• What’s your experience of these dilemmas?

• A last word about ‘Hawthorn’....