

MA in Cultural Astronomy and Astrology
Research Methods: Ethnography and Fieldwork
Qualitative Research
Weekly Introduction
Nick Campion

This week will introduce the concept of qualitative research and begin to prepare you for the first short essay. Throughout, you should continue to think about a topic, or subject area, for your final research project.

Forum Discussion

This week's reading is Feher, Shoshanah, 'Who Holds the Cards? Women and New Age Astrology', in James R. Lewis and Gordon J. Melton, *Perspectives on the New Age* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992) pp. 179-188.

Do you consider, from your limited familiarity with qualitative research, whether this article has any particular strengths or weaknesses?

A Note on This Week's Reading

You are not expected to read all the reading which is posted for this week. Rather, it is intended to provide a basic library for you so that you can write the 1500 word essay on Qualitative Research, and develop a framework for thinking about your research project. You will also, find, if you read everything, that it becomes somewhat repetitive. However, the advantage of multiple readings is that you will be exposed to different points of view and have a wider range of citations in the essays. The first piece to read should be Bryman, Alan, *Quantity and Quality in Social Research* (London: Routledge, 2001), chap 5. After that, use your judgment.

Reading

Bryman, Alan, *Quantity and Quality in Social Research* (London: Routledge, 2001), chap 5.

Bryman, Alan, *Social Research Methods*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004 (chap 1, Social Research Strategies').

Gorard, Stephen, *Quantitative Methods in Social Science*, London: Continuum, 2003, chap 3.

McLeod, John, *Qualitative Research in Counselling and Psychotherapy*, London: Sage 2001, Chap 9 ('How to do Qualitative Research')

Stake, Robert E., *The Art of Case Study Research*, London: Sage, 1995, chap 3 ('The Nature of Qualitative Research').

Silverman, David, *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook* (London: Sage Publications, 2002) Chap 1 ('What is Qualitative Research').

Silverman, David, *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction*, 2nd edition (London: Sage Publications, 2001), (Chap 2 'What is Qualitative Research?').

On-line resources

The Qualitative Report (on line journal) <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/>

University of Edinburgh, School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures; Research Methods and Historiography
<http://www.llc.ed.ac.uk/Research-Methods/>