

## 582X8 In-depth Qualitative Survey: Mass Observation

### Kirsty Patrick

This one-day workshop will examine methods and analysis of in depth qualitative survey, using data collected by Mass Observation as a practical case study. Attendees will use examples from the Mass Observation Archive to reflect on how in depth qualitative data might be used in their research, thinking through the following areas: what is in depth qualitative survey and what methods can be used to collect data? What kinds of data can it produce and how can these be analysed?

Mass Observation was founded in 1937 to undertake a survey of everyday life in Britain. Using both ethnographic and life writing methods, Mass Observation collected diaries, observational reports, questionnaire responses and ephemera to record daily life until the mid-1950s. In 1981, the project was started again, using a volunteer panel of writers to respond to in depth questionnaires reflecting everyday life in late 20<sup>th</sup>, early 21<sup>st</sup> Century UK. The project works with academics from various disciplines to gather data that forms part of the Mass Observation Archive housed at the University of Sussex at The Keep.

At the end of this module, you should be able to:

- Identify methodologies that can be applied to qualitative data analysis
- Apply qualitative analysis methods to a set of in-depth survey data
- Evaluate the benefits of using in depth surveys within your own research work

### **Indicative Readings:**

Lindsey, R. Bullock, S. 2014 A sociologist's field notes to the Mass Observation Archive: a consideration of the challenges of 're-using' Mass Observation data in a longitudinal mixed-methods study. In *Sociological Research Online* 19(3), 8

Madge, C. & Harrison, T.H. 1937. *Mass Observation* London: Frederick Muller Ltd.

Pollen, A. 2013. Research methodology in Mass Observation past and present: 'scientifically, about as valuable as a chimpanzee's tea party at the zoo'? In *History Workshop Journal* 75, p213-235

Sheridan, D. 1996 "*Damned anecdotes and dangerous confabulations*" *Mass Observation as life history*. Mass Observation Occasional Paper No. 7

Summerfield, P. 1985 Mass-Observation: Social Research or Social Movement? In *Journal of Contemporary History* 20: 439 (available via electronic library)

Mass Observation website available at: [www.massobs.org.uk/index.htm](http://www.massobs.org.uk/index.htm)