

Mixed Methods, Multiple Identities: Pre-teen girls and fashionable dress

Julie L. Blanchard

Senior Lecturer, Contextual Studies, UCA
Postgraduate Student, University of Southampton

Overview of presentation

I will:

- Give a brief summary of my thesis
- Explain my choice of methods – why mix?
- Review of:
 - Focus groups
 - Participant photography
 - Interviews
- Conclusions about mixing methods
- Overall findings so far

My thesis: *Pre-teen Fashionable Femininity*



MAIL ONLINE

“High street shops to ban padded bras and 'sexually suggestive' clothes for young girls”

Tim Shipman, 4 June 2011

Why mixed methods?

- ◎ To create multi-faceted picture of girls' consumption of fashion/clothes:
 - > Fashion as shared phenomenon, an inter-subjective practice
 - > Fashionable clothes as specific material objects
 - > Individual bodies have a physical relationship with specific clothes

Which methods to mix?

- Focus groups
 - Pros: participants shape discussion, negotiation, interaction
 - Cons: time & effort to transcribe
- Participant photography
 - Pros: participant choices, focus on specific clothes, details of garments
 - Cons: bad quality photos, needed much organising
- Individual interviews with photographs
 - Pros: narratives about choices, rooms, lives
 - Cons: participants nervous, buying disposable cameras & printing photos was expensive



Georgia's favourite outfit on floor



Georgia's sister's bedroom



Bethany's top hanging on bedroom door



Alice's wardrobe, picture 17 of 27

Mixed methods?

⦿ Difficulties:

- > Amount of data to analyse
- > Making links in data between research types
- > Drawing coherent conclusions

⦿ Advantages:

- > Build up rich, nuanced picture
- > Zoom in and out, specificity in wider context
- > Verbal, visual and gestural complexity
- > Dynamic and exciting

Mixed methods: Multiple identities



- > Clothes allow girls to construct various identities