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

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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
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 intersubjective 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
My findings so far:

- Fit and feel of clothes serve as reminders of their ever-growing bodies
- Clothes materialise memory
- Clothes allow girls to construct various identities

Mixed methods: Multiple identities

Clothes allow girls to construct various identities