Researching Children's Lateral Relationships over Time:

Methodological & Ethical Lessons from a Qualitative Longitudinal Study

By

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PREFACE

This Working Paper aims to provide some insights into conducting Qualitative Longitudinal research with children and young people. In doing so, it focuses on outlining the design and evolution of a recent project '*Siblings and friends: The changing nature of children's lateral relationships'* that formed part of the Economic & Social Research Council's Timescapes programme. Timescapes is the first major Qualitative Longitudinal study to be funded in the UK. Focusing on the ways in which personal relationships and identities develop across the life course Timescapes is framed by a flexible and multi-layered understanding of time. The programme comprises a consortium of five universities[1] in the UK working on seven projects[2] ranging in focus from children's relationships and identities to those of the oldest generation. Three strands relating to archiving, secondary analysis and knowledge transfer interweave and unite the seven projects. Firstly, an archive has been established to preserve and make available material for future use and analysis. Secondary analysis has also been completed within and across projects within the 'Timescapes' team and by external users. Finally, 'Timescapes' aims to provide new knowledge and, importantly, a long-term perspective that will inform policy and practice.

Originally designed as a guide for secondary users of the '*Siblings and friends'* data, it is hoped that this Working Paper will also offer some more general methodological and ethical insights into conducting Qualitative Longitudinal research with children and young people. The Working Paper focuses on all aspects of the research process from project design through to dissemination. We also point to some of the key findings from the project to date and highlight our publications and presentations in the field.

[1] The consortium includes the University of Cardiff, the University of Edinburgh, the University of Leeds, London South Bank University and the Open University.

[2] The projects comprise: siblings and friends: the changing nature of children's lateral relationships; young lives and times: the crafting of young people's relationships; the dynamics of motherhood: an intergenerational project; masculinities, identities and risk: stories of transition in the lives of men and fathers; work and family lives: the changing experiences of 'young' families; intergenerational exchange: grandparents, social exclusion and health; and the oldest generation: events, relationships and identities in later life.

1. INTRODUCTION

Who counts as a sister or brother? What is the significance of siblings and friends in the lives of children and young people? Do such relationships change over time?

Timescapes Project 1 has been tracking the lives of over 50 children from mid-childhood to young adulthood to help answer these and other questions. The aim of the project is to document the meanings, experiences and flows of prescribed (sibling) and chosen (friendship) relationships for children and young people, and how these relate to their sense of self as their individual and family biographies unfold. Studies of such lateral relationships are underdeveloped in childhood and family research. Little work follows children and young people over time to map their views and experiences of everyday changes in their sibling relationships and friendships. Sibling bonds are said to provide a sense of constancy for children in an uncertain world where parents may be less available physically (e.g. through paid employment), or psychically (e.g. emotional fulfilment). Such arguments, at a pragmatic level, leave aside the fact that children may have social ties to half and step sisters and brothers both within and outside their household that provide larger sibling groups, and can also form close friendships. Similarly, friendship networks often provide an important, yet under-researched, range of resources for individuals and families. Indeed, for many young people friendship networks can be seen as a social resource valuable in promoting collective identity and belonging.

1.1 Project Foundations

The study draws on samples of children from three previous projects conducted by the *Families and Social Capital Research Group* at London South Bank University between 2002 and 2005. Each study was concerned to some degree with children's sibling relationships and friendships.

- **Project one:** '*Sibling Relationships in Middle Childhood: Children's Views'* was funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and comprised a nationally distributed sample of 58 children (aged 7-13) from 48 households. Participants came from a diverse range of backgrounds and were recruited from a nationally representative sample of 1112 parents who took part in the NOP Parentbus Survey (which formed part of the '*Resources in Parenting: Access to Capitals*' study at London South Bank University). Participants were interviewed about their sibling relationships (full, half and step) and friendships between Winter 2002 and Summer 2003. The original research team comprised Rosalind Edwards, Melanie Mauthner and Lucy Hadfield. Twenty-eight young people from this project have taken part in at least one Wave of data collection for Timescapes (see also Edwards, Hadfield and Mauthner 2005a/b, 2006, Edwards, Hadfield, Lucey and Mauthner 2006, Edwards, Mauthner and Hadfield 2005, and Hadfield, Edwards and Mauthner 2006, Edwards 2007, 2008).

- **Project two:** Conducted alongside Project One, '*Sibling Practices: Children's understandings and experiences'* formed part of the *Families & Social Capital ESRC Research Group* programme of work. The study explored the sibling relationships and friendships of 44 children and young people

aged 5-21, evenly split in terms of ethnicity between White and Asian, and from a variety of family and class circumstances, who were interviewed between Summer 2003 and Spring 2004. The original research team comprised Helen Lucey, Rosalind Edwards and Val Gillies. Fifteen young people from this project have taken part in at least one Wave of data collection for Timescapes (see also Edwards, Hadfield, Lucey and Mauthner 2005a/b, Edwards, Hadfield, Lucey and Mauthner, 2006, Gillies and Lucey 2006).

- **Project three:** The '*Locality, Schools and Social Capital'* project, also part of the *Families & Social Capital ESRC Research Group*, explored young people's (aged 11-13) experiences of moving to secondary school between 2003 and 2005. Participants were recruited via twelve primary schools based in five contrasting locations in London, southern and central England. Each of these sites represented areas where access to well-resourced schools was limited. The original research team comprised Irene Bruegel and Susie Weller. Nine children (aged 10-12) were invited to take part in the Timescapes study in order to boost the number of young people from minority ethnic and working-class backgrounds (see also Holland, Reynolds and Weller 2007, Weller and Bruegel 2009, Weller 2007a/b, 2009, in press).

Participants aged between 5 and 13 at the time of the original interview from all three studies were invited to take part in two Waves of follow-up work. This age group was selected in order to explore experiences and perspectives from mid-childhood into the teenage years. As such material from these three 'heritage' studies represents Wave 1 of our current longitudinal work. Waves 2 and 3 were completed in 2007 and 2009 respectively. Susie completed the fieldwork for Project 3 of Wave 1 and for the entirety of Waves 2 and 3.

1.2 Research Questions

The sorts of substantive questions that 'Your Space!' is looking at arise out of the findings from the original studies, including that the children and young people themselves had a sense of change in their relationships with their sisters and brothers as they grew older.

- **Question 1:** What are the dynamics of children and young people's ontological connection to, or separation from, siblings and friends, and what do these relationships mean for age, gender and other status hierarchies and boundaries?
    - This question arises out of our finding that, even if they didn't always get on with each other, children often said that having brothers and sisters meant that there was always 'someone there' for them, giving them an emotional sense of protection from being alone. Friends were important and indeed could be 'like' a sister or brother to them, but weren't quite the same in this respect (e.g. Edwards, Hadfield, Lucey and Mauthner 2006; Gillies and Lucey 2006). So, how does this pan out as children grow into, or further into, their teens?
    - Talk and activity were regarded as key features and indicators of the state of relationships, and which were prioritised was largely differentiated by gender – talk between girls, activities between boys, and unsurprisingly activities between sisters and brothers (e.g.

Edwards, Hadfield, Lucey and Mauthner 2006; Edwards, Mauthner and Hadfield 2005). Being an older, younger or middle sibling was important in terms of flows of care, protection, authority and power, and also in judgements of each other – largely but not always down the hierarchy (e.g. Edwards, Hadfield, Lucey and Mauthner 2006). What happens to these hierarchies and boundaries over time?

- **Question 2:** How are these prescribed and chosen relationships balanced over time and accommodated with a sense of separate self for children and young people from different social groups?
    - Working-class children often talked about their siblings as providing them with a sense of identity as part of a collective group, while middle-class children often saw themselves as an individual who was also a sibling (e.g. Edwards, Hadfield, Lucey and Mauthner 2006). How is this sense of self in relation to other, both siblings and friends, played out over time?

- **Question 3:** What particular ethical considerations arise in the design and conduct of qualitative longitudinal research with children and young people living in different circumstances? What are the specific issues surrounding sample maintenance, informed consent, appropriate methods of data collection, and researcher involvement over time?
    - Many of these issues have been explored in Weller (2010c).

Using Timescapes data these questions have, to date, been addressed in a variety of publications and presentations at national and international events (see section on 'outputs').

1.3 Ethical Approach

'Your Space!' is exploring ethical issues as one of its core aims. We have been facing and considering ethical issues along these lines at two main levels:

- for our sample overall, and
- for individual participants in our research.

We consider that ethics in social research is concerned basically with researchers' moral deliberation, choice and accountability throughout the research process, encompassing conceptualisation and design, through data gathering and analysis, and into writing up and all forms of dissemination. Mainstream models of how to understand and resolve ethical issues stress actions in accordance with abstract and universal principles, either driven by intentions such as honesty, justice and respect (the means justify the ends) or judged by consequences such as increased knowledge (the ends justify the means).

In contrast, our starting point is a relational and contextual feminist ethics of care. We pay attention to the specific context of the research and relationships involved over time, both in forming the ethical dilemmas being faced as well as thinking about how to deal with them. We attempt to acknowledge and

take into account the power relations involved in our research project and within wider society. This involves taking account of the asymmetries between ourselves, our research participants, their family and friend relations, and the wider social context, and how these might shift over time, rather than treating everyone in the same way. But importantly, it also involves recognising that our participants are embedded in interdependent relationships that are also ebbing and flowing in various ways over time, rather than treating everyone as individually autonomous.

Our approach to ethics in social research means that we can often be facing ethical dilemmas that involve us in complex deliberations, for issues in relation to our sample overall and in relation to individual participants [See Appendix A for an overview of the ethical dilemmas faced]. Further, what we feel might be an ethical course of action for our research at one point in time for our sample or an individual may not hold at another point in time. We have also had to engage with an institutionalised ethical approval process that does not work with the relational, contextual and careful considerations set out above, but with more abstract principles. We gained approval from our University Ethics Committee in several phases. Initially we were given permission to proceed subject to the supply of Criminal Records Bureau Clearance documentation. We then submitted our invitation letters (one for parents and one for children – different versions for those for whom we had/did not have telephone numbers) and a leaflet designed to provide accessible information for young people [Appendix B]. All documentation was approved relatively quickly. Several months later we spent a great deal of time designing a leaflet and consent form for archiving. It proved challenging producing accessible materials that accurately conveyed the principles of archiving. The leaflet and consent form received a positive response from the committee [Appendix C].

Across all three Waves the ethical and methodological issues involved in research with children and teenagers were afforded significant attention. Issues such as informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, and power are particularly pertinent in such contexts. Accordingly, we designed a range of leaflets and postcards and developed a website[3] to provide participants with accessible information about the project and wider Timescapes programme. Consent has been continuously negotiated, verbally at the outset and after the interview. During Wave 3 we gained written consent to include participants' anonymised interviews and activities in the Timescapes archive [see section on Archiving].

1.4 Advisory Group and Participant Involvement

We consulted our project Advisory Group over a number of issues including: project design (e.g. information leaflets, newsletters, interview schedules and research tools); ethical and archiving dilemmas; the development and promotion of user engagement events; and ideas for future funding applications. Our Advisory Group comprises the following academics and practitioners: Suki Ali (LSE), Ciara Davey (National Children's Bureau), Lucy Hadfield (The Open University), Helen Lucey (University of Bath), Tricia Jessiman (National Centre for Social Research), Ute Navidi (London Play), Harriet Bjerrum Nielsen (University of Oslo, ex-officio member) and Samantha Punch (University of Stirling). Jan Fry was a member whilst employed at Parentline Plus.

[3] www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace

The transformation of the original studies into one longitudinal project impelled the need to devise methods for sustaining long-term interest. A number of factors rendered the active involvement of participants in this study relatively problematic. Ethical predicaments included concerns about confidentiality, anonymity and the collection of personal or sensitive data. There were also practical challenges associated with actively involving those from a nationally distributed sample especially over a considerable period of time. Nonetheless, during Wave 2 we invited project participants to join our Panel of Advisors. Four young people, three girls and one boy from a diverse range of backgrounds, responded positively.

Since the Panel's fruition in early 2008 members have participated in a number of consultations and have played a key role in providing advice on the design of accessible information leaflets and consent forms, as well as, the overhaul of our project website. Panel members have been contacted at regular intervals either by email, mail or phone, dependent on their preferences. Committed to preserving participants' long-term anonymity, the Panel do not confer but provide individual advice via email, mail or phone. It has, at times, been challenging to reconcile opposing suggestions, whilst also complying with the broader Timescapes remit. Mindful of other calls on participants' time we were anxious to emphasise that involvement in each consultation was optional. Input from the Panel has been valuable in enabling us to 'grow with' participants as the study progresses, ensuring in particular that the design of materials and the language used *continue* to be appropriate. During the Wave 3 interviews we gathered feedback on panel members' experiences of involvement (see Weller 2010c, Weller under review a).

We have since invited all project participants to become a 'media contact'. Four girls and one boy have volunteered to consider talking to any journalists who might be interested in the research [see Appendix D for information sent to participants].

1.5 About the Researchers

Rosalind Edwards: My background is in social sciences. I left school at 16, gained secretarial qualifications, and became a secretary. When my youngest child was five and went to school, I also returned to education, taking a degree in Social Administration at Brighton Polytechnic, followed by a Masters in Social Policy and Administration at the London School of Economics and a PhD at London South Bank University. My area of specialism is families, which I view as intensely social in nature. My work takes a critical and feminist approach to understanding family life, address family policies, and engage with major ideas and assumptions shaping these. I am particularly interested in family members' own positional understandings (as mothers, sons, sisters, grandfathers, and so on), how these are shaped by gender, social class, race/ethnicity and generation, and shaped by geographical, political and historical contexts. For most of the Timescapes research project, I was Professor in Social Policy and Head of the Weeks Centre for Social and Policy Research at London South Bank University, but at the end of 2010 I moved to take up the post of Professor of Sociology at the University of Southampton.

Susie Weller: At the age of 19 I was the first in my immediate family to go to university. I followed my passion and studied Geography at Brunel University, largely unaware of the possibilities of a career in academia. On completing my degree in 2000 I applied for and was awarded a studentship to undertake a PhD at Brunel University exploring 'teenagers' citizenship geographies'. This research was framed by the new social studies of childhood and feminist perspectives on citizenship. Developing my interest in youth-oriented research and creative and participatory research methods, in 2003 I became a Research Fellow in the inter-disciplinary Families & Social Capital Research Group at London South Bank University. For four years I worked on a study examining 'locality, schools and social capital', which took a critical approach to dominant theoretical perspectives on social capital, focusing on the ways in which children create and use social capital to help them settle into secondary school, and also for the wider benefit of their families and neighbourhoods. Again, building on my experience of working with children and young people in 2007 I was invited to work on Timescapes Project 1 as a Senior Research Fellow based at London South Bank University. I am currently co-director of the Families & Social Capital Research Group.

2. SAMPLE

Given the time lapse between the original Wave 1 studies and the Timescapes follow-up project (an average of four years) we had concerns about likely retention rates. In order to re-establish contact we sent letters and information leaflets [see Appendix B] to participants (all those aged 5-13 during Wave 1) and their parents with details of our planned follow-up work. Letters were sent in batches by geographical area in order to aid the planning of fieldwork. Despite a large number of participants moving home or changing their phone numbers we did manage to recruit 52 young people (from an original target of 60). In some instances we visited former addresses in the hope of re-establishing contact and this approach did enable us to re-connect with a small number of participants. During Waves 2 and 3 we provided participants with change of address/contact details cards to return to us if necessary, and also kept a record of their school or college to enable us to contact them via their educational institution. Importantly, we have endeavoured to maintain contact periodically between interviews [see section on 'interim activities' below].

Our sample comprises over 50 young people born between 1989 and 1996. Participants were aged 6-13 during Wave 1, 10-17 during Wave 2 and 12-19 during Wave 3. They are nationally distributed across a variety of locations in England, Scotland and Wales including remote villages, coastal resorts, new towns, inner-city estates and suburbs. Fifty-two young people took part in Waves 1 and 2, whilst 45 participated in Wave 3.

Table 1 illustrates the diversity of the sample during Wave 3. Although we did not collect data on the subject, at least 10 per cent of the sample mentioned that they had additional educational needs.

Table 1 - Characteristics of participants during Wave 3 (%, N=45)

GENDER		ETHNICITY		SOCIO-ECONOMIC		GEOGRAPHY	
Female	67	Asian/British Asian	18	Working-class	47	Urban	51
Male	33	Black/Black British	7	Middle-class	42	Suburban	27
		White/White British	60	Socially mobile	11	Rural	22
		Mixed	15				

Whilst relatively broad characteristics have been used for simplicity in table 1, the diversity within such categories should be noted. For example, the category 'Asian/British Asian' encompasses those with family backgrounds originating in Bangladesh, India, the Philippines, Mauritius, Uganda and Vietnam. Although our sample undoubtedly captures the views and experiences of a diverse range of young people, boys have been under-represented across each of the Waves. We have, therefore, been particularly concerned with sustaining boys' interest in the study.

2.1 Retention and Attrition

During the course of the research we used a range of tools to help aid retention and counter attrition. Although for researchers, projects are often all-consuming, for many participants research touches upon their lives only fleetingly. We have been eager to maintain a distant presence in participants' lives between interviews, wishing to be neither intrusive nor overburdening. Table 2 details the retention rates between each of the Waves.

Table 2 - Re-recruitment and retention

	WAVE 2 Re-recruitment from original studies	**WAVE 3 Re-recruitment from Wave 2**
Duration between Waves in years	4-5	2
No. of participants invited	95	52
No. of participants recruited *Original target = 60*	52	45
RETENTION RATES (%)		
Retention rate *Of those successfully contacted*	78	90
Number of WITHDRAWALS		
Refusals/withdrawals *E.g. too busy*	15	5
Unable to contact *E.g. moved*	28	2*

[*One participant was tragically killed in a car accident]

Three girls and two boys elected not to participate in Wave 3. These young people lived in suburban and rural areas and came from White working- and middle-class backgrounds. We have been unable to re-establish contact with one young man who has moved away from his family home. One participant was tragically killed in a road traffic accident [for further details of the ethical dilemmas faced as a result of 'Dan's' death see http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/assets/files/PROJECT%201%20-%20ethical%20dilemma%20correspondence%20%282%29.pdf].

In order to foster long-term engagement, we have endeavoured to sustain contact and encourage continuous involvement through a variety of means. Many of these techniques, such as our annual newsletters [see Appendix E], have focused on informing participants and their families and friends of our progress. Feedback garnered during Wave 3 suggested that many participants enjoyed receiving regular, albeit not too frequent, correspondence (see Weller 2010c). Contrary to common perceptions surrounding young people's use of new communication technologies at the expense of more conventional modes, the majority enjoyed receiving correspondence by post as they said that it made them feel important. In early 2009 the project website was updated from a 'child-friendly' format to a design more akin to popular teen-oriented sites, although to date we lack feedback on participants' engagement with the site.

3. DATA COLLECTION

Data has primarily been gathered via in-depth interviews with individual young people or small sibling groups, dependent on participants' preferences. Whilst the interview schedule used during each Wave differed, common themes included: significant life events, change and continuity in familial relationships and friendships; routines and responsibilities; and hopes and fears for the future, all within the context of everyday life at home, at school/ college/ work and in the local community. Table 3 details the main themes explored in each Wave.

In line with the other Timescapes studies base data relating to the following areas has also been collected:

- Country of birth and religion.
- Marital and labour force status (including part-time work).
- School type.
- Parental occupation.
- Housing tenure.
- Household composition (including number of siblings).
- Expectations to participate in Higher Education and ideas about future occupation.

Table 3: Topics covered during each Wave

	HERITAGE PROJECT 1: Sibling Relationships (JRF)	HERITAGE PROJECT 2: Sibling Practices (ESRC)	HERITAGE PROJECT 3: Locality, Schools & Social Capital (ESRC)
WAVE 1	• Definitions & interpretations of sibling relationships. • Everyday life with siblings e.g. like/dislikes. • Conflict & coping strategies. • Status e.g. age, gender, roles. • Memories of sibling relationships. • Imaginings of the future. • Social context e.g. home, school, interests.	• Definitions & interpretations of sibling relationships. • Everyday life with siblings e.g. time together, trust, reciprocity and obligations, space. • Sharing networks e.g. friends. • Family rules. • Role models. • Journeys and places. • Imaginings of the future.	• Preparation for secondary school. • Settling into secondary school e.g. who/what helped. • Friends and peer groups e.g. change/continuity during transition, help/support. • Family e.g. parental involvement/influence. • Local area. • Imaginings of the future.
	TIMESCAPES		
WAVE 2	• Background and interests. • Significant memories. • Family relationships (particularly siblings) e.g. time together, help & support, conflict. • Friendship & friends e.g. time together, help & support, conflict, influence, connections between siblings & friends. • Everyday life at home e.g. space, routine, rules, responsibilities. • Local area e.g. hanging out with siblings & friends. • School/college e.g. with/without siblings. • Imaginings of the future.		
	TIMESCAPES		
WAVE 3	• Background and interests. • Family relationships (particularly siblings) e.g. reflections on change/continuity - time together, help & support, conflict, influence. • Siblings at home e.g. change/continuity in space, routine, rules, responsibilities. • Friendship & friends e.g. reflections on change/continuity - time together, help & support, conflict, influence, connections between siblings & friends. • Understandings of generation • Reflections on the past e.g. important personal moments, significant world events over life-time. • Imaginings of the future. • Experiences of participating in qualitative longitudinal research.		

3.1 Research Methods

Attempting to home in on popular modes of communication, each Wave of data collection utilised a menu-based approach comprising a range of flexible activities consolidated by an in-depth interview. At the beginning of each Wave participants were given a folder containing information leaflets and items to keep such as notebooks, pens, stickers and lollipops. Tools used in Wave 1 comprised: a circle map exploring closeness in familial relationships and friendships; spider diagrams and charts exploring key aspects of sibling relationships at home and in school; timelines outlining significant life events; and vignettes exploring sibling dilemmas (see also Hadfield et al. 2005).

The Wave 1 studies were originally designed as relatively short-term projects (Weller under review a). Whilst it would have been fortuitous to consult participants about suitable methods of data collection for Waves 2 and 3, the time lapse between interviews coupled with the challenges of re-establishing contact after 4-5 years rendered participant involvement problematic. Rather, each new Wave was shaped by insights and themes emergent from previous Waves, and was also designed to reflect the need for a consistent, but flexible approach in qualitative longitudinal research. Accordingly, the Wave 1 interviews were carefully studied to assess the engagement of participants in different activities. Consequently during Wave 2 popular and insightful approaches such as the circle map were retained whilst the timelines and vignettes were adapted to fulfil the aims of the new Timescapes study. These tools focused on explorations of change/continuity in key relationships, and understandings of sibling relationships and friendship dilemmas. Week-long scrapbook diaries, used effectively in previous research, were also introduced. Similarly, Wave 3 incorporated the circle map, reflections on the Wave 2 timeline and vignettes exploring sibling and generational connections. The diary, popular only amongst a small minority was replaced with another previously tested method; photography. Available in the Timescapes Archive the tools used during each Wave are detailed in Table 4.

Feedback gathered during Wave 3 was generally encouraging, with some commenting positively on the research tools used, whilst others made suggestions for improvements (see Weller, 2010c). Activities made for a more relaxed situation and were deemed beneficial in breaking up continuous periods of talk that might otherwise be boring or overwhelming. Activities were of value to those who found aspects of their lives hard to convey verbally, enabling different forms of expression. Several boys found tasks that required reading and writing challenging to complete and sought the researchers' help or the guidance of a parent or sibling. A small minority appeared relatively ambivalent about the tools and, reinforcing dominant constructions of adulthood, expected the researcher to assume control.

Table 4 – Methods used for each Wave

TOOLS	WAVE 1	WAVE 2	WAVE 3
Diaries	–	• Life with siblings and friends over a week.	–
Network/circle maps	• Closeness to family, friends and other people. • Friendship networks at school.	• Closeness to family, friends and other people.	• Closeness to family, friends and other people.
Photography	–	–	• Important spaces at home.
Timelines	• Memories of siblings.	• Change/continuity in sibling relationships and friendships.	• Reflection on Wave 2 timeline.
Vignettes	• Siblings. • School.	• Siblings. • Friendship.	• Siblings and friends. • Generation.
Worksheets/ games E.g. Tables, Diagrams and Flowcharts	• Siblings. • Chores. • Rules. • School. • Journeys/places. • Questionnaires.	–	–

3.2 Fieldwork and Field Notes

For the Timescapes element of the study fieldwork was undertaken by Susie who travelled the length and breadth of mainland Britain principally by public transport in 2007 and 2009. Field notes from these two Waves of data collection are available in the Timescapes Archive and we feel they provide important contextual information likely to aid re-analysis. Figure 1 features an extract from Weller (under review b) that details some of the emotions felt during fieldwork.

Figure 1: Emotions and research

The young people involved live in a diverse range of urban, suburban and rural locations dispersed across Britain. During the research I have, therefore, spent much time travelling, primarily by public transport. In some instances I have moved in quick succession from deprived households to much more affluent settings, which undoubtedly conjure up a range of powerful emotions that interact with my own political stance and upbringing to shape my assumptions and expectations about the participant and their household. Different emotions ebb and flow throughout the research process, from initial anticipations through to emotional exhaustion.

Prior to the interview, and particularly the first few interviews in any given project, I feel the pressure and stress of preparation; emotions include anxiety and excitement about the places and people I will be

visiting; uncertainty as to whether participants will remember the arrangement and in my own abilities; concerns about acceptance; and care and an emotional commitment to my work. The journey there is also a time of ambivalence where feelings of excitement and anticipation intermingle with 'spatial angst' or concerns about the practicalities of getting there, on time, with everything I need, safely. I primarily travel by public transport and my recent work has taken me to some very remote and isolated places, along with areas deemed to have high crime rates. A great deal of emotional labour or work is, therefore, conducted prior to reaching the fieldwork site and our past experiences, imaginings and perceptions ultimately shape how we anticipate, respond to and feel about different places. I often experience feelings of excitement and wonder; a geographer enjoying the freedom of mobility and on a personal voyage of discovery not only exploring places but also my own emotional responses to and within them.

The journey home is the space in which I begin to offload my emotions by writing field notes, often struggling to ensure that I record every detail. Once written I am pleased and relieved. This is not always an easy, comfortable or pleasurable process. As other authors have written, the process of writing a research diary can be a cathartic experience but it can also include the challenges of tapping into the unspoken. Spaces and people at home and in the office provide the opportunity for further offloading and sharing of joy, pride, anxieties and frustrations to name but a few. Furthermore, during the process of analysis I often 'travel back' as recollections of the space reignite memories about interactions and emotions experienced during the encounter.

3.3 Interim Activities

Our research is essentially structured around repeat interviews conducted every few years. Sustaining young people's interest in the interim can prove challenging and often involves a considerable investment of time. In addition to regular correspondence and the project website we have developed a range of interim activities designed to: help maintain contact with participants between interviews; promote some of the outcomes of the study to participants, their families and the general public; and to enrich our longitudinal data. Participation in the activities was optional.

Two of the activities, the 'cultural commentary' and 'Your Life: aged 25' exercises (both deposited in the Timescapes Archive) were specifically targeted at engaging project participants. The activities were administered by post and email. For completion respondents were offered a £10 voucher. In October 2007, a sample of 20 participants were invited to take part in our 'cultural commentary' activity in which they were asked to explain one of their interests to a researcher exploring the Timescapes Archive in 100 years time. We received 14 responses (70 per cent response rate). A year later, we invited all project participants to complete our 'Your life: aged 25' activity in which they were invited to provide written accounts describing their imagined home life, work and interests at the age of 25. The exercise sought to 'replicate' the pupil's questionnaire completed by 13,669 11 year-olds in 1969 as part of the British Birth Cohort Study. We received 24 responses (46 per cent response rate).

Three of the interim activities sought to engage not only project participants but also the general public[4]. In March 2008 we teamed up with Bill Bytheway and Joanna Bornat (Timescapes Project 7) to conduct a UK-wide exploration of sibling relationships. Part of the *ESRC Festival of Social Science,* the exercise invited members of the public to complete a postcard telling us about their relationships with their siblings. Postcards were distributed online and through universities, schools and voluntary

[4] We were awarded additional funding from the ESRC for each of these endeavours.

organisations. During the week-long exercise public response far exceeded expectation both in terms of the quantity of postcards received (793) and also the level of detail, with a significant number providing rich, in-depth qualitative accounts (Bytheway et al. 2008). In 2009 we obtained further funding to work in partnership with the *V&A Museum of Childhood* in London to showcase findings from the exercise. The 'family albums' weekend was designed as a knowledge transfer activity and comprised a poster exhibition, and a series of sibling-oriented workshops run by community artists and storytellers. Almost 1500 visitors accessed the museum and poster exhibition during the event, with 127 engaging in the activities. We also gained funding to collaborate with *BBC Memoryshare* to develop a unique online collection of memories of sibling relationships over the past century. Again, the exercise formed part of the *ESRC Festival of Social Science.*

We also kept in touch with participants by sending birthday and New Year cards (Figure 2), some of which were re-designed in light of comments from our Participants' Panel of Advisors. We also sent annual newsletters intended to update participants and their families with our progress [see Appendix E].

Figure 2: Examples of greetings cards sent to participants – 2010 designs.

4. ANALYSIS, RE-ANALYSIS AND ARCHIVE PREPARATION

Through our own analysis and that of others the research is contributing to a number of theoretical, substantive and methodological debates including:

- Relationality and individuality.
- Social divisions and social context, especially gender, social class and generation.
- Spatiality and temporality.
- Ethics and archiving.

We do not feel that the aim of qualitative longitudinal research is to be representative. The main basis for the 'generalisability' or 'transferability' of the lessons of qualitative research is 'thick description'; that is, giving the reader enough rich contextual information to fully understand the findings, so that they can judge whether or not the arguments being put forward are applicable to or 'fit' with other contexts. Thus, we have been using a case study approach to explore process. The detail of each case provides the rigour that can be taken further intellectually through our analysis. We then draw upon our detailed analysis of each case to 'scale up' or develop more general statements about process.

In scaling up we have used a case study approach to explore conceptual themes and issues across projects and/or cases rather than make comparisons between participants with seemingly similar characteristics. Our analysis has focused on a number of themes and much of this work has been published [please see list of outputs detailed below]. Emergent findings include:

- **Gender and sexuality over time:** Children and young people's sense of what it is to be male or female is an integral part of their relationships with their brothers and sisters. Their feelings and ideas about gender and sexuality can be confirmed, challenged and negotiated as part of their everyday interactions with each other over time (Edwards and Weller 2010a).

- **Shifting generations across time:** Generation can be understood and enacted as a discursive construction between sisters and brothers, rather than a fixed family-based or cohort-based position. Older siblings can be regarded as parent-like and belonging to a different generation, while older relatives such as aunts can be considered the same generation as a sibling (see presentations listed in the section on 'outputs').

- **Growing closer, growing apart:** Relationships with brothers and sisters are dynamic, with change and continuity over time. Bad relationships can shift into close ones as siblings grow older, especially around shared music interests and other activities. Once close connections can loosen as siblings develop other intimate relationships (e.g. Edwards and Weller 2010a).

- **Trajectories to adulthood and the economic recession:** Data collection for 'Your Space!' has coincided with recent periods of economic change, namely: sustained growth (Wave 1); the credit crunch (Wave 2); and economic recession (Wave 3). Preliminary analysis suggests that teenagers entered the recession with prior resources and particular trajectories already in play. Rather than

disrupting such paths, the downturn appeared to be providing a set of conditions for embedding pre-existing paths (Edwards and Weller 2010b).

- **Hopes for parents' futures:** Rather than the common portrayal of young people as ungrateful or selfish, many wanted the best for their parents. Some people hoped their parents would have a more relaxing, healthy and enjoyable lifestyle, either by moving to the countryside or abroad, or by working less. Others hoped their parents would be wealthier, with some suggesting they would repay their parents in later life either with money or help. Several hoped for good relationships amongst all family members, particularly those who described tensions within the family (Baker 2010b).

4.1 Re-analysis Pilot

In early 2010 we commissioned a small secondary analysis pilot study that focused on participants' hopes for their parents' futures across the entire sample (Baker 2010a). Sarah Baker, who completed the analysis, also detailed her experiences of doing so (Baker 2010b). She felt that:

- The data and project materials were accessible and of use to the secondary user.
- That the base data should be in a format appropriate for qualitative work rather than numerical.
- That field notes should be deposited in the archive to provide important contextual material.
- Interviews with the primary researchers should be conducted to provide further contextual material.

4.2 Archive Preparation

Participants will also continue to be involved over the long-term through the Timescapes 'living archive', which has been established to preserve and make available material for future use and analysis. The possibility of depositing data in the Timescapes Archive was discussed with participants at the outset of Wave 2. Guidelines and protocols were not developed by the Archive team until later in the project so early explanations, whilst as thorough as possible, were sometimes a little tentative. Prior to Wave 3 we developed an information leaflet and consent form designed to cover all that the Archive required whilst maintaining an accessible and 'participant-friendly' format [see Appendix C]. As a stipulation of our original ethical approval from London South Bank University the leaflet and form were submitted to the University Ethics Committee. We were delighted that we were not only granted permission to use the documents but that the Committee requested to use them as an example of good practice. The leaflets were sent with a covering letter to participants prior to the Wave 3 interview in order to allow them time to study the information. The archiving and consent process was then discussed during the interview where we sought permission to deposit anonymised versions of their interviews and activities. Those who had elected not to participate in Wave 3 were sent the information by post, along with an explanatory letter and pre-paid envelope. We were afforded consent by all but two participants – one of whom did not take part in Wave 3 and did not return the form and another who moved house and with whom we subsequently lost contact.

Given the lengthy and meticulous nature of archive preparation, the size of our sample and the fact that we were one of the smaller Timescapes research teams we elected to recruit additional help to prepare the data for future re-use and long-term preservation. Robert Stephenson, Susie's partner, had completed the transcription for some of the Wave 1 data and the entirety of Waves 2 and 3 and so was asked to aid the preparation process. He also had experience of digitizing material for other archives. In collaboration with Ros and Susie (who also sought advice from the project Advisory Group) Rob set about anonymising, formatting and digitising all the material, along with devising detailed metadata. In Figure 3 Robert reflects on the decision-making process and the practicalities of preparing material for the archive.

Figure 3: Preparing material for the Timescapes Archive – by Robert Stephenson

Introduction

I was delighted to be asked to prepare the Timescapes Project 1 data for archiving, having already been familiar with part of the Wave 1 material through transcribing some of the interviews (project 3). I also transcribed all of the Wave 2 and 3 interviews; an exhaustive process involving a large number of in-depth, semi-structured participant contributions, producing rich and layered narratives that at times challenged my skills and stamina! Indeed, as Susie Weller's partner, I was closely exposed to the Timescapes Project's rationale, core construction and activities and this endemic knowledge, I believe, was of great value when planning my strategy to organise what was a multitudinous and eclectic dataset that required and demanded accuracy, consistency and a degree of reflexivity if the material was to be prepared diligently to a standard befitting of such an important body of work. I had past experience of digitising material for the 'International Tin Research Institute' Archive but had never tackled anything on this scale before.

Overall approach

I approached my work in two ways: Firstly, I reviewed the overall picture of what was required, to ensure consistency over the three Waves, in light of their procedural and differential outcomes over time, realising that excellent file management allied to a very methodical approach would be crucial for a successful outcome. Susie had already compiled an inventory of all of the different data files (e.g. interview transcripts and activity sheets) constituting Wave 1. She also provided details of those used in Waves 2 and 3, along with other contextual information such as interview schedules and draft field notes. Secondly, I revisited each individual case (i.e. all of the documents relating to an individual participant or sibling group). Some of the activities/worksheets were very familiar to me from my experience of working on Waves 2 and 3, whilst other participant materials used in Wave 1 (namely for projects one and two) were new to me. This thorough sweep of the dataset and its constituent parts enabled me to construct a viable data management plan, essential to maintain a clear vision of how I was to proceed and I sketched this out in preparation for a collaborative meeting with Susie before the work commenced (who discussed the strategy for archive preparation with Rosalind Edwards, and in the case of particularly challenging issues, with the Project Advisory Group).

During several scheduled discussions Susie and I agreed a timetable and 'Action Plan', interview

material templates were collected across the three Waves and I proceeded to transfer all materials to my PC (backing up all work on two external hard drives and on DVD). It was decided at a very early stage that data would be organised by Case rather than Wave as this would (and so it proved) ensure a more efficient method of file management, enabling me to both familiarise myself with each participant and to ensure that the anonymisation of people, places and institutions were consistent across each Wave. This method assisted enormously in the development of good practice at the outset, providing firm foundations on which to build a definitive road map, tracking both what I would call general 'Wave' fluctuations and individual 'Case' scenarios, both of which presented challenges to my perceived objectivity (although I would question whether a transcriber or archivist can ever be objective) and desire to maintain 100% accuracy and consistency. This 'Case rather than Wave' procedure also, I believe, aided Susie and Ros' approach to narrative analysis.

From this foundation thinking I now turn to the practicalities during implementation and the various foreseen and unforeseen challenges the various tasks presented, especially regarding anonymisation.

Data preparation

For each Wave, the audio files for each participant were revisited and checked against the transcripts and any alterations made to address errors or omissions in the original drafts. This exercise really emphasised the importance of high quality transcription. A large number of Wave 1 interviews were recorded on cassette tape and were of poor audio standard. It is important to note that they were never intended to be archived, and that the quality of audio recording becomes all the more significant when the researcher is aware that others may need to listen to the files. Some of the Wave 1 transcripts were incomplete and in differing formats, necessitating extensive redrafting and long periods of time being used to identify the soundtrack with the activity materials/worksheets present in hard copy form. Two transcripts were only available in paper form and had to be painstakingly re-typed to be saved electronically. This example of the limitations of earlier technology had implications for a smooth transition of case consistency between Waves 1, 2 and 3 although some cases proved less problematical than others. Completing this Wave 1 audio exercise certainly cemented my appreciation for the replacement of cassette recording with digital equipment! The tapes were destined to be digitally copied and also archived alongside the digital audio files for Waves 2 and 3 (albeit with a time embargo).

As I progressed through the Wave 1 material I quickly became familiarised with the eleven activities used therein and was meticulous in my use of file labelling, details of which had been agreed with Susie (and indirectly via the Timescapes Archive team) at the outset. Similarly, the five activities used in Wave 2 and the five activities employed in Wave 3 were quickly assimilated, ready for anonymisation and scanning.

Across all three Waves facing sheets were 'attached' to each document or file, ensuring that each contained the correct background information or metadata. A metadata table, the template of which was provided by the Timescapes Archiving team, was constructed for each case, showing all the files collated for that individual or sibling group. This was designed to provide clear information for the Archiving Team.

Anonymisation was conducted using a previously agreed toolkit of terms and identifiers, in line with the generic Timescapes Anonymisation Guidelines. Ros and Susie had agreed on 'light-touch' anonymisation disguising people, places names (with the exception of large places or countries) and institutions (such as schools and employers). This approach formed the basis on which they had secured consent from their participants. Retaining non-anonymised versions of all documents for project team use only I constructed a new document and systematically replaced all identifying words and phrases on the basis of the Timescapes guidelines. For each case I constructed a 'tracking table' to list all of the anonymised material, such as people's names, place names, occupations and any other potentially 'identifiable' text, alongside the real names etc. again for project team use only. The same codes/replacement text was used across each Wave. For example, a person referred to as 'Friend 1' in Wave 1 was also referred to as 'Friend 1' if mentioned in other Waves. This will enable a secondary analyst to explore change and continuity across Waves without needing to refer to the original, non-anonymised transcripts and activities.

For some participants, with extensive familial and friendship networks, this process presented many challenges, such as trying to establish the correct identity of an individual spoken about, where that person's name was identical to several others in the family or within a particular friendship group. Indeed this identification through time and space sometimes highlighted inconsistencies between Waves, whereby earlier 'assumptions' made were identified as incorrect and demanded revision. This was a consistent theme throughout the exercise and made me even more aware of the need for meticulous cross-checking to maintain accuracy across such a breadth of data and resist the perils of the 'guessing game!' This was particularly important for cases that involved two or three siblings being interviewed together, where the sheer complexity of their intertwined and/or separate networks described or, in some cases, their choice to change pseudonyms across time, sometimes more than once, proved very demanding and sometimes completely baffling! Here, dialogue with Susie proved invaluable.

Once the anonymisation of interview transcripts was complete I then turned to the hard copy activity sheets (e.g. circle maps, timelines and such like) and prepared them for scanning, ensuring that facing sheets were correctly compiled for each activity and printed out prior to scanning. There then followed the painstaking task of marrying the information compiled in my 'tracking table' containing anonymisation codes from the interview transcripts with each activity sheet and laboriously labelling any identifiers contained therein with the correct anonymisation 'name'. Consistency across documents for each case within a Wave was just as important as consistency across Waves. For example, in the case of the circle map 'real names' were covered with small stick-on labels detailing the identifier code (i.e. 'Friend 1'). For some cases where, for example, the names mentioned on circle maps and timelines were limited in number, this didn't present too many difficulties but others, where a myriad of overlapping names, closely woven together, clung to the original document, it proved to be far more difficult and the task much more time consuming and frustrating than ever envisaged.

Places names and institutions were replaced with short descriptions to aid the secondary analyst. This raised challenges in terms of my role in making measured judgments, such as, what constitutes a 'small

town' or how to describe an institution. My descriptions will ultimately impact on the analysis of the secondary user. I used my geographical training in the classification of places and such like to aid this process. Decisions also had to be made in terms of parental occupations and whether certain degrees of anonymisation would either reveal too much or, equally negatively, hide data useful to future users of the archive. Addressing this balance between my researcher's intuition and the need to protect the participant proved more difficult than I imagined but constant dialogue between myself and Susie (and in turn Susie and Ros) resulted in a consensus on a case-by-case basis. This dialogue was essential when facing more difficult ethical encounters with material relating to personal relationships, both within a particular family or further afield, where Susie's innate knowledge of specific context proved invaluable in addressing potentially sensitive material and making ethical judgements on the levels of anonymity required.

Another problem encountered but not foreseen was that in some earlier interviews, transcripts included the contributions of other(s) present during the recording and the issue of whether we had formal consent to include such material was an important one. In one case a friend of the interviewee contributed a substantial degree of material that could have proven useful to future users but, after consultation between Ros and Susie an embargo was placed on this data on the basis that he had not consented to the use of the material. In other examples small contributions of family members WERE retained as it was decided that these people had been aware of the research for some considerable time (having received letters about the project) and knew that their children/siblings were giving consent.

Making decisions on a case-by-case basis was fundamentally important. Two cases, in particular, proved challenging in terms of making decisions about the archiving of their data. In only one case it was decided to embargo a more significant amount of data. The participant in question had taken part in project 3 of Wave 1 and her affiliation with a very small cultural community had been discussed in a publication. In later interviews she described a scenario that she had kept hidden from her family for fear of serious disapproval. It was felt that it might be possible to identify her through her cultural affiliation and so elements of her interviews have been embargoed. Furthermore, one participant was tragically killed in a car accident between Waves 2 and 3. Susie and Ros had secured verbal consent but the participant had not signed a consent form. Ros and Susie consulted the Timescapes Archiving team and their Project Advisory Group and it was decided that the recorded verbal consent to archive his interviews and activity sheets was sufficient. The participant's project materials, along with some memories recorded by his mother, were deposited in the archive in his family's knowledge.

Once all the material was scanned it was meticulously checked (by myself and Susie) and copied onto DVDs and subsequently forwarded to the Timescapes Archive team in batches by post (using secure recorded delivery).

Conclusions

To summarise, this was a challenging and sometimes very difficult exercise that called for the highest degree of application and consistency. Some elements, such as the actual anonymisation of material was more time-consuming and certainly more problematical than envisaged but, nevertheless, very

interesting and ultimately rewarding. To some extent it was a privilege to be offered the opportunity to visit such a wealth of material that was both stimulating and informative but the responsibility of doing such material justice rested heavily upon my shoulders at times. Overall, I prepared 145 transcripts (somewhere in the region of 8,000 – 30,000 words in length each), digitised 145 audio files, and anonymised and digitised approximately 500 activity sheets. My advice for future archivists is that the amount of time required for such work should not be under-estimated.

I wish to thank the Timescapes Team for the opportunity to be involved in such an important Project and thank all of those who helped me with issues that arose during its completion.

Robert Stephenson
June 2011

5. POLICY, PRACTICE AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Each Timescapes project was requested to keep a log of user engagement for the duration of their projects. We anticipated that our project could speak to a range of debates and issues of policy, practice and public concern including:

- **Children and youth-centred support/services**
  - Peer support/mentoring.

- **Education, career development and mentoring**
  - School choice and sibling placement policies.
  - Bullying support/initiatives.

- **Family support/policy**
  - Parental education.
  - Separation/divorce.
  - Family therapy.

- **Health and social care**
  - Siblings and the care of elderly parents.
  - Looked-after children.

Over the duration of the project we spoke to a vast number of potential users of the data and other interested parties. Our 'user engagement' was logged and collated by the Timescapes Secondary Analysis team. Examples include:

- **Academics:** From a wide range of disciplines including Professors through to research students located in the UK and Europe, and overseas in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa and the U.S. We also engaged with research groups/networks and professional bodies including the British Sociological Association, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, Geographies of Children, Youth and Families, International Childhood and Youth Research Network, Play Research Network, Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers, and the Women's Workshop: Qualitative Research Group on Family and Household. Such dialogue included the dissemination of research findings, and the training of academics in a particular method of analysis.

- **Policy-makers:** Including face-to-face dialogue with those in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, Department for Children, Schools and Families, Youth Citizenship Commission, and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

- **Practitioners:** Working in the fields of social work, speech therapy, adult education training, and primary and secondary education.

- **Third sector organisations:** Including, but not limited to, the Children's Rights Alliance for England, the Daycare Trust, the Family and Parenting Institute, Futurelab, ICAN, London Play, National Children's Bureau, One Plus One, Parentline Plus, and The Young Foundation.

- **The media:** Including articles in and discussions with: BBC (e.g. BBC Radio Essex, BBC Horizon programme, BBC Radio Leeds, BBC Radio London, BBC Radio Wales), Colourful Radio, LBC Radio, The Guardian, The Scottish Herald, The Times, The Sunday Times, and freelance journalists. As a result of this coverage we were approached by a wide variety of national and international organisations including: Child Accident Prevention Trust; Children's Bureau USA; Early Years and Childcare Service, Bradford; Greater London Authority; Hythe and Dibden Parish Council; National Children's Bureau; NSPCC; Shelter; OFSTED; Children in Scotland; Education Leeds; and Streets Alive. Some organisations published our findings on their websites and in reports (e.g. Family & Parenting Institute and the Young Foundation). Our work also featured in the ESRC Parliamentary Briefing in Spring 2007. In 2007, MPs David Willets and Maria Miller contacted us for further information and in 2009 two parents (living in different regions of the UK) approached us as they wished to use our findings in their appeals for secondary school places. Several school governors also informed us of the application of our research in their schools.

- **Cultural Industries:** Principally based on events developed for ESRC Festival of Social Science including: Sibling postcards (2008 - Inviting people to complete an online or actual postcard telling us about their relationships with their siblings); BBC Memoryshare (2009 - A collaboration with BBC Memoryshare, where people can share their memories of their sisters and brothers online: www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/brothersandsisters); V&A Museum of Childhood (2009 - A family fun weekend in collaboration with the V&A Museum of Childhood, London, visited by nearly 1500 people) [please see section on 'Interim Activities' above for further details].

- **Participants, their families and friends, and the wider public:** In addition to media coverage feedback was provided to participants, their families and friends via the project website, annual newsletters and invitations to specific events, for example, the launch of the Timescapes Archive. Following the overwhelming popularity of digital technologies amongst young people a short prototype YouTube video was developed detailing some of the findings from one aspect of the project. The video provides glimpses into teenagers' bedrooms, revealing a little of the stories they tell about their identities and relationships with sisters and brothers. With participant's express consent it incorporated their photographs and short interview extracts, along with accessible analytic commentary. It was hoped that the use of YouTube, a popular video community, would enable the global distribution of research findings in an accessible and engaging format. Launched on 29th October 2010 511 people engaged with the video in the first two months. It was most popular amongst males aged 13 to 17 and was viewed predominantly by those in the UK, as well as, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Eire, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Iraq, Italy, Latvia, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands, Turkey and the USA. Detailed comments were received from 26 people, primarily from the U.K. but also from Brazil, Eire, Spain and the U.S.A.

6. OUTPUTS 2007 - 2011

6.1 Publications

From the Heritage and Timescapes data

Bytheway, B, Bornat, J, Edwards, R. and Weller, S. (2008) *Sisters and Brothers: Results of a UK-wide postcard exercise*, ESRC Festival of Social Science 2008, http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/brothersandsisters/

Weller, S. (2009) Mapping emotions in different spaces of research and dissemination, in S. Weller and C. Caballero (Eds.) *Up Close and Personal: Relationships and Emotions Within and Through Research*, Families & Social Capital Research Group Working Paper No. 25, London: London South Bank University.

Baker, S. (2010a) *Reflections on Secondary Analysis of the 'Siblings and Friends' Data* http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/assets/files/Project%201%20Secondary%20Analysis%20Pilot.pdf

Baker, S. (2010b) *Are they 'Bothered'? Children and Young People's Hopes for Their Parents' Futures*, http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace/Parents%27_Futures.pdf

Edwards, R and Weller, S. (2010a) A sideways look at gender and sibling relationships, in J. Caspi (Ed.) *Sibling Development: Implications for Mental Health Practitioners*, USA: Springer Publishing.

Edwards, R and Weller, S. (2010b) Trajectories from youth to adulthood: Choice and structure for young people before and during recession, *21st Century Society*, 5(2): 125-136.

Edwards, R. and Weller, S. (in press). Shifting analytic ontology: Using i-poems in qualitative longitudinal research. *Qualitative Research*

Edwards, R. and Weller, S. (in progress) The death of a participant: Ethical dilemmas in qualitative longitudinal research with young people, in K. te Riele and R. Brooks (Eds.) *Resolving Ethical Challenges in Youth Research*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Shirani, F. and Weller, S. (2010) Introduction: Researchers' Experiences, in F. Shirani, and S. Weller (Eds.) *Conducting Qualitative Longitudinal Research: Fieldwork Experiences*, Timescapes Working Paper Series No. 2, Leeds: University of Leeds.

Weller, S. (2010a) Young people's social capital: Complex identities, dynamic networks, in T. Reynolds (Ed.) *Young People, Social Capital and Ethnic Identity*, Abingdon: Routledge, Ch. 8.

Weller, S. (2010b) Young people's social capital: Complex identities, dynamic networks, *Ethnic & Racial Studies*. 33(5): 872-888.

Weller, S. (2010c) Time(s) to be creative! Sustaining young people's engagement in qualitative longitudinal research, in F. Shirani, and S. Weller (Eds.) *Conducting Qualitative Longitudinal Research: Fieldwork Experiences*, Timescapes Working Paper Series No. 2, Leeds: University of Leeds.

Weller, S. (under review a) Evolving creativity in qualitative longitudinal research with children and teenagers, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*

Weller, S. (under review b) Mapping emotions in different spaces of research and dissemination, *Emotion, Space and Society* (Special Issue edited by C. Caballero and S. Weller).

Weller, S. (submission end Dec) Who cares? Exploring the shifting nature of care and caring practices in sibling relationships, in C. Rogers and S. Weller (Eds.) *Critical approaches to care: Understanding Caring Relations, Identities and Cultures*, Abingdon: Routledge.

From Heritage data

Edwards R., Hadfield L. and Mauthner M. (2005a) *Children's Understandings of Their Sibling Relationships*, London: National Children's Bureau/Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Edwards R., Hadfield L. and Mauthner M. (2005b) Children's understanding of their sibling relationships, *Findings*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation: www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/0245.asp

Edwards, R., Hadfield, L., Lucey, H. and M. Mauthner (2005a) *Who is a Sister and a Brother? Biological and Social Ties*, Families & Social Capital ESRC Research Group Working Paper No. 13, London South Bank University: http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/publications/

Edwards, R., Hadfield, L., Lucey, H. and M. Mauthner (2005b) Children talking about relationships with brothers and sisters, *Family Today*, 14, 8-10

Edwards, R., Mauthner, M. and Hadfield, L. (2005) Children's sibling relationships and gendered practices: Talk, activity and dealing with change, *Gender and Education*, 17:5, 499-513.

Edwards R., Hadfield L., Lucey H. and Mauthner M. (2006) *Sibling Identity and Relationships: Sisters and Brothers*, Abingdon: Routledge.

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Gillies, V. and Lucey, H. (2006) 'It's a connection you can't get away from': Brothers, sisters and social capital, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 9(4): 479-493.

Hadfield, L., Edwards, R. and Mauthner, M. (2006) Brothers and sisters: A source of support for children in school?, *Education 3-13,* 34:1, 65-72

Edwards, R. (2007) Siblings, social capital and local communities, in M. Rantalaiho (Ed.) *Social Capital Among Young Citizens: Children's and Young People's Networks and Involvement in Contemporary Democracy*, Trondheim: Norwegian Centre for Child Research, NTNU.

Holland, J., Reynolds, T. and Weller, S. (2007) Transitions, networks and communities: The significance of social capital in the lives of children and young people, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 10(1): 97-116.

Weller, S. (2007a) 'Sticking with your mates?' Children's friendship trajectories during the transition from primary to secondary school, *Children & Society*, 21(5): 339-351.

Weller, S. (2007b) Managing the move to secondary school: The significance of children's social capital, in H. Helve and J. Bynner (Eds.) *Youth and Social Capital*. London: Tufnell Press.

Edwards, R. (2008) Sibling identity and relationships in local communities, in M. Klett-Davies (Ed.) *Putting Sibling Relationships on the Map: A Multi-disciplinary Perspective*, London: Family and Parenting Institute.

Weller, S (2009) "You need to have a mixed school …" exploring the complexity of diversity in young people's social networks, in J. Allan, J. Ozga and G. Smyth (Eds.) *Social capital, professionalism and diversity: New relations in urban schools*, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, Sense: 175-192.

Weller, S. and Bruegel, I. (2009) Children's 'place' in the development of neighbourhood social capital, *Urban Studies*, 46(3): 629-643.

Weller, S. (in press) School choice versus social cohesion: Examining the ways education policies shape children's geographies, in P. Kraftl, J. Horton and F. Tucker (Eds.) *Critical Geographies of Childhood and Youth: Policy and Practice*, Bristol: The Policy Press.

6.2 Presentations

2011

Reynolds, T. and Weller, S. Friends like us? Identities and the 'place' of friendship in young people's lives*, Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers Annual Conference*, London, 31st August – 2nd September (presented by T. Reynolds).

Weller, S. and Edwards, R. Moving into adulthood in an economic recession, *Understanding and Supporting Families over Times: Research, Policy and Practice*, Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London, 13th June.

Edwards, R. Possible futures: Trajectories from youth towards adulthood over time, Keynote at the *Imagining a Future: Possible Selves and Student Success day conference*, Centre for Research into Higher Education, Leeds Metropolitan University, 21st March

2010

Weller, S. The transition to secondary school, *MA Education Residential*, The Lensbury Hotel, Teddington, Middlesex, 26th November.

Weller, S. Young People, home and outside space, invited presentation at the *London Play Annual General Meeting,* The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, County Hall, London, 25th November.

Weller, S. Student Voice, *MA Education Session*, Fulham Cross School, London, 17th November.

Weller, S. Student Voice, *MA Education Session*, Quintin Kynaston School, London, 11th November.

Weller, S. Closing reflections, *Young Lives and Imagined Futures Seminar*, University of Leeds, 15th November.

Weller, S. Trajectories from youth to adulthood: Choice and structure for young people before and during recession, *British-Finnish Work Transitions & Well-being Seminar*, The Finnish Institute, London, 25th-26th October.

Edwards, R. Trajectories from youth to adulthood, Lived experience through economic downturn in Britain: Perspectives across time and across the life course workshop, *Changing Families in a Changing World International Conference*, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, University of Edinburgh, 16th June.

Weller, S. Creative methods and analysis, *Qualitative Research Methods Day*, London South Bank University, 15th June.

Edwards, R. Young people imagining the future session, *Living and Working on Sheppey: Past, Present and Future workshop*, Blue Town Heritage Centre, Sheerness, 12th June.

Weller, S. The transition to secondary school, *MA Education Residential*, The De Vere Hotel, Greenwich, London, 21st May.

Edwards, R. Gender and sibling relationships over time, invited paper, *Gender in Time, International Research Symposium*, University of Oslo, 19th May.

Weller, S. Student Voice, *MA Education Session,* Richard Atkins Primary School, London, 13th May.

Edwards, R. A sideways look at gender and sibling relationships over time, *Timescapes seminar series*, University of Leeds, 15th April.

Weller, S. Keep out? Glimpses into teenager's bedroom spaces: Understanding sibling relationships through photography, *Families & Social Capital Research Group Seminar Series*, London South Bank University, 10th March.

Edwards, R. Shifting standpoints over time – from interpretive research to participant voices through I-poems, *The Craft of Qualitative Longitudinal Research*, Timescapes conference, Cardiff University, 20th January.

Weller, S. Time(s) to be creative! Sustaining young people's engagement in qualitative longitudinal research, *The Craft of Qualitative Longitudinal Research Conference,* Cardiff University, 20th January.

2009

Weller, S. Talkin' 'bout my generation: Geographies of age and the complexity of intra/inter-generational relationships, *Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers Annual Conference*, University of Manchester, 26th August.

Weller, S. Girl talk: Mapping sisterly identities and relationships over time and space, *2nd International Conference on Geographies of Children, Youth and Families*, Barcelona, 16-18th July.

Weller, S "More of a sister than an auntie": Young people's alternative understandings of intra- and inter-generational relationships, *British Sociological Association Annual Conference*, Cardiff City Hall, 16-18th April.

Weller, S. Time(s) to be creative! Exploring the evolving nature of 'children-centred' methods in Qualitative Longitudinal research, *Creative Methods with Children and Youth People Conference*, London South Bank University, 20th February.

2008

Weller, S. The transition to secondary school, *MA Education Session,* Kingsdale School, London, 7th November.

Weller, S. The transition to secondary school, *MA Education Session,* Clapton Girls' Technology College, London, 6th November.

Edwards, R. and Weller, S. Workshop: Using I-poems to explore change and continuity in young people's sense of self, *CRFR National Conference 'Understanding Families and Relationships over Time'*, University of Edinburgh, 30th October.

Edwards, R. and Weller, S. *Workshop: Using I-poems to explore change and continuity in young people's sense of self,* London South Bank University, 15th October.

Edwards, R. The Friends and Siblings project, *Timescapes: Temporal qualitative research session, ESRC Research Methods Festival*, St Catherine's College Oxford, 30th June.

Weller, S. "I like MSN because I can talk to my friends": Young people document their leisure-time interests, *Play Research Network Meeting*, Leeds Metropolitan University, 26th June.

Weller, S. Mapping emotions in different spaces of research and dissemination, *'Up close & personal - relationships & emotions within & through research' seminar series*, London South Bank University, 25th June.

Weller, S. Student Voice, *MA Education Session*, Strand Palace Hotel, London, 20th June.

Weller, S. "Even though I don't see him we are so close" Dimensions of time in young people's sibling relationships, *Child and Youth Research in the 21st Century: A Critical Appraisal - International Childhood and Youth Research Network Conference*, European University Cyprus, Nicosia, 28th-29th May.

Weller, S. The transition to secondary school, *MA Education Session,* Lister School, London, 8th May.

Weller, S. The transition to secondary school, *MA Education Session,* Virgo Fidelis School, London, 7th May.

Edwards, R. Sibling identities and relationships in local communities, *Putting Sibling Relationships on the Map: A Multidisciplinary Perspective*, Family and Parenting Institute Expert Seminar, London, 30th April.

Weller, S. "You need to have a mixed school …" Exploring diversity in young people's friendship networks, *Young People, Ethnicity & Social Capital Conference,* London South Bank University, 14th March.

2007

Weller, S. Researching teenagers' citizenship: Democratisation within and through the research process, *Democratisation of the Research Process – InHolland/LSBU Seminar*, London South Bank University, 17th September.

Weller, S. "I think church schools are all right but you don't get to mix with people from other religions": Exploring diversity in children's social networks across different schools, *ESRC Seminar Series - Social Capital, Professionalism and Diversity*, University of Strathclyde, 21-22nd June.

Weller, S. Negotiating the transition to secondary school: The significance of children's social capital, *Policy Studies Institute Seminar Series*, London, 12th June.

Weller, S. The transition to secondary school, *MA Education Session,* Harris Academy Bermondsey, London, 3rd May.

Weller, S. Reflections on children's geographies: Theory, discipline and generation, Invited speaker at the *Association of American Geographers Annual Conference*, San Francisco, 17th-21st April.

APPENDIX A: ETHICAL DILEMMAS

This document was produced for an ethics roundtable discussion at a Timescapes residential meeting held at Cardiff University on 19th January 2010.

	ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND ISSUES	
	OVERALL SAMPLE	*INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS*
INFORMED CONSENT *(For data collection and archiving).*	• **Shift from parental to participant contact:** When we re-established contact with participants in early 2007 we sought verbal consent from both the young people and their parent/s to conduct both the W2 & W3 interviews. As participants gained greater independence and we became an increasingly familiar presence in their lives we began to correspond with participants directly rather than via their parents. Indeed, some parents promoted more independent researcher-participant relationships by willingly offering their children's mobile phone numbers; a scenario indicative only of a long-established relationship of trust. • **Letters/information leaflets:** W2 & W3 correspondence was sent at least two weeks in advance of telephone contact to give participants time to study the material. We have tried to ensure that letters and information sheets were concise, comprehensive and accessible. We have sought feedback from our Advisory Group and, more recently, from participants.	• **Parental encouragement or coercion?** W1 & W2 interviews were principally organised through parent/s and it was, at times, challenging to ascertain the extent to which some young people were consenting to participate prior to meeting them. Whilst we had some fears about parental over-encouragement/borderline coercion the level of retention across the waves suggests our fears were not completely warranted. Whilst in W1 (and in some cases W2) parent/s were instrumental in organising interviews, by W3 direct contact often proved more effective. The role of many parents shifted from 'gatekeeper' to 'enabler/ encourager'. • **Reliance on reading/ writing:** There are inherent limitations in the extent to which we can fully gauge whether participants read and understood the letters and information leaflets. Whilst the letters and leaflets were designed to be accessible several participants showed a lack of confidence in reading/writing during the interviews (approx. 10 per cent + have additional educational needs). We've had to continuously re-assess the design and wording of our project materials and have sought guidance from our Advisory Group and Participants' Panel to ensure all participants are as informed as possible.

	• **Thorough explanations:** At the beginning of W2 we showed participants books and articles illustrating the publication of W1 findings. Participants were also given a full explanation of child protection issues, limits to confidentiality and reassurance that there were no right or wrong answers. Participants have been sent regular updates (via letters, newsletters and our website) to ensure they are *continuously* informed. • **Renewal of informed consent:** At the beginning of each interview we gained verbal consent from participants (recorded during W2 & W3). We have also secured verbal consent to use the interview material and any activities completed at the end of each interview (which again has been captured in the recording). At the end of the W3 interview we sought written consent for archiving (from participants only). We distributed a 'young person-friendly' information leaflet and consent form by post prior to our visit and provided an opportunity to discuss any queries or concerns before/during the interview. Participants consented to interim activities on an 'opt in' basis.	• **Missing correspondence:** We have had some concerns about missing correspondence sent by post and so some participants may not have received as much information as possible prior to our visits. Whilst we suggested other forms of communication e.g. email, the majority of participants preferred receiving letters. • **Explaining in different ways:** It has often been challenging adapting the phrasing of explanations for different participants some of whom have a good grasp of the issues informed by e.g. their studies/work experience, whilst others demonstrated less understanding. • **Time/spatial constraints:** Some interviews have been subject to time constraints and so it has proved challenging ensuring that all necessary information is conveyed in a concise, yet thorough manner. Some research spaces have been less conducive (e.g. intermittent presence of family members) to allowing participants time/space to reflect on the implications of consent and to ask questions. • **Withdrawals**: Five people have withdrawn from W3. We have received consent to archive from four and are now contemplating how far to pursue those for whom we have not received consent (we have sent two letters/forms to date). Whilst we have encouraged those who have withdrawn to contact us with any questions about the archive none have done so.

CHILD/RESEARCHER PROTECTION	• **Limits to confidentiality:** In each invitation letter confidentiality/anonymity was assured but at the beginning of each interview we highlighted limits to confidentiality e.g. *"So everything you say is private unless you were to tell me something that really worried me and something that I couldn't keep to myself like you were being bullied or something and we would talk about a way of telling somebody else who might be able to help".* • **Tone of the interview:** Explanation of such issues is a necessary and vital component of our ethical approach but we also recognised that it could alter the tone of an interview early on e.g. soon after having attempted to foster a relaxed atmosphere.	• **Tailoring explanations:** The limits to confidentiality/ child protection issues were explained in a similar way to each participant but the language used was adapted for each individual and based on previous experience of talking to the participant e.g. some were very aware of such issues through their own studies/work experience. • **Privacy and space:** Privacy requires a challenging compromise between maintaining confidentiality and protecting both participant and researcher from the risk of accusation or actual harm. The location of an interview, whilst crucial to this balance, is often predetermined by the participants and/or their parent/s e.g. after a fight with his younger brothers over the use of the living room 'Dan' and Susie (interviewing) were banished by his mother to his bedroom to conduct the interview. It was a small room with a large bed and television. 'Dan' sat in bed whilst Susie perched rather uncomfortably on the end; a situation that she did not feel was of her choosing. Over time issues of protection and safety shift. • **Identifying child protection issues:** One of our W1 studies offered participants a Child Line leaflet if they had discussed issues of concern. During W2 a few participants gave (unprompted) feedback. One boy, who had been bullied at school, really appreciated the leaflet and sought advice from the service. Two sisters were, however, quite perturbed they had been sent one and were not sure what they had said to warrant such help. During W2 quite a lengthy explanation had to be given to justify

		the action. • **Revealing risk:** Whilst it often felt like an accomplishment when participants appeared candid in their responses, there were a couple of instances when participants disclosed very violent acts or, in one case, the taking of Class B drugs. It was not always easy to know what to do with such information. In both cases family members were aware of the boys' activities (in one case other family members were involved in the violent acts).
ANONYMITY	• **Pseudonyms:** All names and identifying details have been altered in the writing up of the research. Participants have chosen their own 'pretend names'. • **Minimal anonymisation for the archive:** In general we are removing only the names of family members, friends, places and institutions in preparation for deposit in the archive. • **Media dissemination:** We are aware, from previous projects, that journalists covering a story based on our research will often be keen to be put in contact with research participants and talk to them directly. Rather than taking a protective stance about anonymity, we have asked our participants if any of them would like to consider requests from journalists, with us passing specific requests on to them so that they can contact the journalist. Five of our research participants have volunteered to be consulted about media interviews.	• **Likeness to real names:** Some of our participant's pseudonyms are close to their real names and some are known by family members. Several wished for their real names to be used but in each case we gave a full explanation as to why this would not be appropriate (e.g. protecting those whom they discuss). In other projects, however, Susie has used participants' first names where they wished for her to do so and where she felt they had a sound understanding of the potential outcomes. The issue here, however, is the longitudinal nature of the research and its topic – it is not just our participants who can be identified if they use their own names but also their parents, siblings and friends. • **Family case studies:** We face a number of ethical issues surrounding the analysis and writing up of sibling group case studies. Whilst many of our interviews are with individual young people from different families we have a number of sibling groups. In some instances participants from the same family chose to be interviewed individually. We are (and will continue) to face challenges surrounding confidentiality and anonymity if we wish to bring together (and archive) material from siblings interviewed individually.

		• **Ensuring anonymity:** We also face some challenges with regard to writing-up and archiving sensitive data over time. For example, aspects of one participant's connection to a very specific cultural/ethnic group and strict upbringing have been documented and published during W1 & W2. During W3, however, she revealed aspects of her life she kept hidden from her family for fear of fundamental disapproval. We have to ensure that such sensitive material is not linked to previous accounts of her life to ensure her anonymity is closely guarded.
COMPENSATION/ RECIPROCITY	• **Reciprocity:** We elected not to offer remuneration for participation in interviews. Participants were given items such as folders, pens, notebooks and lollipops by way of a 'thank you'. We also administered some interim postal activities between interviews for which participants were offered a £10 voucher. We have focused on offering reciprocal help where appropriate e.g. suggesting involvement in the study might be useful for college, university or job applications. Work experience has also been requested by several participants.	• **Offering help:** It was sometimes difficult to gauge when additional help/support was required and, indeed, if it was right to intervene (and the dangers of becoming too involved). One girl hinted at eating issues during W1 & W2 but always reassured Susie/W1 researcher she was dealing with it. In situations like this Susie has always found herself keeping a close eye on particular participants. We have not felt the need to take professional advice in such situations as yet, but this is always a possibility. • **Shaping the future:** Involvement in the research (particularly reflections on the course of their life, future etc.) and offers of help, where appropriate, may alter the course of a participant's life – this perhaps shifts our role from 'walking alongside' to presenting a new direction (albeit in a small way).
MAINTAINING RESEARCH RELATIONSHIPS	• **Distant presence:** We have been eager to maintain a distant presence in participants' lives between interviews, wishing to be neither intrusive nor overburdening. In order to foster long-term engagement, we have endeavoured to sustain contact and encourage continuous	• **(Over)Pursuing?** We also face dilemmas over how far to pursue those hard to re-contact. We have two boys (boys are currently under-represented in the study) who are proving challenging to re-visit. One now works full-time and lives in a relatively isolated village - we are

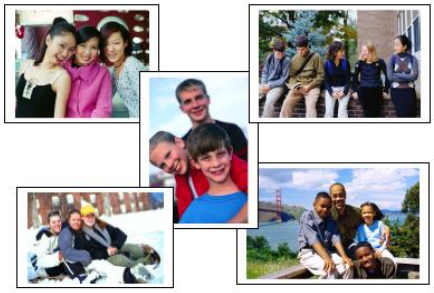
	involvement through a variety of means. Many of these techniques, such as our annual newsletters, have focused on informing participants and their families and friends of our progress.	currently organising a telephone interview to sustain contact. The other now has a child with a second on the way, and has moved away from his family home – we rely on his mother to pass on messages and have, to date, been unable to organise a third interview. • **Revealing too much?** Over time some of our research relationships have become more akin to friendships (although we are aware of debates surrounding the 'ethics of faking friendship'). Those Susie has known throughout the course of the research appear to reveal a great deal. We need to think through the implications of long-term research relationships and such candid disclosure. • **Inquisitive parent/s:** Maintaining connections with parent/s has, in some cases, proved invaluable in sustaining relationships with participants over time. In some instances, however, parents have enquired, seemingly casually, about aspects of their child's lives after an interview. It is at times challenging to provide a response that does not contravene confidentiality but also does not make the research appear trivial to parents e.g. discussing how much their child has grown! Also, with qualitative longitudinal research it is difficult to provide feedback on outcomes.
LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS	• **Anticipating the future:** There are many challenges associated with anticipating and conveying the long-term implications of involvement – in terms of the interpretation of data and findings by, for example, the media, policy-makers, practitioners and users of the archive. Not least, we are not sure of them ourselves.	• **Participant's agendas:** Some participants have their own agendas and assumptions about the research/researcher role. For example, in W1, one family accepted an invitation to participate in the hope that Susie might be able to help them with their social housing (something she did not discover until after the first interview). Whilst Susie was unable to help (she had to clarify her role on several occasions) the family have continued to be involved in the research.

POWER	• **Researching young people's lives:** Since the mid-1990s there have been numerous debates surrounding young people's involvement in research. The underlying rationale for democratising the research process stems from an attempt to redress power imbalances between adults and children – though of course we recognise that this is shifting and will shift as our participants grow older. A number of factors rendered the active involvement of participants in this study relatively problematic. Ethical predicaments included concerns about confidentiality, anonymity and the collection of personal or sensitive data. During W2 we invited project participants to join our Panel of Advisors. We have four panel members who have provided advice and guidance on e.g. the design of project materials.	• **Choices:** We have used a 'toolkit' approach during each Wave in which participants are encouraged to select from a wide range of activities during each interview – affording them some degree of power in shaping the discussion. More recently, all participants have given feedback on the research. • **Social divisions:** Through field notes we are reflecting on issues of power and the implications of age, class, gender, ethnicity and geographical location on the research encounter.

APPENDIX B: INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION LEAFLET

YOUR SPACE!

sisters brothers and friends project



Following changes in your relationships with your sisters, brothers and friends as you grow older

timescapes
An ESRC Qualitative Longitudinal Study

LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

"Actually, they're kind of the same, my sister and my friends, because we sometimes fall out and sometimes we won't talk to each other, but like we always make good friends again" (Izzy, aged 9)

Why is the project important?

- We really appreciated all the effort you put into our last project. Many children completed interviews and activity sheets all over the country. The results were VERY interesting and a book has now been published!
- We feel it is really important to listen to young people's own views and experiences.
- What you say will provide useful information for other young people, parents and people who work with families.
- It's your space to tell us about your lives!

"I don't call anyone else my brother or my sister … Friends are friends, and sisters are sisters, and my girlfriend is my girlfriend" (Spike, aged 17)

Your Space! Sisters, brothers and friends project

Your space! Sisters, brothers and friends project

What is the project about?

- Do you remember being interviewed a couple of years ago about what it's like having a brother or a sister? You may remember completing some activity sheets?
- The findings from the project were so interesting we have been asked to complete another study with young people aged 9-17.
- We are going to look at how young people's relationships with their brothers or sisters and friends change as they get older.
- We would really like to talk to you again to see how things have changed for you. If possible we'd like to visit you a couple of times over the next few years.
- We are interested in finding out :
  - What life is like with your brothers or sisters or friends now.
  - Where you hang out and what you like doing with your brothers, sisters or friends.
  - Whether you have any new brothers or sisters or friends?
  - Whether you spend more time with your brothers and sisters or with your friends?

Contact us!

Susie Weller ~ Tel: 020 7815 5811 Email: wellers@lsbu.ac.uk
Ros Edwards ~ Tel: 020 7815 5795 Email: edwardra@lsbu.ac.uk
Project website ~ www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace

What will happen?

- If you agree to take part we would like to come to your house to chat to you for about 1 hour. It would be really similar to last time.
- You can choose whether you talk to us on your own or with your brother, sister, friend or parent.
- There's no right or wrong answers - we are interested in your views!
- Anything you tell us is private. We won't use your real name or any other details (like your friends' names) in our reports.
- If you agree, your interviews and activity sheets will be stored at a University so that other researchers can learn about young people's experiences.

Who are we?

Susie Weller & Ros Edwards

We work as researchers at London South Bank University ~ quite near to the London Eye!

APPENDIX C: CONSENT FOR ARCHIVING

The leaflet was presented to participants as an A5 booklet along with the consent form.

WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO ALL THOSE INTERVIEWS?!

A LEAFLET EXPLAINING HOW WE PLAN TO ARCHIVE YOUR INTERVIEWS

YOUR SPACE! SISTERS, BROTHERS AND FRIENDS PROJECT

The 'Your Space' project is part of a larger research study called 'Timescapes' that is collecting interviews from a whole range of people in Britain over a five year period to look at how their lives change over time.

As you know, our particular project follows changes in young people's relationships with their sisters, brothers and friends as they grow older ~ including you!

As well as writing reports, books and magazine articles, we would like to store all the interviews and activity sheets in an archive so that in the future other people will be able to look at them. It will help them to understand what life was like for people at the start of the 21st century.

We would like YOUR permission to store your interviews and activity sheets.

This leaflet gives you information about archiving so that you will understand what is involved. If you think of any more questions about the archive after you've read this, then do get in touch. Our contact details are on the back of this leaflet.

timescapes
An ESRC Qualitative Longitudinal Study

LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

Protecting your identity

YOUR SPACE! SISTERS, BROTHERS AND FRIENDS PROJECT

- Nobody will be able to contact you because your interviews are stored in the archive. We will NOT put your name, address, telephone number or email in the archive.
- We will also make sure that any details that could identify you or anyone you talk about in the interviews will be changed before the material goes in the archive.
- Here are some examples to show you how we might change what you might say in interviews, like names and places, to protect you.

INTERVIEW EXTRACT *BEFORE* THE DETAILS ARE CHANGED	INTERVIEW EXTRACT *AFTER* THE DETAILS ARE CHANGED
When I go out of ***Camberwell*** I feel really away from home, as if I don't belong there. Yeah, I'm definitely a ***Londoner***, I feel comfortable.	When I go out of ***[local area]*** I feel really away from home, as if I don't belong there. Yeah, I'm definitely a ***Londoner***, I feel comfortable.
I basically just look out for ***Lisa*** and ***Peter***, like if they are in trouble or anything. If ever ***Peter*** is getting picked on then I'd look out for him, or ***Lisa*** would stick up for him, which he doesn't like because it gets him embarrassed.	I basically just look out for ***Paula*** and ***Simon***, like if they are in trouble or anything. If ever ***Simon*** is getting picked on then I'd look out for him, or ***Paula*** would stick up for him, which he doesn't like because it gets him embarrassed.
My mum can usually get us cheaper clothes because she works at ***Next***. And my older brother works at ***HMV***, so he gets lots of music.	My mum can usually get us cheaper clothes because she works at ***[a clothes store chain]***. And my older brother works at ***[a music store chain]***, so he gets lots of music.

What is an archive?

YOUR SPACE! SISTERS, BROTHERS AND FRIENDS PROJECT

- An archive is a bit like a library, but it doesn't contain books.

For example, the British Library has a sound archive that contains over a million recordings that include music from around the world and interviews with people about their lives.

- Our research archive will be based in a university. It will hold recordings (in sound files, like music downloads) as well as written versions of the interviews (usually called transcripts) and copies of the activity sheets from you and the other people who have taken part in the research.
- The material will be stored in a digital form in the archive, not just as a lot of paper in a building.
- The archive allows people like researchers and historians to look at the material that we have gathered in our research project. Everyone taking part in our research is telling us so many interesting things that we won't be able to give them all the attention they deserve, so storing the interviews and activity sheets gives other researchers a chance to look at them too.
- Archives can be open or restricted. The archive that your interviews are being stored in will be restricted. Your interviews and activity sheets will not be available to just anyone. We will make sure that the people who look at your material promise to do so in a responsible manner.

Agreement to archive

YOUR SPACE! SISTERS, BROTHERS AND FRIENDS PROJECT

- To make sure that you agree that we can archive your interviews, we ask you to sign a consent form that says that we can do this. We will also sign the form, and we will give you a copy to keep.
- The agreement covers ALL the interviews that we have already done with you, and any future interviews as part of the 'Your Space' project.
- We take our responsibility to protect you from any harm as a result of taking part in our research very seriously. The form also says that you agree to give 'copyright', or ownership, of the interviews to our research team.
- We are asking you to give us the copyright because this means that nobody will be able to look at your interview material without our approval and telling us why they want to see it.

Who is funding the research and archive?

- The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is paying for the research and the archive. They are an independent organization that funds research and training in social and economic issues, and receive most of their funding from the Government. They do not tell researchers what they should ask in the interviews.
- The 'Your Space' research team is based at London South Bank University and is independent of the ESRC.

Contact us:

ROSALIND EDWARDS
Tel: 020 7815 5795
Email: edwardra@lsbu.ac.uk
SUSIE WELLER
Tel: 020 7815 5811
Email: wellers@lsbu.ac.uk

FAMILIES & SOCIAL CAPITAL RESEARCH GROUP
London South Bank University
103 Borough Road
LONDON
SE1 0AA
www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace

CONSENT FORM

AGREEMENT TO ARCHIVE INTERVIEWS AND OTHER MATERIAL AS PART OF THE 'YOUR SPACE' PROJECT

YOUR SPACE! SISTERS, BROTHERS AND FRIENDS PROJECT

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT:

- I have read and understood the information leaflet that outlines how my interviews and activity sheets will be archived, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it.
- I understand that the researchers in the 'Your Space' team will change any identifying details in my interviews to protect me.
- I agree that the material can be included in an archive.
- I give the copyright or ownership of my interviews and activity sheets to Ros Edwards (head of the 'Your Space' research team).
- I accept that including my research data in the archive will mean that, in the future, other researchers may also use my words in their reports, books and magazine articles.

.....	.....	.....
Name of participant	Signature	Date

RESEARCHER:

- I have discussed with the 'Your Space' research participant how their interviews and activity sheets will be archived, and given them the opportunity to ask questions about it.
- The 'Your Space' research team will make sure that personal contact and identifying details are not archived, and know their responsibility to ensure that no harm comes to participants as a result of taking part in the research.

.....	.....	.....
Name of researcher	Signature	Date

Contact us:

FAMILIES & SOCIAL CAPITAL RESEARCH GROUP
London South Bank University
103 Borough Road
LONDON, SE1 0AA
www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace

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APPENDIX D: MEDIA CONTACTS

timescapes
An ESRC Qualitative Longitudinal Study

Director: Dr Bren Neale Co-Director: Professor Janet Holland

Rosalind Edwards and Susie Weller
Families & Social Capital Research Group
London South Bank University
103 Borough Road
London SE1 0AA

Tel: 020 7815 5795 / 020 7815 5811
www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace

8th June 2009

Dear <<participant>>,

Your Space! sisters, brothers and friends project

We're writing to you about the 'Your Space!' project and the media. As you'll know, everything that you told us in your interview is confidential. When we archive your interviews or other materials, and when we write a report, we change details such as names and places so that no-one can identify you or the other young people who have taken part. We never pass on information about you to anyone else without your permission. This is why we are writing to you about publicity for our research.

Projects like ours often get media attention. This can be very helpful in making the lessons from the research widely known and increasing its influence. Journalists sometimes approach researchers to ask if they can put them in contact with people who participated in their research so that they can interview them for a news story. If we're approached by any journalists, would you like us to contact you to tell you about the sort of story that they want to write and see if you're interested in talking to them? We've enclosed an example of the sort of article that journalists might write about young people to help you decide.

You don't have to agree to us contacting you about any media attention. And if you do decide that you would like us to tell you about any interest from journalists there's absolutely no obligation for you to actually talk to them. We stress that we will not pass on your contact details to a journalist without your permission.

If you are happy for us to get in touch with you if we're contacted by journalists interested in writing a story about the 'Your Space!' project, please complete the reply slip and return it to us in the enclosed pre-paid envelope. If you would prefer you can email Susie on wellers@lsbu.ac.uk, or leave a message for her on 0207 815 5811.

Once again, thank you for your valuable participation in our research project.
With best wishes

Susie Weller and Rosalind Edwards

The Herald

How children can help make communities feel safer

Children who are visibly involved in their communities make people feel safer and help create stronger neighbourhoods, according to research.

A study by the Economic and Social Research Council found, contrary to public opinion, children play a key role in developing strong community spirit and safe neighbourhoods.

The more children interact with other children the more parents are connected within the area.

A three-year research programme focusing on two inner-city areas, a suburb, a new town and city investigated the social networks of children and how they affected their parents' perception of the area.

They found that children had more freedom if their parents were involved with other parents in the community and the wider the children's social networks the safer the parents felt about living and raising a family.

Around 600 children and 80 parents were involved in the research which found parents struggling with a dilemma of protecting their children and wanting to allow them freedom to be streetwise.

Professor Irene Brugel and Dr Susie Weller, from the ESRC, produced the research paper Children's Place in the Development of Neighbourhood Social Capital.

Dr Weller said: "On the one hand, children are frequently portrayed as vulnerable, incompetent, and in need of protection from the possible dangers of town and city streets. On the other, those allowed to go out and meet up in public areas are often regarded as intimidating and antisocial.

"However, many parents suggested they had established more networks and friendships in the local area through their children than by any other means. This contact came via ante-natal classes, the nursery and the primary school, or through their children's friends' families.

"Parents acknowledged their children had much less freedom to roam or explore the neighbourhood than they enjoyed. They saw this as a problem, and would generally like the youngsters to be out and about more."

In Glasgow yesterday parents agreed that children who were active socially were positive for both families and communities.

Cherry Sneltzer, daughter Debbie Gardner and granddaughter Alexis Gardner were enjoying the sunshine in Kelvingrove Park.

Ms Sneltzer, from Woodlands, said: "If there were more facilities locally then I would feel better about the area. There is nowhere for parents and children to go so we have to come here to take Alexis to the play park.

"Parents and children involved together would build up social structures. I have lived there 26 years and over the years there is less of a community feeling. Apart from the nursery there's nowhere for parents to meet others with the children."

Karen McKay, from Maryhill, was out with daughters Chloe, 11 and Devin, four, and son Josh, seven.
She said: "I have met lots of parents through the kids' clubs like swimming, dancing and karate. It definitely makes the area better if the children are busy and are doing things with their friends.
"I only let them go to organised events or out with me, they are not allowed to hang around on their own. That would not be so good."

However, the study found that when parents allowed their children to roam other parents drew from their confidence allowing them in turn to give their children more freedom.

Children outside London were less likely to be allowed to travel unaccompanied.

12:35am Monday 30th April 2007 *By STEWART PATERSON*

APPENDIX E: NEWSLETTERS

1. January 2008

timescapes
An ESRC Qualitative Longitudinal Study
LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

Your Space!
Sisters, Brothers and Friends Project

NEWSLETTER No. 1 JANUARY 2008

Happy New Year!

Welcome to the first *'Your Space!'* project newsletter. Thanks so much for taking part in our research. It was great to talk to you and we really appreciate all the time and effort you put into our project. We've certainly learnt a lot about the ways in which young people's relationships with their sisters, brothers and friends change over time. Thanks also to your families for their help and support.

In this newsletter we'd like to update you on our progress and tell you about our future plans.

Progress

So what it is that researchers actually do?! When we started the project in January one of our first jobs was to design our project leaflets and the website: www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace We also had to think of all the questions for the interviews and come up with activities that would be interesting and useful. Designing all the materials is a really creative part of our work.

The *'Your Space!'* research project has a team of advisors, including researchers from the Universities of Kent and Strathclyde and the Open University along with representatives from the National Youth Agency, Parentline Plus and the charity 'London Play'. These people give us advice and help with different aspects of our work. They are also really interested in what we find out:

TRICIA JESSIMAN, THE NATIONAL YOUTH AGENCY, STATES: *"Policy makers and researchers often talk about the importance of developing good 'social capital', good friends and family relations that act as a form of support for young people. This research will be helpful in exploring how these relationships develop and change over time and understanding what difference they really make in young people's lives."*

JAN FRY, 'PARENTLINE PLUS', SAYS: *"Parents constantly contact us to talk about their child's lack of self esteem. Building up their child's confidence, both in the short and long term, is a key concern for parents and this research will help us give them more informed information, advice and support about what children are saying about themselves and their relationships from across a range of ages, social backgrounds and cultures".*

UTE NAVIDI, LONDON PLAY, COMMENTS: *Living in a big city can be exciting and fun, but sometimes also a bit scary, and young people often confide in their brother or sister or a friend before telling anyone else. People who work to make London a more child- and play-friendly city need to know from children and young people themselves what it's like and what could be made better – after all it's their city too! Research like this will help us all to understand how children's relationships and environments are changing over time – hopefully for the better!"*

This year we'd like to get together a group of advisors made up of people taking part in the research. If you volunteer to help us as an advisor, then you could comment on our ideas by email, phone and/or letter, and help shape the project. It wouldn't necessarily take up too much of your time and could be something useful to include on your CV or college/university application.

For your CV

You could also include your involvement in our project as an interviewee in any college/university or job applications. We'd be happy to help you out if you'd like any further information.

something bigger

Did you know you're part of something bigger? You've probably noticed a 'Timescapes' logo on some of our material. Well that's because our research is part of a wider group of projects that follow the lives of people from all different age groups. Here is a recent press release about the wider Timescapes study:

" The loves, lives, families and friends of 400 people are to be monitored as part of a new study to see how relationships affect people's life. The Timescapes study will create a database about the lives of volunteers looking at key experiences in their lives such as growing up, forming relationships, bringing up children and growing old. The 400 volunteers will be selected from different ages, faiths and social groups from across the country. The five-year research programme is being funded by a £4.5m grant from the Economic and Social Research Council.

Timescapes involves researchers from Leeds, London South Bank, Cardiff, Edinburgh and the Open University, and is based on seven projects that span people's lifetimes. All of the research will be compiled in an archive which will be kept at Leeds University.

Dr Bren Neale, from Leeds University, who is leading the research, said: "We will be exploring the important relationships by which people define themselves ~ how they live, for example, as sons or brothers, wives or grandmothers. We want to know how these relationships affect people's life chances and the major decisions they make. We will be tracking people to explore how these relationships are worked out over time and how things change through the process of growing up and growing old. It will be like walking alongside people as their lives unfold". The research will feature in-depth interviews, video and audio diaries, and photographs which will also be used to capture changes in the subject's life and outlook.

Dr Neale said: "Because this is about ordinary, everyday lives, it has an appeal and relevance to everyone. The ups and downs of life, the challenges that people face, the choices they make will be immediately understandable. This unique, specialist resource on the dynamic nature of personal lives and relationships will be of enduring value for future generations for researchers and social historians".

send us a postcard

Calling all family members!

We'd like to invite mums, dads, brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends to take part in a mini-project on brothers and sisters. All you have to do is complete a postcard (either by hand or on our website)

After we'd designed all our project materials we had to submit them to our University Ethics Committee. They decided that our project could go ahead because it was being conducted ethically, and would not cause any harm to people who took part.

Our next task was to contact everyone who'd taken part in one of the original projects so that we could see how life had changed for you over the past few years. As you can probably imagine, that involved lots of letters, phone calls and emails.

In May, Susie started a mammoth trip around England, Scotland and Wales in order to interview everyone!

The places Susie visited!

Susie has really enjoyed catching up with the people she's interviewed before and meeting new people. She has been overwhelmed by the welcome and hospitality she's received from everyone.

Susie says'

" Some might say I'm completely mad but I travelled mostly by public transport which was, at times, quite eventful! For example, to reach participants in rural Wales I had to travel on a tiny train for several hours from a city in South Wales. When I arrived at the station to start my journey I noticed on the timetable that my destination was a request stop and that I had to tell the conductor if I wished to alight there. With this in mind I asked at the ticket office what I should do when I wished to board the train to return home. The woman replied 'wave like mad at the driver!!' Seriously worrying I thought and spent all the whole day thinking I wouldn't get home!"

what next?

We're really excited about analysing all the material we've gathered and comparing it to the original interviews ~ so that's our main task for 2008. We've got about 300 documents to explore and each interview is about 15,000 words or 30 pages long!

We'll also be giving presentations and talking about our research at different meetings and, of course, we'll be preparing to do our next follow-up interviews with you in 2009.

Getting more involved

Is there something we could do to improve our project? Do you have any good ideas on how we could enhance our project materials or anything else?

Or would you just like to be more involved?

If so, we'd really like to hear from you.

telling us just a few simple details about your brothers or sisters or anyone you think of as being like a brother or sister.

We're working with our colleagues, Bill Bytheway and Joanna Bornat, at the Open University who are currently working on a project which explores the lives of the 'oldest generation'. The more postcards we can collect the better the picture we'll have of relationships between brothers and sisters in the UK today. We'll be sending out further details in March or you can visit the website: www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/brothersandsisters

media spotlight

Want to get your views and experiences across to the Government, local councils, organisations that support families or the general public? The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), who fund our research, are keen for us to publicise our work in newspapers, on the radio and on television.

We feel it's important that others know what life is like for children and teenagers, from young people's own points of view. One of the most effective ways of doing this is through the media.

Sometimes journalists ask us if they can talk to young people involved in our research.

Would you be interested in talking to the media if we are approached by a journalist?

Everything you've told us is confidential. When we write our reports we change all your personal details such as your name, the names of your family members and friends, and the place you live in so that no-one can identify you.

We never tell anyone any of these details without your permission and would never pass on any of this information to a journalist. If you wouldn't like us to contact you if we are approached by a journalist then we'd be really grateful if you could let us know. We'd be more than happy to talk to you about our own experiences of being interviewed by the media.

thank you!

Thanks again for all your help. Please contact us if you have any questions or would like any further information. You can also check out our website: www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace

Hope you have a great 2008!

Best wishes

Susie and Ros

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Project website: www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace

2. October 2008

timescapes
An ESRC Qualitative Longitudinal Study
LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

Your Space!

SISTERS, BROTHERS & FRIENDS PROJECT

NEWSLETTER No.2 OCTOBER 2008

Latest Project News

WELCOME TO THE SECOND *YOUR SPACE!* PROJECT NEWSLETTER!

We'd like to update you on our progress
& tell you about our future plans.

Thanks so much for taking part in our research ~ we really appreciate it! Your thoughts are enabling us to explore how young people's relationships with their sisters, brothers & friends change over time.

Since January we've been busy analysing all your interviews & activity sheets. We've now spoken to 52 young people (aged 10-17) from across the UK. It's been really interesting looking at your views about your life *now* alongside what you said a few years ago. We've learnt a great deal about how young people's lives change as they get older. We'll put some of the main findings on our website soon: www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace

HOW IMPORTANT ARE SISTERS & BROTHERS TO PEOPLE AT DIFFERENT TIMES IN THEIR LIVES?

In March, we took part in the *Festival of Social Science* organised by the people who fund our research (Economic & Social Research Council). We teamed up with researchers from the Open University to conduct a UK-wide survey of sisters & brothers of all ages. During the week-long exercise we received nearly 800 postcards (both hard copy and electronic) from people all over the world telling us about their siblings.

MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO COMPLETED A POSTCARD!
You can download a summary of our findings at:
www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/brothersandsisters

Spreading the Word

SO WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING WITH ALL THIS INFORMATION?

Over the past few months we have been talking to a range of organisations & researchers about the project:

Ros participated in an *Expert Seminar on Sibling Relationships*, organised by the Family & Parenting Institute. She talked about the time siblings spend together in their local communities.

Susie travelled to Cyprus (it's a hard life!) to a conference on children & youth where she talked to people from all over the world about the ways *time* shapes sibling relationships.

As part of the National Research Methods Festival Ros discussed the importance of re-interviewing people to find out how their relationships change over time.

Susie told the *Play Research Network* about the diversity of young people's leisure-time interests.

What Next?

It won't be long before Susie begins visiting everyone again to see how their lives & relationships have changed. She's really looking forward to catching up with you all next year!

Getting More Involved

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO JOIN OUR 'PANEL OF ADVISORS'.

If there's anything you think we could do to improve our project ~ perhaps you've thought of something we ought to change on our website or you've got some good ideas how we could enhance our project materials ~ then we'd love to hear from you! Being a member of our 'Panel of Advisors' would mean that we'd contact you occasionally to ask your opinion (either by letter, phone or email). It wouldn't take up too much of your time & could be something useful to include on your CV or college/university application. If you're interested please contact Susie on: 020 7815 5811 or wellers@lsbu.ac.uk

The Bigger Picture

'YOUR SPACE!' IS PART OF A BIG NATIONAL STUDY

'*Your Space!*' is part of a larger research study called '*Timescapes*' that is collecting interviews from over 400 people across England, Scotland and Wales over a five year period. The '*Timescapes team*' includes researchers from Cardiff University, Edinburgh University, Leeds University, London South Bank University and the Open University.

There are seven projects in the '*Timescapes*' programme, each focusing on the experiences of people at different stages in their lives from children and teenagers to mothers, fathers and grandparents. We are interested in looking at how people's relationships with family and friends affect their lives and how these relationships change over time.

We regularly meet up with other researchers from the '*Timescapes team*' to talk about all of the interesting things we've been finding out. Researchers, policy-makers, journalists and organisations from across the world have already shown an interest in our research. By working together we hope to build a picture of the lives and relationships of a wide range of people living in 21st century Britain.

You can find out more at: www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk

Making History

YOU MIGHT BE WONDERING WHAT WE'RE PLANNING TO DO WITH YOUR INTERVIEWS & ACTIVITY SHEETS

When Susie visits you in 2009 she'd like to gain YOUR permission to store all your interviews & activity sheets in an archive so that in the future researchers & historians will be able to look at the material. It will help them to understand what life was like for young people at the start of the 21st century.

An archive is like a library. Our research archive will be based in a university. It will contain recordings (in sound files, like music downloads) & written versions of your interviews & copies of your activity sheets. We will NOT put your name or any of your contact details in the archive & we'll make sure that any information that could identify you (or your family, friends etc) will not be included. We hope the archive will become an important national resource. Susie will talk to you about the archive when she visits you next year.

Sharing Memories

CALLING ALL FAMILY MEMBERS!

The '*Timescapes team*' has joined forces with the BBC in order to develop a unique online collection of memories over the past century. If you would like to contribute your memories or view the stories of others please visit the BBC Memoryshare website:
www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/about-archiving/bbc-memoryshare

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3. November 2009

NEWSLETTER No.3 NOVEMBER 2009

PROJECT NEWS

WELCOME TO THE 3RD '*YOUR SPACE!*' PROJECT NEWSLETTER!

This newsletter updates you on our progress and tells you about our future plans.

So what have we been doing over the past year?

As you know, we're really interested in looking at how young people's relationships with their sisters, brothers and friends affect their lives and how these relationships change *over time*. Rather than just visiting you once and getting a snapshot of your life we're interested in *how* and *why* young people's relationships and identities change *over time*. Visiting project participants every few years is an important part of our work.

Thank you for taking part in another interview!

In February Susie set off again on her epic journey around the UK re-visiting just under 50 young people. She travelled to see participants living in a wide variety of places - from rural villages in Scotland to inner-city London and from coastal villages in Wales to New Towns in Southern England. We have been fascinated to find out your views about your life *now* alongside what you said two years ago and also six years ago!

Interested in finding out more?

If you would like to find out more information about the project or view examples of what other young people have said about their relationships with their sisters, brothers and friends please visit our project website: **www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace**

LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

timescapes
An ESRC Qualitative Longitudinal Study

FOR YOUR CV

Many of you have been taking part in our research for over 6 years! You might want to include your involvement in the project on any college, university or job applications. If you'd like any further information about the project please contact Susie ~ wellers@lsbu.ac.uk or 020 7815 5811.

WHAT NEXT?

Over the next year or so we will carry on analysing all your interviews and activities. We'll also continue to prepare them for the Timescapes Archive so that in the future other researchers and historians can look at them and learn from them. This is taking us a long time! Each interview is around 20,000 words long. With three interviews for each person that adds up to around 3 million words!

What have we been finding out?

We have so much fascinating information we have to focus our analysis on several themes. At the moment we're really interested in:

- Differences between girls' relationships with their sisters (where talking seems really important) and boys' relationships with their brothers (where activities appear more important).
- How sharing a room/having your own space affects your relationships with your sisters or brothers.
- Significant people who you feel are just like sisters or brothers.
- Your hopes for your parent/s' life in the future.

The Bigger Picture

'*Your Space!*' is part of a national project called '*Timescapes*' that is collecting interviews from over 400 people across the UK. There are seven '*Timescapes*' projects (based at different universities) each focusing on the experiences of people at different stages in their lives. Over the next few months we will be working with the other projects to build a picture of life in 21st century Britain.

THANK YOU!

We'd like to thank everyone who has taken part in the study. Our gratitude also goes to participant's families for their help and support. We'd particularly like to thank our *Panel of Advisors* for all their views and ideas.

PROJECT EVENTS

This year we've organised several events to help us understand more about relationships between sisters and brothers and also to raise the profile of our research.

YOUR LIFE: AGED 25

Reports in newspapers and on TV often make out that young people today are totally different from young people in the past. **Is this really true?** Nearly 40 years ago almost 14,000 young people were asked to describe what they thought life would be like when they were 25 years-old. The exercise was part of a national project called the **British Birth Cohort Study**. We wanted to find out if young people today have similar hopes, fears and dreams about the future as those growing up in 1969 so we invited you to write and tell us! We have put all the responses into the **Timescapes Archive**. We can now compare the hopes of young people today with those living in the 1960s.

SHARING YOUR MEMORIES @ BBC MEMORYSHARE

Do you remember last year we organised a **National 'Sisters and Brothers Postcard Activity'**? During the week-long event we received postcards from nearly 800 people aged from 2 to 90. Many included detailed descriptions showing the importance of sisters and brothers at different times in their lives. This year we worked with **BBC Memoryshare** to develop a website displaying examples from the postcard exercise. We also set up a link with the BBC Memoryshare website allowing members of the public to continue contributing their memories of sibling relationships. You can check out example postcards at: **www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/brothersandsisters.** You can also follow the link to the Memoryshare website to add your own memories.

FAMILY ALBUMS WEEKEND @ MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD

In April we worked with the **V&A Museum of Childhood** in London on a **'Family Albums'** event designed to celebrate the place of sisters and brothers in our lives. The event included an exhibition of our findings from our Sisters and Brothers Postcard Activity. Visitors to the museum took part in **workshops run by community artists and storytellers.** Almost 1500 people visited the museum and exhibition during the event, with just under 130 taking part in the activities.

TIMESCAPES ARCHIVE LAUNCH @ THE BRITISH LIBRARY

In October the **Timescapes Archive was launched** at the British Library in London. Members of the public, project participants, Timescapes researchers, and representatives from our funding body were given demonstrations of how the archive works. Examples from the 'Your Life: Aged 25' activity were included in a presentation given by the Timescapes Archivist. The event attracted publicity and articles were **published in newspapers such as The Guardian and the Yorkshire Post.**

SPREADING THE WORD

Over the past year we've talked to a wide range of people about the project including researchers, schools, journalists and organisations that support families. We've also been writing reports, articles and book chapters based on your interviews. Here are some examples.

OCTOBER '08
We organised two workshops (at London South Bank University and Edinburgh University) to show other researchers one of the techniques we've used to analyse how people's lives change over time.

FEBRUARY '09
Susie talked to researchers about the interviews and activities used in the project at the *Creative Methods with Children and Youth People Conference* at London South Bank University.

APRIL '09
As part of the *British Sociological Association* Annual Conference in Cardiff, Susie discussed young people's relationships across generations.

JULY '09
Susie travelled to a conference on *Geographies of Children, Youth & Families* in Barcelona where she talked to people from across the world about the importance of girls' relationships with their sisters over time.

SEPTEMBER '09
Susie discussed the different ways many young people think about relationships within and across generations at the *Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference* in Manchester.

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www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace

4. October 2010

NEWSLETTER No. 4 **AUTUMN 2010**

PROJECT NEWS

WELCOME TO THE 4th '*YOUR SPACE!*' PROJECT NEWSLETTER!

This newsletter updates you on our progress and tells you about our future plans.

SO WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING IN 2010?

Over the past year we have been busy analysing different aspects of your interviews and writing up our findings in reports, books and magazines. As you know, we're really interested in looking at how young people's relationships with their sisters, brothers and friends affect their lives and how these relationships change *over time*, so it would be great to talk to you again in 2011 if we can obtain funding to extend the project.

MAKING HISTORY

This year we have been busy preparing all of your interviews for the **Timescapes Archive**. The archive will enable future researchers and historians to understand what life was like for young people at the start of the 21st century. We plan to have all the interviews and activities in the archive by the end of the year. For more details please visit: **www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/the-archive/**

INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT MORE?

If you would like to find out more information about the project or view examples of what other young people have said about their relationships with their sisters, brothers and friends please visit our project website: **www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace**

LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

timescapes
An ESRC Qualitative Longitudinal Study

YOU TUBE

We have just developed a You Tube video publicising some of our research findings. The video focuses on what teenagers' bedrooms say about their relationships with their sisters and brothers. It uses some of your photos and interview extracts. You can check out the video at:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=El0ph9vVl3I

Or via our website: **www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/yourspace**

We would really appreciate your feedback on the video via YouTube or email: wellers@lsbu.ac.uk as we'd like to develop more videos showcasing different aspects of the project.

EXTENDING THE STUDY

In September we submitted an application for further funding to **extend the 'Your Space!' project**. If the application is successful we would like to talk to you again in 2011 to find out:

- Whether your plans for the future have changed since the recession.
- If sisters, brothers or friends have influenced or supported your future plans.

We'd like to thank our 'Panel of Advisors' for their help!

'DREAM JOBS' COMPETITION

In July Susie talked to **Futurelab** - an independent organisation that supports the use of innovation and technology in teaching. Futurelab are very interested in our project, particularly some of the questions we've been asking you about your hopes and plans for the future.

We thought you might be interested in a **'dream jobs' competition** Futurelab are currently running. Prizes include days experiencing 'dream jobs' such as working with racing car designers or a production manager at a film company. As you know, we never give out your personal details to anyone but if you would like to enter the competition please visit: **http://dreamjobs.infocow.org.uk/**

FINDINGS: THE RECESSION

Has the recession affected your plans for the future?

As you know, the first time we spoke to you the recession wasn't even on the horizon. The second interview coincided with the credit crunch and the third took place during the recession.

We've looked back over your interviews to see whether your plans for the future changed during the recession. We found that:

- Some young people, particularly those who'd always planned to go to university and had financial support from their families did not appear to be changing their plans.
- Others had never had firm plans about the future but a range of different ideas. Again, with some degree of support from their families they took up any opportunities as they arose.
- Those not in education, employment or training appeared particularly vulnerable to the effects of the recession. Even before experiencing unemployment they had always felt uncertain about the future.
- Some had a firm idea of what they wanted to do when they were young and had stuck with that idea. The recession appeared to be making them more determined to fulfil their ambitions.

We have been asked to contribute to an international project looking at young people's experiences of the recession across the world.

FINDINGS: HOPES FOR YOUR PARENTS

What do you hope your parents' life will be like in the future?

In early 2010 Sarah Baker, an assistant working on the project, studied your interviews to see what you hoped your parents' life would be like in the future.

Rather than the common portrayal of young people as ungrateful or selfish, Sarah found that many wanted the best for their parents:

- Some people hoped their parents would have a more relaxing, healthy and enjoyable lifestyle, either by moving to the countryside or abroad, or by working less.
- Others hoped their parents would be wealthier, with some suggesting they would repay their parents in later life either with money or help.
- Several hoped for good relationships amongst all family members, particularly those who described tensions within the family.

SPREADING THE WORD

This year we have been talking to a wide range of people about the project. Here a few examples.

JANUARY '10
We gave two presentations at a national conference at *Cardiff University* about the interviews and activities used in the project and some of the creative ways we have been analysing your interviews.

MARCH '10
Susie spoke to researchers at *London South Bank University* about the photographs you took of important spaces at home, discussing what they said about relationships with sisters and brothers.

MAY '10
Ros gave a presentation at the *University of Oslo, Norway* which looked at the ways sisters and brothers shape our identities as girls/women and boys/men.

JUNE '10
Ros talked about the effects of the economic recession on young people's plans for the future at an International Conference at the *University of Edinburgh*.

JULY '10
Susie spoke to *Futurelab* (an organisation that that supports the use of innovation and technology in teaching) in Bristol about young people's experiences of the recession.

OCTOBER '10
Susie met up with researchers from Scandinavia at *The Finnish Institute* in London to discuss young people's experiences of the recession.

NOVEMBER '10
We will be travelling to *Leeds University* to discuss young people's lives and what they imagine for the future. Susie will also be giving a short presentation at the Annual General Meeting of the charity *London Play*.

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