

OLLSCOIL NA hÉIREANN, GAILLIMH  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, GALWAY  
SEMESTER 2 (SUMMER) EXAMINATIONS 1999/2000  
SOCIOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL STUDIES

THIRD YEAR

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SP301 METHODS 2

Time allowed: THREE hours.

Answer TWO questions.

Please be careful not to repeat large quantities of material between questions. You may refer to your own research experience wherever relevant, but please avoid repeating work you have previously handed in.

1. What are the main problems associated by qualitative sociologists with writing up research? Have they been addressed successfully to date?
2. What types of sociological question specifically demand qualitative investigation? Referring to specific examples, discuss the extent to which you feel that this approach can be fruitful.
3. What reasons are there for the claim that standardised interviews are insufficient to capture the attitudes and behaviour of members of society? Are there forms of interviewing among qualitative approaches which are more successful?
4. What are the main purposes involved in using feminist research methods? Do such methods succeed in their general aims?
5. What are the main advantages and disadvantages connected with trying to understand social meaning? Are there qualitative approaches which are particularly promising in this connection?
6. In your view, is participant observation a productive method of understanding the social world? Discuss its demands and its possible effectiveness.
7. How 'sensitive' is qualitative research? Are there particular types of research question which are strongly marked by ethical and political hazards?
8. How easy is it to interpret the data collected in qualitative research? Comment on interpretative strategies which you consider particularly productive, or particularly unproductive.
9. Contrast the advantages and disadvantages of quantitative and qualitative approaches. How easy is it to combine the two?
10. What effects can different modes of gaining access to a research population have on the research which is carried out?