



The Social Work Dissertation: Using Small-Scale Qualitative Methodology

Malcolm Carey

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"This excellently timed book is invaluable for social work students contemplating, or in the process of completing a modest qualitative study for a dissertation. Many barriers exist for students intending to embark on empirical work; this book, detailed but accessible, takes a theoretically informed approach to guide their path- it is much more than a pragmatic handbook."

Professor Steven M Shardlow, Chair of Social Work, The University of Salford, UK

"A trustworthy guide to the dissertation process from beginning to end. The advice offered is extremely sound, it is hard to disagree with anything Carey suggests, and if students choose to follow it they should considerably improve the quality of their submitted work."

Carolyn Taylor, Department of Applied Social Studies, University of Lancaster

"Most social work research dissertations use qualitative methodology - sometimes thinly so. Malcolm Carey's book answers the numerous questions students repeatedly ask, and in ways which will enrich the doing and teaching of dissertation work at both qualifying and postqualifying levels. It is written accessibly and with numerous helpfully worked examples. 'Have you read Carey?' may soon become a frequently heard question on social work courses. This book will definitely be near the top of my reading lists for dissertation skills courses."

Ian Shaw, Professor of Social Work, University of York

"Malcolm Carey is to be congratulated on this book. He has produced an accessible, user friendly, step by step guide to writing a dissertation which is packed with useful examples relevant to social work students. He has accomplished this without over-simplifying the concepts and theoretical perspectives he describes, thus ensuring that the reader can build upon what they have learned. The book will be helpful not only to qualifying the post-qualifying social work students, but to practitioners and managers who wish to undertake a piece of research, but feel a little daunted by the task."

Sue White, Professor of Social Work, Lancaster University, UK

This comprehensive book provides a clear and accessible guide for students undertaking small-scale qualitative research for a social work dissertation. Using jargon free, practical language, the book explains the research process and each of the key stages involved. Also included are:

- Case examples of real student experiences
- Descriptions of key qualitative research concepts
- Examples used to explain theoretical models and research methodologies

The book offers advice on how to get the most from supervision and explains the importance of ethics and political context within the research process. Use of social theory within research is explored, with suggestions of ways in which different theories can influence and help to contextualise social research.

Acknowledging the limited time and resources typically available to students, the book prioritises small-scale qualitative research. Literature based social work dissertations are discussed alongside key sources of information such as relevant journals and websites.

The Social Work Dissertation offers detailed yet concise explanations and is ideal for social work students at all levels, as well as social work practitioners.

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