Sensitivity and vulnerability in research on families and relationships

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Overview

• Introductions

• Defining sensitivity and vulnerability

• Communicating about ‘sensitive’ research

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Defining sensitivity and vulnerability

• What does it mean when you position a person or group as vulnerable; or a topic as sensitive?
• What/who do these definitions include or exclude?
• How might methods be affected by definitions?
  – Surveys versus interviews; online data collection versus participant ethnography?
Challenges of communicating about ‘sensitive’ research

• Talking to participants about findings
  – is this any more difficult with ‘sensitive’ topics?

• Talking to other academics?

• Talking to the public/media – public engagement
  – is this necessarily more challenging with ‘sensitive’ topics?
Further reading (*not* exhaustive!)