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Problems of Involvement and Detachment: a critical approach to researching live event experiences
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Introduction

This chapter deals with a concern often encountered with undergraduate and postgraduate research projects in the Critical Event Studies terrain. Having both taught research methods and supervised dissertations in the Events field over a number of years, we regularly witness students struggling to critically analyse a subject area to which they are personally attached. Seeking to make use of their detailed, first-hand understanding of the situation, students often select dissertation topics that relate to live event experiences they have attended, worked at or delivered. Often these "passion projects", are seen as attractive topics that will sustain interest over the time period of completing a dissertation, or something that will be easier to study due to access to data, or simply personal knowledge of the events. However, as a result of this involvement in the subject area, students often face the pitfall of being unable to form an objective opinion thus impacting on the analysis of the research topic, and as such, they can be prone to producing overly descriptive, even biased work as a result.

This chapter seeks to offer ways and means of overcoming this challenge. By selecting two research settings to which we are personally attached; live music events and Scotland national team football matches, as illustrative case studies, we have put ourselves in the same position as students, namely trying to investigate objectively something that we are deeply passionate about. In the chapter we will use the often ignored figurational sociology of Norbert Elias (1939, 1956, 1987), specifically his notion of "involvement and detachment", to offer a pathway to undertaking research into live event experiences which allows for the development of reflective, reflexive methodologies, which capture the richness of personal involvement, in a manner which is academically rigorous. The chapter begins by highlighting the typical philosophical and methodological issues students encounter whilst undertaking primary research, before suggesting how Elias' work offers a more nuanced approach for students to consider. This is followed by a detailed discussion of Elias' theory of knowledge, which outlines how this can be achieved, with particular attention paid to his notion of 'detachment' and how to obtain this. From here, we introduce the case studies which will illustrate these issues and the methodological journey we have taken when researching these cases in an Eliasian fashion. Finally, we offer reflection on how this framework can assist students in the Critical Event Studies field when undertaking research. Our intention here is to offer students a road map, ensuring they can research their own "passion projects" without losing a critical edge.

Research Philosophy: the problem of binary opposites

Having both delivered research methods courses we have a strong belief that regardless of level, an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of research is crucial to informing how and why you make your research decisions. This should go beyond the traditional research method delivery approach where qualitative and quantitative discussions are the height of the debate. The following sections give a brief tour of the issues students will typically cover in class and their meaning and influence on student studies.

At a philosophical level, research considerations begin with identifying the author's epistemological (the nature of truth) and ontological (the nature of reality) assumptions (Hughes 1990; Creswell 2003). Understanding your position and views in relation to these concepts can give you an excellent insight into why you do what you do. For many students undertaking studies in the events field, research philosophy is often shown to be split between two diametrically opposite positions: that of positivism and interpretivism[1].

The concept of positivism is often associated originally with French writer Auguste Comte (1798-1857) who, being dissatisfied with the methods used to study social phenomena, wanted to introduce more scientific methods to better understand the issues and give clearer "answers". Positivism stems from the "hard sciences", where the certainty and purity of numbers can be seen as "facts" - universal truths to which we can all agree (Smith 1983). As such, positivism will often result in a logical, structured approach to research that relies on quantity and numbers for much of the analysis and findings (Ruane 2005). The positivist approach is often seen as highly objective, resulting in unbiased results.

Interpretivism is often seen as the opposite view to this; one of its synonyms is even as direct as "post-positivism" implying a move away from these scientific methods. Philosophers such a Husserl (1859-1938), Weber (1864-1920) and Bourdieu (1930-2002) have questioned these "universal truths". Interpretivists question the idea that there can be an objective reality, and instead believe that we each have our own reality that is constructed from the information and world around us, as such reality itself is different for everyone (Hughes 1990; Ritchie & Lewis 2003). Essentially; individuals and groups decide what is important and what is real, the interaction between them and their interpretation of an event, experience or object is what defines it (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Importantly, interpretivists acknowledge that the actions they interpret can be highly subjective and personal. When a researcher undertakes a interpretivist approach, it tends to be focused on the respondents' views, actions and opinions. In the social sciences, increasingly interpretivist approaches are used in the investigation and application of research (Creswell 2007; Patton 2002), Critical Event Studies is no different, and given the individual nature of defining "experience" "enjoyment" and "entertainment" these highly subjective concepts often lend themselves to interpretivist approaches. Having identified their philosophical position, typically the researcher's next step is to discern the research strategy: is it deductive or inductive? The fundamental tenant of this question revolves around the issue of sequencing; deductive approaches begin with a theory and set out to investigate its validity, whereas inductive approaches aim to conduct investigation to result in a theory (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2003).

Deductive approaches set out the research questions or hypothesis and theoretical framework of the study first and then develop a methodology to investigate or test these assumptions (Silverman 2000). This testing often requires a tangible "yes / no" result, thus the methods employed tend to incorporate quantitative elements to enable this, linking to the positivist approach identified above. Inductive approaches tend to start with a body of knowledge or data and attempt to establish concepts or theories from this, as such these tend to be in smaller data samples and employ qualitative methods (Patton 2002). Once the above considerations have been taken the researcher should now be in a position to identify the appropriate set of methods for their chosen study.

As you may have noticed, all of the above discussion tends to operate in "binary opposites", "false dichotomies" or "dualisms" e.g.: positivism vs. interpretivism; inductive vs. deductive; quantitative vs.

qualitative and we would argue this is one of the fundamental problems faced by students in the critical events terrain. As identified above, the interpretivist approach may have a greater natural tendency for use within studies in our area, but even our own teaching methods, arguably, follow a positivist approach with the constant oversimplification of complex concepts to their extreme polar opposites rather than larger discussion of the middle ground. Too often we discuss the black and white at the exclusion of the grey.

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[1] This term is often used interchangeably with constructivism and phenomenology

Norbert Elias and Problems of Involvement and Detachment:

One possible solution to the challenge identified here is offered by a consideration of the work of German sociologist Norbert Elias. Elias, most famous for his work "The Theory of the Civilizing Process" (Elias, 1939), produced a range and scope of work so wide that he was considered by some to be the last of classical sociologists (Van Krieken, 2001). His work was foundational to the development of a sociology of sport and leisure (Elias and Dunning, 1969, 1986), but also focused on areas as diverse as the development of court societies (Elias, 1983) and analyses of death and dying (Elias, 1985). Elias also focused heavily on research philosophy and what he termed his 'theory of knowledge' (Elias, 1978, 1987). It is this area of his work which is of particular interest to us here, specifically his work on the 'problem of involvement and detachment' (Elias, 1956, 1987).

Like most of his work, Elias' theory of knowledge was developed in opposition to what he saw as an overly simplified analysis of the world, centred upon false dichotomies (Dunning, 1996). Elias argued that, too often, when trying to understand social life, we fall into the habit of creating simple, but unrealistic, "either-or" situations where two basic ideas would be presented as alternatives to one another, constructing ways of thinking which isolate interlinked ideas from one another, missing the complexity of social life and interaction. As highlighted above, this is often the case when considering how students are exposed to research methodologies during their studies. Students are introduced to epistemology and ontology as separate steps in the development of a research philosophy, despite the fact that, in reality, these ideas cannot be separated. As Bloyce (2004:146) describes it:

'It is not that the two conditions are diametrically opposed, rather epistemology and ontology are so integrally related, they are so interdependent, there seems little sense in discussing them separately. That is to say, knowledge and reality are not separate entities; they are part of the same process.'

Similarly, students are introduced to induction and deduction as if it is impossible to operate within the extremes of these strategies. An exploration of Silverman's (2000) work, typical of many research texts for students, highlights this clearly. Silverman (2000) argues that research is either designed to generate a new theory, an inductive approach; or to test existing theories, a deductive approach. However, Elias (1978) argues that this separation of method from theory is based upon a basic misconception. Instead of viewing human thought in such a rational compartmental style, Elias (1978) viewed human thought as an intricate and continuous process. In the course of this process, theorising cannot be separated from observation as both are constant processes influencing and directing one another at the same time. As Elias (1978:58)

termed it: '*The development of people's conception of subject matter is found to be inseparable from their conception of the method appropriate to its investigation*'.

Similarly, and perhaps most importantly for our purposes here, Elias' theory of knowledge also rejected the simplification of research philosophy into a choice between 'positivism' and 'interpretivism'. Elias, despite being occasionally criticised for being a positivist himself (Layder, 1992 in Turner and Rojek 2001), rejected the simple 'rough dichotomy' of true and false which characterises positivistic research as being highly unsuitable for social research. Indeed as Rojek (1995) highlights, Elias' strongest criticisms were reserved for those advocating approaches to knowledge which enabled researchers to lay claim to a pathway to ultimate truth. However, he was also similarly critical of research in the interpretivist tradition which failed to be suitably objective about research findings. In particular, he argued that research influenced by political or personal agenda should be criticised for privileging interpretations which the researcher wished to advance:

"Anyone who, under the pretext of saying what science is, is really saying what he thinks it ideally should be, is deceiving both himself and other people'." (Elias, 1978:52)

Elias' theory of knowledge could therefore be seen as an alternative to the simplistic reduction to opposites and dualisms discussed above. He sought a research philosophy which didn't succumb to the overly "involved" perspective of the social scientist who focussed on their own interpretations and preconceptions regarding the research topic. However, instead of objective 'truth', Elias searched for what could be termed the most "reality congruent" answer (Bloyce, 2004). This "reality congruence" signifying an answer which is presented as more accurate than previous knowledge, therefore better, but not heralded as the final "truth". In simple terms, the best answer currently available, but not necessarily the definitive answer. Yet, Elias' theory of knowledge retained a focus on a scientific method which would be familiar in terms of its process and underpinning to a natural scientist in the positivist tradition (see Elias, 1956).

Elias' scientific method was not, however, a simple method or tool for data collection such as a survey, nor a simple methodology, such as "quantitative" or "qualitative" for gathering data. Rather it represented a way of thinking about the conduct of research. He conceptualised research as "*a form of detachment represented by the scientist's work... Embodied in the conceptual tools, the basic assumptions, the methods of speaking and thinking which scientists use*" (Elias, 1956:229). It is this 'scientific method', this form of self-consciously distancing oneself from the object of study (Bloyce, 2004) through a 'detour via detachment' (Elias, 1987). Elias believed this detour could be replicated in the social sciences, of which Critical Event Studies is part, in order to discover more reality congruent means of understanding the social world. In short, a balance between involvement and detachment is possible as the researcher attempts to navigate between the two extremes and adopt a position whereby: "*the sociologist-as-participant must be able to stand back and become sociologist-as-observer-and-interpreter*" (Maguire, 1988:190). The issue that remains, however, is exactly how to translate this concept into an actual research method to collect data and generate this reality congruent knowledge.

A Detour via Detachment:

As Rojek (1986) criticises, and Dunning (1997), a key proponent of the Eliasian' approach accepts, one of the biggest failures of the figurational sociology of knowledge is that, given the level of depth with which the issue of detachment is discussed in Elias' work, no significant detail is actually given on how to become 'detached'. Elias (1978:60) himself would argue that this omission reflects the nature of his theory of knowledge as a methodological concept rather than a research method, and suggested that the actual data collection method should be chosen in relation to the research question, asking: "*what should we think of someone who maintained that an axe must always be used to shape any material, be it wood, marble or wax?*". However, by discussing the concept at such length and failing to give a concrete guide as to how to achieve it, Elias leaves himself open to the criticism that he is a self-appointed 'gatekeeper of detachment', happy to cast judgment on the work of others without fully reflecting on his own capacity to attain such detachment.

As such, the task for any researcher attempting to make use of Elias' work to investigate any social phenomena is to construct, from what fragments of guidance exist, a methodology which is figurational in form and suitable for the research question under investigation. Fortunately, a series of principles can be determined which allow this to be achieved.

Firstly, Dunning (1997) argues that it is vital to locate the work being undertaken within the existing social fund of knowledge. In essence, rather than simply examining the subject in isolation, the researcher should engage with as much existing literature, debate and discussion related to the subject matter as possible in order to ensure they are familiar with the arguments and counter arguments within the field and also to add a historical dimension to the research by positioning the researcher in relation to that which already exists. This also helps to answer the question posed by Elias (in Waddington, 1997:37) in relation to the issue of over-involvement and subsequently biased research: "*to what extent am I primarily attempting to establish the validity of a preconceived idea of how human society ought to be ordered*?" and develop a more detached stance.

Secondly, and in a similar vein, Dunning (1997:169) encourages researchers to avoid *"the retreat into the present"* and to adopt a historic overview of their research subject, focussing on the social, cultural or political contexts that have shaped the subject rather than isolating it as a fixed point of time. Elias' (1939) approach encourages the researcher to consider their subject as an arrow in mid-flight, only able to be understood when consideration is given not only to where it is at any given moment but also from where it is fired and where it is targeted. Without this view, it is argued (Elias et al, 1997), that it is not possible to gain significant insight into the current situation. In contrast, if this approach is undertaken, then it further enables detachment by moving away from the ego-centricism of the moment, forcing the researcher to take a detour via detachment and locate their ideas and analysis in a wider context.

Dunning (1997) then turns to an insight previously explored above, namely Elias' rejection of the induction / deduction dichotomy in order to highlight a third insight. Here, Dunning argues that any researcher attempting to generate a figurational method should attempt to construct a methodology which privileges neither theory nor data collection at the expense of the other. Instead, it is argued that there should be an open two way process between theory and data with each informing dealings with the other. In a manner similar to what would subsequently be termed 'Grounded Theory' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), at each stage of the data gathering process, theory should be used to develop understanding, however, if the theory itself

is proven to be inaccurate or less adequate on the basis of research findings, the researcher should also move to realign or reject their theory in light of such evidence. Based on this notion, Dunning et al (1988) therefore argues that the researcher should not attempt to simply apply a theory to a research situation, but rather to continuously test his theoretical framework in order to become more detached.

It is these principles, therefore, that should underpin the development of a methodology and which will enable the researcher to undertake a detour via detachment in their work. The three key tenets: a link between existing knowledge and the research; a commitment to understanding the wider context in which the research subject sits; and a dynamic, continual interaction between the data and theory should inform the selection of the appropriate method, research subjects and data collection instruments. As such, as will be argued in more detail below, various methods can be employed, but it is an understanding of these issues which ensure the correct method is selected.

A Figurational Method:

With these principles in mind, the following discussion endeavors to demonstrate this process in action. As identified above, we selected two topics close to our hearts, from which it would be difficult for the authors to detach; setting the target of a detached investigation of: "the investigation of expressions of fandom at concerts" and "expressions of national identity at international football matches". The table below introduces these case studies and highlights their personal significance to the authors.

Case Study 1.1: A background to the investigation of expressions of fandom at concerts (Elliot)	Case Study 2.1: A background to expressions of national identity at international football matches (Daniel)
As an avid guitarist who grew up idolizing the rock stars of the past, a challenging topic to become detached from would clearly be the attendance of concerts of my heroes. In winter 2014, two artists were to play the newly developed SSE Hydro in Glasgow. One of which was "The Who", whom I had never (but always wanted) to see, the other was "Slash & The Conspirators", although I had been to numerous Slash concerts in the past, as the driving force behind my decision to take up playing guitar as a child, any affiliation he has with concerts I attend instantly influences my engagement and involvement with the event. The specific focus of the work (in this case at concerts), expressions of "Fandom" and its links to sub-culture is a key topic area within my teaching of Consumer Psychology and the experiential aspects of Live Music Management (see Hebdige 1979; Pine & Gilmore 1998; Bennett 1999), therefore I have a vested interest and knowledge of the theoretical underpinnings	I have been a football fan my entire life and have been attending the Scottish national team's matches since the mid 1990s. Scotland home games are a major part of my social and leisure life, events that are marked in my calendar far in advance and an opportunity to catch up with a group of friends specific to attending these events. The matchday experience is full of little rituals and I have many great memories related to games over the years. In addition, this interest spills into my professional life. As an academic, I have a keen interest in national identity and its expression via traditional Scottish events (see Flinn and Turner, 2014). As such, attending Scotland football matches, both personally and professionally, represents as involved an experience as I can possibly undertake. For this research, matches in November 2014 against England (Scotland's fiercest rivals) and the Republic of Ireland (near neighbours and significant competitors) were selected as research sites. Given the nature of the opponents, both

of the study and as such detachment from this too could be problematic as theoretical underpinning could prejudice my views on the findings. These two factors combined make this a highly involved experience from both the professional and personal point of view. To investigate this area I set the goal of identifying how concertgoers expressed their fandom or devotion at the event.	matches witnessed an even higher than normal outpouring of Scottish nationalism from the crowd and made obtaining detachment an even greater challenge for me as a researcher. In this context I decide to pursue a board research aim to investigate how Football fans express their National identity when attending International matches.

Having established our case studies, the next step was to select appropriate methods for data collection. The process and principles of a detour via detachment can be adopted within any methodology and method(s), the following discussion demonstrates the methodology and method we adopted, but should not be seen as a directive or the only way. Rather, it should be noted that the following is a methodology that meets the requirements of the Eliasian approach rather than the way to do so.

To study the expressions of national identity and fandom respectively, the method of participant observation was selected. Participant observation involves the study of participants by watching them in a given setting(s) in an attempt to observe their routines, beliefs, values and relationships (Stokes 2011). Waddington (2004) discusses participant observation as a continuum from complete observation to complete participant. Complete observation requires the researcher to be completely separate from the participants, whereas complete participant has the researcher completely immersed in the social setting they are observing and actively interacting with the participants. By adopting a participant observation study, a traditional view is that we would be taking a highly interpretivist approach to an ethnographic study: "*Any gaze is always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity. There are no objective observations, only observations socially situated in the worlds of the observer and the observed*" (Denzin and Lincoln 1998: 24). Ethnographic research is a highly qualitative and subjective methodology that focuses on the beliefs, thoughts and feelings of the participants and, linking back to its anthropological beginnings, can often involve seeing the observed in "*their natural habitat*" (Brennan 2013: 159). As with the often confusing, and incorrect interchangeability of Interpretivisim, Constructivism and Phenomenology, Ethnography is often used ubiquitously to simply mean qualitative research (Madden 2010). Whilst some will argue that it requires an on-site longitudinal study of foreign cultures, people, participants, others suggest that it can be conducted both locally and over a short period of time if it meets the key criteria of investigating a specific group (Brennan 2013). It is the latter view of ethnographic research that we have adopted for our studies, in conjunction with an observation approach nearing "complete participant", the following table outlines our approach to data collection.

Case Study 1.2: Approach to the investigation of expressions of fandom at concerts (Elliot)	**Case Study 2.2: Approach to expressions of national identity at international football matches (Daniel)**
For both of the concerts, I attended the event with close friends and family as a ticketed concert-goer, as such I was there first and foremost to experience	For both matches, I attended the events with a group of friends who are my regular social circle for such occasions. We observed our traditional pre-game practices of visiting a local bar, in one

the event, and during it would observe the wider crowd and their expressions of Fandom.

Relating to Waddington's Continuum (2004) this puts my research closer to that of a "complete participant" however as I did not engage directly with the participants outside my inner group, it can be seen that in fact I used a "participant observer" approach, where I was "*fully integrated into the culture being studied.... While taking extensive field notes about his or her observations... [and] strives to understand the meanings of actions within the community from an insider's perspective.*" (Brennen 2013: 165). This differs from a complete participant or "going native" as I did not abandon my role in the process and completely engage with the event at the expense of my research.

During the walk to the venue I began the observation process, taking notes on my own experience, the interactions between groups of fans and each other, our own discussions and a factor that became critical to both concerts, the choice of clothing and associated expressions of fandom (hair-styles, accessories etc) of the attendees. For the first concert we went for a pre-theatre meal at a nearby restaurant, which was playing "The Who's" greatest hits and was full, as such this too was part of the observation process. This was also my first visit to the newly developed SSE Hydro and as such many of the notes were also focused on how the crowd and I interacted with the venue. Less than a week later, I was back to see "Slash and the Conspirators", the process of note taking was similar, focusing on the same key areas of my own experience, fan interaction, our own discussions, clothing and associated expressions of fandom.

As the purpose of this chapter is to discuss the process of the research rather than the results themselves, an analysis of findings is not specifically presented. However in relation to this chapter's remit, a clear and important aspect of the observation occurred at both concerts but specifically at "Slash and the Conspirators". As the concert neared its conclusion and "the hits" began to play my note taking became more sparse, to the eventual point of none being taken at all during the encore, this was due to the simple fact that I was enjoying the experience too much, which is the key problem we are aiming to address, when we study

case a venue hosting a Tartan Army (the name for the Scotland Supporters' Club) pre-game concert and then walking to the stadium as part of the wider crowd. This "walk up" can be considered to be as much a part of the experience as the match itself and notes were taken from arrival at the pre-match venue as this can be considered the starting point for the research.

Similar to Elliot, my position was that of a 'complete participant', perhaps more so given my group for the evening was larger and there was a greater interaction with the wider crowd.

Throughout the process, at both games, I typed notes at various points as I encountered moments of interest and intellectual curiosity which married with my chosen research topic. These notes ranged from comments relating to the dress of fans, songs sung within the crowd, observations regarding the demographics of participants and a range of other issues. Relating to the discussion above regarding the interplay between theory and data (Dunning in Bloyce, 2004), I found my topic shifting to focus more explicitly on politicised expressions of national identity (the matches closely followed the 2014 Scottish independence referendum) within the crowd as this increasingly became a key recurring issue. This shift in focus also allowed a greater fit with figurational approaches detailed above (Elias et al, 1997), forcing me to consider the experience of attending the matches in a political and social setting rather than simply as a one-off football event.

Similar to Elliot's experience, reviewing the notes following the matches, the difficulties of being detached were apparent. In the case of both matches, there were moments where being immersed in the match clearly reflected in a reduction in noted observation. However it was also clear from the notes that my own thoughts and narrative began to appear during the data collection stage as I noted questions and comments in the margins, my analysis being shaped in real time by events. As such, the real challenge for me as a researcher was to ensure these initial thoughts did not come to dominate my analysis unfairly. I had to try to find a

something to which we are too involved, objectivity is difficult, nearing impossible. Upon return home after the concerts, I wrote additional notes on the overall experience, with particular emphasis on the areas of the night where I was having too much fun to be truly engaged with the research. This issue shows that during the process of the participant observation, it is possible (although not necessarily an advisable or deliberate approach) to change your position on the observer / participant continuum; I started each of the concerts as a participant observer but ended as a complete participant.	technique to enable me to follow Maguire's (1988:190) suggestion that *'the sociologist-as-participant must be able to stand back and become the sociologist-as-observer-and-interpreter'*.

Having collected our data, the final phase of the process was to ensure the detour via detachment. The first part of this process relied heavily on our own notes and reflections upon them. The simple act of taking notes during the process ensured that an element of detachment was already present in the research. In the process of taking notes, the authors were taken out of the moment and were forced to reflect on the relevant issues. Similar to the three tenets outlined above, this could be whether that was the observation's relation to the wider subject area; the nature of the finding (was it supporting or in conflict with a predefined view of the researcher?); and how the observation related to the wider historical context of the subject. It is worth noting at this point, that when reviewing these notes, that if they are treated in a similar manner as that of an interview transcript, in other words attempting to treat them as the notes / words of another rather than your own thoughts and feelings, one can attempt to enhance this level of detachment.

The above process was conducted separately from one another, and in preparation for the final act: a "critical conversation" with each other regarding our findings. This conversation was intended to force a detour via detachment by making each of us explain and defend our findings regarding our experiences. Having collated our individual thoughts regarding our live event experiences, we outlined the main themes and findings identified and how these linked to the wider body of knowledge. The role of the other was to critique these claims and to question the reasoning and logic used to arrive at the results presented. Similarly, the conversation allowed the questioner to raise alternative ideas and concepts which may or may not have been more reality congruent than that offered by the researcher. Crucially whenever findings had the potential to be formed through the primary researcher's own views or subject knowledge rather than from the actual observations, these areas would be discussed in-depth in an attempt to avoid bias through a too heavily involved standpoint. The role of the questioner in this case was to force the researcher to confront the question, raised above, as to what extent they were presenting what they felt ought to be said rather than what could be claimed based on the evidence. In the end, these interrogations did not necessarily change the conclusions reached by the researcher, but allowed them to say with greater certainty that their findings possesses a high level of reality congruence and that they had successfully undertaken the required detour to be able to trust the claims they wished to make based on the live event experience.

Conclusion:

The aim of this chapter was to introduce students to a philosophical and methodological approach to enhance the study of live event experiences. Whilst we have undertaken primary research of our own to illustrate this, it is not the purpose of this chapter to answer the research questions that guided our data collection. Rather, in conclusion, we wish to focus on the research process we have undertaken and how this can enable students to improve their own research. As we have argued, researching live event experiences is an inherently problematic undertaking for students and academics. We are fortunate to study a subject area we find intrinsically interesting, but as such, face a continual battle to avoid the unreflective familiarity this brings. Elias' detour via detachment and his wider reflections on the problems of involvement and detachment offer students a pathway to overcome this obstacle and the potential for inherent bias when conducting research.

In our case, the process of detour via detachment was achieved by the critical conversation observed above, this was an obvious benefit of co-authoring a piece in the critical event studies terrain, we could ensure the process of detachment was achieved by reflecting objectively on each other's work. This may not always be possible and as such individual reflection and detachment may be required, particularly for students undertaking personal research projects. One way to achieve this is through the use of a "diary method" during the collection phase: by noting thoughts, expectations and desires before the observation, interview or method and similarly reflecting on the experience immediately after the event, the researcher can have an honest "conversation" with themselves at a later date in the research process. Similar to the approach identified above, by treating these diary entries in the same way one would any other data and by ignoring that they were originally the author's own thoughts, it is possible to have the same critical conversation we had with each other by yourself. However, it is not the intention of this chapter to give students a simple roadmap of methods to employ, rather, in conclusion, we challenge students to use Elias' work as a way of stimulating critical debate and discussion as to how to think about their research, in keeping with the emergence of a Critical Event Studies terrain.

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