

APPENDIX 1C: INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULES

FIRST INTERVIEW

[NB recruiters will have briefed participant from information about the project, that will include the following description of its aims : *This project is interested in how different people across Britain, from all walks of life, understand their relationship to the public world. By ‘public world’, we simply mean those aspects of life that are of shared concern, not purely private concern.*

Different people may draw the line between public and private differently. For some, ‘public’ may mean neighbourhood groups and local organisations. For others, it may mean talking about issues with friends and people they work with, or it may mean political parties and election time. For some, by contrast, ‘public’ may refer to something they are passionate about with others, whether it’s a type of music, a football club, a TV programme, a hobby or a game they play; it could also mean a global issue or organisation, such as an international charity. Or it may be a mixture of these. But, however you think about this, we want to understand what makes up the public world for you. We are interested in hearing your reflections about what matters in that public world over a period of three months, and about what role media of all sorts play, alongside other sources including people you know or meet, in connecting you with that public world. From time to time we may send you suggestions of things of potential public interest that you might like to comment on. But throughout what you write or tell us about remains for you to decide.]

(A) Introduction

The purpose of today’s interview is:

- To run through some basic information about the things you do with your time, including the media you use.
- And to talk with you about the types of things you might be interested in telling us about during this project, and what for you would be the most comfortable format for doing this
- To explain and answer any questions you have on what this project is about

As mentioned in the letter you signed, interview will be recorded (to save time taking notes).

(B) Opening questions as warm-ups

1. [ask about occupation mentioned in info received from marketers.] How much of your time does that take up each week? what about family demands, domestic chores and so on?
2. How much time, if any, does that leave you with free for yourself? [follow-up briefly if appropriate]
3. What do you like to do with your free time?
4. Is there anything you always make time for in your week? [suggestions – TV show, news, going out to something local . . .]
5. Is there anything you’d like to do more of if you had more time?

C. Moving onto questions on media consumption

6. [ask re media access reported by marketers] In a typical week, how much time would you say you spent on media? [*prompt if necessary – TV radio press internet novels magazines – if asked, say exclude internet or other media purely for work purposes*]
7. [depending on what media they use most] What sort of [newspaper-reader] [TV viewer] etc would you describe yourself as?
8. Is there a particular form of media you couldn't do without?
9. How have the media themselves changed in your view over the past five years? [ie in a way relevant to your choices . . .]
10. Would you say your use of media has changed much over the past five years? If so, how?

[Note: if don't mention Internet/ Web and we know has online access at home, prompt . . . since may not include 'internet' as 'media']

(D) Questions on Public World/ Related Media Use/ Civic Involvement

as intro to this section, begin with brief recap of project description given by recruiters and then informally (in conversational way) explore with participant his/her idea of public/private boundary, for example

We're interested in how the public world looks to you – what sort of things and issues you think of as public, what sort of things and issues you think of as private – and where you would draw the line. So something may arise in your private life, but for you it raises issues or questions of public significance . . . So with that in mind can you give me an idea of

- what type(s) of things you think of as public, rather than private [if necessary, invent people and scenarios to give idea of what form responses might take]

. . . leading to more formal questions . . .

11. If we take the type of public issues or themes that interest you (and it could be anything that you consider is of common concern, rather than of just private concern), where do you generally get your information about it from? [if mention only media, ask re non-media – or vice versa. . .]
12. Are these things something you'd make a special effort to get information on [eg watching a TV programme, reading a press article, checking a website]?
13. Are these things you talk about with other people? Who with? [family, friends, people at work, people at college etc] Where do you talk about this and when, in what sort of situation?
14. Do you belong to any group or organisation linked to these issues ? [prompt: any charity, self-help group, national organisation, political party, online chatroom or newsgroup]
15. You think this issue is important – do you feel that your view of its importance is reflected in the media or not?
16. Do you think that your focus on these types of issue, rather than others, might tell other people something important about you?
17. Have you ever got involved in public discussion on such issues, for example written in to the newspapers, phoned-in to a radio or TV phone-in, taken part in a poll for a

- up to you how much you write in the basic weekly format (we provide you with this to help us keep some basic track of each participant, but as you can see it's quite open)
- please return weekly (by Monday of the following week) in SAEs provided or (if prefer) by email attachment.
- . . . with any additional information in a range of format to suit you: phone message, phone call; email message; record onto mini-tape. [discuss which would be likely to prefer: if definitely tape, then hand-over dictating machine and initial set of tapes]
- Contact with Research team: Tim is the main contact and will keep in touch with you through the project. You can always contact him by email/phone/letter.
- Run through timing – diary process, then follow-up interviews, discussion groups in autumn
- Payments arranged by market research company
- **ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?**

(F) General points For interviewers to keep in mind throughout...

- connections
 - Questions should allow for multiple publics, possibly conflicting – majority/minority, local/global etc.
 - Group narratives. If there are issues or groups which the interviewee cares about, ask: how did you first get involved in this? What made you interested? How do you keep up your interest? Will you always be concerned about this issue, do you think?
 - Discussion. If interviewee does talk about issues with others, ask: are these talks with people you agree or disagree with? If agree, do you seek out people you disagree with? Or do you see them in the media, and if so, how do you respond?
- disconnections/ disinterest in connection

Keep an eye on disconnection themes. Look for constraints – whether interviewees feel excluded, insufficiently supported or resourced, in connecting. Emphasise that we are not assuming 'everyone's connected' – we're interested also in feelings or thoughts about disconnection, or different views about how much 'connection' matters.

SECOND INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Note on overall style:

(1) more informal than first interview; (2) should not give impression of being dictated by us, although should aim to cover the following topics (but feel free to ask questions in more informal style); (3) where any specific issues/ questions need to be raised from diaries/ first interview, deal with as unobtrusively as possible and fit in where can in protocol

A Preliminary

A1 how have you been since the diary? [probe for any work changes etc]

A2 explain purpose of second interview (to receive feedback on diary process; to discuss issues coming out of doing the diary)

A3 say would like, if you agree, to ask a few questions on the build-up to the US elections for some US researchers who're doing a similar project to this one in USA – would you be willing to answer them? Answers to be passed on anonymously to those US researchers for research purposes only. If agrees to answer US questions, ask to sign extra consent letter.

B Warmup questions

B1 How was doing the diary for you? Did you enjoy it, did it get you down etc? [NB check any note of postcompletion telecon in J-drive and refer to this]

[follow-ups – eg ‘other people did/felt this . . . did you?’]

C Doing the Diary

C1 The time when you were doing the diary – what sort of time was it for you? Completely normal? Busier than normal? Quiet period?

C2 How was it finding time to do the diary – difficult? easy? depended on what was going on each week?

[follow-ups - did you have to cut it short some weeks, because other things came up?
- Did you go on longer than expected some weeks because got involved in it?]

C3 Were there any other difficulties in doing the diary which you experienced? [eg what happened if you didn't get time to follow media for a while? Did you sometimes want to

C5 Did you find yourself commenting on things you wouldn't have expected to comment on?

C6 What did other people say about you doing the diary? [Follow-up: what did you say to that?]

D Media Use as Reflected in Diary

D1 [interviewer should comment on sort of media use reflected in this diarist's diaries, ie what the diarist's key media are, and ask any necessary follow-ups - this is good place to raise issues about gaps between account of media use in first interview and diaries]

D2 [coming out of discussion on D1] Is there a particular type of media you take in right away when you get up each morning?

D3 Looking back, do you think there was anything unusual for you about your media use in that period?

D4 Has your media use changed for any reason since doing the diaries for any reason?

E Issues/Themes Specifically Raised in Diary

E1 [raise questions about specific issues commented on in diary eg]

- have you continued to follow this issue in the media?
- Is it [still] [not] something discussed with your [friends] [family] [workplace]?
- Has your view on this issue changed at all over the past few months? How?]

E2 [mention themes raised in diary – invite to comment on these]

F Current Issues

F1 what issues are you following closely at the moment?

[follow-up questions about social context for this, how links back to what said in diary and first interview about issues and media coverage – try to get discussion going]

G Media Responsibilities

There are some broader issues coming out of your diary and also other people's diaries which we're interested to know your thoughts on:

G1 Do you think media have responsibilities to inform you of certain things?

G2 How do you feel about the role media play in keeping you in touch with things that matter – Satisfied? Dissatisfied? Bit of both? [Follow-up: do media have their priorities right in your view?]

G3 Do you trust media? [in follow-up, ask if makes a distinction between newspapers/ TV/ radio/ Internet/ local]

G4 Do you sometimes want the media just not to be there? Do you ever want to get away from media?

G5 Do we maybe give too much importance to media – i.e. are other things (apart from media) just as important, maybe even more important, in keeping you in touch with what matters? [work, friends, church, other activities?]

H Politics/ Civic Action

H1 Do you think politicians have responsibilities to inform you of certain things and to consult you on certain things?

H2 How do you feel politicians fulfil those responsibilities? Satisfied? Dissatisfied? Bit of both?

H3 Do you trust politicians? [in follow-up, ask if it makes a difference which sort of politicians – local, national, international?]

H4 [if social discussion of issues mentioned in diary] You told us about how you discussed issues [at work] [with friends] [with family] [at church] [others]. Is it important

H2 How do you [(H5d ud abl/toon kicianemptedthingsd[6anyTj/Fntion6anyTonenot s? If yary] You toldcir)

FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE

Note on style:

- (1) overall priority is to encourage people to talk; in some groups, age/gender/ethnic/class differences may make this difficult, so discussion should start out very informally from common ground. So suggest start with local issues and work towards more general discussion about orientation to public world

A PRELIMINARY

A1 Purpose of meeting: to talk about (1) some issues raised in people's diaries and also (2) about the more general question of people's sense of what types of thing really matter, what types of things it's important to follow outside our day-to-day life and those it isn't – which is the main question this project is trying to raise...

A2 Confidentiality: as always we will preserve this, so suggest use first names in the discussion. [NB no need to mention US researchers again as US consent form already covered focus group material]

A3 Go round room asking people to introduce themselves by first name (to help transcriber identify the different voices in the room).

... [Lead-in to B: people's diaries talked about lots of types of issues – national, local, international and global... since everyone here is from the area of [details], shall we start by talking about local issues, which might be ones you all share?]....

B LOCAL ISSUES

B1 have there been any issues this year of major importance or concern to this area? [if necessary, prompt with mention of local issues mentioned by these diarists] [try to pick up if anyone disagrees about whether these issues are important]

B2 Has it been easy or difficult to get the information you need on these issues?

B3 Do you see any opportunities to take any action on this issue? [Follow-ups: If yes, what sorts of things? If not, why not? And does this matter or not?]

B4 Among all the different public issues you think about, how important are local issues like these compared with other types of issues ie national, international?

C OTHERth02/IISED BY DIARISTSes

- (ii) Iraq war
- (iii) Celebrity stories [Beckham, George Michael, others?]

On each issue, encourage people

- (a) to give their views
- (b) indicate how important (**or unimportant**) they think the issue is relative to others and
- (c) if discussion gets bogged down, suggest links to other issues made in diaries [viz Iraq War to general security issues; Celebrity not just around Beckham/sport (sport being mainly of interest to male diarists) but also George Michael (mentioned by a number of female diarists) ...; crime to quality of life, asylum, education]

C2 Don't lead people to discuss media coverage, but there is significant consensus/disagreement emerging on media coverage of any one issue, follow up and clarify. . .

D CIVIC ACTION

D1 Taking these issues we've just been discussing [recap], what do you see as our options for doing something about them? [Prompt if necessary – Write to MP/ council? Contact media? Visit website? Sign Petition? Go on protest? Consumer boycott? Join group?]

D2 Have you ever done any of these things?

D3 [If not,] What is your image of the types of people who do take such action?

D4 How much of a difference do you think doing these things would make?

D5 [If none or little difference], how do you feel about this? [explore people's feelings or thoughts on this]

[bring out any contrasts with discussion on B3]

F PUBLIC AWARENESS [NB don't pose these as formal questions, rather as 'thoughts' to throw into discussion]

F1 Are there things which all of us, no matter what our interests, should follow/ keep up

