Reviewer’s report

Title: Brokered Dialogue: A new research method for addressing controversial health and social issues

Version: 2 Date: 29 October 2011

Reviewer: Brett Smith

Reviewer’s report:

An excellent article that makes a distinctive and important contribution to our knowledge. I recommend publication with a few very minor changes.

1) The authors say that dialogue literally means through words. Where then does this the visual? Given Broken dialogue is represented on film perhaps an alternative description is required that takes into account the non-verbal.

2) The authors are devising methods for identifying the metrics to evaluate the impact. Whilst these are clearly under construction, I wondered if the authors could say briefly just what they have identified thus far.

3) Box 1. The authors say they use a narrative analysis. Which specific types? Is it a structural and thematic analysis, and/or dialogical narrative analysis? I assume also the authors see narrative analysis as an embodied engagement with the lives of others. If so, they might want to say something about this.


4) The authors say they use accepted techniques for ensuring rigour and trustworthiness, including member checks. Member checks have been critiqued in terms of ensuring rigour and trustworthiness - they can’t do this. Member checks can be used for ethical reasons or as practical ways to gain richer views. But participants can, and do, reject interpretations given by researchers. I would invite the authors to reconsider this section and re-write it, taking into account the literature that deals with validity, rigour, criteria etc in ways that fit the principles of dialogue. As it stands, the paper’s use of rigour seems to contradict the principles it outlines; it borders on a neo-realist or criteriologist standpoint. Please see and consider using:


5) The strengths of Broken Dialogue is stressed. Could the authors say a few things about the limits and difficulties associated with Broken Dialogue - such as the time needed to invest in learning to do narrative analysis and the need to be familiar / competent in the use and production of film.


Overall, a great paper. I look forward to seeing it in print, using the ideas in my own work, and citing the paper often. I hope these very minor points help with strengthening what already is a noteworthy piece of scholarship.

**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.