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Symposium (22 March 15:45 – 17:00)

033 QUALITATIVE STORY COMPLETION: AN INNOVATIVE METHOD WITH EXCITING POTENTIAL FOR HEALTH RESEARCH

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Background Story completion asks the participant to produce a story, in response to an open, sometimes ambiguous, scenario. As a method for *qualitative* research, it is relatively unknown. Yet the method has deep roots, with origins in psychotherapy *practice* (projective techniques, such as Rorschach) and (quantitative) developmental psychology research (such as the doll play story completion test); in those domains, it offers a method to access information inaccessible through self-report. As a qualitative method, story completion has usually been used to research the meaning-worlds people occupy, exploring everyday sense-making in relation to topics such as infidelity¹ and health and weight loss.²

Aims/Objectives This paper provides an overview and introduction to story completion as a qualitative technique for health research, including a brief signal of key design concerns. It demonstrates the exciting potential this method has for tapping collective sense-making, making it potentially very use for health researchers.

Discussion/Conclusions We believe story completion has untapped, exciting potential for qualitative *health* research, offering something *quite different* to many of the more popular methods used (e.g. interviews, focus groups). Through highlighting conceptual and design considerations for story completion, this paper both introduces the method *and* sets the scene for the three empirical symposium papers that follow – each of which demonstrates the application of story completion within a different area of health (healthy eating; disability and physical activity; mental health in the workplace).

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034 IMAGINING 'HEALTHY EATING:' USING STORY COMPLETION TO UNDERSTAND EVERYDAY MEANING-MAKING

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Background The ways people eat is of interest to many, from government level instruction to the populace on 'healthy eating' (e.g. through guidelines, such as the UK's Eatwell Guide; eatwell.gov.uk), to the individuals who may be making choices around their food practice. Food – what and how we eat – is deeply implicated in health and wellbeing, and the last decade or so has seen a diversification and intensification of what we might characterise as health maximisation dietary 'guidelines' – such as gluten-free, sugar-free or ketogenic diets. Often based around exclusion or restriction, these diets go far beyond what public health messages promote. Yet they have high profile via (social) media, and appear to be popular beyond their evidence base, at least among privileged individuals, and those seeking to maximise health and wellness.

Aims This research aims to explore how do everyday individuals (in Aotearoa New Zealand) understand decisions around, and the practice of, 'healthy eating'? Are dietary guidelines or more restrictive modes of eating evident in common-sense about 'healthy eating'?

Method Using an innovative approach called story completion, I collected a sample of approximately 100 stories. Stories were written in response to a cue which read: 'Chris has decided to eat healthily, but needs clear guidelines to do this. After some online research, and talking to friends, Chris is ready to start...' Other aspects were left open.

Results/Discussion The study is underway. Data will be analysed thematically and discursively, and this paper will report key patterns in sense-making around healthy eating. Initial analysis suggests 'healthy eating' is constructed in various ways, and as good but effortful, and hard to persist with. I will also discuss how useful story completion is for understanding the everyday worlds people navigate and negotiate around 'eating healthily', and thus for thinking about health-oriented food interventions.

035 EXPLORING NARRATIVES OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND DISABILITY USING STORY COMPLETION

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Background Disabled people face a multitude of social barriers to leading a physically active lifestyle. These barriers include a lack of knowledge and understanding from healthcare professionals and exercise practitioners, and negative attitudes from others in sport and exercise settings. Thus, there is a need to explore constructions of physical activity and disability and the cultural narratives that operate within sport, exercise and health contexts.

Aims

1. To explore sport and exercise science students' constructions of physical activity and disability using story completion and