



This is Survivor Research

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A. Faulkner, M. Nettle & D. Rose.
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I approached this book with trepidation, as the authors are known and respected in ways that I can only aspire to, and I found it by turns inspiring, irritating and inward-looking. It could easily become a reference book for the ethos and motivation of user/survivor research and the user movement, and could be referred to by service users to help them question and assert the value of their work. Other professionals who may need help to understand

the motivations and ideologies of people carrying out this sort of research will also find it of value.

I remember a late-night conversation with a psychiatrist who talked of the atmosphere at lunch in the 1960s and 1970s when his colleagues seemed to almost forget eating such was the passion of the debate about mental illness, society and psychiatry's identity. I see this less and less nowadays. Maybe the debates have moved to the user/survivor movement, as in this book where one can detect the atmosphere of the excitement of the search for meaning and a set of concepts and ideals that underpin the users' and survivors' work.

Among other things, this is a comprehensive attempt to show that all research is inevitably subjective and that as long as we acknowledge this it can enhance the work we do. Our identity as service users gives us access to a set of experiences denied to other people. Thus, in our research, we seek to promote such values as empowerment, participation, equality and anti-discrimination, and aim towards action, participatory and emancipatory disability research.

This book may become your research bible, your dinner conversation topic or something you would prefer to throw across the room. Either way, reading it should be an enriching and enlivening experience.

Graham Morgan Highland Users Group, Highland House, 20 Longman Road, Inverness IV1 1RY, UK. Email: gmorgan@hccf.org.uk

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