



An Introduction to Social Psychology

Interview dynamics

Narrator (vo):

Social psychoanalytic researchers investigate a broad range of topics. What unites them all is an interest in the ways in which subjectivity is formed through the merging of psychic and social processes.

Ann Phoenix:

The previous study that I was doing was on masculinities in 11 to 14 year old boys. And for that, we were interested in a range of boys, black, white, Asian, from different social classes, private schools, state schools, so that we were interested in building in the social. But we were also interested in trying to get the boys to talk in narratives about what was happening with them, how they felt, what they thought about masculinity, their relationships and so on. And one of the things that we found again and again, that boys defended themselves against, were charges of not being masculine enough. It wasn't natural to be a boy in any sense, they had to work at it and they defended themselves against two things in particular: charges of being girlish and charges of being gay. And there was very common name calling gay. We could say a great deal about the racialisation of masculinities and it is very much racialised with for example, African-Caribbean boys being seen as in some ways the most masculine, but in other ways being derided for being too tough, too hard, all the things that make for popular masculinity.

Rob Patman, who was the interviewer on that project, made field notes after every interview, recording things like how he felt about the boys at different points in the interview. What sort of things made the interview flow smoothly? Where it was difficult. Where there was humour, laughter and so on. So really trying to get at the interview dynamics, and the ways in which he was part of the co-construction, but also using the interview dynamics in order to understand the boys' emotional processes.