

## 4 CRITICAL SOCIAL RESEARCH

Harvey (1990) distinguishes critical social research as follows

Critical social research is underpinned by a critical–dialectical perspective which attempts to dig beneath the surface of historically specific oppressive social structures. This is contrasted with positivistic concerns to discover the factors that cause observed phenomena or to build grand theoretical edifices and with phenomenological attempts to interpret the meanings of social actors or attempt close analysis of symbolic processes

(Harvey, 1990, p 1)

This quotation reveals some of the differences between critical research and, on the one hand, positivism (which is often, but not exclusively, associated with quantitative research such as surveys, experimentation and content analysis) and, on the other hand, phenomenology which is roughly equivalent to what we have termed the interpretative tradition (and often, but not exclusively, associated with ethnographic research). The differences which are highlighted are as follows first, positivism emphasizes explanations cast in causal terms whereas critical research does not, second, whilst both interpretative and critical perspectives are concerned with social meanings of, for example, contents of documents, the former places emphasis on how these are generated in small-scale interactions whereas the latter seeks to analyse them critically in terms of structural inequalities in society (e.g. class, race or gender inequalities)

Within the social sciences the critical tradition owes much to Marx or to reworkings of Marx by other writers. Critical research which is influenced by this source is concerned with social structural inequalities founded on class inequalities. The work of the American sociologist, C. Wright Mills, was influenced by the Marxist tradition but was less explicitly class based in directing its attention at bureaucratization in mass society and at the concentration of power in a power élite (see especially Mills, 1956). During the 1970s the critical tradition received impetus from the rise of black movements and from feminism. This led to the examination of structures founded on race and gender inequalities.

There are variations within the critical tradition. Nevertheless, a number of central assumptions is discernible. First, prevailing knowledge (e.g. that provided in official documents such as reports of Royal Commissions) is viewed as being structured by existing sets of social relations which constitute social structure. Second, this structure is seen as oppressive in so far as there is an unequal relation between groups within it and in so far as one or more groups exercise power over others. Third, the inequality, power and oppression are rooted in class, race or gender or some combination of these. Fourth, the aim of critical analysis is not to take prevailing knowledge for granted or to treat it as some 'truth', but to trace back such knowledge to structural inequalities at particular intersections in history. In doing so, it is considered important to examine the role of ideology in the maintenance of oppression and control and also the way in which social processes and social institutions operate to legitimate that which is treated as knowledge. Ultimately, the aim of critical research and analysis is to confront prevailing knowledge — and the structures which underpin it — by providing an alternative reading and understanding of it.



### READING

You should now read Brian Fay's 'The elements of critical social science'. This is Chapter 4 in the Reader.

The reading by Fay epitomizes the central features of critical research as outlined above. However, in its emphasis on *emancipation* it goes one step further. For Fay it is not sufficient that critical research enlightens oppressed groups by providing an analysis of the root causes of such oppression. Such enlightenment should lead to emancipation. 'By offering this complex set of analyses to the relevant group at the appropriate time in the appropriate setting, a social theory can legitimately hope not only to explain a social order but to do so in such a way that this order is overthrown' (Fay, 1987, in Hammersley, 1993, p 36)

## Deconstruction and reconstruction

The twin concepts of deconstruction and reconstruction are central to much critical research. Deconstruction is the process by which prevailing knowledge, or any construct within it, is broken down into its essential elements. This can involve the collection of empirical data and the examination of such data in relation to the abstract constructs which constitute knowledge. Reconstruction involves the rebuilding of a construct in terms of the oppressive social structural arrangements which underpin it and sustain it.

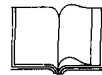
An example is required in order to illustrate what is otherwise an abstract set of prescriptions for analysis. We can take the construct 'housework', which can be deconstructed or broken down in terms of a set of activities and tasks which are viewed within prevailing knowledge as constituting its essence (washing dishes, ironing clothes, etc.) The process of reconstruction involves an examination of this construct in terms of wider structural arrangements, especially gender inequalities in society. It may also provide an analysis in terms of class (e.g. a study of working-class housewives) and class and race (e.g. a study of black working-class housewives). Such reconstruction views 'housework' not as a set of activities such as washing dishes, making beds and so forth, but as an exploitative relationship within a social structure with patterned inequalities and oppressions.

## 4.1 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF DOCUMENTS

Critical analysis is explicitly theoretical. However, empirical work has been and is carried out, including social surveys, detailed interviews, social history research, participant observation and, of course, the analysis of documents. (For examples of the use of each of these in critical research see Harvey, 1990.) The contribution which the analysis of documents can make within the critical research tradition is indicated in the reading 'Traditions in documentary analysis'

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### READING



You should now read the section entitled 'The critical tradition', in Chapter 5 in the Reader. While reading the extract ask yourself:

1. What are the main features of the critical tradition and how do they differ from positivism on the one hand and the interpretative approach on the other?
2. What questions might form the core of a research agenda organized around the critical analysis of documents?

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The key features of the critical tradition can be highlighted by comparison with the features of positivism and the interpretative approach as outlined in Section 3. The critical tradition is critical both of positivism and of the interpretative tradition whilst agreeing with the latter about the relevance of the assignment of social meanings and subsequent consequences. However, further and more 'critical' concerns are added to the research agenda. These include a concern with analysis at a societal and social structural level, an emphasis on social conflict, an emphasis on power and control, an interest in ideology as a means by which existing social

arrangements are legitimated; and a commitment to not taking for granted what is said. With specific reference to the analysis of documents, there is therefore an interest in the role of official, quasi-official and other documents, an emphasis on the role of such documents in social conflict and as mechanisms by which power is exercised, and an interest in documents as legitimating devices.

## 4.2 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

An important development within the critical paradigm stems from the writings of the French social theorist Michel Foucault and relates to what is termed discourse analysis. The meaning of 'discourse' in social science has already been discussed in Section 2 in this unit, and earlier in the course in Unit 16.



### READING

At this point you should turn once more to Chapter 5 in the Reader and read the sections entitled 'Discourse analysis' and 'Conclusion'. While reading, ask yourself the following questions.

- 1 What are the key assumptions of discourse analysis?
- 2 What is distinctive about the Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis?
- 3 What are the main elements of the research agenda which is suggested?

One key assumption is that discourse is social, which indicates that words and their meanings depend on where they are used and by whom, to whom. Consequently, their meaning can vary according to social and institutional settings and there is, therefore, no such thing as a universal discourse. Second, there can be different discourses which may be in conflict with one another. Third, as well as being in conflict, discourses may be viewed as being arranged in a hierarchy. The notions of conflict and of hierarchy link closely with the exercise of power. The concept of power is vital to discourse analysis via the theoretical connection between the production of discourses and the exercise of power. The two are very closely interwoven and, in some theoretical formulations, are viewed as one and the same.

The Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis is distinctive on a number of counts including the position that discourse and power are one and the same. 'Power produces knowledge, they imply one another: a site where power is exercised is also a place at which knowledge is produced' (Smart, 1989, p 65). What is more, Foucault's position is that there is not one focus of knowledge and power (e.g. the state) but several.

His viewpoint is that strategies of power and social regulation are pervasive and that the state is only one of several points of control. This is an important divergence from Marxist analysis. For Foucault there are many semi-autonomous realms in society, where the state has little influence, but where power and control is exercised. In this way Foucault's notion of the pervasiveness of loci of regulation and control encourages research about discourses in a range of institutional settings.

(Jupp and Norris, 1993, in Hammersley, 1993, p 49)

The ways in which research may be carried out in such settings are laid out in the 'research agenda' in the conclusion to the chapter. The 'agenda' brings together questions which typically would be asked in a critical analysis of documents, especially with reference to discourse analysis. It is unlikely that any given analysis will deal with all these questions; rather, it will tend to focus on some to the exclusion of others.

Critical analysis, and discourse analysis in particular, has a tendency towards being theoretical. It is appropriate, especially in a course concerned with social research methods, to consider how an abstract set of ideas and concepts can be converted into a programme for research. This will be done in the following sections via a number of case studies, each of which uses different types of documents and represents a different selection of research questions, from the above agenda, with which to address the documents.

The first case study is of a fictitious research proposal to carry out discourse analysis on what — using Scott's typology in Section 2.1 — can be called 'state' documents which are 'open-published', that is, they are in general circulation. This case study is especially useful because it shows how a particular theoretical system can be turned into a programme of research. The second case study shows the end product of a critical analysis of an open state document. It illustrates the conclusion which one social scientist, Mike Fitzgerald, reached after a critical 'reading' of a report on prisons. The third case study is based on institutional records and transcripts of detailed interviews with professionals in the criminal justice system to examine decision making regarding the disposal of women offenders. The final case study involves a different form of document, a report of survey findings produced by social researchers. This case study illustrates the difference between a critical analysis of text and a 'technical' evaluation of research design and the findings derived from it. This case study can be found on Audio-cassette 2.

### 4.3 CASE STUDY 1: A PROPOSAL FOR CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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#### READING



You should now read the following example of a research proposal based on critical analysis of a text. Write notes on these questions:

- 1 Which, if any, of the research questions included in the agenda at the end of Chapter 5 in the Reader are represented in the proposal?
  - 2 What method of inquiry is advocated and how does it differ from positivist content analysis?
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#### Official analyses of problems in prisons

##### **Introduction**

The transformation of a sequence of events into what becomes defined as a deep-seated 'social problem' is often marked by the setting up of a public inquiry. The theoretical analyses and moral perspective of such inquiries play a large part in determining public perception of 'normality' and 'dangerousness'. In 1990 serious rioting took place in Strangeways Prison, Manchester. The government of the day commissioned Lord Justice Woolf to conduct inquiries into the rioting. Woolf decided to adopt a broad interpretation of his terms of reference to address wider issues which the disturbances raised (e.g. physical conditions in prisons, the use of local prisons to keep individuals on remand, the extent of overcrowding). The Report of the Woolf Commission was published in 1991 (Woolf, 1991).

### **Research questions**

Two sets of important questions can be asked about the Woolf Report, or, indeed, any other such official report. First, we can try to ascertain the nature of the official discourse it represents:

- How does Woolf define the *problems* of our prisons in the 1990s?
- What range of *explanations* does he consider?
- What does he propose as the *control solution*?

Second, and more generally, we could investigate the role of such public 'voices' as Woolf's, perhaps by comparing the Report with other official or quasi-official reports. For example, in relation to crime and criminal justice we could undertake 'readings' of the Scarman Report on the Brixton disorders of 1981 (Scarman, 1981) or of the Taylor Report on the Hillsborough disaster (Taylor, 1990). However, we need not restrict ourselves to this area of concern. Instead, we can investigate a wide range of official reports (e.g. on health, education and housing). The important questions to ask are:

- What is the *audience* addressed by these official reports and for whom do they speak?
- What *influence* do reports of this kind have on what happens in agencies of social control?

### **Theoretical frameworks**

Much of the interest today in official discourses stems from the influence of Michel Foucault on social science. Foucault envisages society not as something 'out there' which causes, and is in turn reacted upon by, certain kinds of knowledge or social policy. Rather, 'society' comprises an array of *discourses* which exhibit and produce moral norms, theoretical explanations and techniques of social control. These three aspects of social regulation are, in Foucault's view, quite inseparable. So, the first three research questions listed aim to try to establish the various components of official discourse about problems in prisons and the overall moral climate such discourse creates.

The second set of questions gets us to think about who is represented in public discourse of this kind. On whose behalf does Woolf speak — the liberal professions? the ruling class? the Establishment? And whom is he addressing — the moral majority? the British public? the respectable white male citizen? It is important to recognize here that, for Foucault, these 'subjects', on both sides, are not concrete individuals or groups existing *outside* the field of the discourse itself. Rather, they are 'ideal' positions which are produced in and through such discourses, serving as powerful moral regulators. The last questions further reflect Foucault's view that official discourse is only *one* type amongst others, and that the social priorities established in any given discourse may well be undercut or qualified by those established in other discourses (such as those of the media or the police).

### **Methods of inquiry**

This project involved 'reading' and reflecting upon Woolf and similar official reports, looking closely at the way in which language is used, and at the values involved, so as to produce the typical 'subject' of the discourse. Reports embody certain types of theory or knowledge — which may be embodied in policy and institutions — about what or who is the problem, about what is the explanation and about what is the 'correct' solution. Considerations of power are deeply embedded in such theory and knowledge. The purpose of 'reading' is to apprehend such theory, knowledge and power. This type of approach does not accept a distinction between the 'theoretical' and the 'empirical' modes of investigation.

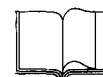
The research proposal has the analysis of the report of the Woolf Inquiry at its centre. In doing so, it enlists theoretical ideas from Foucault, particularly the viewpoint that society comprises an array of discourses which express and produce moral norms defining what are 'right' explanations and techniques of control. The report of the Woolf Inquiry is one such official discourse relating to prisons. It provided official definitions of what is wrong with our prisons, why these problems exist and how they should be solved. (The precise recommendations are not reproduced here. For a useful summary and commentary consult Sparks, 1992.) The theoretical ideas derived from Foucault generate research questions to be asked of the Report at two levels. First of all, one set of questions is asked of the document itself. These questions are concerned with what is defined as problematic (and, by implication, what is not defined as problematic), the explanations or theories that are provided (and, by implication, the explanations that are omitted or rejected); the solutions that are offered (and, by implication, the solutions that are rejected). These are typical of questions 5 and 6 of the research agenda outlined in the conclusion to Chapter 5 in the Reader.

A second set of questions relates not to the document itself but to the 'subjects' on either side, asking on whose behalf the report speaks and to whom it speaks. These are close to questions 3 and 4 in the research agenda. Note that, in contrast to the interpretative approach outlined earlier in this unit, the focus in the approach advocated in this proposal is not upon the actual person who wrote the report, nor is it upon the actual people who read it. Rather, it is upon 'ideal' positions which are produced in and through such discourses, serving as powerful regulators.

With regard to methods of inquiry, the position adopted is in complete contrast to that of positivist content analyses. There is no reference to formal protocol of categorization, coding and counting of words, themes, headlines or column inches. Rather, the project involves 'reading' and 'reflecting' and is founded upon an approach that does not accept that there are two separate yet interrelated activities of theorizing and empirical research carried out by two different kinds of people: theorists and research technicians.

#### 4.4 CASE STUDY 2: CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF A PUBLIC DOCUMENT

##### READING



You should now read 'The telephone rings: long-term imprisonment', by Mike Fitzgerald, in *Offprints Booklet 4*. The article is a critical analysis of a public document about prisons. In reading it you do not need to know about specialist issues in penology; rather, you should focus on the methodological approach used by Fitzgerald. In particular, write notes on the following.

- 1 What *kinds* of documents is Fitzgerald concerned with? Refer back to Scott's typology of documents outlined in Section 2.1
- 2 What *aspects* of the documents is he concerned with? In particular, focus on definitions of what is seen as problematic in the documents, preferred solutions to these problems and implied theory of management.

Fitzgerald focuses on a number of official reviews, inquiries and policy papers that have followed disorders in prisons, with a view to uncovering the principles of penal policy that underpin their recommendations. In terms of the typology outlined earlier, the documents can be classified as official-state-open-published.

In his consideration of the Report of the Control Review Committee, Fitzgerald focuses on three main areas that make up what he calls the 'general orientation' of the Report. This general orientation, and its three sub-areas, constitute the object of analysis. First, he is concerned with the concepts that the Committee employs to define that which it sees as problematic, and he then goes on to deconstruct some of these concepts to see how they themselves are defined. For example, he notes that 'control' is central to the Committee's conceptualization and also that control is defined in terms of the control of the prisoners themselves, whereas other reports have sought to conceptualize this in terms of problems in the Prison Service. In short, this form of analysis asks why certain kinds of concepts, defined in certain ways, are placed on the public agenda.

Second, he is concerned with the kinds of solutions that emerge from the Committee's thinking. As he points out, such solutions are largely in terms of new prison designs and not in other terms, such as improving prisoner-staff relations. The preferred solution does not stand in isolation but flows directly from the way in which the Committee conceptualizes what is seen as being problematic in the prison system.

Third, Fitzgerald analyses the implicit theory of management that underpins both the conceptualization of the problem and the preferred solution and its implementation. As he argues, he is not against management *per se* but questions the rigid hierarchical theory of management that dominates the thinking of the Committee.

At this point it is appropriate to summarize some of the key features of the critical approach to documents in the light of Fitzgerald's analysis of the Report of the Control Review Committee.

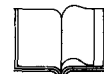
- First, the sources of data are often, but not always, official texts which are important at a macro level in so far as they put forward conceptualizations regarding, in this case, the prison system, although they could refer to any other element of the social system.
- Second, the method does not exhibit the formal protocols of quantitative content analysis (e.g. categorizing, coding, counting), but is a critical reading of texts aimed at uncovering how problems are defined, what explanations are put forward and what is seen as the preferred solution. It also seeks to bring to the surface that which is rejected in the text and that which does not even appear — what is *not* seen as problematic, what explanations are not considered, and what are not the preferred solutions. In other words, the analysis is concerned with how official documents frame the public agenda.
- Third, Fitzgerald is not solely concerned with analysing the definitions, explanations and solutions put forward in official documents, but seeks to challenge them and suggests alternative proposals and viewpoints. In this sense, the methodological approach is not exclusively a critical reading of the text, but is also a challenge to the text.
- Fourth, note that the paper is solely concerned with the 'communication', that is, with the text. It could have gone beyond this by examining the 'senders' and the 'recipients'. Had it done so it would not have been concerned with the identity of individual authors or with the meanings they bring to the text as someone from the interpretative tradition would be, but with the section of society for whom the document speaks, and with the consequences for the prison system and its inhabitants.
- Finally, unlike the preceding research proposal given in Section 4.3, Fitzgerald does not make explicit reference to discourse analysis or to Foucauldian theory in general. There are similarities in approach, although there are also differences. This is not the place to go into the fine details of different theoretical and methodological positions. It is sufficient to note that Fitzgerald's paper exemplifies the critical approach to documents as epitomized in the research agenda at the end of Chapter 5 in the Reader, an agenda which in good part was influenced by the work of Michel Foucault.

## 4.5 CASE STUDY 3: CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF DECISION MAKING

The next reading, also within the critical tradition, is slightly different from the preceding two case studies in so far as it is not concerned with macro state-originated documents. Rather, it involves transcripts of detailed interviews with 'experts' within the criminal justice system and institutional records. What is more, it is not solely concerned with one discourse, namely that represented in official state reports on prisons, but with a multiplicity of interacting discourses which have consequences for the decisions made regarding women who offend

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### READING



You should now read the three short extracts from Anne Worrall's *Offending Women* which you will find in Offprints Booklet 4. The first extract outlines the theoretical and methodological position of the author; the second details the research methods which were used, the third summarizes the main conclusion. You might find it helpful to 'skim-read' in the first instance, followed by more detailed study. Write notes on the following:

- 1 What methodological approach is preferred?
- 2 What is the relationship between power and knowledge?
- 3 What is the relationship between discourse and practice?
- 4 What are the implications of discourse analysis for methodology?
- 5 How was the research carried out in practice?
- 6 What discourses lay claim to knowledge about women offenders and are therefore important in relation to the disposal of such offenders?

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The position taken by Worrall eschews social science which, on the one hand, is concerned with the search for universal properties and causes and, on the other hand, is solely concerned with social meanings. She is not interested in questions of what is the 'truth', but rather with 'the relationship between those who claim to know the "truth" and those about whom they claim to know it' (Worrall, 1990, p. 6). In turn, this relates to the question, 'What is it that endows certain individuals to have such knowledge and to apply it?' These are the hallmarks of critical analyses in general and of discourse analysis in particular.

The relationship between power and knowledge is vital to such analyses. Worrall's viewpoint is that knowledge does not of itself give power. Rather, those who have power have the authority to know. In this context such people are magistrates, probation officers, solicitors and psychiatrists. Power is not reducible to one source, class (as Marxist analyses would have it), but exists in all social relations. In this case, it exists in the relations between women offenders and those who make decisions about them, and also in the relations between such decision makers themselves. Within this analysis the exercise of power is not the naked oppression of one group by another but the production and subtle application of coherent 'knowledge' about other individuals which has consequences for what happens to these individuals (e.g. Social Inquiry Reports, written by probation officers about offenders, which can influence decisions taken about such offenders). This is discourse as discussed at the beginning of Section 2.

Discourses have implications for practice in terms of programmes, technologies and strategies that is, coherent sets of explanation and solutions, ways of implementing these solutions and strategies of intervention. The earlier discussion of discourse analysis (in Section 4.2) indicated that there can be differing and competing discourses.



In this respect, Worrall suggests that the power of the offender lies in the ability to resist, and even refuse, the coherent and homogeneous discourse of 'experts' 'By demonstrating the existence of heterogeneity and contradiction, the speaking subject is helping to keep open the space within which knowledge is produced' (Worrall, 1990, p 10) In the main, however, women offenders remain markedly non-resistant and 'muted'

The methodological approach is one of a case study of detailed interviews with magistrates, probation officers, psychiatrists and solicitors and of institutional records and reports It has no claims to randomness or representativeness (as, for instance, a social survey would) and it seeks to generalize via theorizing rather than by reference to probability theory (again, as a survey would). 'The adoption of this particular mode of theorizing womens' experiences calls for a method of research which rejects notions of generalizability through probability in favour of generalization through theoretical production' (ibid., p 12). As with the first case study, we found rejection of the viewpoint that there are two distinct activities, theorizing and empirical inquiry

The main conclusion of Worrall's work is that women are 'muted' within the criminal justice system by being subject to the multiple discourses of the 'experts' who are authorized to present coherent knowledge concerning problems, explanations and solutions and who deny legitimacy to the discourses of the women themselves Worrall's analysis involves deconstructing the discourses of the 'experts'. Despite the power and authority of such discourses, offenders develop means of resisting them by exploiting construction within them 'Yet, while much of the women's resistance is individualistic, inconsistent and, in some, self-destructive, it has the important effect of undermining the authority of official discourses and keeping open the possibility of the creation of new knowledge about them — both as women and as law-breakers' (ibid , p 163)

The contribution which this case study makes to the discussion of critical analysis is that, in comparison with the other examples, it shows that there can be a multiplicity of discourses, that these can operate in subtle ways, that there can be resistances to prevailing discourses, and that outcomes have a good deal to do with the positions of particular discourses in the hierarchy of legitimacy and authority

#### 4.6 CASE STUDY 4: CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF A RESEARCH REPORT



##### ACTIVITY 3

You should now listen to Audio-cassette 2, Side 2 Before doing so, though, you should read the appropriate notes in Section 2.3 of the Audio-Visual Handbook and the article by David Farrington, 'The origins of crime: the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development', in Offprints Booklet 2, which you read in conjunction with Unit 9

## 5 CONCLUSION

This unit has been concerned with the use of documents in social science research. Such documents include life histories, letters, diaries, essays, institutional memoranda, and public pronouncements such as Reports of Royal Commissions They can also include reports of academic and policy-related research The types of documents illustrated have been distinguished according to their authorship and also according to the degree to which they are accessible to researchers A classification based upon these two criteria encourages us to ask questions

pertaining to the validity of particular documentary sources, for example, whether a document is authentic, whether it is accurate, whether it is representative of other documents of its type and what is the intended meaning

Three broad approaches to the use of documents have been outlined the positivist, the interpretative and the critical. The emphasis in this unit has been on the critical approach to the use of documents as objects of inquiry (as opposed to resources in inquiry) The reason for this is that both positivist and interpretative approaches have been reflected elsewhere in the course (e.g. in the consideration of survey research and ethnographic research, respectively) Critical research is distinguished by questions which are asked of documents, especially questions about what does — and does not — constitute accepted 'knowledge' and with what consequences By way of conclusion, three points are worthy of emphasis. First, as with positivist and interpretative approaches, critical analysis is used in a very broad sense within which there are different strands For example, an approach influenced by Marxism places emphasis on the way in which documents reflect class oppression in society, whereas Foucauldian discourse analysis views power as operating at different levels and in different sectors of society and also does not reduce power to one source, namely class relations Second, the unit (and its associated readings) may give the impression that there has been an historical unilinear development from positivist content analysis through interpretative analysis of documents to contemporary critical analysis There is an element of truth in this in so far as, for example, interpretative approaches of the 1970s developed as a reaction to earlier positivism, and critical analyses of the 1980s responded to what were seen as shortcomings (e.g. insufficient attention paid to power) in interpretative approaches Nevertheless, it should be recognized that all three approaches continue to exist alongside one another and to play their part in contemporary analysis of documents Despite the emphasis of this unit, it would be wrong to assume that all documentary analysis is critical analysis. Finally, it would also be wrong to assume that critical research is solely concerned with documentary sources As Harvey (1990) has illustrated, critical research encompasses a wide range of methods of research (e.g. interviews, surveys, observations) and forms of data (e.g. quantitative and qualitative, primary and secondary, contemporary and historical)

## ANSWER TO ACTIVITY

### ACTIVITY I

Given below is a summary of the examples provided by Scott (1990) of the types of documents in his classification:

Type 1 Personal letters and diaries.

Type 2 Documents of a long-established land-owning family held in a private archive.

Type 3 Personal documents of such families deposited in a public archive for general use

Type 4 Diaries of politicians written for subsequent publication.

Type 5 Confidential organizational memoranda

Type 6 Company accounts and records held in their own offices

Type 7 The governmental archive of business documents held at the companies Registration Office

Type 8 Accounts of companies quoted on the Stock Exchange which, by law, must be published

Type 9 State documents covered by the Official Secrets Act

Type 10 Papers held in the Royal Archive which may be consulted if permission of the Sovereign is gained.

Type 11 Government papers classified as 'open', such as those held in the Public Record Office.

Type 12 State documents which are published, such as Annual Reports of Departments of State (e.g. Home Office).

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### TABLE

Table 1. Scott, J. (1990) *A Matter of Record*, Polity Press