



VIKKI BELL

Vikki Bell is Professor of Sociology at Goldsmiths, London, where she convenes the MA Sociology (Cultural Analysis) pathway. She is the author of four monographs, including *Culture and Performance* (Bloomsbury, 2007) and *The Art of Post-Dictatorship: Ethics & Aesthetics in Transitional Argentina* (Routledge, 2014). Her research has addressed questions of ethics, aesthetics, subjectivity and politics across the social sciences and theoretical humanities. Recently her work has explored how violence is documented and displayed in different forums, with her research project on the place of archives in Argentina, Chile and Colombia funded by the British Academy, and on the documentation of forced disappearance in Chile, Mexico and Colombia by the Newton Fund (with Oriana Bernasconi).

LESSONS earned



1 DON'T PROMISE TOO MUCH.

Quality not quantity is what will advance your project, it is what your research respondents deserve, and what will shine through in the end.

2 BE A SPONGE.

Be attentive to all voices, even those that seem tangential to your research. Some of the most engaging stories have come from those we spoke to 'en route' to our scheduled appointments.

3 BE AMBITIOUS IN YOUR AIMS AND HUMBLE IN YOUR ATTITUDE.

In our research, we are all always learners. People will want to help you if they know you understand you are still a student.

4 MAKE ETHICS YOUR FIRST CONVERSATION WITH YOUR TEAM, AND YOUR LAST, AND ALL THOSE IN BETWEEN.

Ethics is never truly dealt with after the consent form is signed. Make it an on-going debate.

5 BE PREPARED TO BECOME EMOTIONALLY CHANGED BY RESEARCH.

It's difficult to plan for, but attending to your research, with interviewees or with archival documents, is bound to draw you into the lives of others.

6 DON'T BE WORRIED ABOUT OTHERS ENCROACHING ON YOUR RESEARCH TERRAIN.

Human rights violations require as many people as possible to join forces. Research is not a ship. There's room for all and it won't sink if others join you.

7 IF YOU WAKE IN THE NIGHT WITH A BRILLIANT IDEA, YOU PROBABLY ALREADY WROTE IT DOWN SOMEWHERE.

Many times, I've scribbled a note to myself in the wee small hours, only to find I had already typed it up on my computer. Go back to sleep!

8 ALLOW INTERRUPTIONS – CHILDREN, PETS, PARTNERS.

But when you need some time to really think, ask for it, plan it in advance, so everyone knows you need to be by yourself.