

University of Wales: Trinity Saint David & Hong Kong Management Association

Day One

# Critical Literature Review

Dr. Tamara Savelyeva



Philosophical  
Assumptions &  
Research  
Frameworks

# Our goals for today

Understand how theory influences  
critical reading & research  
methodology

Recap the research foundations in  
relation to critical literature review



# Positioning yourself

## Common barriers

Research is useless—  
just give me the degree!

Research is boring—  
all these theories are so  
far from reality

Research is too hard –  
so much work, so little  
time



**Self-fulfilling prophecy**

# Positioning yourself

Touchstones to reframe your thinking:

Research is useless

Research is boring

Research is too hard



- All businesses rely on social science research to engage in competent practice
- No one *already* knows research. It's something I'll learn through practice
- It's challenging for everyone
- Research is relevant to me because it allows me to figure out what is known about any topic I want to study
- If the topic I choose to study is important to me, I will be more interested in research

# Research that “knocks your socks off”

## TASK

1. Give an example of Quantitative and Qualitative Research study
2. Discuss why researchers went on to conduct the Research study?

# Qualitative Research that “knocks your socks off”

## Examples from the literature



Svetlana ALEXIEVICH

Belarusian oral historian and essayist

**Nobel laureate** in Literature 2015

traced the first-hand historical accounts of the Soviet and post-Soviet individual through carefully constructed collages of interviews



Alexievich, S. , *Selected titles:* (1999) *Chernobyl Prayer / Voices from Chernobyl*; ( 1984) *War's Unwomanly Face*; (1993) *The Last Witnesses: the Book of Unchildlike Stories*

# Qualitative Research that “knocks your socks off”

## Examples from the literature



### Deliberate HIV exposure by 6 African-American youths was rooted in growing up poor in the inner city

Tourigny SC. Some new dying trick: African American youths “choosing” HIV/AIDS. Qual Health Res 1998 Mar;8:149–67.

**Question**  
What are the experiences of 6 African-American youths who deliberately sought exposure to HIV?

**Design**  
Ethnography.

**Setting**  
Inner city Detroit, Michigan, USA.

**Participants**  
6 African-American youths (4 women, 2 men) ranging in age from 12–22 years who had ≥1 family member with HIV/AIDS and who had deliberately sought exposure to HIV. All respondents were HIV seropositive.

**Methods**  
Respondents told their stories during meetings that took place over time at locations chosen by the respondents. Meetings often occurred in the respondents' homes.

**Main results**  
The decisions of the 6 youths to deliberately expose themselves to HIV were presented in the context of “marginalization, insensitive social policies, and demanding caretaking responsibilities” inherent in growing up poor in the inner city. The following are excerpts of conversations about why the respondents deliberately sought exposure to HIV:  
*Béatrice* (mother with AIDS and 2 HIV positive stepisters) “... the easiest thing to do was to just give up and get sick too ... maybe now I’m sick, I’ll be maybe able to get the things I needed before ... the counselling and the assistance and the money I’ve asked for all these times and nobody could get me ... I never existed for them before; now, they have to count me ...”  
*Brendon* (sister and nephew with AIDS) “Everybody was ragging me about not getting nowhere, not getting no job ... Well, there ain’t nothing to do here. I looked around at my sister and she got everybody seeing to her hand and foot ... This AIDS things don’t need make you sick at all, but people sure listen up when you talk ... She’s getting good money from the feds ... She ain’t got no need to worry ever again about nothing ... Two of my homies gone died last month, from gunshot wounds ... I ain’t gonna live no 15 years anyway ... with no jobs out here, I can’t get me no real family, no kids, nothing ... these “hopes” we’re supposed to have, that’s crap. Ain’t worth the fight!”

*Anne* (mother with AIDS and brother HIV infected at birth) “It was worth it, to have my baby. My mother always said she loved my baby brother all the more, ‘cause she was sick and he was sick ... It’s human nature for people to have babies, to be born, to die. So when they say “safe sex,” they mean no babies. That’s sad ... There ain’t much gain’ on for Black girls like me. My mom tried hard, and she said there ain’t much we could do with no school ... [the government] gonna pay for everything like they done for my mom.”  
*Laure* (mother with AIDS) “I felt he [my HIV positive boyfriend] deserved to have someone with him ... and I know I am destined to love and lose and I don’t want that anymore ... I made the choice not to be left anymore ... We don’t need to worry about the future, we can enjoy the day, because there is no future to think about.”  
*Charles-Doug* (HIV positive brother) [AIDS is] “A white virus manufactured by White people to kill us off ... First they import drugs into the ‘hood, then, when we ain’t dying fast enough, this HIV ... now I can really get in people’s faces about how they invented a virus to make Black folk completely dependent on them ... if you got AIDS, you get more [government aid] ... I knew what I was doing ... If I can end up doing some activism, I need to be on the inside.”  
*SueAnn* (HIV positive father) “I don’t know if they’ll [gang] let me hang out much longer without jumping in.” SueAnn felt challenged to prove herself and did—“I had to boot with someone else’s mix ... they brought a syringe with blood and coke ... I never really thought about HIV, although four of the guys got it and I knew their blood would be in the mix.”

**Conclusions**  
The stories of 6 youths who deliberately sought HIV exposure were rooted in the social inequalities of inner city life. They were overwhelmed by worry, fear, depression, caregiving, and hopelessness and robbed of their childhood by poverty. They were all young and deeply involved with their loved ones, such that leaving was not an alternative. With no obvious recourse or avenues of success, AIDS offered a way of accessing care. It also provided “self erasure ... without the immediacy of death.”

*Source of funding: not stated.*  
*For correspondence: no current address available.*

### Commentary

The stories presented by Tourigny provide a glimpse of the reality of how 6 individuals made health choices based on the context of their lives. For these individuals, becoming HIV positive offered a potential improvement in their quality of life. Qualitative study findings such as these afford an opportunity for healthcare providers to reflect on how their view of reality may differ from others and the implications for their professional practice.<sup>1</sup>  
Nurses are uniquely positioned to gain understanding about quality of life issues from the perspective of the individual. Through respectfully working with others, nurses gain knowledge about personal and structural influences on health.<sup>2</sup>  
This study shows the impact of inequitable social conditions on the health of disenfranchised people. It provides direction for nursing practice focused on individuals and on the development of public policy. Nurses are knowledgeable about the functioning of economic and social policy and its effect on health. We must use this knowledge to advocate for the development of public policy that promotes and supports health for all.<sup>3</sup>

Penny Nelligan, RN, BScN  
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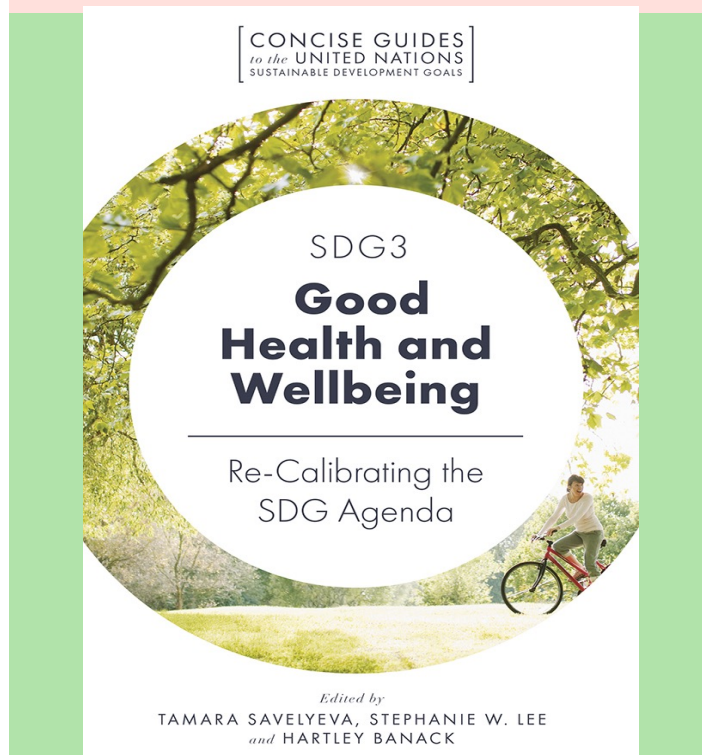
1 Mitchell GJ. Nurs Sci Q 1996;9:143–4.  
2 Labonte R. Health Educ Q 1994;21:253–68.



Tourigny, S. C. (1998). Some new dying trick: African American youths “choosing” HIV/AIDS. Qualitative Health Research, 8(2), 149–167

# Qualitative Research that “knocks your socks off”

## Examples from the literature



### CULTURAL SOLUTIONS: A NORTH WEST AUSTRALIAN REFLECTION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 3

Sandra Wooltorton

This chapter addresses Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3): 'Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all, at all ages' (United Nations (UN), 2015). *Agenda 2030* (UN, 2015) and the encyclical letter by Pope Francis (2015) known as *Laudato Si'*, launched within months of each other, aim to transform our world. *Agenda 2030* comprises 17 SDGs which include ending poverty, reducing inequality, fighting climate change and promoting economic growth. *Laudato Si'* advocates these goals with the exception of one: economic growth. Along with the technocratic paradigm, economic growth is posited by *Laudato Si'* as a source of global problems. These two globally significant documents describe a vision for

“ How can UN policy narratives be used to improve Aboriginal health and well-being outcomes in Australia?”



Savelyeva, T. Lee, S. Banack, H ( 2019) SDG3 Good Health and Wellbeing: Re-calibrating the SDG Agenda. London: Emerald

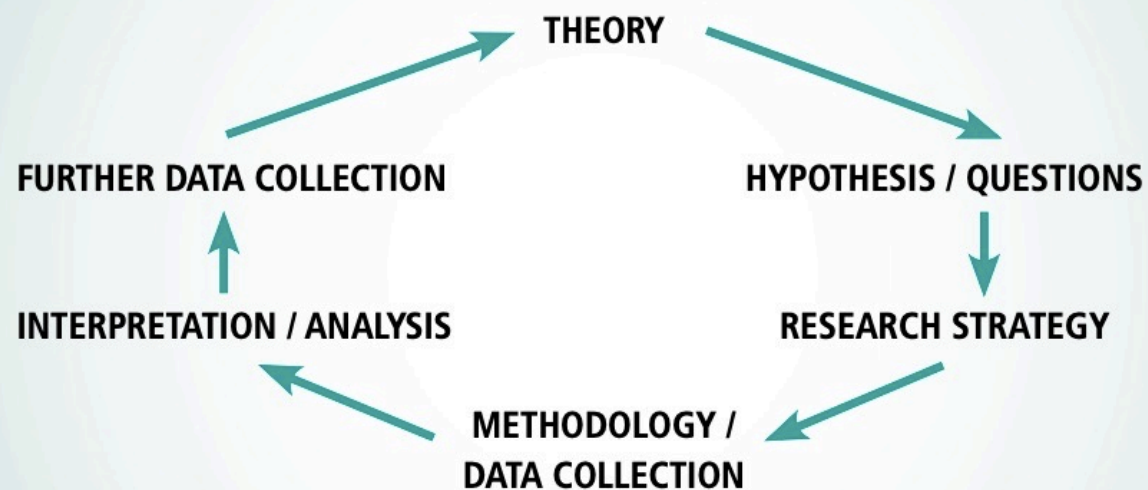
# Tools for Thinking and Ways of Thinking (critically)

**Research Tools for thinking:** concepts, metaphors, labels, perspectives, models, theories

**Research Ways of thinking:** assumptions, philosophical positions, ideologies

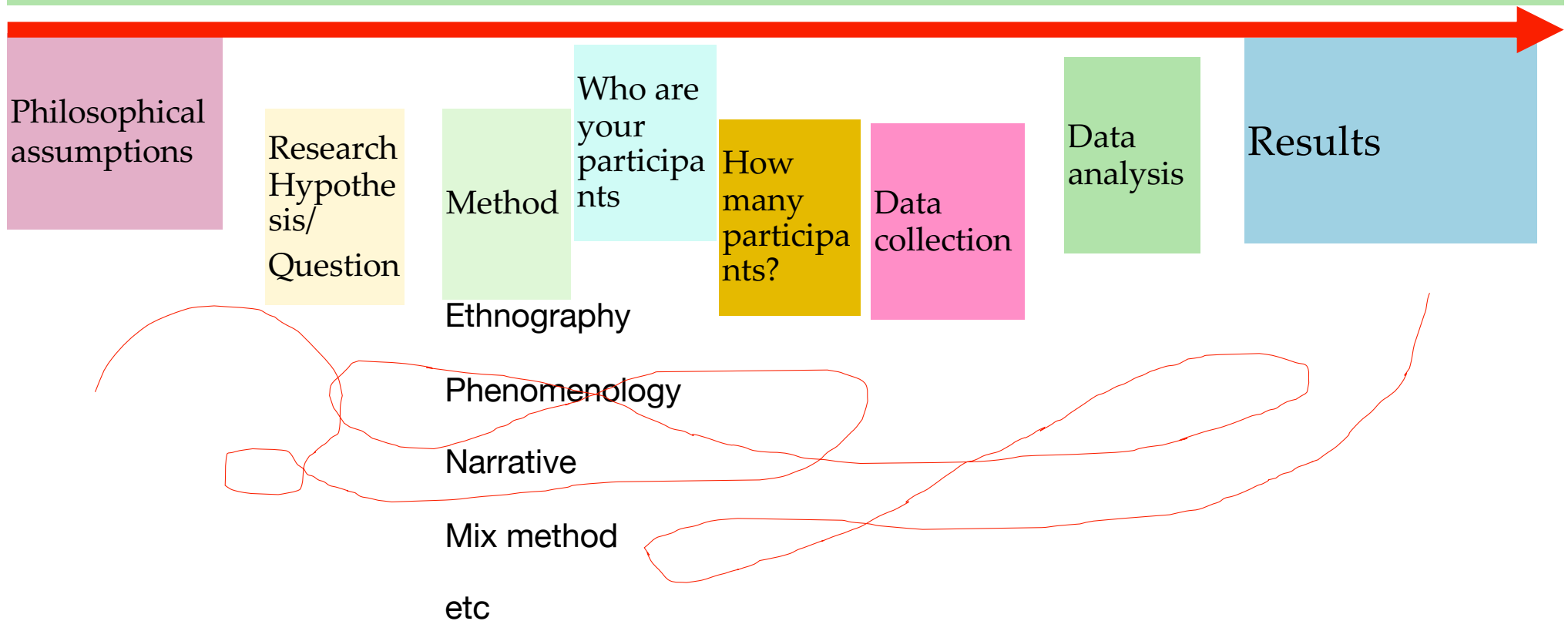
# Cohesive scientific process : cyclical

**Figure 1: The relationship between theory and method**



# Cohesive scientific process: linear

TASK: List phases of a research process (one on this slide is not accurate ☺ )



# Qualitative Research



Think of research  
as an exploration,  
with unexpected  
twists and turns



Research is not as linear as  
it looks on paper

It's always more



than .

So you may jump around in this course  
to meet your needs

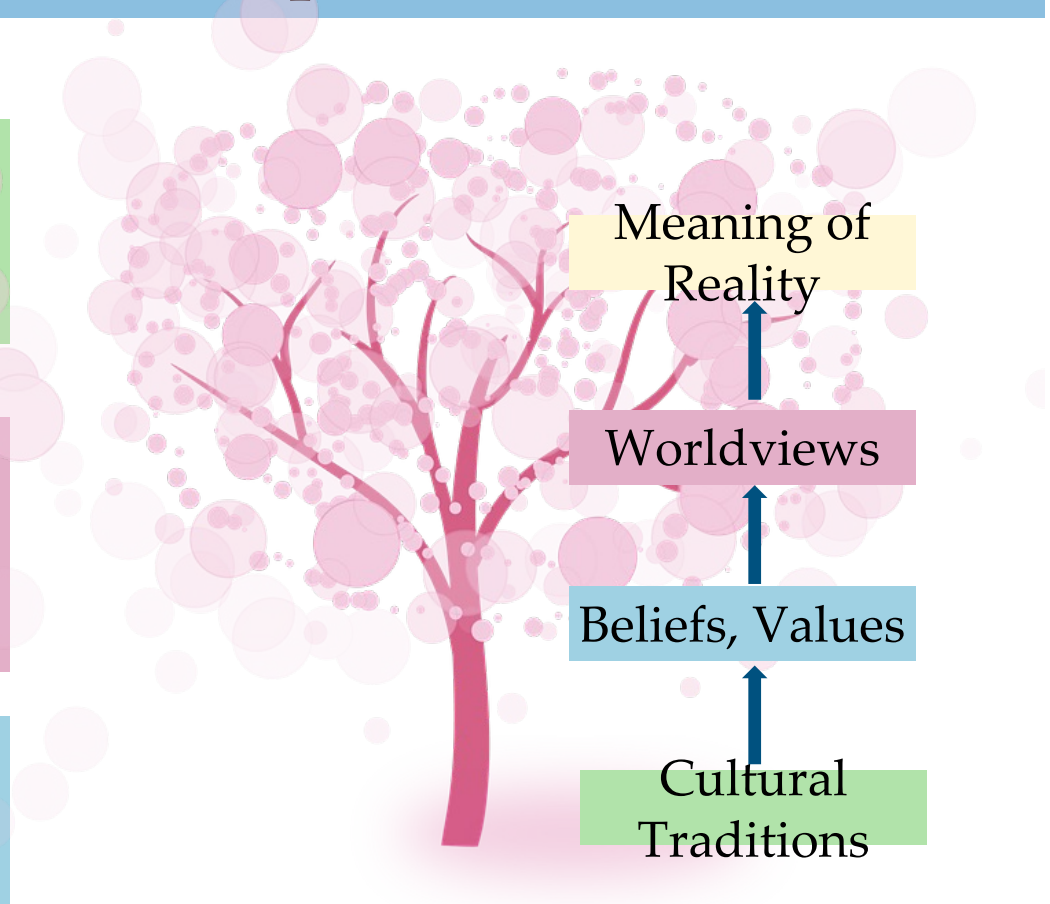


# What is Qualitative Research? Recap the Foundations

Philosophy of science: *What is science?*

Ontology -> Epistemology-> Axiology  
->Methodology/ Research Process

Inductive- deductive research processes



Whatever you believe  
you become  
(proverb)

# Evaluating Others and Choosing Own Methodological Assumptions

- Making methodological assumptions → choices about the nature and character of the social world → Basis of a critical activity
- Methodological standpoint: System of rules and means to facilitate the collection and analysis of data , which **provides the starting point (or vise-versa)**
- for choosing a most suitable and feasible design and approach, guided by the theories, ideas, concepts and definitions of your research topic

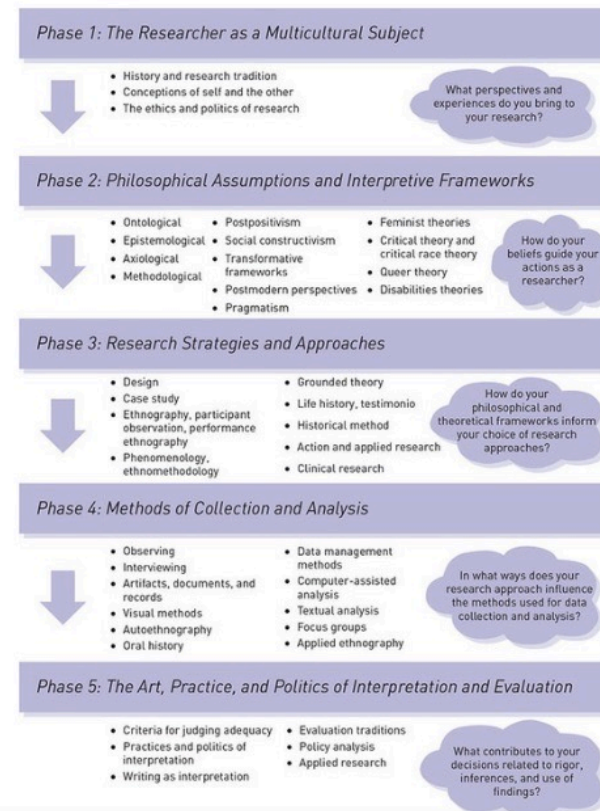
# What is has to do with CLR? “Research Imagination”

- Have a broad view of a topic
- Be open to ideas regardless of how or where they originated
- Question and scrutinize ideas, methods and arguments regardless of who proposed them
- Link different ideas
- Follow ideas to see where they might lead in your scholarly work

# Philosophy and Research Process: How do they fit together?

TASK: Use Handout 1 →  
to locate the philosophical  
assumptions

Figure 2.1 Situating Philosophy and Interpretive Frameworks Within the Research Process



Why it is important to  
understand & articulate  
the philosophical assumptions  
in research?

# Importance of philosophical assumptions

Drive / give direction to research goals and outcomes

Depend on training and research experiences

Define evaluative criteria for research-related decisions



# Four philosophical assumptions

|                 | Questions                                                                                                                                | Characteristics                                                                                                                                         | Examples                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ontological     | What is the nature of reality?                                                                                                           | Reality is multiple as seen through many views.                                                                                                         | In the findings, the researcher reports different perspectives as themes develop                                                                                                       |
| Epistemological | What counts as knowledge? How are knowledge claims justified? What is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched? | Subjective evidence is obtained from participants; the researcher attempts to lessen the distance between himself or herself and that being researched. | The researcher relies on quotes as evidence from the participant as well as collaborates, spends time in field with participants, and becomes an “insider.”                            |
| Axiological     | What is the role of values?                                                                                                              | The researcher acknowledges that research is value-laden and that biases are present in relation to their role in the study context.                    | The researcher openly discusses values that shape the narrative and includes his or her own interpretation in conjunction with those of participants.                                  |
| Methodological  | What is the process of research? What is the language of research?                                                                       | The researcher uses inductive logic, studies the topic within its context, and uses an emerging design.                                                 | The researcher works with particulars (details) before generalizations, describes in detail the context of the study, and continually revises questions from experiences in the field. |



# Writing philosophical assumptions into qualitative study

## Example 1

### In the Phenomenological Approach Section

Alongside approach description, for the study examining the meaning that people with liver failure ascribe to the experience of waiting for a liver transplant



### THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

According to Frankl (1997), the construction of meaning is a central human activity. An advocate of the phenomenological approach, he believed that preconceived patterns of explanation distort human existence and reduce human experience to sub-human dimensions. He advocated something better: a phenomenological approach that pushed forward, in rigorous fashion, the search for meaning in people's lives that could not be reduced to other phenomena. Inspired by Frankl, we have chosen a phenomenological approach to search for the meaning of waiting for a liver transplant.

Contemporary phenomenology is based on the philosophy of Husserl (1960). When we see a tree, Husserl insisted, we do not see a tree image or a packet of sense-data that we make into a tree (as empiricists insist); we see the tree itself. Moustakas (1994) described it as "if the only being that can be absolute is the being that can be absolutely given, and the only being that can be absolutely given is the phenomenal being, then only phenomenal being can be absolute being" (p. 41). Transcendental phenomenology contains four basic assumptions (Creswell, 1998). First, knowledge begins with a description of the experience. Phenomenology is a return to the traditional task of philosophy; a search for wisdom. Second, phenomenology involves an attempt to suspend all judgments about what is real until they are based in more certainty. This process is called *epoche*. Third, the intentionality of consciousness posits that the reality of an object is intimately linked to one's consciousness of it and the meaning if found within. Fourth, phenomenology calls for the refusal of subject-object dichotomy. Reality is only in the meaning of the experience of the individual.

In phenomenological research, the structure of consciousness of lived experiences is explored with the goal of giving the reader an accurate understanding of the essential, invariant structure (or essence) of an experience (Moustakas, 1994). Prior research on chronic illness that involved the use of the phenomenological approach supports the idea that for patients, an illness is a lived experience not easily reduced to a list of variables or a theory (Anderson & Spencer, 2002; Cheung & Hocking, 2004; Ironside et al., 2003). Living with ESLD and waiting for a transplant become experiences in and of themselves as the illness progresses and outcomes are not known. It is with this understanding that we chose phenomenology as the tradition of inquiry.



# Writing philosophical assumptions into qualitative study

## Example 2

In the Method Section

within the description of the  
Piliriqatigiinniq Partnership  
Community Health Research  
model

**Methods**  
This qualitative participatory research study explored the topic of Inuit family communication about sexual health and relationships at the request of community members who participated in consultations conducted in Nunavut between 2006 and 2008 (2,40). Their request was prompted by the high rates of sexually transmitted infections and high rate of teenage pregnancy in Nunavut communities

nt J Circumpolar Health 2014, 73: 25070 - <http://dx.doi.org/10.3402/ijch.v73.25070>



p. 134–135

compared to the Canadian population. The research project was designed and implemented in partnership with community wellness or research centres in each of 3 Nunavut communities. The researcher is from Nunavut and familiar with community and territorial research protocols. This study followed a modified grounded theory approach (41), which retains most of the defined characteristics of “classic” grounded theory, but takes a more subjective and reflexive stance which is more aligned with Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing (42–44). The research framework focused on Inuit ways of knowing, specifically following the *Piliriqatigiinniq* Partnership Community Health Research Model (45). The model highlights 5 Inuit concepts, which informed the research approach: *Piliriqatigiinniq* (the concept of working together for the common good); *Pittiarniq* (the concept of being good or kind); *Inuuqatigiinniq* (the concept of being respectful of others); *Unikkaaqatigiinniq* (the philosophy of story-telling and/or the power and meaning of story); and *Iqqaumaqatigiinniq* (the concept that ideas or thoughts may come into “one”). A paper outlining the theoretical and methodological aspects of this study in greater detail is published elsewhere (45). Participants were engaged in the study through community health and wellness centres and were offered the opportunity to be



# Writing philosophical assumptions into qualitative study

## Example 3

Within researcher positionality  
description

under the heading of  
Positioning the Mobile  
Ethnographer



p.642

### Positioning the mobile ethnographer

While definitions and meanings have changed, researcher movement and travel remain critical in ethnographic practice. There is an abundance of qualitative methods literature dedicated to the selection of sites (Fetterman, 2010; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007), methods for gaining entry (Hine, 2000; Pratt, 1986), negotiating relationships (Lofland et al., 2004; Silverman, 2006), ethical issues (Murphy and Dingwall, 2007; Skeggs, 2007), managing multiple sites (Coleman and Von Hellerman, 2011; Falzon, 2009; Marcus, 1998) and advice on when and how to leave the field (Delamont, 2004; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Regardless of the nature of distance (physical, virtual or symbolic), movement and travel are deemed vital to the development of an authentic ethnographic presence and authoritative voice. Just as Coleman and Von Hellerman (2011) in their edited collection of ethnographic research 'do not provide a single perspective on multi-sitedness', similarly, in this section, I attempt, by no means exhaustively, to categorise four types of ethnographer mobility and attending issues of positionality with the aim of locating the case study and a discussion of the ethnographic commute.

### Ethnographers who make symbolic moves

I begin this taxonomic task with a category to mark general distinctions between work, non-work and in-between lives of ethnographers. Physical distance is not the only challenge an ethnographer has to address. All ethnographers, regardless of where they live, have to negotiate personal, professional and cultural boundaries. A classic study on this subject is Nippert-Eng's (1996) research, which illustrates a range of symbolic shifts that separate the dimensions of home and work. From dressing differently, maintaining separate phones and key chains and other ritualised practices involving talk, food and music, she illustrates the many 'integrating' and 'segmenting' tactics involved in making the 'mental boundary crossing' between different parts of everyday life. Other kinds of symbolic moves, from the researcher viewpoint, are illustrated in Hine's (2000) virtual ethnography of the Louise Woodward case (in which an English nanny was accused of murdering a child in her care) and Hodkinson's (2002) study of Goth culture. In the former, Hine examines a range of conventional ethnographic moves, such as finding and accessing sites and negotiating identities, relationships and ethical issues, while remaining largely stationary. Ethnographic mobility in this case 'focuses on experiential rather than physical displacement' (Hine, 2000: 45). In the latter, Hodkinson (2002) also attends to symbolic shifts but does so from a different perspective. Already an 'insider' in the UK Goth community, he discusses the deliberate moves he makes to become a 'critical insider', which meant 'continually taking mental steps back so as to observe, compare, contrast and question as well as to experience' (p. 6). In these examples, the moves respondents and researchers make are not always visible, but are nevertheless necessary, deliberate and intrinsic to practice and understanding.



# Writing philosophical assumptions into qualitative study

## Example 4

Within Method Section

in description of  
ethnomethodology of  
information technology  
disruptions on court  
proceedings

&

positioning statement at the  
footnote



p.207-209

### 3. Method: Conversation analysis

Our analysis of the influence of information technology on court proceedings is informed by ethnomethodology (Coulon, 1995) and conversation analysis. Conversation analysis is a form of sociological study in which social activities and the methods of social organization are the targets of study (Button & Lee, 1987). It begins from the recognition that social activities are “co-ordinated and accomplished” (p. 20) through talk and interaction, and that detailed analyses of this observable interaction can reveal this co-ordination and the methods of its accomplishment.

Conversation analysis is sometimes considered to be a stream of research within the ethnomethodological tradition. It is, alternatively, considered to be its own stream of sociological research that shares some common assumptions and views with ethnomethodology (Maynard & Clayman, 1991). Either way, it shares with ethnomethodology the view that “all natural language is indexical” (Maynard & Clayman, 1991: p. 398) – that the meaning of language can only be understood within the context in which it is uttered (Coulon, 1995). Rather than seeing this as problematic, conversation analysts and ethnomethodologists see it as an opportunity to better understand the conditional and active productions of social order through active agents engaged in making sense of a situation.

“Indexical expressions are a window, then, through which to gaze upon the bed-rock of social order. Actors achieve all manner of relationship, interdependence, and commitment (Rawls 1989a), and perform an infinite variety of social actions, through the precise placement of single turns of talk in relation

<sup>2</sup> The second author of this paper was involved in this case as an expert witness for the defence, providing expertise to the court in the area of e-commerce. Participants were aware of the author's desire to use the trial in future research. In this paper, however, we have confined our analysis to data taken from official court proceedings and have not relied on the author's inside knowledge of the trial and associated events.



# Interpretive Frameworks



Paradigms

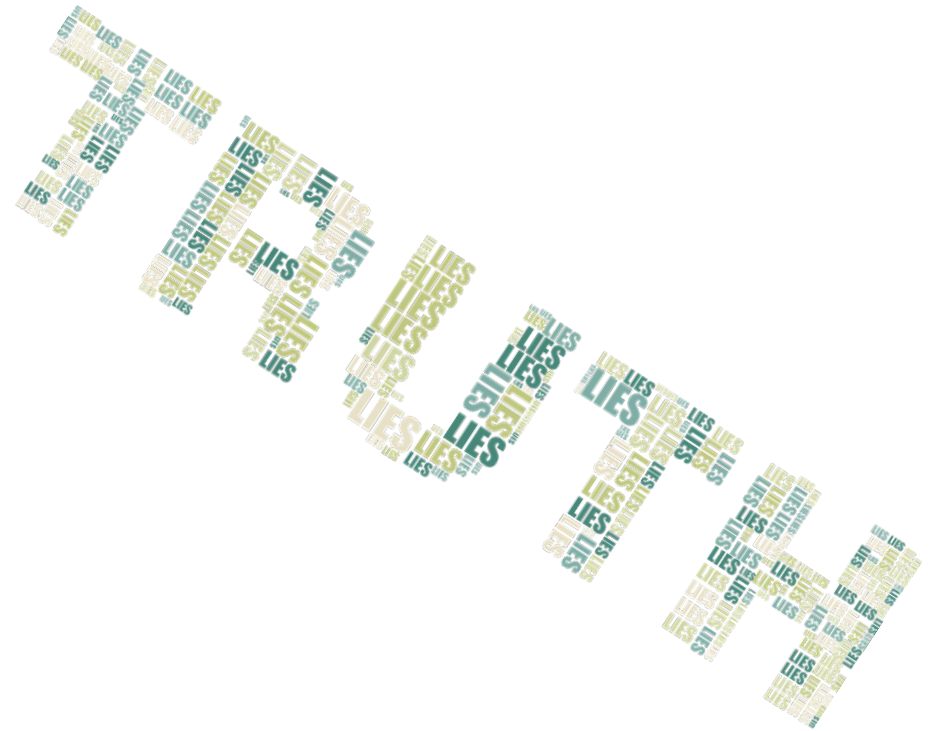
Theories

# Interpretive Frameworks: Our goals

Define paradigm & describe their significance

Identify and describe the four predominant paradigms underlying qualitative research

Define theory & describe the role that theory plays in qualitative research



# Interpretive Frameworks: Paradigms

“Analytical Lens” = a way of viewing the world

“  
set of common beliefs and  
agreements ... from which to  
understand human experience

Thomas Kuhn, 1962



# Interpretive Frameworks: Paradigms

Scientific & non-scientific paradigms

Give an example of a non-scientific paradigm



# Interpretive Frameworks: Sci- & non-Scientific Paradigms

TASK:

Give an example of a non-scientific paradigm

Hint:

What do you eat for breakfast?

# Interpretive Frameworks

## Paradigms

- A paradigm is a model of understanding consistently free of significant contradictions; even when it isn't, it still works, because we can shift in and out of various paradigms, although not always as well as we would like.
- It guides our expectations and helps us to sort, organize, and classify information.
- It affects the way information is processed by the brain and the types of questions we ask when trying to understand the world around us incorporating all of the knowledge and experiences we have acquired since birth.
- Our brain uses paradigms to classify, sort, and process information received by the senses.
- A paradigm may be personal or cultural, and we each have many different paradigms for different contexts.

# Interpretive Frameworks: Paradigms

## Perceptions, meanings, relationships

- Expectations are focused through learning, learning reinforces expectations
- We acquire information through our senses
- We recognize order, repetition, predictability, patterns
- We organize information by comparing it with experience
- Experience is the total of previously learned information
- Learning affects our perspective by altering our paradigms, which influences what we perceive and ultimately alters our perception.
- We see the world very differently as adults than as children

# Paradigm interpretive frameworks

1

Postpositivism

2



Social constructivism  
(Interpretivism)

3

Transformative  
(Creswell, 2014)

or

Critical (DeCarlo, 2018)

4

Postmodernism

5



Positivism

6

Pragmatism



# Paradigm interpretive frameworks

1

## Postpositivism

**premise** : a completely objective reality is impossible to apprehend

**assumption**: research accounts can approximate, or at least attempt to approximate, an objective truth (may or may not occur)

**approach**: starts with a theory



Post-positivism holds that only partially objective accounts of the world can be produced, for all methods examining such accounts are flawed

Denzin & Lincoln 2005, p.27



## Postpositivism researchers

- view inquiry as a series of logically related steps
- believe in multiple perspectives from participants rather than a single reality
- espouse rigorous methods of qualitative data collection and analysis
- use multiple levels of data analysis for rigor
- employ computer programs to assist in their analysis
- encourage the use of validity approaches
- write their qualitative studies in the form of scientific reports, with a structure resembling quantitative articles

# Paradigm interpretive frameworks

2

## Social constructivism (interpretivism)

**premise** : reveal multiple realities as opposed to search for one objective truth

**assumption**: research accounts aim to understand/interpret multiple truths, constructed socially & collectively

**approach**: generates theory

“

Constructivism ... adopts a relativist (relativism) ontology, a transactional epistemology, and a hermeneutic, dialectical methodology.

Denzin, 1994, p.100

”



# Paradigm interpretive frameworks

3

## Postmodernism

**premise** : human knowledge is limited

**assumption**: research claims must be set within the conditions of the world today in the multiple perspectives of class, race, gender, and other group affiliations.

**approach**: challenge all other approaches.

**common method**: interpretive biography



“armchair radicals” who focus their critiques on changing ways of thinking rather than on calling for action based on these change

Thomas, 1993, p. 23 (cited in Creswell & Lincoln, 2018)



# Paradigm interpretive frameworks

4

## Pragmatism

**premise** : Truth is what works at the time; not connected to ideas or reality.

**assumption**: research is what works here and now, based on the intended consequences & research outcomes.

**approach**: focus on problem & emphasize the importance of conducting research that best addresses the research problem.

**common method**: evaluation



The examples ... are drawn primarily from program evaluation, policy analysis, and organizational development. The emphasis throughout is on gathering information and generating findings that are useful.

Patton, 1990



## Paradigm interpretive frameworks

### 5 Critical or Transformative

**premise** : Truth is neither objective, no value – free

**assumption**: research focus on power imbalance, inequality, oppression, domination, and social change

**approach**: research is conducted with the express goal of changing & empowering participants & systems being studied. Results include a plan for reform, political debate etc.

**common method**: participatory ( in collaboration with participants), case study.



the “voice” of the participants becomes heard throughout the research process and the research products meaningful for all involved

Creswell & Lincoln, 2017, p. 61



# Paradigm interpretive frameworks: Critical or Transformative



<https://courses2.cit.cornell.edu/fit117/index.htm>

# Paradigm interpretive frameworks

| Paradigm               | Emphasis                                                  | Assumption                                                                                                           |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Positivism             | Objectivity, knowability, and deductive logic             | Society can and should be studied empirically and scientifically.                                                    |
| Social Constructionism | Truth as varying, socially constructed, and ever-changing | Reality is created collectively. Social context and interaction frame our realities.                                 |
| Critical               | Power, inequality, and social change                      | Social science can never be truly value-free and should be conducted with the express goal of social change in mind. |
| Postmodernism          | Inherent problems with previous paradigms.                | Truth is always bound within historical and cultural context. There are no universally true explanations.            |

**Table 6.1 Social scientific paradigms**



# Theory interpretive frameworks

## HOW?

Theories  
( specific aspects of a  
phenomena level )

## WHY?

Paradigms  
( ontology, epistemology, axiology,  
methodology levels )



Theory is a systematic set of  
interrelated statements intended  
to explain some aspect of social  
life.

Rubin & Babbie, 2017, p. 615



# Theory interpretive frameworks

Social Science

Social Justice

Leadership theory, complexity theory, constructivist theory, political influence theory, system theory, conflict theory, social exchange theory, control theory, symbolic interaction theory

etc. etc. etc.

1

Feminist theories

3

Disability theory

2

Critical theory /  
Critical race theory



4

Queer theory



# Theory interpretive frameworks

## 2 Critical Theory

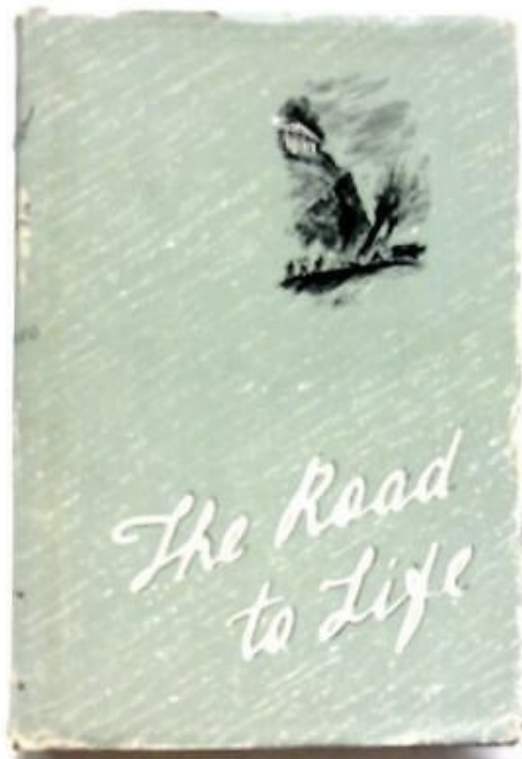
Aims to empower people to transcend the constraints placed on them by race, class, and gender

### Central themes

- study of social institutions and their transformations through interpreting the meanings of social life
- the historical problems of domination, alienation, and social struggles
- critique of society and the envisioning of new possibilities approach
- opposition to authority
- resistance of subculture youth groups

# Theory interpretive frameworks

## 2 Critical Theory in Education Sciences



**Anton Makarenko**

Social Pedagogy

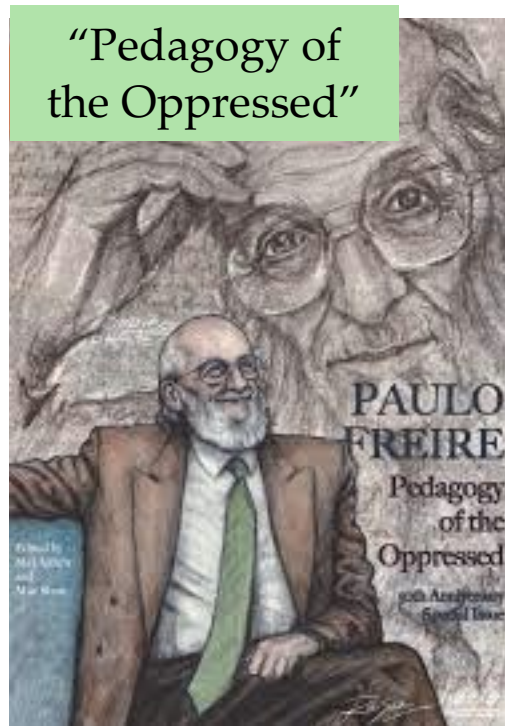
or

**Pedagogy for Change**



# Theory interpretive frameworks

## 2 Critical Theory in Education Sciences



**Paulo Freire**  
Critical Pedagogy  
or

**Pedagogy for Transformation**

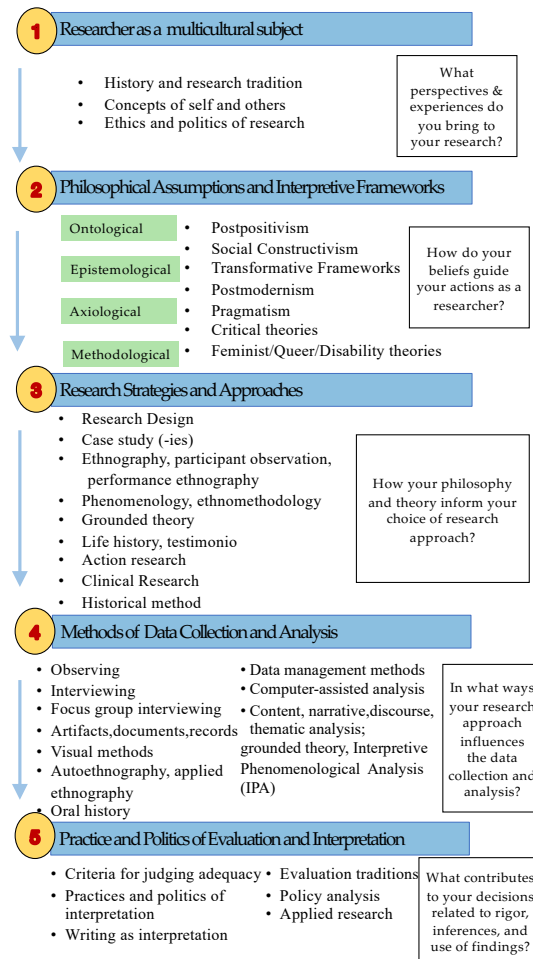
**"Pedagogy of  
the Oppressed"  
1970**



# + Handout

Fig. 2.1 Situating Philosophy and Interpretive Frameworks within the Research Process

Fig. 2.1 Situating Philosophy and Interpretive Frameworks within the Research Process





Why We Conduct Research?



## EXERCISE

Answer the question:  
Why to conduct a research project?

## Reasons to conduct intellectual projects

### MAKE IT CLEAR:

- what do you find interesting, important, or right or wrong about the aspect of the social world you are investigating?
- whom do you wish to inform?

### EXAMPLE: read the claim

***‘our findings show that it has been a bad year for the policy sector’***

Can we evaluate this claim? whose interests the authors are presenting?

What’s the research topic? what a researcher is trying to achieve?

If you are policy activist– good year!

If you are policy maker – bad year indeed

## Types of intellectual projects (4) based on outcomes – Where do you stand?

- **Knowledge-for-understanding** – attempting to develop theoretical and research knowledge from a relatively impartial standpoint. The rationale is to understand (rather than change) practice and policy or underlying ideologies.
- **Knowledge-for-critical evaluation** – attempting to develop theoretical and research knowledge from an explicitly negative standpoint towards existing practice and policy. The rationale is to criticize and expose the prevailing ideology, arguing why it should be rejected and sometimes advocating improvement according to an alternative ideology.
- **Knowledge-for-action** – attempting to develop practice-relevant theoretical and research knowledge, taking a positive standpoint towards practice and policy. The rationale is to inform efforts aimed at generating and implementing policies to improve practice, within the prevailing political ideology.
- **Training** – attempting, through guidance, training and consultancy, to impart practice knowledge and associated skills, taking a positive standpoint towards practice and policy. The rationale is directly to improve practice within the prevailing ideology.

## Types of intellectual projects (4) based on outcomes – Where do you stand?

- Yours may still be emerging, but the authors whose texts you read is likely to be fully formed
- Can gain useful insights !
- Authors rarely state what their intellectual project is, and may not very explicit about the outcomes that they are trying to achieve .

### **Places to check:**

- Title, chapter headings, or subtitles
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Conclusion

## What the main intellectual project in the research? Look for:

**Reasons for undertaking the study** – how authors' explicit or implicit values about some aspect of the social world, their theorizing, research methodology and methods may affect their focus and the nature of the knowledge claims they make

**Typical mode of working** – which kinds of knowledge authors are attempting to develop and how they make use of different types of literature

**Value stance** towards the aspect of the social world they are studying – authors' attitudes towards policy and practice and towards attempts to improve them

**Value governing** the significance of the study focus – whether this aspect of the social world is intrinsically interesting, or is instrumentally important, so relevant activity should be challenged, or improvement should be sought

## What the main intellectual project in the research? Look for:

**Values about what is right or wrong** – applied to the behaviour of different groups involved in this aspect of the social world, and the consequences for them

**Typical question** or questions they ask about the social world – which aspects authors are attending to or ignoring, and the focus of the answers they are offering

**Assumptions** about the place of theoretical knowledge in the study – how authors employ any explicit definition of concepts, and the extent to which they are drawing ideas from the social sciences or from practical experience

**Types of literature** produced – the kinds of knowledge authors are attempting to create, and where they publish

**Target audience** to influence – the people whose thinking or actions authors wish to influence by convincing them to accept the authors' argument

# Types of intellectual projects

## HANDOUT

**Table 10.1** Four intellectual projects for studying aspects of the social world

|                                                           | Intellectual project for studying an aspect of the social world                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                           | Knowledge-for-understanding                                                                                         | Knowledge-for-critical evaluation                                                                                                                                                           | Knowledge-for-action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Training                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Reasons for undertaking the study</b>                  | To understand policy and practice through theory and research                                                       | Critically to evaluate policy and practice through theory and research                                                                                                                      | To inform policy-makers' efforts to improve practice through research and evaluation                                                                                                                                                                               | To improve practitioners' practice through training and consultancy                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Typical mode of working</b>                            | Social science-based basic research and theory                                                                      | Social science-based basic research and theory                                                                                                                                              | Applied research, evaluation and development activity                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Designing and offering training and consultancy programmes                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Value stance towards an aspect of the social world</b> | Relatively impartial towards policy and practice                                                                    | Negatively critical of policy and practice                                                                                                                                                  | Positive towards policy and the possibility of improving practice                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Positive towards policy and the possibility of improving practice                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Value governing the significance of the focus</b>      | Positive, because it is intrinsically interesting to understand how policy and practice operate                     | Positive, because it is instrumentally important to show how policy and practice benefit some groups at the expense of other groups                                                         | Positive, because it is instrumentally important to help those responsible for policy and practice to make them work as well as possible                                                                                                                           | Positive, because it is instrumentally important to find practical ways of making policy and practice work as well as possible                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Values about what is right or wrong</b>                | Neutral towards any group advantages or disadvantages resulting from the behaviour of the different groups involved | Negative towards advantages that the behaviour of some groups gives them over others<br>Positive towards changing policy and practice to minimize advantages or disadvantages for any group | Positive towards (or not noticing) any advantages that the behaviour of some groups gives them over others<br>Positive towards (or not noticing) the help that advantaged groups may get from the investigation to sustain or increase their advantage over others | Positive towards (or not noticing) any advantages that the behaviour of some groups gives them over others<br>Positive towards (or not noticing) the help that advantaged groups may get from the practical intervention to sustain or increase their advantage over others |

(Continued)

# Types of intellectual projects –cont'd

## HANDOUT

**Table 10.1** (Continued)

|                                                                       | Intellectual project for studying an aspect of the social world                                             |                                                                                                |                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                       | Knowledge-for-understanding                                                                                 | Knowledge-for-critical evaluation                                                              | Knowledge-for-action                                                                                                     | Training                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Typical question about the social world</b>                        | What happens, and why?                                                                                      | What is wrong with what happens, and why?                                                      | How effective is what happens, and how may it be improved?                                                               | How may my programme improve practice?                                                                                                                |
| <b>Place of theoretical knowledge in the study</b>                    | Informed by and generates social science theory                                                             | Informed by and generates social science theory                                                | Informed by and generates practical theory                                                                               | Largely atheoretical, informed by a practical theory of training                                                                                      |
| <b>Common types of published literature produced</b>                  | Academics' social science-based theory and research (reference may be made in associated policy literature) | Academics' critical social science-based theory and research                                   | Informed professionals' practice and academics' applied research (reference may be made in associated policy literature) | Trainers' and consultants' practice literature (reference may be made in associated policy literature)                                                |
| <b>Main target audience to influence through published literature</b> | Policy-makers, academics, practitioners on advanced education programmes                                    | Policy-makers, academics, practitioners on advanced education programmes                       | Policy-makers, academics, trainers, practitioners on advanced education programmes                                       | Practitioners, other trainers, practitioners on education and training programmes                                                                     |
| <b>Fictional example of a leadership study</b>                        | A comparison of perceptions as leaders and followers in different groups                                    | A study of the inhibitory impact of childrearing on women's career chances as business leaders | Measuring the impact of senior managers' leadership behaviour on organizational performance                              | Development of a diagnostic tool for identifying individuals' potential as business leaders, marketed to the human resources departments of companies |



Scientific research is about a mindset,  
and here we are making it grow



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