

# ECGE7001

## Philosophy and Practice of Social Research

### Session 1

# Module Aims



- To develop an in-depth knowledge, understanding and skills of social research methodologies and research methods appropriate to research with and for young children, children, young people, adults and groups who are at risk of exclusion and within wider community settings or educational contexts.

# Module Learning Outcomes

- Critically evaluate the nature of philosophical concepts in qualitative research and how they differ from concepts of quantitative research;
- Undertake critical analysis and evaluation of research methodology, identifying implications for practice and/or their applications in policies and contexts;
- Critically reflect on the complex ethical frameworks and legal implications which underpin all research and analyse specific ethical implications of research for and with young children, children, young people, adults and groups who are at risk of exclusion, within wider community settings or educational contexts;

# Module Learning Outcomes cont....



- Consider at a higher level the role of reflection within the research process;
- Present their work appropriately, within ethical and research frameworks, and with an understanding of the requirements of critical thinking.

# The Research Journey



Source: [Academic Coaching and Writing](#)

# Schedule

|                         |                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>03-Oct</b>           | Research Journeys: Mapping the Route <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to Module</li><li>• Overview of Assessments</li></ul>          |
| <b>10-Oct</b>           | Becoming a Researcher: Research Paradigms <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thinking and Being as a Researcher</li><li>• Research Design</li></ul> |
| <b>24-Oct</b>           | The Tools Along the Way <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Qualitative Methods</li></ul>                                                            |
| <b>7-Nov</b>            | More Tools Along the Way <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quantitative Methods</li></ul>                                                          |
| <b>17 Nov<br/>(Sat)</b> | Research Conference                                                                                                                                      |

# Schedule

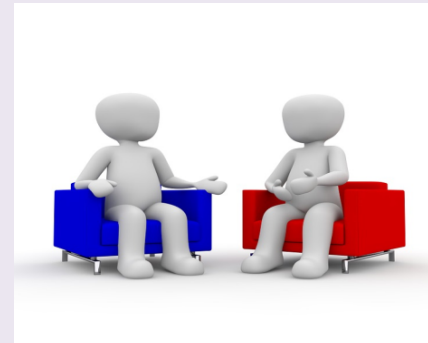
|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>28-Nov</b>          | Doing it Right; Doing No Harm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ethics in Educational Research</li></ul>                                                                                                    |
| <b>16 Jan</b>          | Telling the Story: Building arguments, not libraries <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reviewing the Literature</li><li>• Critical skills</li><li>• Notes and quotes</li><li>• Writing at Level 7</li></ul> |
| <b>30 Jan</b>          | Tutorials                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>06-Feb</b>          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>06-Feb</b>          | Presentations???                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Submission Date</b> | <b>10<sup>th</sup> April, 2019</b>                                                                                                                                                                                |



# Assessment

- Assessment Component 1 – 50%
- Written Assignment (4300 words): Develop a Research Proposal
- Consider and critically evaluate a research paradigm and methodology suitable for your client group (e.g. with young children or children or young people or those excluded, or within wider community settings or educational contexts). Your research proposal should include:
  - the choice of focus and its potential impact on the student's own practice,
  - a rationale of the methodology to be adopted,
  - an example of an empirical data collection tool on a research area of your choice; include a consent form and letter of introduction, e.g. a questionnaire or a focus group schedule or an interview schedule or equivalent,
  - ethical considerations relating to your research.

# Assessment



- **Assessment Component 2 – 50%**
- Oral presentation (25 minutes)
- Prepare and present a relevant ethics form based on the research paradigm explored in Assignment 1. You will discuss and justify your ethical decisions with the module tutor, making links to relevant ethical frameworks and supporting your points with appropriate academic sources.

# Submission Dates

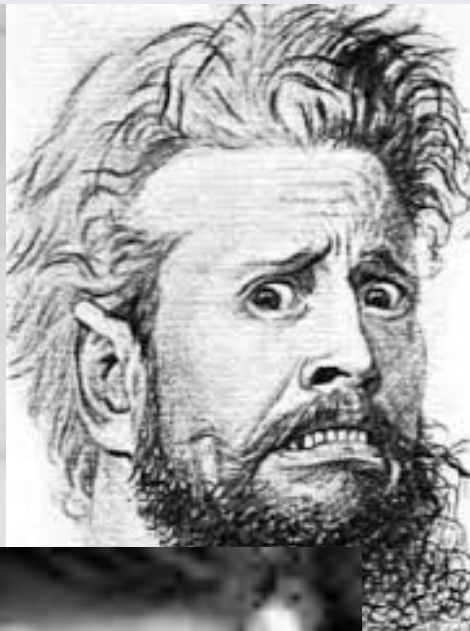


- Research Proposal
- 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 – 23.59pm!
- Upload to Turnitin

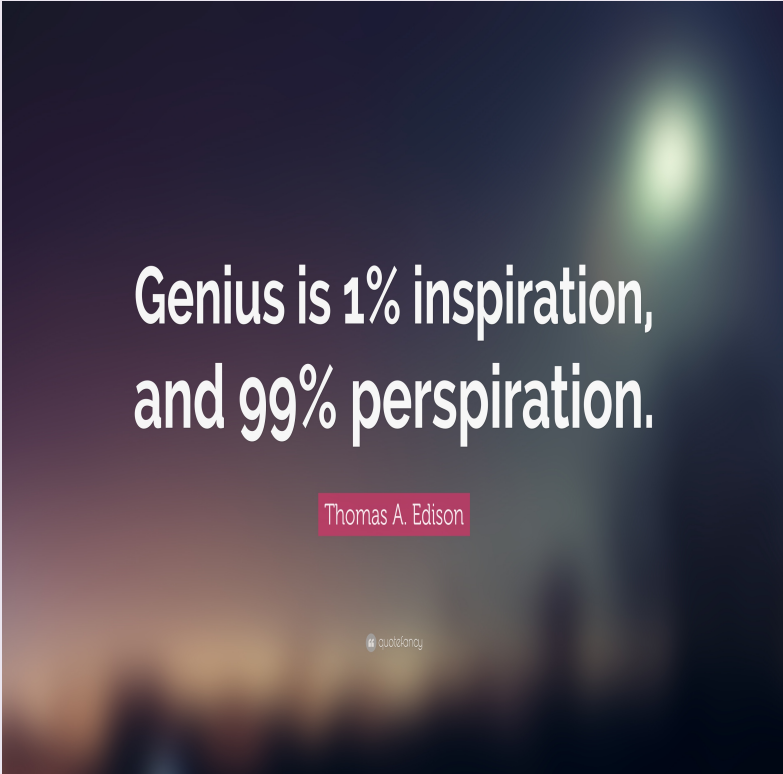
- Individual Presentation
- Date TBC
- Printed copies of both assessment sheet and presentation.
- Upload presentation slides to Turnitin.



# Research – your first thoughts?



# Organised Common Sense



Genius is 1% inspiration,  
and 99% perspiration.

Thomas A. Edison

autofocus

The qualities that drive effective research are...

- Organization
- Systematic, thorough and careful attention to details
- Internal consistency
- Logic

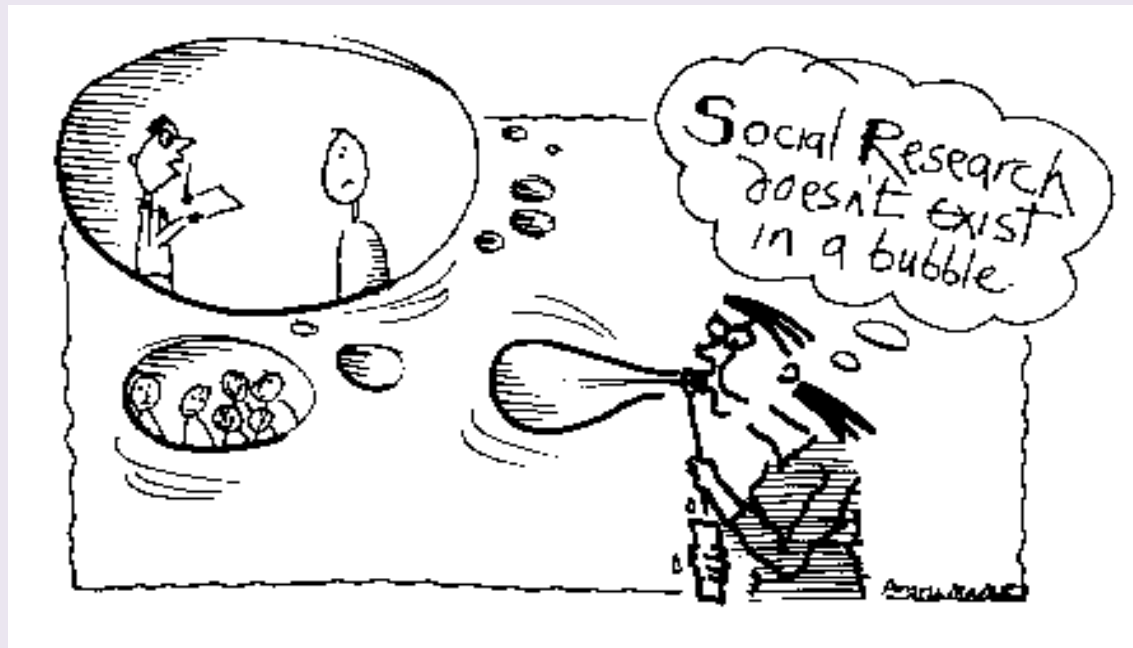
Punch, 2016

# Research – First thoughts (cont'd)



# Real World Enquiry

'Social research does not exist in a bubble' (Bryman 2001)



# Applied Social Science and the Educational Context

If one wants to solve a problem, one must generally know what the problem is. It can be said that a large part of the problem lies in knowing what one is trying to do.

(Kerlinger, 1986)



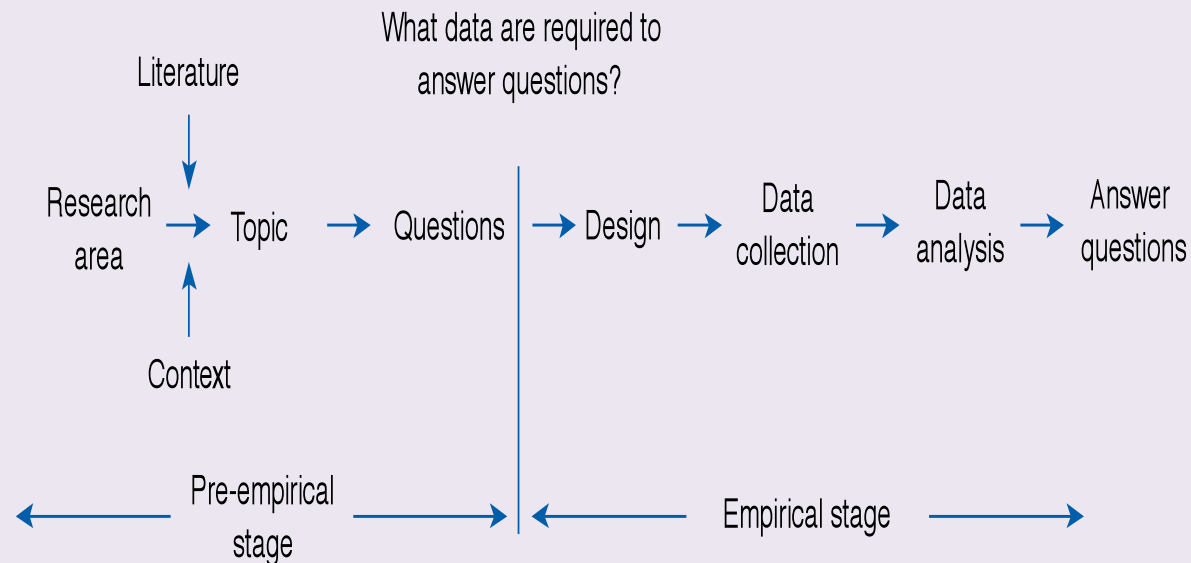
# Applied Social Science and the Educational Context

- Psychology
- Sociology
- Anthropology
- Economics
- Political science

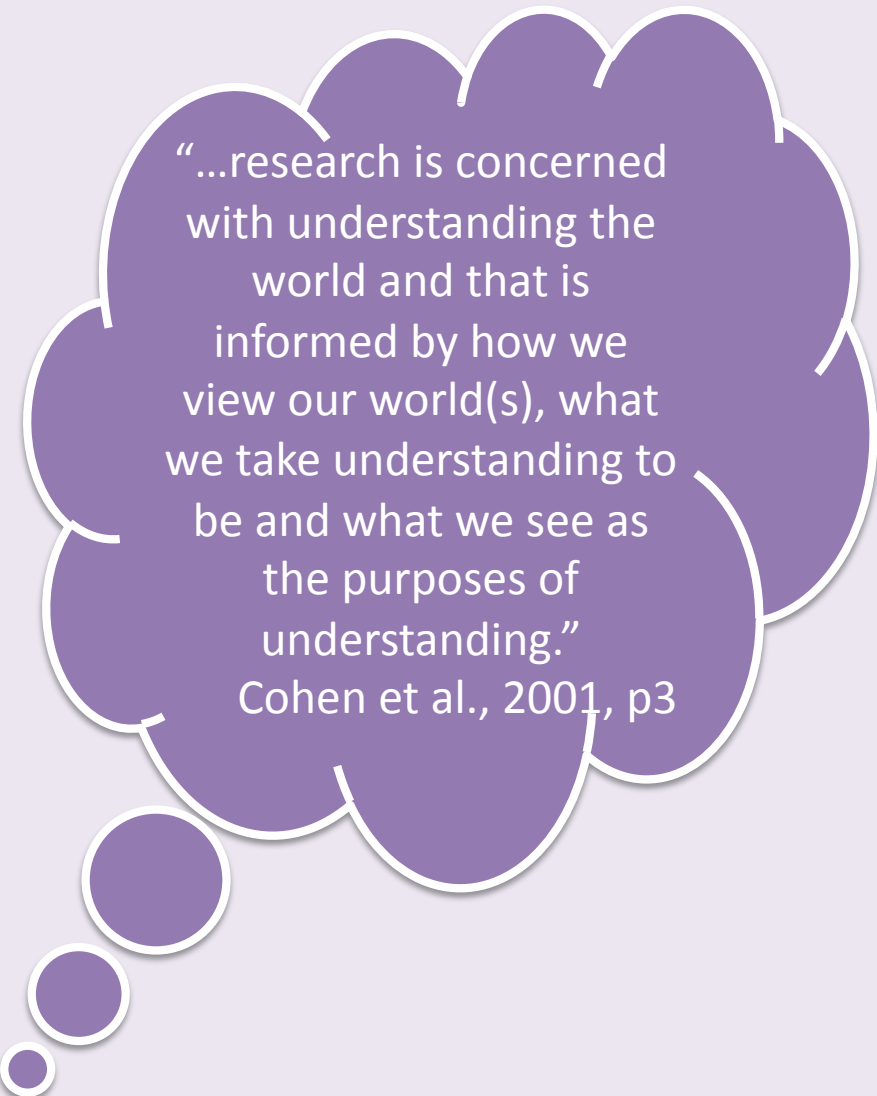
*The study of human behaviour in an educational setting from a psychological/sociological/anthropological/economic/political science point of view.*

# Stages of empirical research

- **Stenhouse (1975:142): research is ‘systematic inquiry made public’**



# When planning your research...



“...research is concerned with understanding the world and that is informed by how we view our world(s), what we take understanding to be and what we see as the purposes of understanding.”

Cohen et al., 2001, p3

You will need to consider:

- What is your methodology (framework)?
- What methods will you use (e.g. tools for data collection)?
- Where do your own beliefs and philosophy sit within the wider paradigms?
  - Fitness for purpose – explore the range of research traditions
  - Being mindful of political agendas (e.g. what is the link between educational research and policy-making?).

# Methodology vs. Method

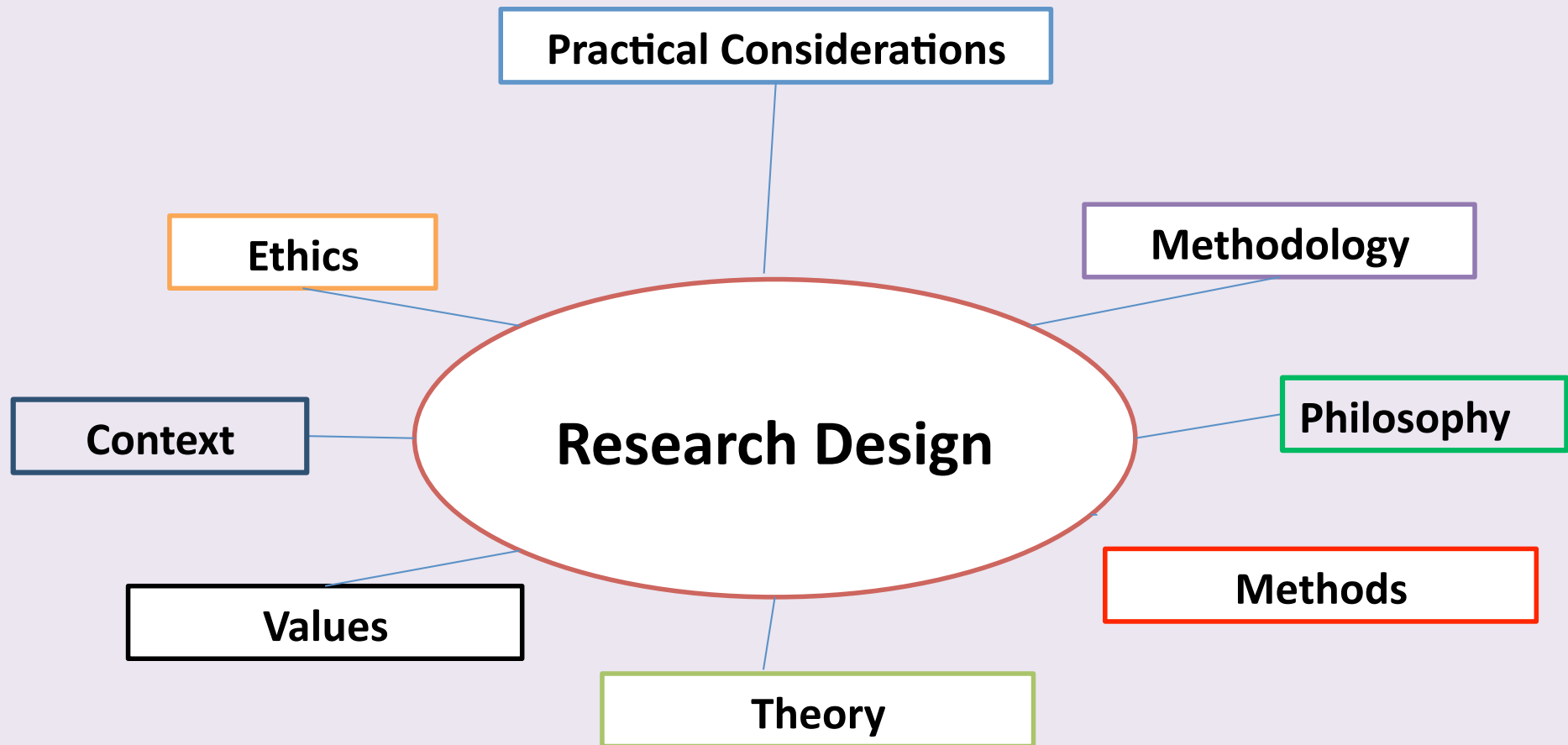
## Methodology

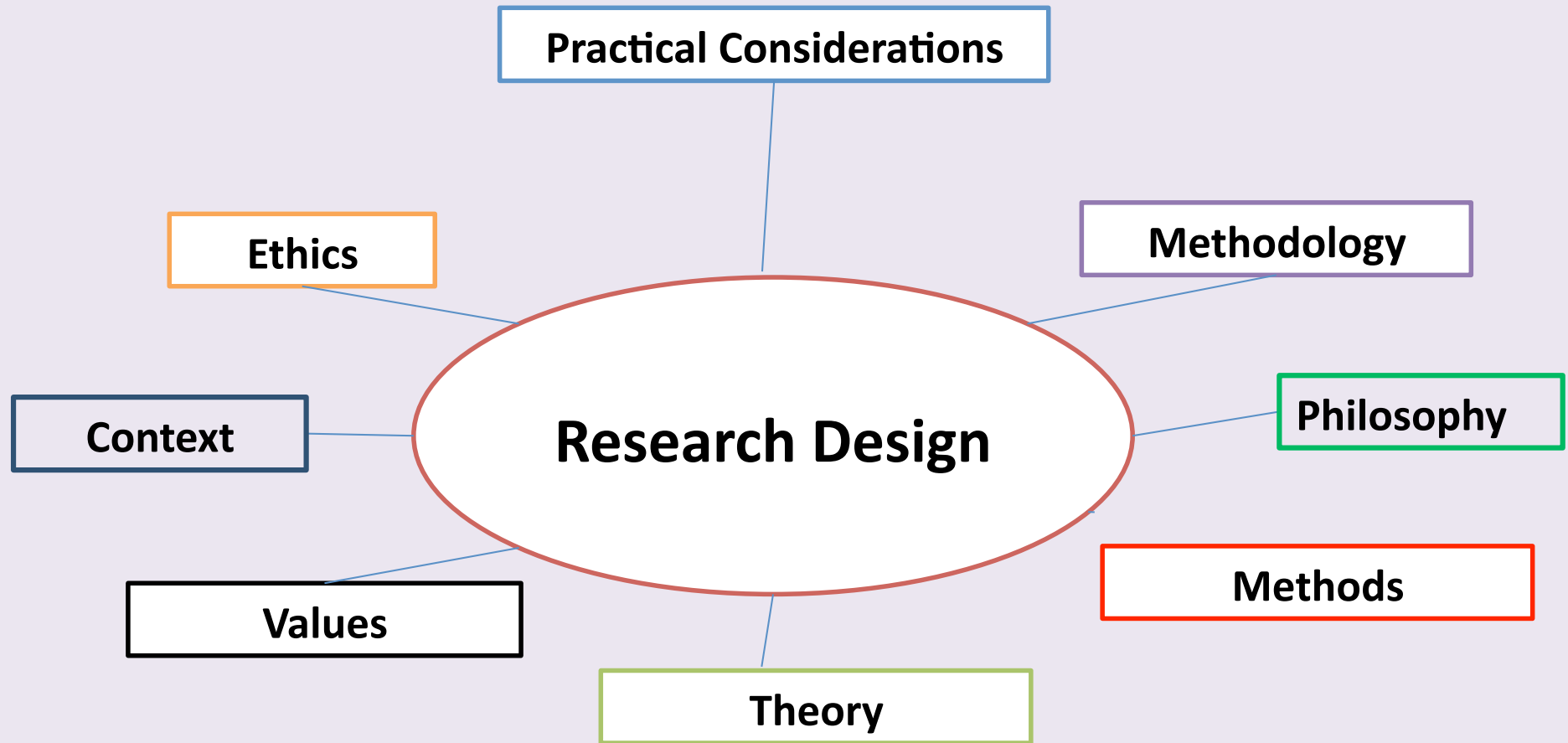
- The theoretical framework that outlines the rules to follow in a study.

## Method

- The actual tools/steps taken by which you conduct research into a subject or a topic.

# What does Social Research look like?





- Using the diagram as a guide, think about your own ideas for research and the relevance of each heading....

# BUT...!!!

- **Questions** come before the methods





# Your Paradigm...

|                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Ontology</b><br><br>The fundamental beliefs we have about the world. These can be: | <b>Objectivism</b><br>Social phenomena and their meanings have an existence independent of social actors                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                       | <b>Constructivism</b><br>Social phenomena and their meanings are constructed through social interaction and therefore are in a constant state of revision                                                      |
| <b>Epistemology</b><br><br>The theory and study of knowledge                          | There is a distinction between 'true' and 'false' knowledge – what standard of evidence is sufficient to make a judgement? This also encompasses issues of validity and reliability which are discussed later. |
|                                                                                       | The types of evidence can include faith, trust, experience, logic, empiricism – depending on what philosophy you subscribe to.                                                                                 |

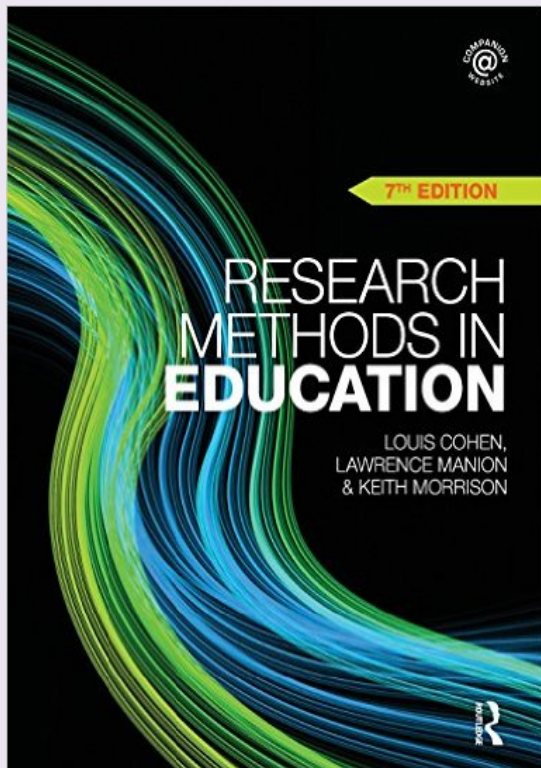
# Where are you?



- *Which ontological position do you think you come from?*
- *How might this impact on your research?*

**Our fundamental beliefs are likely to impact on our research choices**

# Key Reading for Educational Context

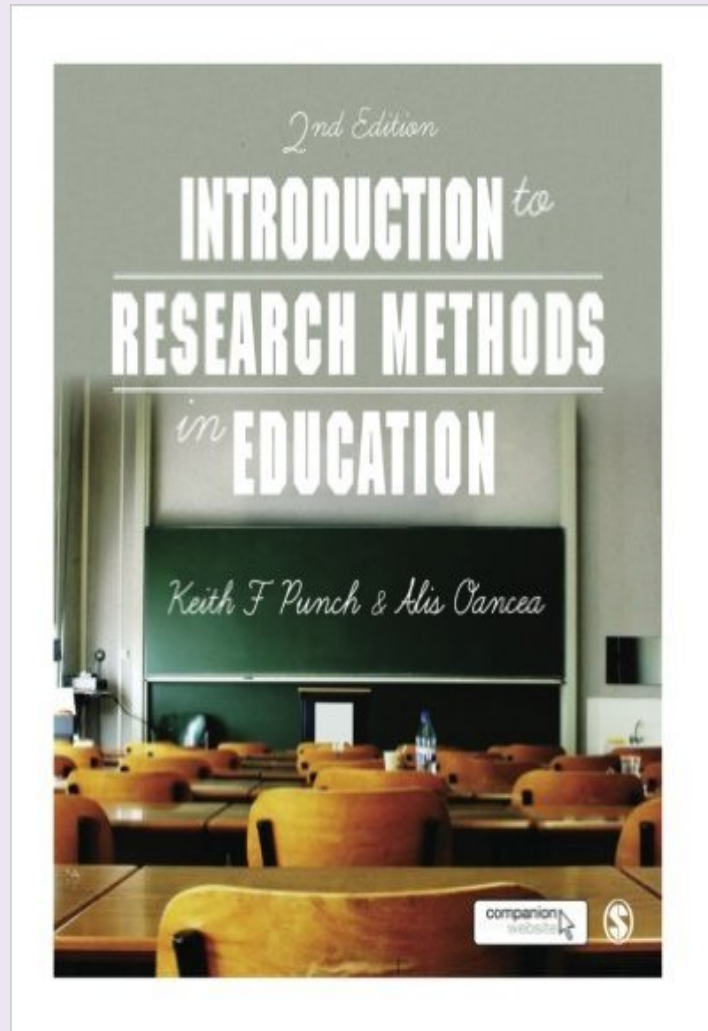


Cohen, L., Manion, L. &  
Morrison, K. (2011)  
*Research Methods in  
Education* (7th ed.)  
London: Routledge

6<sup>th</sup> edition:

[https://islmblogblog.files.wordpress.com/  
2016/05/rme-edu-helpline-blogspot-com.pdf](https://islmblogblog.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/rme-edu-helpline-blogspot-com.pdf)

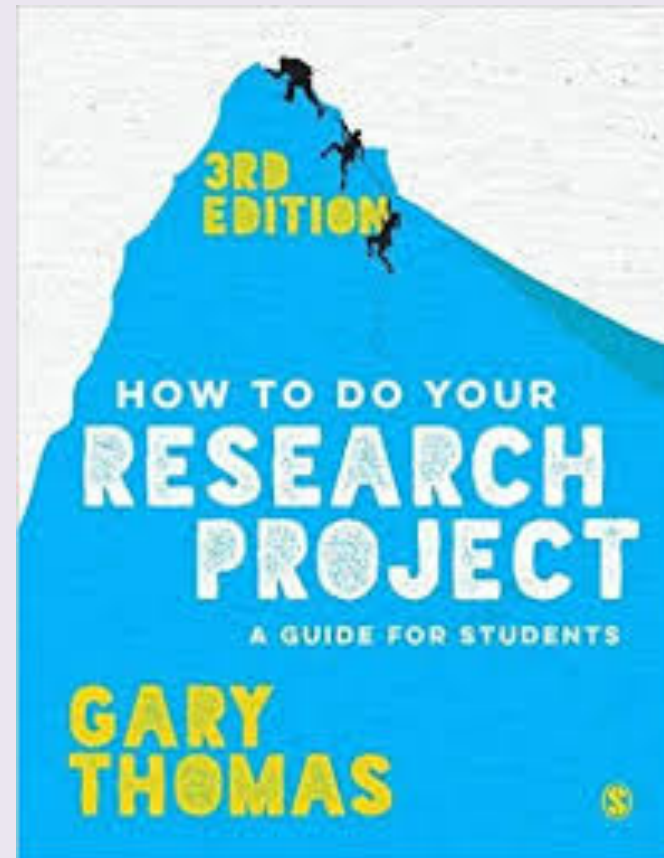
# Another Useful Text



- Punch, K. & Oancea, A. (2014) *Introduction to Research Methods in Education* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

# And another...

- Thomas, G. (2017) *How to do your Research Project*. London: Sage.



# Directed Study

- Read pages 3-44 of Cohen, L., Manion, L., Morrison, K. (2007) *Research Methods in Education* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) London: Routledge.
- Begin your own dictionary of technical terms. Write detailed definitions of the following:
  - Ontology
  - Epistemology
  - Positivism
  - Scientific Method
  - Naturalistic Approach
  - Phenomenology
  - Plus 4 other terms of your choice

# To Do List!

- Moodle access
- Turnitin
- Library