

MAD ABOUT QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

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- ▶ **Mad Topics Symposia**
- ▶ **Quantitative complements qualitative (both/and)**
- ▶ **Our qualitative, multiple-case study**
- ▶ **Some helpful tools & references**

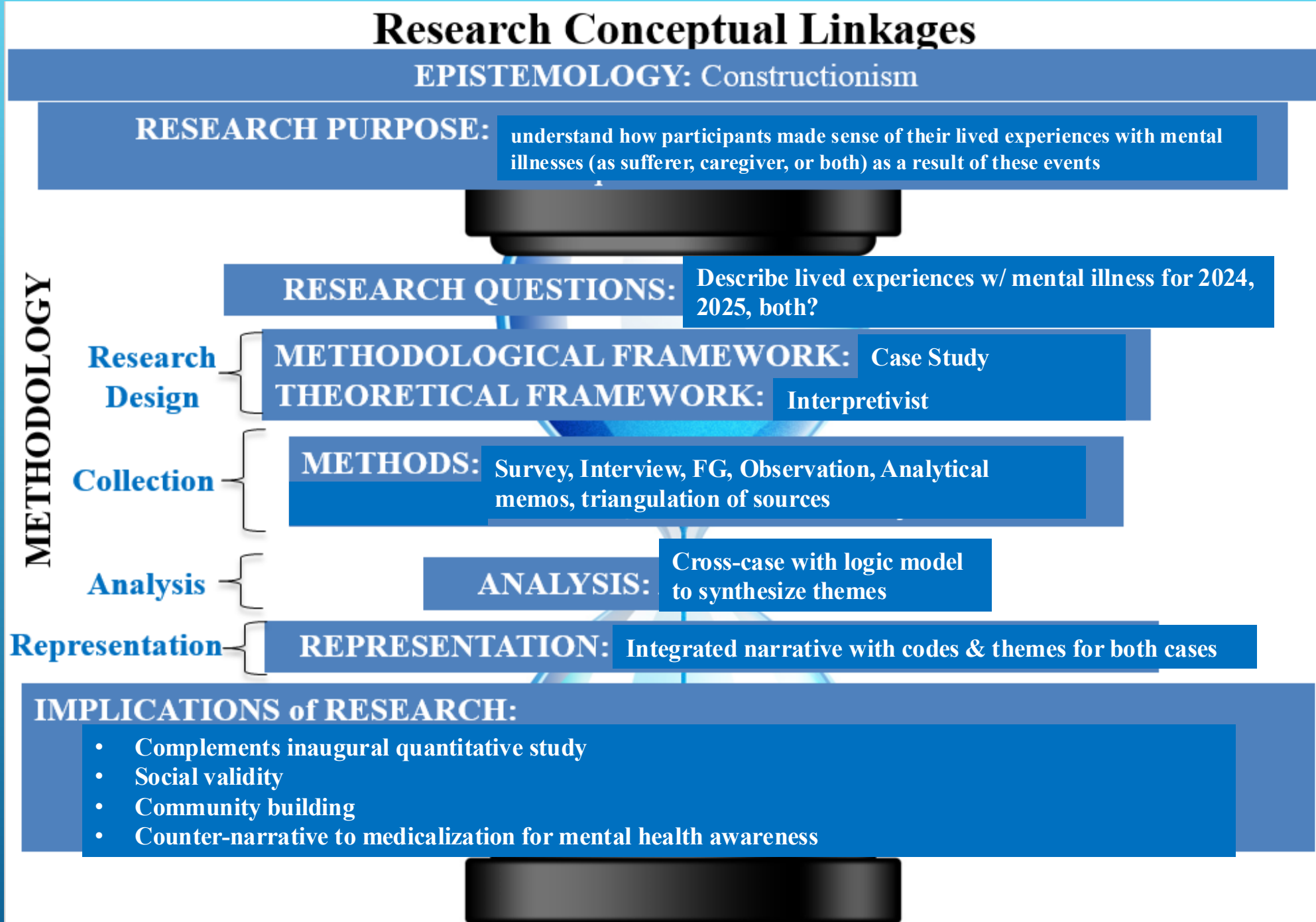
AGENDA

- ▶ **Mad Topics:** Holistic, international, and interdisciplinary framework of praxis, research, and education which combines lived experience + clinical expertise
- ▶ **Mad Topics symposia:** Community therapeutic experience which brings together experts, lived experiences, and valuable discussions focused on supporting mental health awareness and reducing stigmas in educational settings
 - ▶ 2024 symposium: OCD and ADHD
 - ▶ 2025 symposium: Anxiety disorders and depression
 - ▶ 2026 symposium: Autism Spectrum Disorder
- ▶ Each symposia reaches 200+ individuals and were found to be significantly correlated with increased empathy and awareness surrounding mental health issues (see Simone et al., 2025)



MAD TOPICS SYMPOSIA

AN EXAMPLE MAD TOPICS IN EDUCATION



- Barkley, E., Cross, K., & Major, C. (2005). *Collaborative learning techniques*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bhattacharya, K. (2017). *Fundamentals of qualitative research: A practical guide*. New York: Routledge.
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REFERENCES (2 OF 2)

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QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

Qualitative Research Methods	Quantitative Research Methods
Purpose: interpret meaning to understand social-cultural phenomena at a deeper level.	Purpose: <i>acquire “objective knowledge [e.g., causality, relationships] that is generalizable to a larger population” (Lim, 2011, p. 40).</i>
Assumptions: Research involves active inquiry to understand the essence of lived experiences in their social-cultural environment.	Assumptions: Research is informed by theory, tests hypotheses, or generalizes findings (Peshkin, 1993).
Epistemology: Constructivist, Critical Theory	Epistemology: Postpositivist
Researcher role: takes an insider perspective to deeply understand lived experience(s) & their meanings; reflects on own voice and subjectivity; is the primary instrument	Researcher role: takes an outsider perspective to test or verify theory; seeks to remain unbiased and objective; often relies upon existing instruments
Research design: generate new, emergent ideas through inductive process; design methodological framework to best study lived experiences	Research design: <i>test hypothesis through a deductive process using systematic methods in controlled conditions</i>

QUAL VS. QUANT

Understand	Emancipate	Deconstruct
<p>Interpretive</p> <p>Naturalistic</p> <p>Constructivist</p> <p>Narrative Inquiry</p> <p>Phenomenological</p> <p>Hermeneutic</p> <p>Symbolic</p> <p>Interactionism</p>	<p>Critical Theory</p> <p>Feminist</p> <p>Praxis-oriented</p> <p>Educative</p> <p>Freirian</p> <p>Participatory action research</p> <p>Gay & Lesbian Theories</p> <p>Marxism</p>	<p>Poststructuralism</p> <p>Postmodernism</p> <p>Post-paradigmatic</p> <p>Diaspora</p> <p>Postcolonialism</p>
 <p>MILD</p>	 <p>MEDIUM</p>	 <p>HOT</p>

PURPOSES OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

► QualPage at <https://qualpage.com>

► E-flashcards at <https://study.sagepub.com/saldanaomasta/student-resources/chapter-1/eflashcards>

► Get Your Qual On at www.sarahjtracy.com/get-your-qual-on/

► NVIVO, Dedoose, HyperTranscribe

► Check out *Qualitative Inquiry* and other scholarly journals

► Keep a research journal!!

► Sage Methods Map (interactive) at <http://methods.sagepub.com/methods-map>

► Course reserves

► RefWorks & Literature Review Matrix

► WorldCat



Author, Short Title, Year	Research Questions / Purpose	Instrument/ Sample/ Methodology	Key points related to topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none">New conceptsTagsDisagree	So what? Theme / Gap / Category
1. Ackeman, Stories of Elijah and Medieval Carmelite Identity, 1995	Examine the narrative history of the Carmelites and how that informs their contemporary social perspectives	NA	Ackeman (1995) observes that medieval Carmelites "were imitating a narrative, not a man. This makes the periodic appearance of Elijah Carmelites and the survival of Elijah in the order all the more striking. Although Carmelites do not have a flesh-and-blood founder in the prophet Elijah, the full-hearted, all-out Elijah abandonment to God on the mountain has long survived in a dialect between <i>reflections</i> of the prophet and individual or collective Carmelite stories lived out in many private ways" (p. 147).	Creating and sharing stories of a religious order's origins can influence its self-concept. SA / NL
2. Adler et al., Variation in narrative identity is associated with trajectories of mental health over several years, 2015	This article describes the results of two longitudinal studies "designed to assess the relationship between variability in narrative identity and trajectories of mental health over several years" (Adler et al., 2015, p. 476).	Review of 2 longitudinal studies	"Without a doubt, purpose and unity are important ends in their own right and narrative identity is concerned with much more than just mental health (MH)" (Adler et al., 2015, p. 476).	We make sense of ourselves and develop our identities by listening to, crafting, and retelling stories. This lifelong process of narrative learning and development influences our mental health and resilience in particular (Adler et al., 2015). NL / MH / ID
3. Attard & Armour, Learning to become a...	Attard & Armour (2005) employ an autoethnographic...	Autoethnography employing sociological	Strongly agree with Attard & Armour (2005, p. 196) that "... the best tool at	Adult professionals can learn their trades

SOME TOOLS

Source: curt-rice.com

Qualitative researchers normally—

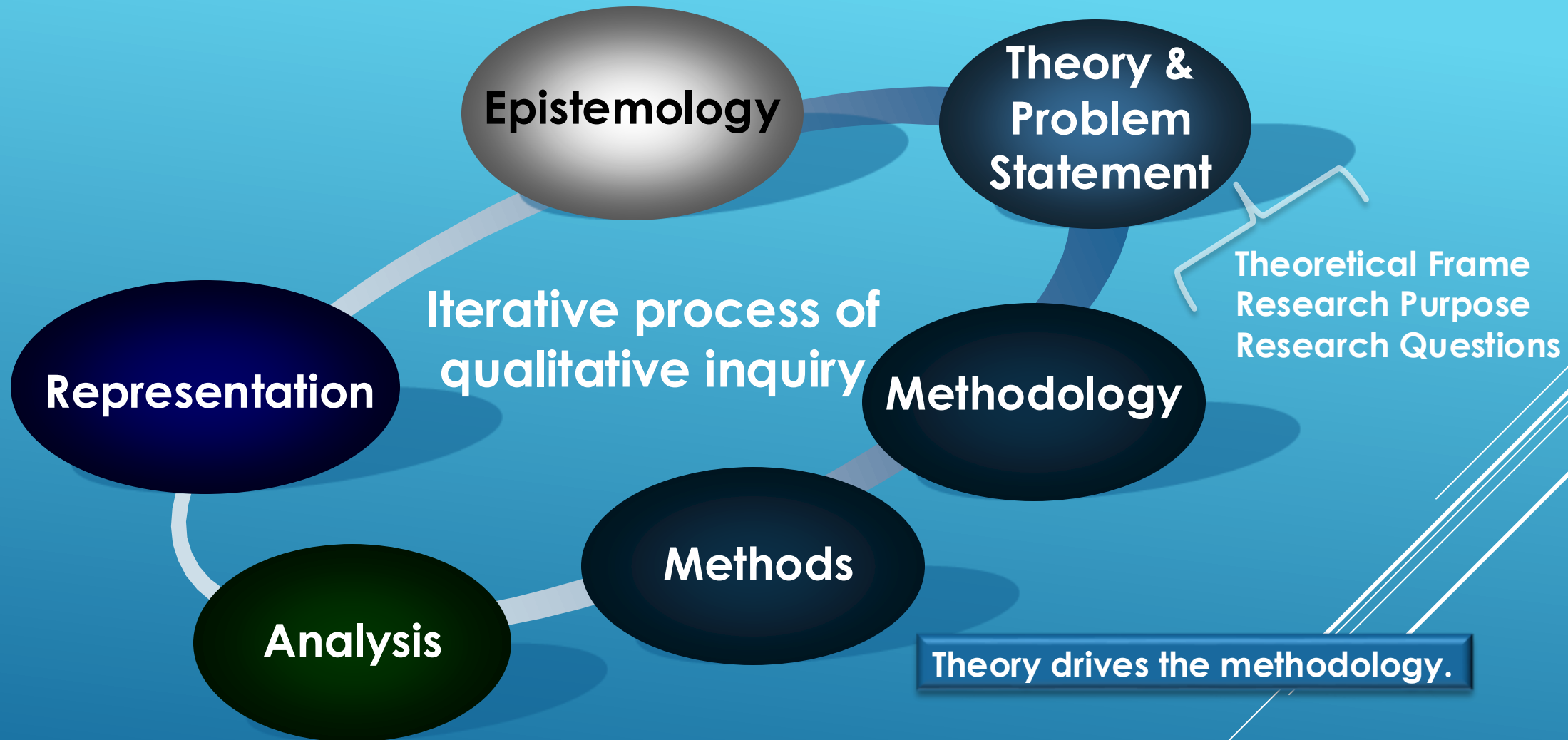
- ▶ ask research questions highlighting why and how.
- ▶ focus on process rather than outcomes.
- ▶ interpret meaning through analysis of thick description.
- ▶ are the primary tools for data collection & analysis.
- ▶ create concepts inductively from specific data collected *in situ*.
- ▶ construct meaning in social-cultural contexts.
- ▶ attempt to understand complex phenomena at a *deep* level.
- ▶ seek academic rigor & trustworthiness rather than reliability & validity.

ASSUMPTIONS



- ▶ Subjective observer
- ▶ Empathetic participant
- ▶ Selects samples *purposefully*
- ▶ Interviews *consenting* participants and designs questions that address theoretical perspective, literature review, & research purpose/questions
- ▶ Transcribes interviews & reflects upon data collected
- ▶ Conducts member and peer checks
- ▶ Coding, one way to analyze qualitative data

RESEARCHER ROLES



EPISTEMOLOGY, THEORY, METHODOLOGY, & METHODS

Research Conceptual Linkages & Alignment

EPISTEMOLOGY: Constructionism is common for qualitative research.

RESEARCH PURPOSE: Informed by the epistemology.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS: Align with the purpose & informed by the epistemology.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: Ties research to your field.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK: Interpretivist approach

METHODS: Tools appropriate to the frameworks.

ANALYSIS for rigor & trustworthiness

REPRESENTATION: Show your findings.

IMPLICATIONS of RESEARCH: Broad applications of the research which may resonate with readers.

Ontology:
Nature of
reality

**Theory
drives
Methodology**

Methodology

Technology-Research Category	Resource Titles and Links
Data Management & Analysis	Nvivo ; Dedoose ; Atlas.ti ; Scrivener ; Quirkos ; Hyperresearch
Transcription	YouTube close captioning ; Transcription with Transana ; Google Cloud ; Speech API ; InqScribe ; HyperTRANSCRIBE ; oTranscribe
Bibliographic Management	Mendeley ; Zotero ; RefWorks ; Endnote
Visual / Conceptual Mapping	DiscoverText ; HyperRESEARCH ; MAXQDA ; QDA Miner ; Quirkos ; Scrivener ; Transana ; Inspiration
Presentation	Canva ; Piktochart ; Venngage ; Visme
Images & Annotations	Over ; Skitch ; Pixlr
Web-development & Branding	Squarespace ; Ucraft ; Weebly ; Wix ; Whiteboard Animation ; LinkedIn
Productivity	Be Focused ; Pomodoro Tomato Timer ; PomoDone
Reference Texts	<p>Paulus, T., Lester, J., & Dempster, P. (2014). <i>Digital tools for qualitative research</i> (1st ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.</p> <p>Silver, C. & Lewins, A. (2014). <i>Using software in qualitative research: A step-by-step guide</i> (2nd ed.) Los Angeles, CA: Sage. Available at ISCARL.</p>

OTHER RESOURCES

Source: Bhattacharya, Workshop, 2017

Theoretical Framework	Focus	Primary Methods	Example Research Questions
Critical theory	Interrogate traditional social structures involved with oppression, inequality, and power.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations • Collaboration • Observation • Document analysis 	How do structures of the US Army's promotion system influence the experience of being a female combat arms officer assigned to an infantry battalion?
Feminism	Examine structures of power and hierarchy to identify social inequality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations • Collaboration • Observation • Document analysis 	How would a female infantry officer describe her experiences given recent Army policy decisions regarding women in combat roles?
Hermeneutics*	Construct meaning from texts, studying how humans express their experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis • Narrative analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do people make meaning of Umberto Eco's <i>In the Name of the Rose</i> in terms of their own understanding of Christianity? • What does it mean to interpret experience through creating and reading blogs?

Theoretical Framework	Focus	Primary Methods	Example Research Questions
Phenomenology*	Examine the lived experiences of a phenomenon to discern its essence and construct meaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phenomenological interviews • Observations • Document analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the essence of being a survivor of Auschwitz during the Holocaust? • How do soldiers define their role while acknowledging the contradictions and tensions that characterize this role construct?
Postpositivism	Explain <i>approximations of</i> truths in particular contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Observations • Surveys 	What are some primary factors / experiences that contribute to the increase of students in alternate education?
Symbolic Interpretivism*	Examine how the interaction with symbols creates meaning in lived experiences within a social context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations • Narratives • Case studies • Interviews • Document analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do people of Syrian descent in Europe describe their experiences after recent incidents of terrorism? • How do teenagers use emojis to make meaning of their experiences?

Descriptive	Exploratory	Explanatory
Normally narrative approach to thoroughly describe the case and its context	Inductive approach (i.e., no <i>a priori</i> theory or hypothesis) “to explore various aspects of, and relationships in, the case and to develop a new theory or explanation” (Lim, 2011, p. 48)	Deductive approach to test a theory or competing theories
Intrinsic	Instrumental	Collective
Case has innate value as a topic of in-depth study	Studying this case will provide keen insight into a particular phenomenon uniquely illustrated by the case	Instrumental case research involving multiple cases from a systematic point of view

PURPOSES OF CASE STUDIES

Positivist	Interpretivist	Critical Theory	Deconstructivist
Reality is object and "found."	Reality is subjective and constructed.	Reality is subjective and constructed on the basis of issues of power.	Reality is ultimately unknowable; attempts to understand reality subvert themselves.
Truth is one.	Truth is many.	Truth is many, and constitutes a system of socio-political power.	"Truths" are socially constructed systems of signs which contain the seeds of their contradiction.
Discourse is structured and transparent, reflecting reality.	Discourse is dialogic and creates reality.	Discourse is embedded in (and controlled by) rhetorical and political purpose.	Contingent, deferred meanings
What is true? What can we know?	What is heuristic? What can we understand?	What is just? What can we do?	What constitutes truth?
Knowing the world	Understanding the meaning of phenomena	Changing the world	Critiquing the world

UNDERSTANDING VARIOUS PARADIGMS

Approach	Key Characteristics	Major Scholars / Examples	Possible Topics
Action Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborative, systemic investigation of complex problems to develop practical, effective solutions in their own environments• Facilitate communication to enhance efficacy• Attempts to involve all stakeholders in research	Siha, Stringer	Aspects of learning, implementation of policy, application of mission command principles in a particular time & space
Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rich description of “bounded social” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 31) phenomena• Focus on social units, processes, systems, or institutions over time• Review of several data sources	Kim, Yin	Battles, projects, life events, promotion system, people, organizations, social-cultural issues
Ethnography	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe & interpret particular values, assumptions, behavior, communications, & beliefs within their social-cultural contexts• Time-intensive observations	Ellis, Geertz, Pelias, Poulos	Command climate, how soldiers' perspectives on an issue change over time
Grounded Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than description; seeks to develop new theory of a process based on participants• Grounded in field data with constant comparison of data and theoretical samples of groups	Bryant, Charmaz	Deriving theories from analyzing case studies
Hermeneutics / Content Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interpret texts to discern rich context of meaning• Understand the whole in terms of its parts	Gadamer, Heidegger, Polkinghorne	Biblical studies, language & communication
Narrative Inquiry / Biography	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Starts with stories of lived experiences in social contexts• Analysis through re-storying, involving a collaboration between the researcher & participants	Clandinin, Cortazzi, Goodall	Personal narratives, oral history, arts-based narratives
Phenomenology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate the meaning of lived experiences to understand the essence of particular human phenomenon (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012)• Time intensive participation with few participants	Husserl, Moustakas, Van Manen	The essence of trauma in combat, the culture of mission command

SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT EXCERPTS WITH INITIAL CODING

Line #	Transcript	Remarks/CODE
1	D: [>OK. (.)Tell me about a time when you experienced online learning in a community college.<]	Descriptive question to generate discussion of particular topic; conducive to phenomenological studies
2	C: [>Yeah=((shifts in chair while smirking)) It's like I want to get it..you know, the material...but it's hard to understand without being there with the instructor to show me how to practice the concepts discussed...<]	PRESENSE (THEMATIC) PRACTICE THE CONCEPTS (IN VIVO)
3	D: [>So, you mention how difficult it can be to learn concepts in an online class. Talk about how you go about understanding the concepts well in an online learning environment.<]	Contrast question helps elicit alternative perspectives or disprove prior comments
4	C: [>Yeah, so(.) WELL the thing most students would say is that they learn from asking questions of the instructor and seeing an example.... It's easier for some students than others to do that....<]	QUESTION MATERIAL (DESCRIPTIVE summarizes main topic of excerpt)
5	D: [>Now, can you describe what happened at class last night specifically during the synchronous discussion on somatic learning?<]	Specific Grand Tour question focuses on a specific incident that requires the participant to describe the event and his/her reaction to it.

Draft analytic memo: "D" describes how social presence with her professor helps her learn abstract concepts in an online environment. This corroborates Dewey's (2008) understanding of pragmatic instruction through experience. The student seems a bit uneasy talking about her failure to understand the material (indicated by nonverbal cues). Next time I interview her, asking about the specific process she uses to learn these abstract concepts through social presence (link to theoretical framework) will help me answer Research Question #2.

richer understanding.

4. What other codes would work? How would you write an analytic memo for this excerpt in order to synthesize the data?