

# Epistemology, Paradigm, Research Question, and Methodology

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Dr. Kirsten Brown

Twitter: @DrKirstenBrown

Course Website:

<https://kirstenbrown.org/wmu/>

# Agenda



Housekeeping



Epistemology and Purpose



Paradigm & Questions



Methodology Choices



Logistics

# Housekeeping Overview



GETTING TO  
KNOW YOU



BRIGHTSPACE



TECHNICAL  
DIFFICULTIES



ACCESSIBILITY



# My Positionality

- There are different ways to understand what is reality.
- Probably useful to put a disclaimer on the instructor's version.
- I view quant, qual, and mixed methods as a spectrum of approaches that work together.
- Some folks might even call me pragmatic.





**Epistemology** = How I know something?

**Purpose** = What is the intent of my study?

**Paradigm** = What is my conceptual or theoretical framework?

**Research Questions** = What information do I want to know?

**Methodology** = What procedures can I use?

**Logistics** = Is this doable?

# Epistemology

- How do you know something?
- Objectivist = stable characteristics that can be verified regardless of who the observer is.
- Constructivist = meaning is situated within the observer and shaped by human consciousness.
- These shape:
  - What counts as knowledge?
  - How do we know what we know?
  - Relationship between knower and known?
- Bhattacharya (2017)



# Small Group Work: Shifting Between Knowing

Example	Objectivist	Constructivist
Heart	A muscular organ, which is hollow, that pumps blood through the circulatory system through dilation and contraction.	A place from where one feels love for other human beings and pets.
Table	A piece of furniture with flat horizontal surface supported by four legs.	A place where one can dance in a bar with adequate amount of alcohol intake
Dog		
Your Research Topic		

Bhattacharya, 2017, p. 3



A close-up photograph of numerous light-colored wooden blocks, some of which are arranged in a row to spell out the word "PURPOSE" in a serif font. The blocks are scattered across a wooden surface, with many others visible in the background, creating a sense of depth and texture. The lighting is warm, highlighting the natural grain of the wood.

# PURPOSE

- What is your intent for the study?
  - **Understand**
  - **Interrogate**
  - **Deconstruct**



# Paradigms

## Understand

Interpretive

Narrative Inquiry

Phenomenology

## Interrogate

Critical

Feminism

Marxism

## Deconstruct

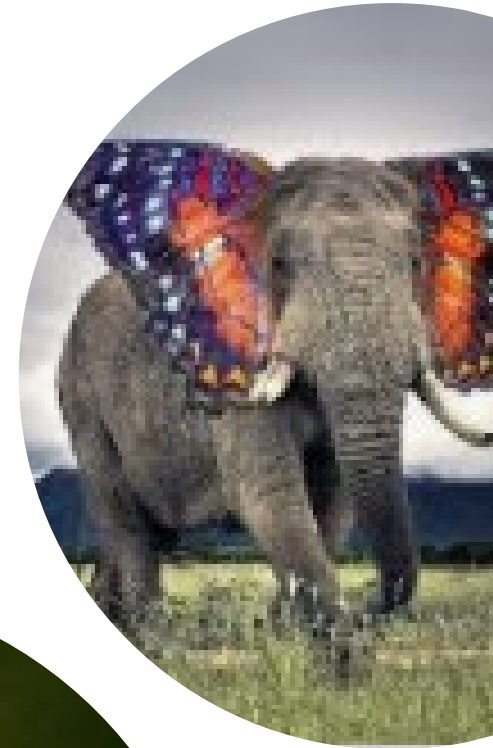
Postmodern

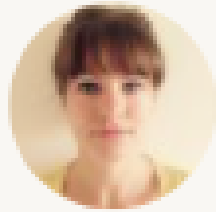
Postcolonial

Post structural

# Research Questions

- Must align or fit with the purpose and paradigm.
- Keep them simple and try to avoid jargon.
- Uses a naturalistic perspective.
- One point of inquiry per question.
- Do not use the word “you” (that is an interview question).
- Frame in a way that invites multiple possibilities as a potential answer. Open-ended questions, not Yes/No.
- *If this were a full class, we would spend time on a workshop where each student looked at 2 example research questions from journal articles, discussed them with peers, and then started drafting their own.*





**Annelies Kleinherenbrink**

@kleinherenbrink

During lectures, I switched from asking "does anyone have a question before I move on?" to telling "someone ask me a question before I move on" and it is so simple but SUCH a game changer. [#AcademicTwitter](#)

12:02 AM · Feb 16, 2022 · Twitter Web App

**1,217** Retweets   **191** Quote Tweets   **14.5K** Likes

# Common Qualitative Methodology Choices

Narrative

Phenomenology

Grounded Theory

Ethnography

Case Study

Discourse Analysis

# Logistics

- Is it ethical to do this?
  - Will this research cause harm to others
  - Will this research cause harm to yourself
- Will the community (that your data comes from) benefit from this?
- Is it wise to do this? Care for the human instrument.
- Is it expensive to do this?
- How does this fit with your career goals?
- Would you enjoy learning about something else more?





Five Minute  
Break