

‘Tips and tricks, lessons learned with foundations’

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Tip 1

Draw upon mentors



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Live

Event

Job

Offer

A close-up photograph of a metal object, possibly a piece of machinery or a tool, featuring a large question mark and several numbers (2, 7, 0) engraved on its surface. The background is a warm, blurred gradient of yellow and orange.

Tip 2

Know your foundation(s)



Science and Religion: Exploring the Spectrum



Tip 3

Put yourself and your research out there: create opportunities

NETWORK



SCIENCE & RELIGION

EXPLORING THE SPECTRUM



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'Science and Religion: Exploring the Spectrum of Global Perspectives' is a major international research project that seeks to build an understanding of the social and cultural contexts of public perceptions of the relationship between 'science' and 'religion' across all religious and non-religious groups.

Tip 4

**Work collaboratively, across
disciplines/mixed methods**





Tip 5

**Be clear, precise, and firm in the value
of the qualitative research proposed**

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Hannah Arendt

This post might be considered a postscript to those posts which concern Aspects of the University of Dissensus [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#), [\[3\]](#), [\[4\]](#), [\[5\]](#), [\[6\]](#), [\[7\]](#). The terrain covered in this blog, which is affiliated to the thinking around narrative environment design [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#), [\[3\]](#), even as it had at one time some resonance with the American university, does not sit well in the British university, yet it still might be said to have some habitation there in the margins of the **STEMMification of the contemporary university.**

Overall, the critical relation might be said to be towards science conceived as positive sciences (STEMM subjects) in which the world is made up of 'objects' (res extensa) for a subject (res cogitans) as two distinct forms of 'substance' with their respective ontologies or modes of existence. Rather than 'objects', which can be mastered, controlled and exploited, there are 'things' that matter to 'me' and to 'us', and which trouble 'me' and 'us', even as 'the I' and 'the we' are articulated in relation to 'the It' (or 'the Id) and to 'the they'.

In other words, the world is a field of engagement and struggle which is political through and through, with politics conceived as the possibility of giving voice and action to those who have no voice and that which is deemed incapable of acting, a world whose disagreements and tensions are not simply capable of being resolved by technical solutions in the form of a (universal) consensus. It is instead a polyversity of dissensus, in the which the STEMM university (with its technical discussions and proposals) sits awkwardly and inadequately.

'How many cases do I need?'

On science and the logic of case selection in field-based research

■ Mario Luis Small

University of Chicago, USA

ABSTRACT ■ Today, ethnographers and qualitative researchers in fields such as urban poverty, immigration, and social inequality face an environment in which their work will be read, cited, and assessed by demographers, quantitative sociologists, and even economists. They also face a demand for case studies of poor, minority, or immigrant groups and neighborhoods that not only generate theory but also somehow speak to empirical conditions in other cases (not observed). Many have responded by incorporating elements of quantitative methods into their designs, such as selecting respondents 'at random' for small, in-depth interview projects or identifying 'representative' neighborhoods for ethnographic case studies, aiming to increase generalizability. This article assesses these strategies and argues that they fall short of their objectives. Recognizing the importance of the predicament underlying the strategies – to determine how case studies can speak empirically to other cases – it presents two alternatives to current practices, and calls for greater clarity in the logic of design when producing ethnographic research in a multi-method intellectual environment.

KEY WORDS ■ ethnographic methods, generalizability, representativeness, validity, case study, sequential interviewing, extended case method, science

Epistemological boot camp: The politics of science and what every qualitative researcher needs to know to survive in the academy

Karen M. Staller

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Abstract

Doctoral students and faculty members sometimes face unexpected barriers when engaging in qualitative research that can impede career advancement. In part, this can be because qualitative methodologies often conflict with objectivist epistemological assumptions that are deeply embedded in university cultures. Since ontology, epistemology, methodology, and methods are related, it is imperative for qualitative researchers to understand these differences and recognize the resulting tensions. Furthermore, when conducting qualitative research it is critical to design studies in which the epistemology, methodology, and methods are logically integrated for the best quality work. In this article, I seek to make transparent the link between everyday problems that arise (in dissertation defenses, funding and Institutional Review Board applications, peer review, tenure and promotion, etc.) and the underlying epistemological and methodological issues that produce them. I seek to educate beginning qualitative researchers about the importance of this integration in their own work and to arm them with some diagnostic skills. In doing so they will be better prepared to successfully negotiate the politics of science, the politics of evidence, and the politics of methods within their home institutions.

Keywords

Academy, epistemology, methodology, politics of science, qualitative inquiry, qualitative research, qualitative research design, rigor

p.402 “those who go against the grain – in this case qualitative researchers in general – need to recognize that they sit in a disadvantaged position relative to the dominant culture and therefore should take extra steps to protect themselves and their work for misplaced critique.”

“being critically aware of the impact that the different epistemological assumptions that undergird qualitative forms of inquiry (which can be drastically different from privileged and institutionalized objectivist ones) have for the design, implementation and dissemination of their research. Only then is it possible to locate and articulate the differences between your work and those who might critique it from a different perspective.”



Tip 6

See the gaps

Tip 7

Deliver



Tip 8

Persist

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Christie Bahlai, PhD, is a Data Scientist and Ecologist. Her work focuses on developing and interpretive methods.



Rebecca Catto, PhD is a Sociologist. Her research is grounded in the sociology of religion and connected by



Bridget Mulvey, PhD is an Education Researcher in Curriculum and Instruction. Her research focuses on

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