Welcome to the Fall 2018 Newsletter!

There is a wealth of scholarship and timely information in this season’s newsletter. We have a new column editor for Methods, News and Notes - Noah Goodman – and feature his interview with Dr Jori Hall on educative values-engaged evaluation. Also in the section, Wesam Salem introduces the ziyyarah, a form of postcolonial interviewing. We have a letter from the QR SIG Chair, and calls for submissions for the Outstanding Book and Outstanding Dissertation Awards. In Digital Tools, Bree Akkerson writes on adapting GIS to qualitative inquiry, while Christy Wessel Powell and Gina Weir explore researcher positionality in online meeting technology. There are spotlights on new qualitative materials in several forms, a podcast series run by Pengfei Zhao, a book by Vajra Watson, and a blog/photo narrative by Amy Scott Metcalfe, whose photos in these pages offer a beautiful reminder of Fall.

Sincerely,

Lucinda Carspecken, QR SIG Newsletter Editor

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Dear QRSIG Colleagues,

I hope you are all doing well and enjoying the new term/semester.

Over the last few months, the QRSIG Executive Committee, as well as the members of the SIG’s standing committees, have been working to sustain and grow the SIG’s current activities. I offer three updates.

First, the QRSIG’s podcast, *Qualitative Conversations*, continues to grow in reach, with new episodes being added regularly. Should you be interested in nominating potential guests and/or suggesting particular topics, please do not hesitate to reach out to me (at jnlester@indiana.edu). Second, in the coming months, we will be introducing new initiatives aimed at growing our membership. Specifically, we hope to increase the number of graduate student members that are part of the QRSIG, as we aim to further support the growth and scholarly efforts of emerging qualitative scholars. Finally, in the next few weeks, we will be introducing our new Twitter account. This account is intended to be another avenue by which we might share our memberships’ scholarship and activities. Stay tuned for information related to this!

Thank you all for your continued support of the QRSIG. Please reach out to me with ideas of additional ways that we might work to support and grow our community.

Kind regards,
Jessica Nina Lester, QRSIG Chair
Indiana University
The Qualitative Research SIG of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) invites nominations for the Outstanding Book Award for significant contributions to methodology of qualitative educational research. The Qualitative Research SIG will also recognize the winner of this award during the 2019 annual meeting of AERA in Toronto. Books published with a 2017 or 2018 copyright date will be considered for this nomination as long as they were not previously submitted for this award. Books may have been published anywhere in the world, but for the purposes of consideration must be available in English.

Criteria for judging the merits of the books include the significance and timeliness of methodological issue(s) addressed, integrity and quality of the discussion of the methods used for an empirical study, and contribution of the book to the advancement of knowledge about an area in educational research that can benefit qualitative inquiry. Books that use qualitative methods but do not advance methodological issue(s), or theorization of methodology, or do not substantially address contemporary issues in educational research through advanced use of qualitative inquiry are not eligible for this award. Books may be single-authored, co-authored, or edited collections.

To be considered for this award, please submit electronic copies of each of the following:

1. A submission abstract (no more than 200 words) that provides a full citation of the book, a rationale on how the book contributes to the field of qualitative methodology.
2. Letter of nomination that includes a brief clarification of the purposes, scope and quality of the book, an explanation of how the book contributes to the field of qualitative methodology (theoretically/pedagogically) and a discussion about why it is deserving of this methodological award.
3. A summary of the book, prepared by the nominator, that gives an overview of the book, a description of individual chapters, and a
statement that provides a context for book’s place in the field of qualitative research.
5. One representative chapter from the book that best exemplifies the contribution of the book to qualitative inquiry.

Nominations may be submitted by the author of the work, another scholar, or by the publisher of the work. Membership of the SIG is not a requirement for the nominee or nominator but is strongly encouraged.

Nominations must be received by Monday, November 12, 2018. Late nominations or incomplete nominations will not be considered. Please send nominations electronically to Jasmine Ulmer at jasmine.ulmer@wayne.edu.

Jasmine Ulmer, Assistant Professor, Qualitative Methodology, College of Education, Wayne State University

Cherry Tree, Nitobe Memorial Garden. 2017 by Amy Scott Metcalfe.
2019 Outstanding Dissertation Award
Call for Submissions
By Cheryl Hunter

The Qualitative Research SIG of the American Educational Research Association invites nominations of dissertations in educational research that exemplify excellence in qualitative methodology and that may typify the SIG’s mission to emphasize “ways that qualitative research may contribute to reducing inequality and injustice in schools and society”. The American Educational Research Association will also recognize the winner of the qualitative dissertation award.

Dissertations defended during Spring/Summer/Fall 2018 semesters, no later than Friday, December 7, 2018, will be eligible for consideration. The committee chair must receive nominations by Monday, December 10, 2018. The committee will not consider late or incomplete nominations. Award finalists will be contacted by the third week of January 2019. Finalists will then be asked to supply a full copy of the dissertation to distribute to the committee for further consideration.

Send nomination packets to:
Cheryl A. Hunter, Ph.D.
231 Centennial Drive, Stop 7189
Grand Forks, ND 58201-7189
Cheryl.hunter@und.edu (electronic submissions strongly encouraged)

To nominate a dissertation, the nomination packet must include the following five (5) items (if submitting paper copies, submit 3 complete sets of materials):

1. One (1) letter of faculty endorsement from a member of the student’s dissertation committee who is also an AERA member, attesting that the dissertation was completed by the student during the award period specified above and that the faculty member nominating or endorsing the nomination served on the dissertation committee. The letter should include the dissertation defense date, a brief clarification of the purposes, scope and quality of the student’s dissertation research, an explanation of how the dissertation contributes to the field of qualitative methodology (in terms of theory and practice) and a discussion of why it is deserving of this methodological award;
2. A title page for the dissertation (including university/college, name of the professor chairing the dissertation committee and a complete list of committee members). In addition to the title page, please include contact information (phone and e-mail) of the nominee to be used for all correspondence regarding the award;

3. The Table of Contents from the dissertation;

4. A summary of the dissertation, prepared by the nominee, that gives an overview of the research, a description of individual chapters, and a statement that provides a context for how the representative chapter submitted (see item 5 below) fits within the overall dissertation (double spaced, 12 pt. type, 10 pages maximum);

5. One representative chapter from the dissertation that best exemplifies the contribution of the dissertation to theorizing and implementing qualitative methodology;

Criteria for judging the merits of the dissertation include:

1) The significance and timeliness of the methodological issue(s) addressed;

2) The integrity and quality of the discussion and implementation of the qualitative methods used for an empirical study, and;

3) The contribution of the dissertation to the advancement of knowledge about an area of or issue in qualitative research methodology.

Dissertation nominations should also add to theoretical and practical knowledge about contemporary methodological issues in qualitative research in order to be considered for the award. Please be aware that dissertations utilizing qualitative methods, but that do not contribute significantly to the theorization or implementation of qualitative methodology and do not substantially address contemporary issues in qualitative methodology, are not eligible for the award.
How would you describe culturally responsive approaches?
This is a very good question, because it’s a broad field in a lot of ways. But I first want to mention that this approach, culturally responsive evaluation, has been going on for a long time. For example, Stafford Hood, who is known in the field and has a center on this approach, wrote a historical analysis documenting African-American researchers and evaluators in the 1930s and 1950s who took up a more culturally responsive approach.

I think the more recent version, CRE if you will, can be seen in Stake’s work. A lot of it stems from his responsive-evaluation approach. And essentially what it boils down to, for me, is thinking about the stakeholder issues—really incorporating their concerns into the evaluation. Of course, a huge part of culturally responsive evaluation really seeks to draw attention to the culture and context of a particular program, but it also draws attention to the culture of evaluation itself.

Finally, CRE promotes the evaluator explicating his or her worldview. All this in order to implement culturally responsive practices relevant to a specific context.
You said the “culture of evaluation itself.” Can you explain that?
Sure, it’s one of the things that often gets left out—or at least receives less attention. People recognize that there’s a culture of the evaluation context, but what I mean by the culture of evaluation is, evaluation itself is embedded in society. It has its own worldview. It’s not this value-neutral way of conducting inquiry. It comes from a desire of particular people at a particular time to get a job done. And what I’m saying is, even particular methods—quantitative methods or qualitative methods—all have a history. Again, really thinking about what’s the history of evaluation, and what cultural aspects as a profession we bring into the evaluation context. So CRE focuses on both the culture of the program, but then also on the culture of the discipline itself.

Have you used this culturally responsive approach with programs that don’t have explicit equity goals?
There are two ways to think about that. One is, I actually had a situation where we tried to use an educative values-engaged approach with a program, and we were very clear, as best we could be, about the fact that it does bring attention to equity. And to be frank and honest, that particular program was not interested. And so we did not conduct the evaluation. I say that to show that there are situations where this approach is not going to be feasible, either because the evaluator doesn’t think it’s appropriate, or because it’s not a welcomed approach. So that does happen.

The other thing I’d like to say is, yes, we as researchers who use this approach are explicit about our focus on equity, and content, and pedagogy, but at the same time we believe that all programs have values and assumptions, even if they don’t talk about them.

Another important point to mention is that equity is going to look different depending on the program. For example, equity may relate to African-American students in a math program created just for them. And in another situation—an evaluation actually that one of my graduate students did for her dissertation—the educative values-engaged approach was used with older adults, so the equity issues were around transportation, cognitive ability, and things of that nature. So equity isn’t going to be the same.
And I think when you go into a context, that’s the kind of thing where the educative function kicks in. Well, what does equity mean here? What understanding do the stakeholders have about equity with respect to their program? And so, in order to build buy-in, it’s important to be open to hearing and understanding those issues, and what their program’s about. I feel like I don’t have to sell this—there are cases like I mentioned earlier—but a lot of my work isn’t really selling it, because people are doing these things. People are interested in their participants, and in really trying to make it work.

So as an educative values-engaged evaluator, you’re educating them about evaluation writ large—what it can offer, its limitations, and all of that—but you’re also listening to what’s happening in the context.

You said that you were interested in thinking about inequity, specifically by looking at privilege, and more specifically at how researchers look at their own privilege. Could you discuss this?
Sure, and thank you because this is a thought-piece that I’m working on right now. Essentially, it goes something like this: As culturally responsive evaluators, the focus is on examining inequities in all shapes and forms. And one side of inequity is oppression. So, how people are disenfranchised in a particular situation, or marginalized. But I feel like the other side of inequity is privilege. And I think that as culturally-responsive evaluators, if we solely focus on the oppressive side of inequity, and we’re not examining privilege, then we’re going to miss something. It’s going to lead to misguided social-justice endeavors, or to designs in our evaluations that can further marginalize communities.

I’ve been thinking about two aspects of privilege: first, the privilege that our individual identities bring to a context—I work at a Research I university, for example. That’s a personal privilege that matters, and plays a role in the evaluation. And then, the privilege of being a part of evaluation as a profession. I think that grants some privilege as well—any time you’re part of a professional group, I think that grants privilege. I think it’s important to think through how your privileges intersect with the evaluation approach you’re using. And more specifically, how you can use the privileges you have—which can change given the evaluation—in the service of what you’re doing.
Privilege isn’t necessarily bad. Often times people can be shamed for their privilege, and made to think they always have to work against it. But I think privilege can be used productively. And I really want to get some more good thinking around that. I have to think through an example of what it looks like. I’m sure it’s happened to me and other folks, but right now I’m trying to have more conversations around the productive use of privilege, and to think and theorize it better. But essentially, it’s really examining the other side of inequality—individual privilege, and our privilege as a profession.

I think the other thing that is important is centering stakeholders’ experiences, and really beginning with more of what folks want. So it’s pushing CRE just a little bit further, maybe. And perhaps even being, if I can dare say, a traitor to the ways that evaluators are “supposed to be.” Maybe there are some different ways we need to think about being, in order to be more responsive or reflective in our evaluation. Maybe we need to not be so rigid to these traditional ways of conducting evaluation, especially when they’re not helping the people you’re trying to help.

And when you say a traitor, what are you thinking there?
In the paper that I wrote, I draw on feminism and standpoint theory in particular. And one of the things they talk about is that they situate society as a hierarchy. There are those in the center, and then there are those that are kind of at the margins. As evaluators, we have this privilege. And we’re centering ourselves, and maybe even our personal identities—like, as a professor. I have a lot of privilege as a professor and people can—I don’t think I’m intimidating people—but that can come with being a professor at a university.

So, people have expectations of how I’m supposed to act as an evaluator. And that privilege, as an evaluator, can become a fearful thing for participants. People don’t want to be made to feel like they’re not doing their job correctly, or being punished, or all these kinds of things. With standpoint theory, we all have a particular standpoint, and there are scripts that tell us what it means to be a man, or what it means to be an evaluator. And sometimes you need to be a traitor to the script that society sets for you, because it doesn’t serve the people that you’re trying to help—continuing that script doesn’t help. So that’s what I mean. I was referring back to standpoint theory, and this notion of privilege cognizance that I’m trying to advocate that evaluators have.
References

**Ziyyarah: (Un)settling Methodology**

By Wesam Salem

University of Memphis

Interviewing, in general, emerged in the last few centuries as a socially and historically situated research practice (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). By bringing to the forth stories and narratives of research participants, interviewing reveals how individuals make sense and understand the world around them. As such, this research approach is believed to illuminate humans’ social interactions, practices, beliefs, and/or behavior. Atkinson (2007) writes that

> [h]umans are the storytelling species. Storytelling is in our blood. We think in story form, speak in story form, and bring meaning to our lives through story. Our life stories connect us to our roots, give us direction, validate our experience, and restore value to our lives. (p. 224)

But who is telling the story? Who is listening? Whose voice is represented, textualized, and contextualized? How do we conceptualize narratives and interpret storied experiences? Are oral narratives the only product of interviewing? When I embarked on my study, which explores how Muslim high school students negotiate their national and religious identity and how this negotiation informs their learning in schools, I was faced with the challenge of navigating the Western terrain of research in which the knowledge about the Other or the Orient has been
collected, classified, and disseminated by the West and through the eyes of the West (Said, 1978/2003). The West subjectified or thingified the colonized subject by first disempowering it, repetitively branding it and then coercively assigning it with a set of characteristics for imperial exigencies (Azeez, 2016).

How can I trouble the Western approach to interviewing? What approach to interviewing would be respectful to my participants? Wrestling with these questions, I found comfort in Smith’s (1999) argument for methodological approaches that provoke revolutionary thinking about the roles that knowledge, knowledge production, knowledge hierarchies and knowledge institutions play in decolonization and social transformation (Smith, 1999, p. xii).

Drawing on Smith’s (1999) argument, and Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concept of nomadic subject and assemblage, I constructed the Ziyyarah, a postcolonial interview, to (re)think beyond the traditional and prescribed methodological approaches to research. Ziyyarah, which is an Arabic word that means a visit, interrogates the reproduction of colonial subjugation that traditional interviewing inscribes on participants.

Within the colonialist onto-epistemology, participants’ stories, “cultures, languages, and social practice—all may be spaces for marginalization”. However, these narratives have also “become spaces of resistance and hope…[within] wider framework of self-determination, decolonization, and social justice” (Smith, 1999, p. 4). A postcolonial approach to interviewing renders attention to the silenced and marginalized voices of my participants to forge new intellectual spaces that challenge Western academics and conventional research practices. It also troubles conformity to linear and categorized forms of narrative research for they reproduce marginality and further colonize the subject within the study.

I argue that the Ziyyarah interview is inclusive of participants’ ways of knowing and culture. As a methodological approach, it shifts our thinking of interviews and creates a line of flight that troubles traditional interviewing to become a

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1 Ziyyarah: Arabic word that means a visit in which someone visits a friend, family member, or acquaintance at his/her house. The host usually offers food and/or drink and informal conversation.
“provisional space” (St. Pierre, 1997) that is a mixture of both striated and smooth spaces. By making conventions or “meetings” (Nordstrom, 2017) between participants’ ways of knowing, culture, space, history, and beliefs; and interrogating the researcher/researched binary, Ziyyarah becomes an informal conversational methodological space that examines transgressive data. These conventions attempt to (un)settle interviewing practice by bringing attention to participants’ ways of knowing, tradition of storytelling, familial connections, and the space they inhabit to create rich grounds for creating “new” knowledge.

**Ziyyarah Conventions**

Thinking of my participants and resisting the Western approach to interviewing, I constructed my Ziyyarah interviews with the following conventions or meetings in mind:

**Unstructured and Conversational Life History**

There are many ways to conduct interviews (e.g., life course interviews, life history interviews, and digital storytelling). Savin-Baden and Major (2013) describe life history interviews as being concerned with exploring individual’s life history to illuminate events pertaining to the phenomenon researched. The subject, within this type of interviews, is viewed as an insider to the phenomenon and is engaged in making sense of these experiences. My choice of unstructured life story interviews draws from (Barth, 2016) argument that this type of interviews can “deconstruct” the Western’s fixed and monolithic notions of participants’ identities and allow for the participants to compose their own identities and “insert” themselves, history, and objects in their stories where they feel most comfortable (p. 91). It also provides a space for the participants to share their beliefs, perspectives, feelings, and aspirations as they tell their stories. I find using a conversational, un-structured, life history interviews to mirror the culture and communication style of non-Western Muslims and bring to the forth the assemblage of the interaction of the space, time, and matter. that constitutes the nomadic subject.

**(Un)settling the “I”**

Many researchers within the postmodern and transformative research (re)considered interviewing practices to bring to forth the decolonizing capacities of research beyond the traditional and the neopositivist research (Smith, 1999).
Views of the society as “a series of fragments in continuous flux” in which meaning is ambiguous and cannot be reduced to a single representation (Borer & Fontana, 2012) replaced the static and monolithic views of the society and its members. The postmodern sensibilities interrogated the researcher/researched roles, which privileged the researcher position, to theorize an inter/intra active role of the subject and the researcher, and created new forms of interviewing that are more collaborative and contextual. These sensibilities decentered the researcher’s privileged position while focusing on the subject’s own meaning of self or *epiphanies* “to produce narratives that ennoble human experiences while facilitating civic transformation in the public (and private) sphere” (Denzin, 1996, p. xiv). As such, within Ziyyarah, the researcher and the researched are actively engaged in the meaning-making of the narrated stories and experiences. The power relations in which the researcher assumes the role of all-knowing is dismantled and knowledge is constructed inter/intra-actively. My visible Muslim identity as head-covering woman, arguably, may alleviate my participants’ hesitation in sharing statements or expressions outside the English language; and they may be forthcoming with framing their experiences within the contexts of religion and culture.

**Ways of Knowing and World Views**

Beyond the Western system of knowing, the Other epistemologies and world views have the potential of developing oppositional counterparties that resist colonialism and imperialism. Therefore, researching Muslim Americans, I am aware that Muslim ways of knowing are deeply rooted and guided by Islam and its teachings. These epistemologies “cannot be understood apart from collective consciousness, much of which has stemmed from the experience of colonialism and imperialism” (Stonebanks, 2008, p. 295). The Muslim ways of knowing encompass references to the Qur’an (the holy book of Muslims) and ways of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The bilingual references Muslim Americans use in their narratives mixing Arabic and English terminologies, are examples of how they know and narrate the world around them. Nonetheless, kept in mind that Muslims, in general and as such my participants, may not exclusively draw from the Muslim ways of knowing considering their various levels of adherence to Islam. Attending to such discourses and practices that position the participants within the mainstream culture as similar or different render knowledge of how they construct their identities as Muslim Americans and as learners.
Scholarly Significance
This study holds methodological implications to expanding the realm of qualitative research beyond the boundaries of Western research traditions, as well as the postpositivist paradigm. Smith (1999) writes that “researchers who work in the margins need research strategies that enable them to survive, to do good research, to be active in building community capacities, to maintain their integrity” (p. 213). Therefore, Ziyyarah, with its conventions and meetings, contributes to the “growing maturity of the field” of qualitative research by moving it “beyond the Western borders” (Chase, 2018, p. 546). This methodological approach, with its limitations and strengths, broadens the scope of interviewing as well as narrative inquiry research to encompass the previously marginalized onto-epistemological stance of the Other. By bringing attention to cultural, historical, and political contexts that shape participants’ experiences and narratives, Ziyyarah provides new possibilities qualitative inquiry and for communication across communities.

“First” Tree. 2018, Amy Scott Metcalfe.
Using GIS as a Qualitative Approach to Learn About War-Affected Families’ Experiences

Bree Akesson,
Wilfrid Laurier University

The past several years have witnessed increased numbers of people fleeing war and violence in their home countries. Contexts range from Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar for Bangladesh and Syrian refugees fleeing to neighboring Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. The number of displaced continues to rise as new conflicts begin or worsen and solutions to stem the conflict and its subsequent displacement continue to fail. With the sudden arrival of large numbers of refugees in resource poor settings, sites for living, working, and learning have developed rapidly without attention to the social and spatial implications. The precarious setting within which war-affected families live poses logistical obstacles for collecting meaningful and rich data. Given the challenging context, how can researchers learn about the social and spatial experiences of these marginalized populations in a methodologically rigorous and sensitive way?

To learn more about the experiences of war-affected families, our research team has used geographical informal systems (GIS) in two different primarily qualitative studies. The first study was conducted in 2012 with 18 Palestinian families living in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. GIS was not the primary method of data gathering in this study, but was piloted in conjunction with other data collection methods in order to create a multi-faceted and dynamic picture of people’s lives. The research started with a collaborative family interview (CFI) that discussed the family’s everyday lives and their experiences. The CFI included elements of drawing and mapmaking, which encouraged children’s voices in the research process. After completion of the CFI and with their parents’ permission, children were invited to lead the research team on a walk of their neighborhood community, while the research team carried a GIS device to record the walk (Akesson, in press). The children were encouraged to explore places where, for example, they were allowed to visit, places where their daily activities occurred, and places where
people they knew were located. With the children’s permission, these places were photographed by the research team. Conversations about these places facilitated dialogue between the children and our research team, prompted by the people and places encountered along the way. In addition to observing the children in their natural environments where they expressed their multidimensional place experiences, the GIS technology yielded quantitative data on the length of the neighborhood walk in both distance and time, which revealed that there was a relationship between level of violence in the family’s community and the length of the neighborhood walk (Akesson, 2014). Combined with the other methods of data collection, the GIS data revealed more information about family members’ relationship to school. For example, some children showed us their school as a place of significance, elaborating upon stories related to traveling to school and attending school. This method is best suited to children’s natural ways of communicating, using a physical and mobile approach far more active than the traditional interview setting, as a means for gathering data.

In light of the small success of this method piloted with the Palestinian cohort, we decided to expand the method to a larger sample size and in a different setting. In 2016, the second study—with 46 Syrian families who were displaced in Lebanon—made the GIS approach a more prominent part of the overall methodology. In addition to the CFI and the neighborhood walk, this research included GIS technology to enhance an ethnographic approach to data collection. Family members were asked to carry a GIS device, or “activity logger” that recorded their activity over a five to seven day period. Family members were also asked to keep a daily diary of activities that we could use to determine the spaces and places they visited during the week. The activity logger and the daily diaries provided us with valuable data about individual family members’ mobility and activities that expanded upon the data gathered in the neighborhood walk. We liked to think of the activity logger as a miniature ethnographic researcher being carried around on the pocket of the research participants. The GIS data combined with the CFI data has been used to create sensory maps of sights, sounds, and their corresponding feelings related to everyday mobility. (See www.outofplaceresearch.com for a sample of the maps that were created using the GIS data from this study.)
Like the study with Palestinian families, the data from this study with Syrian families also revealed family members’ relationships with education. We were able to determine which children attended school, which children worked instead, and which children did both. We learned about the barriers that kept families from sending their children to school. We also discovered the importance that families place on education.

Practical challenges in the use of GIS as a qualitative approach are related to the volatile environment within which these groups live. In Palestine and Lebanon, several neighborhood walks were not conducted because there were environmental dangers (e.g., a sandstorm or heavy rain) and physical danger (e.g., when the level of violence was so high that the children were not allowed outside). Like any research method, GIS also poses ethical challenges related to access, confidentiality, surveillance, and dissemination of research findings (Akesson, Hoffman, El Joueidi, & Badawi, 2018). Yet despite these challenges, GIS is a promising qualitative approach to learn more about the everyday experiences of marginalized populations.

References


Willing to be Disturbed
Positionality in Researcher Collaborations: Utilizing Online Meeting Technology to Deepen and Strengthen Relationships
By Christy Wessel Powell & Gina Weir

The purpose of this article is to highlight the method we utilized and share insights into how online meeting platforms can be used to strengthen researcher collaborations. In this newsletter, we describe our use of an online meeting platform as a tool to illuminate positionality. Using three structured roles--Interviewer, Interviewee, and Silent Listener/Inquirer--, web-based technology has the power to facilitate reflexivity, reveal positionality to the research topic and work through collaborative tensions.

We are three co-researchers who conducted narrative-based interviews with mothers on school choice and educational equity. The positionality of participant-researcher is complex and overlapping in our research process, as we are mothers and interviewers with convictions and lived contradictions about school choice. We brought varied experiences, opinions and assumptions to this work from our own schooling, as parents, and as methodologists. Our parental history regarding decision-making for our children created tensions around equity and familial opportunity.

Turning away from these tensions would have been a methodological choice, but we did not choose to turn away as detachment or complacency would not further our vision as researchers (Rasheed, 2006; Greene, 1988). When collaborative difficulties surfaced, we chose to turn toward one another and dig into the root of our differences. We paused our larger interview project, and instead, took time to interview one another.

We used the same interview protocol as we developed for the mothers in our larger study but used a unique model for reflexive interviewing that included three roles: Interviewer, Interviewee, and Silent Listener/Inquirer, as a way to make our positions and preconceptions increasingly transparent.

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1 For our more extensive writing about this process, which has been submitted for publication, please email cwesselp@purdue.edu for the full manuscript
Theoretical Underpinning of Productive Tensions

We decided to play with the idea of productive tensions. To work through tensions, we incorporated Wheatley’s call to invite surprises, confusion and disturbances into this relational process (2002). Wheatley states,

Noticing what surprises and disturbs me has been a very useful way to see invisible beliefs. If what you say surprises me, I must have been assuming something else was true. If you say something that disturbs me, I must believe something contrary to you. My shock at your position exposes my own position (p. 36).

Utilizing this notion, we conducted reflexive web-based interviews with one another as a conduit for theorizing strength in differences for our research team. Key to this process was our openness to discomfort and a willingness to listen to, and learn from, one another.

Our intentional engagement with discomfort as a necessary part of the reflexive process was based in part on Fine’s theories on the researcher/researched relationship. We drew on Fine’s foundational work, Working the Hyphens: Reinventing Self and Other in Qualitative Research in which she theorizes the relationship between researcher and researched as “the hyphen that both separates and merges personal identities with our inventions of Others” (p. 70). Fine also brought to the forefront an awareness of how we position ourselves in perennial tension between “us” as researchers and “other” as informant. Thus, our commitment was to confront our pluralisms, uncertainties and disturbances, and the space between us as a way to contend with the messy contradictions within ourselves, our informants and our research.

Reflexive Interview Model

We collected interview data on one another in three reflexive interview sessions. Interviews took place online. Our data included three recorded interviews between one another, interview transcripts, and private chat transcripts between the Interviewer and the Silent Listener/Observer. Data also included written reflections on our own experience being interviewed, as well as reflections on
listening to others’ interviews, and comments or questions made on one another’s written reflections.

**The Process**
The process of tapping this essence of experience and looking beyond preconceptions became known by various interchangeable terms: phenomenological reduction, epoche, or bracketing.

**During interviews:** To engage in this research we used web conferencing software (in our case, Zoom) to conduct reflexive interviews. All three co-researchers rotated through three roles assigned prior to each interview.

1. Interviewer
2. Interviewee
3. Silent Listener/Inquirer

The interviewer’s role was to lead the Interviewee through the interview protocol, selecting follow-up questions as they saw fit, depending on the Interviewee’s response. The role of the Interviewee was to respond to questions as a parent first, rather than as a researcher. The role of the Silent Listener/Inquirer was a unique aspect to this research. This participant was present during the interview but kept their camera off, so the focus was primarily between the Interviewer and Interviewee. The Silent Listener/Inquirer played a critical role. Primarily, they focused on what they were hearing and seeing expressed, taking notes of important moments and/or possible embedded assumptions. Secondarily, the Silent Listener/Inquirer functioned as a coach and thought partner for the Interviewer. Using the private chat tool, they sent insights or follow up questions to the Interviewer to consider. Because they were not conducting the interview this left the Silent Listener/Inquirer in a mental space more present to reflect and consider emerging themes and the direction of the interview. Because of this person’s unique “listening” and “thinking” role, they had a powerful position to influence the unfolding of the interview and to work in collaboration with the Interviewer as another resource in the moment.

All interviews were recorded using audio and video via the web conference software tool set. All private chats were saved as data sources.
After Interviews

The Silent Listener turned on their camera, and all researchers debriefed as researchers. The focus of the initial debrief was to air significant aspects of the interview that stood out and what was difficult or uncomfortable, followed by reflections.

After the initial debrief, each member answered written reflection questions on their own focusing on their role and their insights around the interviewee’s positionality to the research study. Written reflections were shared via email afterward so co-researchers had the opportunity to view, comment on and probe each other’s reflective writings.

A final recorded online debrief took place after all three co-researchers had been interviewed, to discuss how the reflexive interview process might inform our larger study. We focused particularly on 1) What stood out to each researcher about the written reflections and interview process? 2) Where did we feel uncomfortable in the process and what does that suggest? 3) What new insights were gained about self as parent or researcher in relationship to the research topic? 4) How would this process help us in our future work as researchers? What new insights emerged related to methods?

After the final reflective meeting, we asked one another to write about positionality, thinking particularly about what resonated with us regarding the process and what made us uncomfortable, or feel uncertain.

Final Thoughts about the Process

This methodological investigation was the intervention we needed as fellow researchers to help us deepen our readiness to engage as critical researchers while minimizing the potential for suppressed discourses around a topic of a very personal nature. We interpret our reflexive interview process in order to help us think about how it might inform and fold back into our larger parent interviews project but we also have gained an appreciation for the use of webcam platforms to help foster productive relationships between researchers, novice and experienced. Performing reflexive interviews in a triangle with one Interviewer, one Interviewee, and one Listener/Inquirer, gave us ideas for training future graduate
students who are learning qualitative, narrative interview methods and could benefit from the structure of this online interview process. We especially see the potential for a more experienced researcher to play a role in this process as a way to enhance the training process. For example, video links to online conversations can be shared with a professor as a lens into how students are engaging in practice interviews. We also surmise this reflexive interview design would be a helpful exercise around a variety of controversial topics that incite strong and personal opinions from collaborating researchers, and holds the potential to yield productive results.

This seems simple, but in our hurried society we don't focus on the quality of our thinking and the time that it takes to engage in great teamwork. Coming together to problem-solve and make transparent the tensions in a collaboration is critical to the research process. We can’t overemphasize the importance of us using our positionality as a resource that does not inhibit or stop the analysis process. We invite peers who may be in similar discordant collaborations to consider intentionally cultivating opportunities for dialogue and reflection through the utilization of online meeting platforms. Wheatley (2002) reminds us, “It’s not differences that divide us. It’s our judgements about each other that do, and curiosity and listening bring us back together” (p. 37).

References
Campus Trees is an ongoing photo narrative about the relationship between humans and trees on the university campus. In her images, Dr. Amy Scott Metcalfe, Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia, pictures the campus landscape as a living participant in academic life. Photographically, Dr. Metcalfe selects vantage points that pull us closer to the embracing limbs of these not-so-silent witnesses to our day-to-day passings. Whereas the built environment of a campus often captures more attention than the landscaping that holds it together, the “green campus” movement and interest in sustainability pedagogy has placed greater emphasis on trees as an integral part of the social and educational context of a campus community. On any given campus, each tree has its own (bio)graphy, telling a story of human and other-than-human displacements, movements, endings and beginnings. Trees chronicle the passage of time in place through the annual cycle of the changing seasons, greeting the North American academic year in full autumnal color. Trees mark the ever-creeping decades of institutional life, evident through a variety of techniques to measure arboreal growth patterns, noted too when today’s view is juxtaposed with historical images of the campus landscape. Campus trees hold many truths, even in a place where “truth” may be contested, or thought to be unknowable. By seeing campus trees more clearly we might think differently about some of the challenging aspects of our campus histories, such as the university’s role in settler colonialism, the exclusionary practices that have made “open access” a thing and not the norm, the impact of climate change on the local environment, the difficult questions of who to remember and how, and the way that geospatial change often overshadows human aspirations and achievements. Through the trees, we might glimpse something more of ourselves.

Images and text for each tree in the series is forthcoming at https://blogs.ubc.ca/campusphoto/campus-trees/. Previews available in Dr. Metcalfè’s Instagram: @100views
The Dogwood. 2018, Amy Scott Metcalfe
Transformative Schooling: Towards Racial Equity in Education
Vajra Watson, University of California, Davis

Summary:
Discussions of achievement gaps are commonplace in education reform, but they are rarely interrogated as a symptom of white supremacy. As an act of disruption, award-winning scholar Vajra Watson pierces through the rhetoric and provides a provocative analysis of the ways schools can become more racially inclusive. Her research is grounded in Oakland where longitudinal data demonstrated that Black families were sending their children to school, but the ideals of an oasis of learning were being met with the realities of racism, low expectations, and marginalization. As a response to this intergenerational crisis of miseducation, in 2010, the school district joined forces with community organizers, religious leaders, neighborhood elders, teachers, parents, and students to address institutionalized racism. Seven years later, Watson shares findings from her investigation into the school district’s journey towards justice. What she creates is a wholly original work, filled with penetrating portraits that illuminate the intense and intimate complexities of working towards racial equity in education. As a formidable case study, this research scrutinizes how to reconfigure organizational ecosystems as spaces that humanize, heal, and harmonize. Emerging from her scholarship is a bold, timely, and hopeful vision that paves the way for transformative schooling.

Reviews:
‘A bold call to action, a passionate plea for justice, a discerning document of wise witness, Transformative Schooling tells the inspirational story of an inner city school district that resists the ravages and legacy of institutional racism and begins to reimagine and construct an educational community based on trust, respect, and accountability among all the stakeholders, paving the way for student empowerment and achievement. Educators will find compelling insights, challenging truths, practical lessons, and reasons for hope in this work.’

—Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, Emily Hargroves Fisher Professor of Education, Harvard University, Author of The Good High School, I’ve Known Rivers, and Respect
‘This book reminds us that we must fight for and demand ecosystems of racial justice during these heightened times of white supremacy, xenophobia, and racism. A vividly powerful, multi-layered analysis of people, places, policies, and practices of hope and resistance, this book is a must read for anyone interested in and committed to challenging normative structures that perpetuate the status quo.’

—H. Richard Milner IV, Helen Faison Professor of Urban Education, University of Pittsburgh, Author of Rac(e)ing to Class, Handbook of Urban Education, and Start Where You Are, But Don’t Stay There

'Transformative Schooling' is that all-too-rare example and substance needed in education: analysis intertwined with context. Throughout this person-ful and human-filled narrative, Watson lifts up and maintains the entangled complexities of white supremacy, masculinity, Black empowerment, and education as a practice of freedom. With a straightforward transparency about her own learning and priorities, Watson paints a rich portrait of the complicated and multi-faceted work of reconnecting a community with its own sovereign power.

—Leigh Patel, Professor, University of California at Riverside, Author of Decolonizing Educational Research and Youth Held at the Border.

We qualitative researchers very often wear multiple hats in our career— not only scholars and teachers, but also community builders, social activists, and life-long learners. With these multiple roles, we hope to engage in conversations not only in the academia, but also in the public spheres locally, nationally, and internationally. Yet how shall we make our voices better heard by the general audience within and outside the ivory tower? How shall we ride the wave of new media to promote our research as well as critical thinking and the pursuit of social justice embedded in our work?

A helpful platform I found is the New Books Network (https://newbooksnetwork.com), a consortium of author-interview podcast channels dedicated to introducing the most recent scholarly books to the general audience. Since the fall of 2017, I have served as a host for one of the New Books Network channels, “New Books in Education.” My responsibility is to produce podcast interviews with book authors in the field of qualitative inquiry. So far, I have produced five episodes featuring impactful works in our field. On my guest list are prominent qualitative researchers such as Aaron Kuntz, Patricia Leavy, Jessica Lester, Karen Ross, and Lucinda Carspecken.

Founded by Marshall Poe, a former history professor at UMass Amherst, New Books Network (NBN) commits to raising the quality of public discourse and opening more space for public education. The volunteer-based and loosely connected organization is currently hosted by Amherst College Press and owns 82 channels covering a wide range of scholarly books from literature to education, sports, and East Asian Studies. Each month, New Books Network produces approximately 100 episodes. With its 50,000 downloads each day, the Network helps scholars to reach a much wider audience in this digital era.

As a host, I select books, create interview protocols, and contact the authors independently. A typical author-interview session starts with conversations about the interviewee’s intellectual trajectory and then moves on to an overview of the book. I refrain from asking too many questions and leave most of the time for authors to unpack
their thoughts regarding the books. Besides contributing to the channel of “New Books in Education,” my interviews are also cross-listed under other channels such as “New Books in Anthropology” and “New Books in Sociology” depending on the content of the books.

Becoming a podcaster and using my second language to create public programs was not something that I had expected to do years ago. My mindset changed after giving birth to my daughter in 2014. For a few months, I was constantly occupied with endless housework and responsibilities related to being a new mother. While I enjoyed the precious tie with her, I also longed for returning to my desk. Not having time to read or write made me feel deeply rejected—by the way how intellectual activities were supposed to be and how a junior researcher was expected to allocate her time. I started to search for alternative ways to engage in learning and thinking, and from there, I found New Books Network. Sound and voice emerged as a new way to refresh my mind and re-ignite my intellectual curiosity. I became an avid listener of the Network’s sociology, anthropology, and East Asian Studies channels, and fell in love with the podcasting style of Carla Nappi, a historian at the University of Pittsburgh.

But something was lacking in NBN. I am a qualitative methodologist and I want to hear voices from my own field. For that reason, I contacted Marshall and volunteered to interview authors in qualitative inquiry. He agreed and guided me through the preparation stage. Now, planning and conducting New Books interviews has become part of my work routine in addition to teaching and research. In this process, I received precious support and constructive feedback from the faculty members in the Inquiry Methodology Program at Indiana University Bloomington, for which I would like to express my sincere appreciation. My heartfelt gratitude also goes to the guests who have generously shared their insights in the podcast programs. Without their time and input, the production of the author-interviews would not have been possible. I consider it a true privilege to talk with them and learn about their amazing intellectual journeys.

Last but not least, dear colleagues and qualitative researchers, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have just published your book and would like to share your thoughts about it with a more general audience, or if you want to recommend authors of new books that interest you. You can easily reach me by sending an email to pzhao@indiana.edu. I also look forward to meeting you virtually through “New Books in Education.”
Call for Papers
Special Issue on Family Methodology (Volume 2)
*Vitae Scholasticae: The Journal of Educational Biography*, 34.2
Lucy Bailey, Oklahoma State

This collection of essays explores the art and science of doing family research. We consider ethical, methodological, ontological, and epistemological questions involved in conducting research that focuses on family members, is carried out with family members, uses relatives as vehicles to explore particular phenomenon, and, in the process, can have implications for our families. The introduction notes, “Ancestors,” “family,” and “researchers” are shifting conceptual sites, and the weighty symbolic, cultural, economic meanings attached to “family” at a given point in time shape their treatment in inquiry” (p. 6).

What do researchers need to consider when conducting a project with their parents, on an ancestor, with extended family? How do they negotiate their subjectivity and relate to the family member? The private/public issues that always, inevitably, affect how their “family” is represented? How do they negotiate secrets, silences? How does the ‘family’ relationship shape the inquiry differently than other forms of inquiry? What research approaches are productive for undertaking such projects?

The collection considers these issues in different types of projects, from one researcher’s zine making with her mother about her immigration experience, to another’s reflection on “preparing” her mother’s personal letters for a public archive, to an artist and teacher’s art installation made of extensive “rubbings” from a family home. The examples offer ideas for researchers about how they might take up inquiries with their or other’s families.

Volume 2 is under production; if you have a piece for consideration, please reach out to Lucy E. Bailey at lucy.bailey@okstate.edu.