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Qualitative Inquiry 2014 20: 267 originally published online 19 July 2013
DOI: 10.1177/1077800413489532

Qualitative Inquiry
2014, Vol. 20(3) 267–281

DOI: 10.1177/1077800413489532
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Teaching the Unteachable: Some Issues of Qualitative Research Pedagogy

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Abstract

In this essay I broach some of the issues surrounding the teaching of qualitative research methods, not in an effort to necessarily resolve them, but so that we might wrestle with them. Some of the issues concerning the teaching (and learning) of qualitative research include, but are not limited to: the schooling trends of pedagogicization; the politics—global, national, regional, and local—affecting teaching; interpersonal and intrapersonal structures, processes, and relations; the status and hierarchies of knowledge and of curricular subjects; the status accorded research in general and qualitative research in particular; the individual qualities of the instructor and his/her pedagogy; and the nature of the various environments within which teaching occurs. Fieldwork, thinking, and writing—as constitutive elements of qualitative research, are considered in light of the issues raised.

Keywords

pedagogy, qualitative research & education, qualitative research, methodologies, democratic methodologies, methodologies, training, evaluating and extending qualitative methods, decolonizing the academy, pedagogy

Teaching is messy. Dealing with other people is always tricky: You never know for certain what they are thinking or how they will act.[1]

Teaching and learning are always unfinished. The messiness and unfinishedness of teaching and learning are made even more so when the subject matter is complex, processural, and/or unsettled (emergent, in flux, contested and/or transgressive).

In this essay I lay out what I see as some of the issues surrounding the teaching of qualitative research methods, not in an effort to necessarily resolve them, but so that we, all of us, might wrestle with them, and, in so doing, move our teaching along—both individually and collectively, as a field.

Though I will have recourse to what literature there is on teaching qualitative research, I will also draw upon my 20-plus years of experience teaching doctoral courses in qualitative research in a number of U.S. universities. My experience includes not only being the professor of record in these doctoral courses, but mentoring early-career colleagues in the teaching of qualitative research (teaching the teaching of methods), and serving on numerous qualitative doctoral dissertation committees (usually as the methodologist or chair).

I believe the selection criteria for the issues I highlight here are well-reasoned and solidly grounded in experience. I intend for this discussion to be as provocative as it is informative; and, hence, I may raise more questions than I am able to answer here.

Others might see different issues in qualitative research pedagogy; indeed, some have (e.g., Denzin, 2010; Eisenhart & Jurow, 2011; Hurworth, 2008; Koro-Ljundberg, 2012; Preissle & deMarrais, 2011). For instance, Eisenhart and Jurow focused mainly on qualitative research methods course objectives and their modules. In their review of the (scant) literature on teaching qualitative research, Eisenhart and Jurow distinguished between those teachers and scholars who practice and/or advocate "a more conventional social science view of methods and concentrate . . . on research designs . . . and techniques" and "those who take a more critical or 'avant garde' view and concentrate on epistemological and ontological principles" (p. 700). Borrowing from D. C. Phillips (2006), they refer to these approaches as the left pole and the right pole—the left being the more avant garde and the right being the more conventional. These terms were taken up in turn by Denzin (2010), who added "a third pole—the space of social justice. Right and left pole methodologists can be united around social change issues" (p. 55).

Hurworth (2008), in true qualitative research style, observed and interviewed those who were teaching qualitative research methods courses at several universities. The

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issues she distilled, then, were largely those of the pedagogues, seen through her lenses of the issues she perceived as pertinent. The issues she found were:

Constraints arose from the context. These comprised:

a) class size . . .;
b) the problem of time constraints . . .;
c) specific length of course . . .;
d) level of knowledge and training of lecturer . . .;
e) limited practical experience of the lecturer . . .; and
f) characteristics of students, including discipline of origin, degree of prior training in quantitative methods . . . .

Other problems that emerged were associated with:

a) the relationship of practice to theory . . .;
b) course planning and content . . .;
c) the amount and type of reading . . .;
d) the role of discussion . . .;
e) how literature reviews can be taught . . .;
f) decisions about assessment . . .;
g) managing student projects . . .;
h) sharing teaching . . .; and
i) ideological conflicts between staff . . . (Hurworth, 2008, p. 97, emphasis in original)

As is common in the conduct of qualitative research, different researchers might have differing perspectives or interpretations of similar phenomena, and such is the case here. While some of the issues I think relevant and pertinent could well be included in or subsumed under some of the categories advanced by Eisenhart and Jurow (2011) or by Hurworth (2008; e.g., the relationship of practice to theory), most do not.

It is not necessarily that our categories are incommensurable; rather, I would frame the differences as stemming from differing focuses: While Hurworth (2008) seems to focus on the management of and conduct of the teaching, and while Eisenhart and Jurow (2011) appear to focus more on the overall organization of content, I prefer to discuss the political (micro and macro), interpersonal (relational), and ideational dynamics and philosophical issues swirling around qualitative research pedagogy. This approach allows me to get at what I see as the larger issues affecting the teaching of qualitative research methods, while touching upon or including the others.[2]

Pertinent Issues Surrounding the Pedagogy of Qualitative Research

Some of the issues surrounding the teaching (and learning) of qualitative research include, but are not limited to: the schooling trends of pedagogicization; the politics—global, national, regional, and local—affecting teaching; interpersonal and intrapersonal structures, processes, and relations; the status and hierarchies of knowledge and of curricular subjects; the status accorded research in general and qualitative research in particular; the individual qualities of the instructor and his/her pedagogy; and the nature of the various environments within which teaching occurs. I take these up next.

Pedagogicization

Broad, global trends affect teaching, and the teaching of qualitative research, and affect how we think about teaching; though their effects are felt differently by individuals positioned at the various school levels and in different locales. Many, if not most, of these global trends, movements or impulses are dynamic, complex, messy, even paradoxical. Teaching, and our conceptions of it, is one such messy phenomenon.

Rancière (1991) wrote of "the integral pedagogicization of society—the general infantilization of the individuals that make it up" (p. 133; also Bingham & Biesta, 2010, p. 147). Explication is the primary mode of "teaching" in the pedagogicized society and its schools, done by master explicators. One of the inherent, fundamental problems of this for Rancière (1991) is that it is based on a presumption of inequality. The student, as a learner, is defined by a lacking. Schools and schoolers (my term) are needed to fill this void, to make the learner equal—an idealized end goal that is always out of reach, never attained, thus justifying the work of the scholar and the role of schools in society, always reconfirming inequality. This fiction—that of the inherent inequality of intelligence—gives rise to pedagogies of stultification, to master explicators or knowing masters and to societies built on explication and schools which collude in the perpetuation of this fiction.

Rancière (1991), on the other hand, and his ignorant schoolmaster *begin* from an assumption of equality—that of two equal intelligences, "master" and "student." It is in this sense that Rancière's schoolmaster is ignorant—he is ignorant of the supposed, presumed inequality thought to exist between people. It is not, or at least not principally, that Rancière's ignorant schoolmaster is ignorant as regards the subject matter, although that can be the case as well, but is ignorant as regards any inequality between master and student. Still, and from this ontological stance, the schoolmaster has no problem teaching what he/she doesn't know.

In a society pedagogicized, on the contrary, the schooler and the school become indispensable to the maintenance of the existing order, the police order, and to the policing and administration of that order, an essentially explicative order. Schoolers produce and police inequality, built upon the presumption of a fundamental lacking on the student's part. The school "reproduces a certain explicative understanding

of social order" (Bingham & Biesta, 2010, p. 99). It "*explains* society by demonstrating, through explanation, that everything that needs to happen in society can be rectified, changed or improved by means of explanation" (Bingham & Biesta, 2010, p. 99, emphasis in original).

The existing order, the status quo, delimits the "distribution of the sensible," another key concept for Rancière (2004, 2010). The distribution of the sensible has to do with what is seeable, say-able, hearable, and so forth, and how they are distributed among the population; indeed, it has to do with who is even considered part of that population and who is outside. Rancière's concern is with equality and emancipation—emancipation of others is a contradiction; people emancipate themselves by claiming a place as a speaking subject in the overall distribution of the sensible, the police order.

Our historical memory is such, aided by the current police order, that we forget that the preceding generations of qualitative researchers, of field workers—from Boaz through Mead, and perhaps as recently as Spindler and Wolcott—had no college courses in qualitative methods per se. Rancière (1991, p. 121) reminded us that "the Greeks and Romans had neither a University nor a Great Master, and . . . things didn't go badly for them." But students today, positioned as lacking and infantilized, must be taught the methods, lest they not learn, and usually, if not exclusively, through explication. It is in this sense that Biesta (2010) and Bingham and Biesta (2010) call our attention to learnification and its insidiousness.

Learnification

At certain levels, especially in primary and secondary public schools in the United States—an example with which I am most familiar—the trend seems to be away from a concern with teaching per se to more of a focus on learning, or, more accurately, student achievement (as measured, usually, by large-scale high-stakes standardized tests). Biesta (2010) referred to this as *learnification*, which works to make teaching and learning strictly pragmatic and utilitarian (e.g., "what works"). Regimes focused on learnification erase or ignore the teleological components of education—those having to do with purposes and ends, shifting the discourse on teaching and learning to the more technical or technicist.[3]

Though the focus on learnification has not quite affected higher education to the degree that it has public schools and public school teaching, in the United States we are beginning to see more of the language and discourse, more of the control and controlling tendencies that underpin it.[4] These darkening horizons threaten teaching in colleges and universities, and affect the teaching of qualitative research.

Lived Example 1

An episode in a recent faculty meeting revealed for me just how deeply seated the notion of teacher as expert in the transmission of knowledge is, both culturally and epistemologically, and how ready-to-hand. The scene played out roughly like this:

> We had convened a relatively small group of faculty who were teaching or were interested in teaching qualitative research methods courses in our doctoral program.[5] As we had only two qualitative research courses on the books—an introductory- and an intermediate-level course—the discussion ranged over what might be taught in each of these courses, what was to be covered and at what level. (Teachers will recognize this as a curriculum alignment issue—one of Hurworth's, 2008.) A colleague was arguing for a clear demarcation of what was to be covered when. I was arguing for a more student-centered conceptualization of the curriculum and of pedagogy. In the heat of the debate, my colleague, arguing strenuously for compartmentalization of the curriculum and content coverage, stopped herself short when, following her logic and the direction her argument was going, the next words out of her mouth would have been: "how can we expect them to learn it if we don't teach it to them, if we don't cover it?" Though she pulled herself up short, the implication of what she was about to say, but had not said, was not lost on us.

These teacher-centered pedagogical impulses and transmission-based epistemological beliefs are deeply seated within us, even within some of our most progressive colleagues, perhaps within ourselves.

The Global, National, Regional, and Local Politics Affecting Teaching

Politics—from the global to the national to the regional and local, including the interpersonal—affects teaching generally and the teaching (and learning) of qualitative research in particular. Neoliberal trends toward learnification (Biesta, 2010), marketization, and the positioning of the student as consumer and the teacher and educational institutions as providers, and more, all affect what and how we teach, and students' orientations to and expectations of teaching.

State control (and in Rancièrean terms, the police order) most certainly affects the teaching of qualitative research (and, again, borrowing from Rancière, we are all part of the police order). Simons and Masschelein (2010), in reading both Rancière and Foucault, noted Rancière's contention that: "everything Foucault is focusing on is situated in the space of what I call the police" (as cited in Simons & Masschelein, p. 591). Rancière, in his conception of the police, "refers to the administration or 'management' of society, and in particular to what is presupposed in all types of administration: 'the symbolic constitution of the social'"

(p. 591). The police order of which we are a part is concerned with 'the distribution of the sensible'; that is:

> As the general law that determines the distribution of parts and roles in a community as well as forms of exclusion, the **police** is first and foremost an organization of "bodies" based on a communal **distribution of the sensible**, i.e., a system of coordinates defining modes of being, doing, making, and communicating that establishes the borders between the visible and the invisible, the audible and the inaudible, the sayable and the unsayable. (Rockhill, 2004, p. 89, emphasis in original)

And as I have asserted elsewhere (Waite, 2012), we, all of us, are prone to police our students' and our colleagues' (qualitative) methodologies, and as regards students, most, though certainly not all, of this policing is done in the teaching and learning of qualitative methods.

At the national level, using the United States as an example, politics affects funding and, in an iterative way, the funding affects our politics (again), and, downstream, both exert a strong influence on our scholarly pursuits—research and teaching. The reemergence of a more positivistic episteme, one inscribed in federal funding policy guidelines about "what works" and "evidence-based science" (see St. Pierre, 2006, for a description and a critique) is felt in qualitative research methods classes. As an example, once firmly opposed to "mixed methods" (because the methods are not neutral in themselves, but are epistemologically laden, and, when mixed, are never done so on equal terms), Patti Lather (Newhart & Lather, 2009) recently lamented how she now feels compelled to teach mixed methods, since that "method" is such a large part of the research environment her students will encounter if/when they take up positions at a university; and, as in the neoliberal conditions circulating around higher education, obtaining research grant funding is considered to be a basic task of faculty, in a type of bring-your-own-salary scheme.[6]

Departmental and interpersonal politics among faculty affect the teaching of qualitative research (student-faculty relationships will be discussed below). First, these more locally situated politics affect who teaches what, and where. That is to say, the "location" of qualitative research courses and programs—which academic department is responsible for or has ownership of such courses—is often politically determined (sometimes this is based on historical precedent). Departmental contexts influence how qualitative research is perceived, and, following from this, to whom these courses are available and who is deemed fit to teach them (often based on ideological-epistemological beliefs).

The (micro)politics at play within departments and programs affect the teaching of qualitative research. Due to the status accorded research and, by association, the teaching of research (more on subject matter status hierarchies below), there is usually some political maneuvering involved in, for example, selecting faculty to teach these courses. Who teaches what matters, just as how one teaches influences the student experience and may affect learning.

A recent example from my personal experience illustrates some of these points:

Lived Example 2

I had been teaching the more advanced qualitative research methods course here since we began offering a doctoral program, until 2 years ago. It was then that, according to the dean of the college, budget and scheduling exigencies convinced him to give the course to another professor to teach. (I'll call her Betty). Betty had been eager to teach this course. This particular course is offered only during the summer session. Summer teaching here, as in many U.S. universities, counts over and above one's 9-month teaching load and professors can earn additional salary teaching summers. However, during the recent financial crisis, these monies have been restricted, as have the number of courses we can teach. Betty, I was told, hadn't been scheduled for her full summer load and "needed" another course. I, on the other hand, being in a larger program, had other courses I could teach. Politics played a big part in these decisions—college, departmental, and interpersonal politics. Betty was aligned with the then doctoral program director: they both had earned their degrees in the same field and were assigned to the same program. The former director of our doctoral program had recruited Betty from a nearby Research I university and appeared to favor her in her decisions. The next fall, there was a change in program leadership: The former director stepped down (or was encouraged to do so) and a colleague from my program area and Betty were named codirectors. I had heard that the other program's faculty had discussed course scheduling among themselves prior to our joint faculty meeting and that Betty had plans other than to teach the summer qualitative research methods course. At our combined program faculty meeting, I jumped in early and expressed my desire to teach this course, mentioning my experience and other bona fides. Betty, in her role as codirector, took the floor and went around the table asking the junior faculty from her concentration area if they wanted to teach the course. No one else expressed an interest in teaching that course at that time; why, I can't be sure, but my hunch is that it was due to the politically charged situation.

I objected to Betty's behavior, saying that it appeared to me that her interest was in having anyone teach the course but me, when I was the one who had expressed the interest. A somewhat heated discussion followed. Finally, in what seemed to be either anger or frustration, Betty blurted out, "Fine, you can teach it."

Early the next week, seemingly having reconsidered, Betty emailed me, asking me to meet with her to discuss the

course. In the interim, I got an email from our department chair asking me to work with Betty on this. We met, but were unable to resolve our differences, unable to come to a mutually satisfying resolution. Later, I received an email from my colleague, the program codirector, informing me that in a meeting of the two program codirectors and my department chair, they had decided to split the course in two and give one section to Betty to teach; their rationale being that it was just a bit large (I had granted a student an override, allowing her to register for the course, which pushed the student numbers to just one over the cap). I was asked to work with Betty to decide how best to divide the students between my section and hers.[7]

Evidenced, I believe, by this lived example are some of the issues I've raised (or will raise below): the status of research and research courses and, by association, the perceived status of the research professor and how the personal and interpersonal local politics affect who teaches what and how—a point related to one I made elsewhere of how politics trumps research (Waite, 2004).

Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Structures and Relationships

The intrapersonal. The intrapersonal dynamics (for example, personality, motivation, maturity, learning ability—if there is such a thing, and more) which play out within the learner, and within the instructor, and between the two (in groups), affect the teaching and learning of qualitative research methods, often at a subliminal, visceral level. This alone may make these characteristics of the learning less obvious, less amenable to reflection and intervention (Butler, 2001; The teacher's part of this equation will be discussed in a separate, later section; the interpersonal aspects will be discussed below.)

Application of Goleman's (1995) notion of emotional intelligence may help illuminate certain issues having to do with the teaching and learning of qualitative research methods, especially those issues having to do with the learner's readiness, ability to manage his/her emotions in order to be more open to learning. Personally, my application of Kahneman's (2011) "law of least effort" in framing student effort (or lack thereof) allowed me to reframe what I had previously conceived of as laziness on the students' part, into something more positive with which I could engage: Students weren't necessarily being lazy; as adults and adult learners, they were managing their energy expenditures and devoting no more energy than was necessary to the task at hand—whether learning qualitative research methods more broadly, or simply accomplishing the course assignments in order to progress (some/many were extrinsically motivated by the grade they thought they should get).

My application of the law of least effort also allowed me to rethink my role as arbiter of standards. That is, if students, in general, could be expected to devote the least amount of effort required to accomplish the task, I needed to monitor that and assess whether it was sufficient (i.e., in terms of the effort invested and the quality of the product—paper, project, or whatever). This reframing of student motivation permitted me to more closely align my stance with what I understood of the orientation of Rancière's (1991) ignorant schoolmaster—where the schoolmaster works to invigorate the students' will and checks to see that the students apply themselves. This epistemological shift allowed me to reorient my relationships with students in a hate-the-sin-not-the-sinner fashion: Students weren't lazy (an essentializing move), but simply hadn't put in enough effort to produce what I considered an acceptable result. The standards that I or other instructors set for student work—whether tacit or explicit, and that which students set for themselves, affect teaching and learning, generally, and teaching qualitative research methods, particularly. This also fit with my redesign of the intermediate methods course, wherein I allowed students to redo assignments and/or submit additional or other modules to earn extra points, to earn the grade they are willing to work for.

The interpersonal. Clearly, interpersonal relationships between the teacher and the student affect teaching and learning. What is perhaps not so clear is how interpersonal relationships influence how the teacher and student are perceived or sociopedagogically positioned and how this positioning affects both what gets taught (and how) and what is learned.

To start with a relatively simple example: I frequently invite those doctoral students for whom I serve as dissertation chair who have expressed an interest in perhaps pursuing a position at a university to coteach the qualitative methods class with me—to give them some experience teaching qualitative methods, to help broaden and, hopefully, to deepen their knowledge and understanding of qualitative research methods (though, usually by this time they have already done most of the work for their dissertation, if not having defended already). I invite them primarily so that they can add this teaching experience to their resumé, as I feel that, in addition to a content-area expertise (or knowledge), having experience in teaching methods cannot help but increase a student's attractiveness to university search committees.[8]

Doing my students this favor may, however, disadvantage them with their doctoral student colleagues. Some students seem to resent the doctoral student who gets special privileges. Some no doubt get jealous. This interferes with their learning. Krashen (1981) has long hypothesized that an affective filter can impede learning when it's activated. This speaks to a part of the hidden curriculum that operates

in university classrooms, no less so than in primary or secondary school classrooms. I recall how I felt when my professor and mentor invited a doctoral student colleague of mine to coteach a class on teacher culture with him. Though in my mind I could accept the rationale, the emotional side of me was a bit resentful, envious. I can't remember what I may have learned. Lending credence to my theory here are the somewhat more negative student course evaluations I get whenever doctoral students coteach with me. Still, I feel an obligation to my doctoral student(s) and must balance that with the comfort, ease of learning, and/or resistance on the part of the students enrolled in the qualitative methods courses we coteach. Mentoring and modeling for the doctoral students I chair is a kind of teaching too. And for them, teaching aids learning.[9]

Sociolinguists (e.g., Duranti & Goodwin, 1992; Gumperz, 1992) have held for some time that we give off and pick up on certain context cues in the language we use. Some of the cues signal who we perceive ourselves to be (or how we would like ourselves to be perceived [Goffman, 1959]) and our estimation of the other—that is, how we view this context right now and how we view each other. Bakhtin (1981) noted how the word exists in the space between people and its utterance is in anticipation of the other, and this includes an estimation on the part of the speaker as to who that other is. How teachers view students individually and in groups and the teachers' and students' estimation of each other and their abilities and other qualities are all communicated, enacted, in interpersonal pedagogical encounters.

The individual qualities of the instructor and his/her pedagogy. Rancière (1991), in his *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons on Intellectual Emancipation*, detailed how you can teach what you don't know. It all hinges on how one conceptualizes teaching, of course, and this is one of the insights or lessons the book provides. However, the implication is that teaching what one doesn't know necessitates a different relation to the material and an altogether different relationship with one's students. For instance, an ignorant and autocratic pedagogue would simply inflict his/her ignorance on the students, often through some type of coercion or violence.

On the other hand, the teacher who values the emancipation of the student as one of his/her pedagogical objectives, and who sees learning as part and parcel of the emancipatory project, and who has a more progressive stance toward knowledge and authority *may* help the student learn what the teacher him/herself doesn't know. But what and how is it to be learned?

The identification of the teacher with the subject. A certain degree of pigeon-holing, stereotyping, image manufacturing, impression management, and even personal bias attach themselves to both the methods one uses and the teaching of methods. For example, certain people may get associated with certain methods (e.g., Harry Wolcott and ethnography). This stereotyping, a form of what Kahneman (2011, p. 149) refers to as representativeness, contributes to the narrative one tells about oneself and those that others tell, in this case, about those teaching qualitative research methods. Such pigeon-holing may, in a reflexive move, both lead to and result from a certain degree of bias, which in turn may occasion discrimination toward a course, a method, or a professor of qualitative methods, when such a person is identified with a particular method or school. These attributions and interpersonal processes (as, for instance, among program or department faculty) may affect what gets taught (curricular offerings) and by whom (pedagogy) and may ultimately affect the student experience (learning). I can easily imagine a scenario wherein someone—a professor or fellow student—tells a student something to the effect that "you don't want to take that class from Professor X, because . . . " either he or she is portrayed as difficult (as regards grading standards or personality) or has a (manufactured, socially constructed) reputation as inflecting whatever she teaches with a heavy dose of feminist poststructural theory (or whatever) or because he is more of an ethnographer of the old school, and so on. Our perceptions of one another, our biases, and our realization of them matter.

The Status and Hierarchies of Knowledge and of Curricular Subjects

Status hierarchies, especially socially constructed hierarchies of knowledge, affect, first, research, and then qualitative research and its teaching in several ways. Research and research classes have a certain status within the academy and without. This status may generate some competition among professors for the opportunity to teach such courses (as evidenced in the lived example above). Such competition or interest may manifest itself in publicly stated positions as to the ideal curriculum for qualitative research methods classes and the best way (and person) to teach them. Competition among professors for the opportunity to teach such courses likely begins with implicit or explicit posturing as to who is best qualified to teach such courses.[10]

Taxonomies and other types of hierarchies and the hierarchical thinking behind them (and the territoriality and/or possessiveness of academicians and their units—for example, programs, departments, schools, and the like) affect where qualitative research methods classes are housed and who offers them. Initially, and historically, these courses may have emerged within departments of educational psychology, as these programs or departments historically have had strong empirical and experimental research components. Such arrangements are ripe for conflict and controversy, especially in cases where the prevalent (dominant)

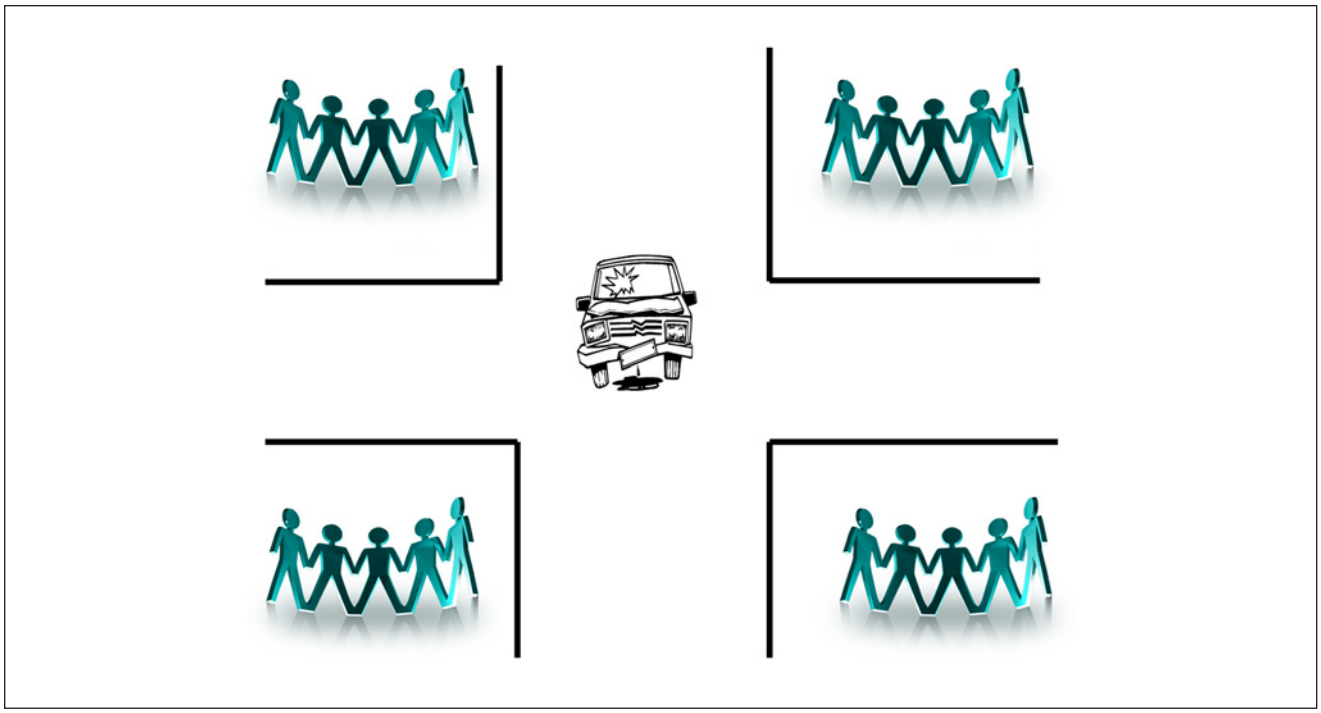

Figure 1. The four-corners problem, or going where the data are: general questions of research design.

epistemology within such departments is positivistic or behavioral and where the predominant epistemology of the emerging qualitative research methods courses and the professors who teach them (sometimes these are junior faculty and new hires—politically vulnerable positions) is not. That is, those teaching qualitative methods may prefer constructivist, interpretative, phenomenological, or some other nontraditional epistemology. The personal attitudes and departmental norms may prove welcoming for those with diverse or divergent ideas, or they may not.

The status of knowledges affects the resources they receive. Perhaps this is why relatively few universities and their programs hire methodologists and instead hire for content area preparation/experience, with methodological expertise being a secondary consideration or second thought ("if you can also teach . . ."). This, in turn, affects and is affected by market forces (preparing oneself for the job market), including the availability of programs for educating qualitative research methodologists. Similarly, this may affect standards or criteria for selecting professors to teach such methods classes, as mentioned above (that is, simply having conducted a qualitative dissertation as being a common, though minimum qualification).

The foundational disciplines within which qualitative research first emerged (e.g., journalism, anthropology, sociology, more recently education, and others), and those in which it is today practiced, tend to be perceived and treated as the poorer step-children in the university, as regards prestige and resource allocation. This hierarchical relationship and its outcomes or effects mirror those at the national institutional level, where qualitative research is given short shrift by, for example, the U.S. Department of Education and the National Academy of Sciences (Lather, 2003; St. Pierre, 2006).

Three Broad Areas of Qualitative Research and Their Pedagogical Considerations

I hold that there are three broad areas or domains of qualitative research, areas with which students and other beginners need to be well-versed and adept: (1) *fieldwork methods* or data gathering techniques (including overall research design, entrée, rapport, logistics, participant observation, etc.), (2) the *thinking* piece (including analysis, interpretation, and other theorizing), and (3) *writing*. The pedagogical considerations or issues affecting each of these broad areas differ somewhat across these domains, though epistemologically, some issues touch upon all three. As I tell my students, a minimal level of competence in all three areas is necessary for an acceptable study—a course project, research report, dissertation, or journal article. However, skill in one (or more) of these areas can lift an otherwise mundane study to such heights as to allow it to stand above the rest.

Fieldwork

Though I'm a big fan of "simply hanging out" as a fieldwork technique (P. A. Adler & P. Adler, 1987), students today, doctoral committees, and Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) generally look for something a little more structured.[11] In helping to get students thinking strategically about qualitative research design, I introduce what I term "the four-corners problem" (Figure 1).

It's simple, really. I ask students to imagine that they are a police officer investigating a collision at a city intersection. The "wreck" in the center of the intersection represents the focus of their study, the phenomenon or phenomena of interest. What does an officer do in her investigation? First of all, she goes to the scene. She then might collect physical evidence (i.e., data): measuring skid marks, taking photos of the condition of the car or cars involved, noting the weather conditions and all other pertinent physical data. Who was involved? How many? What is their state (both physical and mental)? (This is, of course, after seeing to the well-being of those involved.)

Next, the officer might choose to interview witnesses. These are the people located on the various four corners; and, because of their different locations, they will likely have slightly different perspectives on the accident/phenomena of study (leaving alone for the moment differing "positionalities"—agendas or such that might affect the seeing).

I ask students to consider who in their study (or proposed study) might correspond to those on the different street corners in the figure (whether differentially-situated people, or those with different roles or status, etc.—and here we might talk of types of sampling and of triangulation). This is a good time to help students, individually or in groups, wrestle with research design issues, for example, those having to do with the unit of analysis of their studies.

I caution students that it is far too easy to get sidetracked, or off track in the conduct of a study. Though I encourage students to be flexible and responsive to "where the data lead them," it's all part of a general plan of going where the data are. (Put another way: what settings, people, situations, or activities are more likely to yield the best and the most relevant data?) Whether doing an interview study (e.g., an oral life history), narrative analysis, discourse analysis, or some type of archival study (e.g., hermeneutics or curriculum theory), it's a better use of the qualitative researcher's scarce resources (time, labor, etc.) to go where the data are or are likely to be had.[12]

Of course, this assumes intentionality—that the researcher intentionally sets out to study a certain phenomenon, situation, role, or what have you. This perhaps privileges rationality too much, as the unanticipated, the serendipitous, and fortuitous—the accidental—are or can be just as important in the conduct of qualitative research as the intentional and rational, perhaps more so. Wolcott (1988) wrote of problem finding in qualitative research, and I don't intend to dispute his assertions here. However, the overarching issue is recognizing a study. In the first case, the rational, this might mean designing a study; in the second instance, the accidental or fortuitous, this means recognizing a potential study when one presents itself. Of course, the researcher must be willing to take on a study that presents itself, accepting the invitation. But, as undertaking a study represents a major commitment of time and energy, a fledgling researcher, or even an established one, might not be willing to take up a study not of one's choosing.

Fieldwork, Methods, and Techniques

There are several excellent texts on fieldwork methods (e.g., Agar, 1996; Glesne, 2011; K. M. DeWalt & B. R. DeWalt, 2011), and so I'll not go into the issues associated with the conduct of fieldwork in depth here. I will, however, make quick mention of some of the issues surrounding such methods and their teaching/learning.

The first issue is one that has troubled me for some time (see Waite, 1994). This has to do with the hierarchy of methods, or, put another way, what seems to be a preference of many researchers—novices and old hands alike—for interviews as the principal, often sole means of collecting data. Of course, there are interview studies and/or other methods whose most appropriate and primary method is the interview. (Such studies might include oral life histories and other narrative methods; though narrative research can and does employ much more than interviews.) One of the problems, as I see it, is that an interview is simply done. (Note: I do not say done well; though they're easier to do than are the other primary methods—observation and document/archival collection and analysis; interviews, to be done well, require a certain degree of tact and skill.)

Another, and related issue, is how researchers—students and old hands, think of the results of the interview and of evidentiary claims. Now, I must admit that I am a bit of an empiricist and a skeptic: I believe that simply because someone says something, does not make it so. Does that make me a positivist? I don't think so, but, still, I'd like to see for myself. Some researchers report out what their participants say as though it were fact. Is this due to laziness? Sometimes, sometimes not.[13] Sometimes the researcher is, shall we say, a bit too naïve; that, or he/she valorizes the informant and minimizes his or her own knowledge and insight. Sometimes the researcher doesn't take the time to look more deeply or more thoroughly into the matter in question—which can be accomplished simply by triangulation, either by interviewing others or through observation.

Also, observation (and to a lesser degree other data collection techniques) is susceptible to perception distortions, biases, and other errors. (To make this point, I sometimes

show classes the but-did-you-see-the-gorilla video clip, also called the selective attention test [Simmons, 1999]: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo)

Observation, while an essential human faculty, is one of the more difficult research methods to do and do well. First, observation is difficult to teach, and too many either give it short shrift or teach it poorly.

As a firm believer in participant observation, I try to communicate to my students that researchers must spend substantial time in the field. This requires a commitment. (It also can result in frustration, especially if one is impatient.) I try to stress the time (and being) commitment to my students through my use of an analogy. Some time ago, I was approached by a documentary film maker, David Zeiger (*Displaced in the New South; The Band; Sir!, No, Sir!*; www.displacedfilms.com/about.html), who was interested in viewing my copy of Frederick Wiseman's *High School*, as he prepared to begin filming *The Band*, the story of his son's time in his high school band. I immediately saw the parallels between his work and my own. I invited David to come and speak to my qualitative research methods class.

David talked about the tremendous amount of film footage documentary film makers capture. They then need to distill these hundreds of hours of film down to somewhere in the neighborhood of 90 min or, at most, 2 hr. This requires serious cutting. Often, in the final film, an important vignette is given only a minute or two of screen time. Most of the film is left on the cutting room floor, so to speak. (This parallels Harry Wolcott's saying that the problem isn't collecting data, the problem is getting rid of it.) David said something that stays with me to this day: He said that among documentary film makers, the adage is that if you didn't get it on film, it never happened. It doesn't work if you show up the next day and have someone tell you about something that happened the day before. You have to have been there. This requires untold hours of time "in the field." (Some so-called journalists bend the rules of journalism by reenacting important news-worthy scenes, but this does not make for a documentary.)

Another issue for us and for those whom we hope to teach is how to capture what one sees. I don't think most students "get" the notion of thick description. Novice qualitative researchers are apt to distill, filter, and gloss occurrences they witness in the field. They are prone to capture (and write) impressionistic studies. Many project their biases or assumptions onto the actors in the scene they are observing; some inject second-order analysis and/or interpretation into their field notes, rather than a "thick" or even a simple description. It is often difficult for students or novices to see that the more that "raw" data are contaminated with second-order analysis and/or interpretation, the further they are from being considered data and the more they move into the category of analysis, but without the advantage of transparency and systematic, methodological treatment.[14]

Again, paralleling the documentary film makers, students need to be encouraged, often coaxed or cajoled, to write copious field notes, which they seldom do. Capturing the richness and detail of what are sometimes mundane social scenes and settings is difficult, especially when its relevance might not be apparent at the time. It is also difficult to get beginners to see how richer field notes can contribute to a better study or report. In hindsight, or with feedback from a critical reader, this might become apparent. Experience can be a good teacher in this regard. (And getting students to go back into the field to redo or to supplement poorly collected data is another difficult task, and therefore, unlikely.)

Though this is perhaps not the perfect method, one thing I do to help students learn the art of collecting field notes is to take them on a field trip. (Students love fieldtrips!) We first practice note taking in class. Then we arrange to meet at the local supermarket (with prior permission from the establishment, of course). I instruct the students in at least two methods of collecting field notes: the first is what I call taking notes in vivo; that is, writing field notes openly, in plain view, while observing. This method has its downsides, too; one of which is the problem presented by cognitive strain or overload (contrary to the mistaken belief in the efficacy of multitasking). The human brain cannot do two things simultaneously and do each well. Writing while observing suffers from this problem.

The second method I teach students is to observe, to be fully "on" (K. M. DeWalt & B. R. DeWalt, 2011), and to write the notes immediately afterward (or as soon as one can). While on the supermarket fieldtrip, I have students write notes in vivo for half the time, say a half hour. For the second half of the observation, I have them put away their notebook and fully observe—to be "on"—and be present for another half hour and then remove themselves to their car or some other quiet, secluded spot to compose their field notes. Students are generally surprised with how much they can recall and how much detail is still available for them to capture or document; still, this method suffers from associated problems of memory and recollection.[15] Afterward, we reassemble in our university classroom to debrief the experience.

Each method of observing has its pros and cons. There are no perfect methods. (And this goes for the method or combination of methods students might finally settle on for their dissertation research. I advise them that they ought to know about many methods, their strengths, weaknesses, and blind spots; and, once having selected a method, or methods, accept it "warts and all," but to be up front about it.)

As I said, learning is messy, and it is nothing if not processual and developmental. The artificiality of the field note practice is not lost on students, even if they can't articulate what bothers them about it. During our debrief, I call the students' attention to the fact that this is a one-off experience, disconnected from an on-going concern or a developing or emerging research project. Though I don't tell students not to, few take the opportunity to question or interview shoppers (participants) or otherwise interact with them in any way. Some get close enough to overhear snippets of conversation, but little of this makes its way into the field notes. Students generally fixate on one area of the store (seldom outside) or one issue, never taking wider contexts (the whole store, for example, or historical contexts of material production) into account. The theorizing is rudimentary at best.

Thinking

Theorizing is a matter apart. Of the three constitutive elements essential to the conduct of qualitative research, teaching thinking is perhaps the most difficult. Whether conceived of as conceptualization, analysis, interpretation, or theorizing, how does one teach thinking? This is a problem with which I have wrestled for some time (see Waite, 2009a, 2009b). As with the other fundamental components (fieldwork and writing), there seem to be some who come by thinking, and thinking deeply, quite readily; others—especially those who are more concrete sequential, in Piaget's terms, find thinking, analyzing, conceptualizing, and relating theory to what they are seeing and hearing a bit more difficult to do (developing theory from the data, from the factoids, in the manner of grounded theory is likewise more difficult for some).

This issue, that of teaching thinking, or theorizing, reveals the problematic aspects of teaching qualitative research the best. It captures and highlights the issues having to do with teaching in general.[16]

First, this "problem" has no easy answers. Some more general pedagogical moves are perhaps appropriate to help students learn to theorize. Besides talking about analysis conceptually, modeling can help students learn at least the rudimentary aspects of the analytic process. There are, of course, the more procedural aspects of data analysis, such as coding. To introduce this concept, I use what I call a card trick (see Waite, 2011), having students sort cards from a deck of playing cards as though that represented their data set. But it's one thing for the teacher to model for the student in the abstract, using the teacher's data or data set, perhaps in a lecture format. It's quite another to work with students one-on-one with data that they have collected themselves; again, the quality of the analysis depends heavily upon the quality of the data with which we work.

Also, as mentor or guide, as pedagogue, I often don't have ready knowledge of the theory that informs or might inform the data that the student presents and their analysis, and so my ministrations can only be of so much help. And, if the qualitative researcher is the instrument, then the student needs to learn to do the heavy lifting, theoretically speaking—the teacher can't do it for him.

Another of the dynamics affecting thinking is to be found in the interplay, the push and pull, of our human individual/communal impulses. Teaching is a relational act. Thinking is done in one's own head. That is not to say that you can't think with others. Others can aid one's thinking. But others can't do the thinking for you. The teacher can't do the thinking for the student (Bingham & Biesta, 2010). The teacher can't do the learning for the student either. If pushed, I would claim that I can't teach students (qualitative research or anything else), I can simply and solely help them learn.

Qualitative research, as with many intellectual endeavors, is shot through with individualistic/communalistic dynamics, realized differently by each of us and by our students, and realized situationally. The anthropologist, the qualitative researcher—the student and old hand alike—must, at times, be sociable and at other times work alone. We get our data from/with people, alone and in groups. Entrée and rapport call on the researcher's social skills. Analysis and writing (and the two are mutually influential) are more solitary acts. Do we teach the social skills required of the researcher? Can or should we? If so, how?

Thinking (and here I include analysis) is more difficult to teach, in part because it is an internal, private processes. Writing, though equally private—despite recent efforts at on-line group writing and open-source publishing, is meant to be publicly displayed, consumed.[17] This fact alone—the fact that one writes for an audience, complicates matters for some researchers. That, and the fact that feedback is not immediate (and this affects learning to write) add to the complexity that is writing, and learning to write and write well.[18] Becker (2007) adds nuance to consideration of what he termed "the social organization of writing as a professional activity" (pp. 18-19). Though he admits that "most people write in absolute privacy," he does discuss research group collaborative efforts, the feedback of colleagues, the authors' relationships within their professional community, and the reactions of editors and peer reviewers. The professional, social, institutional, and (inter)personal conditions that affect writers and their writing contribute to, in Becker's terms, how writing "gets 'privatized'" (p. 20).

The complement of writing is reading. Reading, too, is a private, internal process. True, there is oral reading or reading aloud; and, as with both thinking and writing, the language used in reading is not of one's own making—we generally think, read and write with the words of others, though me may inflect them individually, personalizing

them. Still, as Bakhtin (1981) demonstrated, the word exists on the boundary between self and other.

Reading is an essential component to qualitative research; it's especially critical to teaching and learning to do qualitative research. The instructor's choice of syllabus material, course readings, sets the stage, but isn't the limit of what students can and do learn (recall the lived example above).

Reading skills are seldom taught in graduate qualitative research methods classes; or perhaps better said, I'm unaware of concerted efforts to teach them, and I don't spend much time explicitly addressing them in class myself. However, unless the teacher simply lets students find their own way, some recognition of reading, and reading in/for qualitative research helps the instructor plan her courses, to strategize, and to think about what the students should get and what they are getting. Thinking about reading—coupled with some form of assessment of content mastery, and the connection between them—ought to permit the teacher to individualize instruction, to remediate if necessary. (Though remediation, in the graduate context, is nearly an unmentionable.)

Undoubtedly it's still the case that most instructors assume that graduate students read cover to cover the material they are assigned for qualitative methods classes. More than likely, this is a romantic fantasy on the teacher's part. Burke (2000) mentioned two distinct reading styles or strategies: the extensive and the intensive. Intensive reading is a more thorough and comprehensive strategy, wherein the reader immerses him/herself in the text, studying it intensely, possibly memorizing it, and often cover to cover. The extensive reading strategy, neither better nor worse than the other, shows the reader dipping into a text in bursts, perhaps rather intensely, but not comprehensively or completely; that is, not intense study from cover to cover, word for word.[19] As Burke pointed out, throughout history, more traditionally minded scholars and critics were put off by the extensive style, a style some saw as a "'nonchalant reading style'" (p. 179). This practice of "browsing, skimming, or consulting" texts was thought by some to contribute to the "'desacralization' of the book." And herein lies one of the fundamental epistemological issues surrounding, not just the teaching and learning of qualitative research methods, but graduate school teaching and learning more generally, and that has to do with the authority of the text (and of the teacher/professor; see Rancière, 1991, for a different take on pedagogy and authority). This issue of the authority of the text extends to writing as well (as in referencing and citing), especially in more formal writing—dissertations, journal manuscripts, and books. Burke noted how a particular reader may practice different reading styles at different times, and he reminded us that the text itself may call for a certain type of reading, citing Francis Bacon's belief that "'some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested'" (as cited in Burke, p. 179).

Summary and Conclusions

I have attempted a broad, sweeping essay in order to wring out some of the many pertinent issues involved in our teaching and learning of qualitative research, though these issues have relevance, I believe, for other areas as well.

Reading, writing, thinking, fieldwork, and methods—these are a few of the topics addressed in this brief treatise. In this discussion, I touched upon how pedagogicization affects our classrooms and our students. I made brief mention of curriculum hierarchies and sociologies of knowledge, the inter- and intrapersonal dimensions of teaching and learning qualitative research, and several of the other environmental and processural influences on the teaching and learning of qualitative research methods. Still, many other teaching/learning issues remain.

Writing this article has helped me (/forced me) to crystallize my thoughts, as writing might do for the students with whom we work. Thinking about my teaching has both humbled and renewed me and my commitment to this noble craft. Writing about my teaching/learning journey has allowed me to chronicle the steps I've taken, the roadblocks I've encountered, the paths I've forged through the clearings. Publishing it all might permit other fellow sojourners to make some connections with/through my experiences, clarifying both our commonalities and our differences.

Author Note

The title for this essay, *Teaching the Unteachable*, came out of a collaboration between Mirka Koro-Ljungberg and me for the 2011 International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, and owes its genesis to our reflections on Jacques Rancière's (1991) *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*.

Thanks to Isaac Karikari for comments on an earlier draft of this article.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Notes

1. What you think about others' thinking (whether students, informants, or whomever) depends, in part, on the theory of

mind (Cheney & Seyfarth, 2007; Dunbar, 1998) with which you operate. Theory of Mind has to do with "the ability to understand another individual's mental state" (Dunbar, p. 102). Cheney and Seyfarth, in positing a metaphysics of baboons, noted that "our thoughts and conversations are rife with inferences about other individuals' emotions, motives, and beliefs . . . The ability to attribute mental states like knowledge and ignorance to both oneself and others is . . . a "theory of mind" (pp. 146-147).

2. This is accomplished by my taking to heart what I frequently ask my students to do, which is to ratchet up the level of analysis. Further advantages are had in discussing the teaching of qualitative research and its doing, one distinct advantage afforded the teacher is that such a role asks that the teacher be conversant with all aspects of the art—the theory, the history, the logistics and conduct, the writing, the data collection techniques and their analysis, and so on.
3. The shift toward learnification is accompanied, aided, and abetted by marketization and its inscription of the learner as consumer, client, or as customer. A parallel political process has been underway, transforming our conception of the individual from citizen to consumer (Biesta, 2010). Neoliberalism, with its notion of "choice," is implicated in these shifts as well.
4. A case in point: Recently, the system administrators of the two top-tier higher education systems in Texas—the University of Texas and the Texas A&M systems—collected, assembled, massaged, and published data which showed what every professor earned and, through a twisted calculus, the worth ("efficiency" or "productivity") of each and every professor in monetary terms (Hamilton, 2011); that is, what the professor cost the system per student credit hour taught, minus any external funding the professor brought in. In this strange calculus, the Nobel Laureate ranked the lowest and graduate students with large lecture classes ranked the highest.
5. I admit that I am conflicted, that I wrestle with more egalitarian versus expert knowledge (and skills) concerns. One issue here is whether anyone can teach qualitative research. At many universities, faculty are thought competent to teach qualitative research methods if they did a qualitative dissertation themselves. Absent are questions of quality, of experience, of depth of understanding, even of pedagogical skill. The Rancièrian (*The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, 1991) notion that one can teach what one doesn't know suggests a more egalitarian posture toward this issue. What Rancière doesn't address explicitly is the question of pedagogical skill and/or disposition (especially epistemological leanings).
6. Thanks to Brenda Beattie for this felicitous turn of phrase (B. Beattie, April 19, 2000, personal communication).
7. One positive outcome (I think) of all this maneuvering is that I've had to adjust my approach, as I noted above. In fact, I decided to completely revamp the course in line with the beliefs that frame this article, that qualitative research has three components—the fieldwork, the thinking, and the writing. I redesigned the course to focus on these areas, with students completing modules intended to call forth and develop the requisite skills. In fact, in a bold experiment, I had no required textbooks and no required readings (if you don't count the APA style manual). Students earned points for the modules they successfully completed (as determined by me and my coinstructor, a doctoral student I was mentoring). I built in maximum flexibility and hoped students would be able to customize the course to meet their needs. (I will report out on this pedagogical experiment in more detail at some later date.)
8. I may overestimate the advantage that experience in teaching qualitative research methods gives job candidates, my students. It may be that those in the academy devalue teaching, generally, or more likely downplay the amount of skill and artistry involved in good teaching—either thinking that anyone can do it, or that pedagogical skill is less important than content knowledge; it may still be the case, as it was when I began my teaching career, that many in the academy still believe that anyone who has done a qualitative dissertation can teach qualitative methods. I know that's the case where I work.
9. Of course, there are many more teaching/learning situations in which we engage, my doctoral students and me. I sometimes recommend additional coursework, sometimes an independent study concerning the particular method they choose to use in their dissertation research. (One of my students, at my urging, enrolled in a course with Bettie St. Pierre, working through her University of Georgia research methods syllabus studying rhizomatic analysis in a distance-learning arrangement.) I usually brainstorm with my students concerning their research design for their dissertation proposal. I serve as a sounding board through their fieldwork and analysis—posing questions, offering advice or literature to consider. Each semester I convene a meeting of all my current students so that they might learn from each other. I edit their writing along the way and sometimes co-present at conferences with them. At conferences, I shepherd my students around, introducing them to scholars I know, whom they have read or are otherwise familiar with. Taken as a whole, the pedagogical relationship I establish with (some) students comes to resemble an apprenticeship of sorts.
10. The ideal curriculum—if ever there was one, and the best, most qualified teacher to teach it are not always the criteria by which staffing decisions are ultimately made; often, political, logistical, or other concerns drive staffing issues.
11. I addressed some of these issues in a paper I did for the Qualitative Research Special Interest Group (SIG) of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), titled: Canons to the Left of Us, Canons to the Right of Us: On the Over-determination of Method in Qualitative Research (Waite, 2004). Please contact me if you'd like a copy.
12. Clearly, research design involves more than simply going to the scene, especially when methods other than "simply hanging out" are involved. "The four-corners problem" is most suitable for generic qualitative research field methods, especially participant observation and other more ethnographic techniques. Other, more specific methods might require method-specific data collection techniques. This is one reason why Wolcott (2009) suggested that those interested in a particular method write their study backward, by which he meant that, at least in the conceptual phase, to consider the type of

study one wishes to produce (be it a grounded theory study, an ethnography, an auto-ethnography, or what have you), and give some consideration to the type of analysis/interpretation needed to produce this type of study; then, what type of data would inform this kind of interpretation/analysis, and what method is most likely to produce these data?

13. Here I encourage students (and other authors whose work I respond to) to make attribution: So-and-so *said* such-and-such; rather than such is the case. This also protects the researcher from having to defend what might be considered specious claims.
14. Another issue, one not yet addressed in this essay, is how much information to give students, and the issue presently under discussion demonstrates this conundrum nicely: the issue of, for lack of a better phrase, the purity of the data (i.e., descriptive data sans analysis and interpretation) depends on the researcher or theorist's epistemological and ontological stance. Is all data already theory-laden? Aren't all observations theoretically framed?

    The pedagogue and teacher might wrestle with whether to introduce these philosophical debates or simply to ask students to work toward a purer, more accurate description, knowing that, if and to the degree that this is accomplished, data so generated may (stress, may) make the final cut, may inform the researcher and the reader. If it is an impressionistic study from start to finish—which becomes increasingly likely the farther away from "pure description" the observer gets—why the charade of collecting data through observation in the first place? Why not write fiction, or call the result a fictionalized account?
15. There is a compromise method, one practiced by Gary Alan Fine (G. A. Fine, personal communication, April 20, 1996) and others: carry a stack of 5X8 note cards in your pocket (or elsewhere) and, upon observing something thought to be relevant, absent yourself to make jot notes or fuller renditions, including exact quotes.
16. Some of these issues are those having to do with assessment of student readiness and learning styles, with the level of attainment sought (evidence of learning, "product" of learning), and with teaching versus learning (the old teacher's defense of "I taught them, but they didn't learn" is an example, as is the claim that you can teach a dog to whistle [implication: you can teach, but that doesn't mean the dog will learn]).
17. True, diaries, as a genre, are not meant to be public, and most letters, though letter writing is becoming a lost art, are usually not meant for mass consumption. An interesting example of the public/social and private/solitary sides to the researcher and the research act can be found in Bronislow Malinowski's (1989) *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*; a peek behind the scenes, as it were, published by his wife after his death.
18. One of the better texts on writing for qualitative researchers is Wolcott's (2008) *Writing Up Qualitative Research*; another is that by Kamler and Thomson (2006), *Helping Doctoral Students Write: Pedagogies for Supervision*.
19. This is more how I read, as I usually have several books I'm 'in the middle of' at once, but I read for personal illumination and growth, and not to become an authority on a text or author, or to be able to cite chapter and verse.

    At a meeting of the American Educational Research Association in Montreal, I had lunch with Elizabeth "Bettie" St. Pierre, Deborah Britzman, and Alice Pitt. As Bettie had been a librarian, I thought it would be interesting to ask her about her reading style. Bettie admitted to doing more extensive reading, and Deborah, it turns out, is more of an intensive reader. As their CVs demonstrate, one style is not better than the other, they're just different. Still, many (most?) of our course syllabi are biased toward intensive reading (thus making manifest our assumptions concerning course structure, curriculum, and epistemology), expecting graduate students, adults themselves, to read thoroughly and in an intensive manner. Are we doing a disservice to those who practice a more extensive reading strategy? Are all the readings we assign—books and articles alike—worthy of the time, energy, and devotion of intensive reading?

    I'm experimenting with a course structure that is less prescriptive, partly to see how this plays to different learning/reading styles. I've designed the syllabus for my intermediate qualitative research methods class with no required textbooks (I have a recommended list), but no required readings. The course is module-based—with modules built around the foundations of qualitative research I've identified above (fieldwork, theory, and writing), and students are expected to do whatever reading they must to complete the tasks set for them, and upon which they will be graded. This approach should allow students to learn what they need to learn from various sources—reading, video (e.g., Youtube), discussion, the internet, and so on. Still, I wonder how we might allow students to more fully practice their preferred reading style or strategy in our qualitative research methods classes; that is, if we prefer not to be impositional.

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Author Biography

Duncan Waite (BA, philosophy, University of Michigan; MA and PhD, curriculum & supervision, University of Oregon), while at Oregon, studied with Harry Wolcott (anthropology & education, ethnographic methods), Jack Whalen (conversation analysis), Ken Liberman (ethnomethodology), and C. A. Bowers (philosophy of education), among others. He has been teaching qualitative research methods for 20 years. He is the editor of the *International Journal of Leadership in Education* (Routledge), a progressive, multidisciplinary journal, and one which he founded. He himself has published in such journals as the *AERJ, Teaching & Teacher Education*, and the *Journal of School*

Leadership, and others, and has numerous chapters in edited books, dealing with language, philosophy, supervision, leadership, and social justice. His current research interests include teaching, learning, and thinking; organizations and organizational forms, especially status and dominance hierarchies; and neoliberalism and "corporativism"—a term he coined for a concept he's developing which has to do with ingrained, ubiquitous and ontological forms of corporatism. Over the next year, he'll be finishing up a 20-year-long oral life history project of Dr. C, who, among his other accomplishments, served as the principal of several high schools in the segregated American south, and saw one through to integration.