

## The Methods Clinic, January 22, 2021

### Chat transcript [lightly edited, Dvora Yanow]

- 10:13:57 From Janelle Wong : Schwartz-Shea and Yanow Book:  
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/interpretation-method-dvora-yanow-peregrine-schwartz-shea/e/10.4324/9781315703275>
- 10:17:35 From Jillian Schwedler : Also, not all quantitative research is necessarily positivist.
- 10:18:34 From Sybille Muench : I have not had a chance to read it yet, but I assume Deborah Stone covers this in her recent book?  
<https://www.norton.com/books/9781631495922>
- 10:19:00 From Guillermo Caballero : Bonilla-Silva *Racism without Racism* writes a little bit about this on qualitative and interpretivist connection as well in his project
- 10:21:33 From Carolyn Holmes : To build on what Dvora said, I would add that there is an interpretivist orientation toward the categories into which cases/instances are counted in datasets. What do the categories mean? How do they include or silence internal variation?
- 10:22:03 From Kerstin Tomiak : STS? Science Technology studies on this? Looking at how the data were generated?
- 10:22:51 From Carrie Reiling : Sally Engle Merry and other anthropologists have also written on indicators. And think about the Sustainable Development Goals as a model?
- 10:23:19 From Kerstin Tomiak : Oh yes, Merry is great!
- 10:23:27 From Taraf Abu Hamdan : thanks for the recommendations
- 10:26:36 From Nathalia Justo : Jillian, could you please share the reference in the chat?
- 10:26:52 From Jillian Schwedler : <https://www.amazon.com/Media-Bias-Perspective-State-Repression/dp/0521759706>
- 10:27:13 From Nathalia Justo : Thank you so much!
- 10:27:35 From Cheryl Van Den Handel : I can really use a source for that perspective
- 10:27:43 From Mark Hand : To Carolyn's point, there is an "interpretive data science" group in Alberta that uses the phrase "interpretation all the way down."  
<https://www.interprettivedatascience.com/>

10:27:46 From Cheryl Van Den Handel : Carolyn Holmes

10:28:13 From Jacob Thomas : In sociology we have in recent years had a methodological tension in ethnographic methodology between those that take a comparative case method (e.g. such as the work of Michael Burawoy, CK Lee) which is more deductive in refining canonical theories (e.g. marxism) and those that take more of a grounded theory approach (e.g. Charmaz, Strauss) which takes more of an inductive approach of axial coding to allow theories to emerge from the data). Abductive approaches (e.g. building off of Timmermans and Savory) build on the philosophy of Charles Pierce to bridge these two. I was wondering if in characterizing interpretive methods as abductive you recognize tensions within interpretive and positivist approach between inductive v. Deductive v. abductive approaches to scientific inquiry?

10:28:14 From Cheryl Van Den Handel : Thanks Mark

10:28:50 From Osman Balkan : I like Ch 1 of Jim Scott's "Seeing Like a State" (Nature and Space) on this question of categories

10:29:09 From Jillian Schwedler : And creating those categories in data sets IS an act of interpretation

10:29:44 From Ana Portocarrero : The work of gasper, lera St Clair and others related to climate change reports may be helpful

10:30:49 From Guillermo Caballero : I am wondering if we can create a google doc or some kind of repository with sources and resources ???

10:31:14 From Guillermo Caballero : There are a lot amazing works being mentioned here

10:32:44 From Carolyn Holmes : I will do my best!

10:34:58 From Cheryl Van Den Handel : fmri studies, brain studies is where to look for some research on how we learn.

10:36:47 From Aarie Glas : Edward Schatz describes an "ethnographic sensibility," which sounds like the learning from/in the "soup" as described. Perhaps see his first chapter in the edited volume:

<https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/P/bo7995019.html>

10:37:02 From Michelle Weitzel : Soss, Joe. 1999. Lessons of Welfare: Policy Design, Political Learning, and Political Action. *American Political Science Review* 93, 2: 363-80.

10:37:42 From Colleen Wood : Ed's appendix to his new book "Slow Anti-Americanism" also does a great job of explaining perspectives on mixing epistemologies and justifies blending ethnographic observation, interpretivist analysis of interviews, and a survey experiment

[DY: <https://www.amazon.com/Slow-Anti-Americanism-Movements-Symbolic->

[Politics/dp/1503613690](#) ]

10:37:45 From Carolyn Holmes : I would add that Lisa Wedeen's chapter in the Schatz volume is an excellent way to think through the idea of "rigor" and "replication" in the ethnographic enterprise.

[DY: This chapter might also be helpful: D. Yanow, 2014, Neither rigorous nor objective? Interrogating criteria for knowledge claims in interpretive science, in D. Yanow and P. Schwartz-Shea, eds., *Interpretation and method: Empirical research methods and the interpretive turn*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 97-119. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.]

10:37:52 From Michelle Weitzel : Parkinson, Sarah. 2013. Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War. *American Political Science Review* 107 (3), 418-32.

10:40:26 From Elizaveta Potapova : I have always been thinking that there is still a certain limit of transparency. Even if I explain to the reader how do I code, how do I build my categories, how do I build my theory, and illustrate all of that with quotes, it's still limited proof. I try to talk about trust with my students. But cannot really agree on a borderline of a proper trust procedure in my own work

10:41:54 From Christina Harris : Can you include that last author/piece mentioned by Peregrine here in the chat? Thank you!

10:42:13 From Guillermo Caballero : And the one that Carolyn mentioned. Please!

10:43:10 From Jillian Schwedler : Wedeen's chapter is in the Ed Schatz volume mentioned above.

10:43:15 From Jessica Soedirgo : The piece Peri mentioned is: Fujii, Lee Ann. 2010. "Shades of truth and lies: Interpreting testimonies of war and violence." *Journal of Peace Research* 47 (2):231-241.

10:43:47 From Guillermo Caballero : Thanks!

10:44:11 From Carolyn Holmes : This is the direct link to the Wedeen chapter:

10:44:12 From Carolyn Holmes :  
[https://www.google.com/books/edition/Political\\_Ethnography/DtjTCFni594C?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Lisa+Wedeen+Rigor+INterpretation&pg=PA75&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Political_Ethnography/DtjTCFni594C?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Lisa+Wedeen+Rigor+INterpretation&pg=PA75&printsec=frontcover)

10:44:48 From Maryia Rohava : there are some great insights and reflections on transparency in interpretive research "The Qualitative Transparency Deliberations: Insights and Implications" <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592720001164>

10:45:19 From Cheryl O'Brien : Which political science journals publish interpretivist methods regularly? The data transparency issue has been a concern given interview subjects on sensitive issues in repressive contexts. For

tenure/promotion at some universities, we are required to publish in “political science” journals.

10:47:17 From Zein Murib : Is there a way to use the language of positivists against them in these answers/strategies? For example, all dataset construction entails some degree of selection as it's impossible to sample entire populations. The same is true for interpretivist work — it's just doesn't cloak it in scientific jargon.

10:47:42 From Carrie Reiling : @Cheryl, I know of IR journals like *Security Dialogue*, *IFJP*, etc.

10:47:53 From Cheryl O'Brien : thx

10:47:54 From Jillian Schwedler : *Perspectives on Politics*, and *APSR* will do more in the future with the new editorial team. *World Politics*, *Comparative Politics* as well have published some ethnography (but not tons). But you need in all cases to anticipate some of the objections or concerns readers might make.

10:48:07 From Sybille Muench : @Cheryl: *Critical Policy Studies* perhaps

10:48:14 From Jillian Schwedler : ^^

10:48:30 From Xymena Kurowska : @Cheryl We have just taken over editorship of *Journal of International Relations and Development* and we are open to interpretive work, of course. Also *International Political Sociology*.

10:48:38 From Cheryl O'Brien : thx!

10:48:39 From Carolyn Holmes : *Politics, Groups, and Identities* from the Western Political Science Association is also a great outlet

10:49:04 From Guillermo Caballero : PGI is where its at!

10:51:34 From Cheryl O'Brien : Like Merry's book on violence against women, is there any political science book on case study research that uses interpretivist research in any way (i.e. it could be in addition to positivist or not)? (For those of us doing book manuscripts.) Thanks in advance.

10:51:35 From Carrie Reiling : Thanks, everyone! I think I need to think about the reader more!

10:52:30 From Sybille Muench : For those who read German: we tried to take „all political scientists offer us interpretations“ as staring point and show exactly that, across different sub-disciplines: <https://link.springer.com/journal/41358/volumes-and-issues/29-2>

10:54:10 From Michelle Weitzel : Kathy Cramer. 2016. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker* University of Chicago Press.

10:54:35 From Michelle Weitzel : Walsh, Katherine Cramer. 2012. Putting Equality in Its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective. *American Political Science Review* 106 (3): 517-532.

10:55:41 From Liz Foley : And “*Hillbilly Elegy*” is by J.D. Vance. Haven’t read it but I believe it’s a memoir rather than any kind of scholarly work.

10:56:12 From Michelle Weitzel :  
<https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/L/bo20832419.html>

10:56:52 From Michelle Weitzel :  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1350508410372151?journalCode=orga>

10:57:09 From Candan Turkkan Ghosh : I also want to emphasize that the answers to the 'so what' question can, may and do take a different shape/form for the people participating in the research (informants, subjects, participants, however you want to call them). And although we don't talk about that as much, I think that it is as important to answer the so what to them as much as to our peers/colleges/readers.

10:57:38 From Nina Krienke : Sometimes, I think, one could also point to gaps that strictly positivist work leaves in the understanding of several phenomenon, think About the "surprise" some political scientists faced the Ukraine crises or election of the PiS in poland, sticking to a 90s transition paradigm.

10:59:09 From Carrie Reiling : I like “whether/how” and “in what ways” questions

11:00:59 From Xymena Kurowska : Dvora and Peri talk about constitutive causality in the *Interpretive Research Design* book.

11:01:38 From Carolyn Holmes : If we go to the “so what” question of Cramer’s work, it gained a much higher profile in the context of the elections of Scott Walker and Donald Trump, but her work was published before that. So perhaps sometimes the “so what” becomes evident after the fact?

11:04:57 From Sybille Muench : Frank Nullmeier has attempted to come up with non-variable based/ interpretive explanations:  
<https://www.elgaronline.com/view/edcoll/9781784719357/9781784719357.00011.xml>

11:05:21 From Brooks Kirchgassner : I teach in a few minutes so I have to log off, thank you for organizing this session!

11:05:51 From Cheryl Van Den Handel : I have to go to an appointment. Thank you so much. This was very helpful. See you next month.

11:05:53 From Zein Murib : Kathie’s work also illustrates that it’s important to specify what you are generalizing TO. In her book, she was generalizing about Wisconsin voters, which became really compelling, especially after 2016 when WI flipped in the presidential election.

11:07:01 From Michelle Weitzel : both in the chat above!

11:08:21 From Karen Baird : I was kicked out and came back on so lost the earlier chat. Do you mind re-posting the Cramer citations? Thanks

11:08:56 From Michelle Weitzel : Kathy Cramer. 2016. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker* University of Chicago Press.

11:09:02 From Guillermo Caballero : Kathy Cramer. 2016. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker* University of Chicago Press.

Walsh, Katherine Cramer. 2012. Putting Equality in Its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective. *American Political Science Review* 106 (3): 517-532.

11:09:23 From Kerstin Tomiak : I have to go to an appointment - thanks a lot for a great discussion!

11:09:29 From Guillermo Caballero : Oops my apologies Michelle!

11:11:36 From Hüsni Yilmaz : I have a seminar to attend. I am also thankful for the discussion, which was really helpful and hope to see you all next time.

11:13:47 From Jillian Schwedler : I have to go to a dissertation defense, thank you for a great conversation!

11:14:38 From Carolyn Holmes : I have to go and teach, but this has been so interesting. Thank you all! I will see you all next month!

11:15:07 From Sybille Muench : Yes, see you all next month. Thank you so much for this!

11:21:27 From Janelle Wong : Hello! We will be rejoining the main session in 1 min. Sorry for the delay!

11:25:26 From Wendy Pearlman : Thank you everyone for this terrific conversation!

11:26:10 From Karen Baird : This has been terrific! Thank you Dvora and Pere!

11:26:11 From Zein Murib : Thanks to all the organizers for convening! This was great!