



Qualitative Research: Bridging the Conceptual, Theoretical, and Methodological

By *Sharon M. Ravitch, Nicole C. Mittenfelner Carl*

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Focused on developing the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological knowledge needed to engage in rigorous and valid research, this introductory text provides practical explanations, exercises, and advice for how to conduct qualitative research—from design through implementation, analysis, and writing up research. **Qualitative Research** presents the field in a unique and meaningful way, and helps readers understand what authors Sharon M. Ravitch and Nicole Mittenfelner Carl call “criticality” in qualitative research by communicating its foundations and processes with clarity and simplicity while still capturing complexity. Packed with real-life examples of questions, issues, and situations that stem from the authors’ and their students’ research, the book humanizes the qualitative research endeavor, illustrates the types of scenarios that arise, and emphasizes the importance of actively considering paradigmatic values throughout every stage of the research process. In every chapter, the authors illustrate the qualitative research process as decidedly ideological, political, and subjective using themes of criticality, reflexivity, collaboration, and rigor.

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Editorial Review

Review

“The chapters are accessible and easy to read. They are also applicable and will better help guide students in how best to provide and support their work with theory and literature while presenting useful information on methodology and how to conduct and analyze qualitative research.” (Lydia Kyei-Blankson)

“I believe this book would be a great resource to my doctoral students enrolled in my Introduction to Qualitative Research Design and Methodology course as well as those individuals working on their dissertation proposal development, data collection, data analysis and writing process.” (Ifeoma Amah)

About the Author

Sharon M. Ravitch, Ph.D. is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania’s Graduate School of Education where she is Research Co-Director at the Center for the Study of Boys’ and Girls’ Lives and a Founding Co-Director of Penn’s Inter-American Educational Leadership Network. She serves as the Principal Investigator of Semillas Digitales (Digital Seeds) a multi-year applied development research initiative in Nicaragua (<http://www2.gse.upenn.edu/nicaragua/>).

Ravitch’s research integrates across the fields of qualitative research, education, applied development, cultural anthropology, and human development and has four main strands: (1) Practitioner Research as a means to engendering sustainable professional and institutional development and innovation; (2) International applied development research that works from participatory and action research approaches (projects currently in the US, Nicaragua, and India); (3) Ethnographic and participatory evaluation research; and (4) Leader education and professional development.

Ravitch has published three books: *Reason and Rigor: How Conceptual Frameworks Guide Research* (with Matthew Riggan, Sage Publications, 2012); *School Counseling Principles: Diversity and Multiculturalism* (American School Counselor Association Press, 2006) and *Matters of Interpretation: Reciprocal Transformation in Therapeutic and Developmental Relationships with Youth* (with Michael Nakkula, Jossey-Bass, 1998).

Ravitch earned two master’s degrees from Harvard University in Human Development and Psychology and in Education and a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania in an interdisciplinary program that combined anthropology, sociology, and education.

Nicole Mittenfelner Carl is a doctoral candidate in the teaching, learning, and leadership division at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education (PennGSE). She is Director of Impact Assessment for the Center for the Study of Boys’ and Girls’ Lives (CSBGL) and is conducting a multi-sited, multi-year participatory evaluation of the Center’s impact. Carl facilitates and teaches Youth Participatory Action Research and researches ways that schools can be more equitable and humane places as a part of her work with CSBGL. Carl is also a graduate research associate at PennGSE, where she is part of a research team that examines ways that teachers and parents can organize and act collectively as a means of educational problem-solving.

Carl has conducted qualitative research for over a decade. She has published articles about new teachers' experiences with standardized curricula as well as about teacher activism and organizing. Her current research focus includes critical approaches to qualitative research, participatory action research, educational equity, urban education, and teacher education.

Carl is a former middle school language arts and lead teacher in the School District of Philadelphia as well as a former mentor to and supervisor of first-year teachers. Carl's research interests stem from her experiences as an educator, and she focuses her work on ways that students, parents, and teachers can work together to address educational inequities.

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