

A?

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School of Arts, Design
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ARTS-L0108

Methods of gathering data

*Eeva Berglund – 22.1.2019 – Session 8 – RESEARCH AND POLITICS IN
EXPERIMENTAL TIMES*

A?

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Discussion – what is a research question (for)? Where does it come from?

A little history of science and society

The rise of experimenting in Science

The birth and uses of the 'Social' and the 'Public'

Discussion of texts:

Practical:

Focus groups

Portfolio

TODAY

DISCUSSION: Research in the 21st century

1. What is research (for)?

- Blue skies, problem-solving, making the world better, having fun
- Who is research for? Independent exercise silently to yourself

2. What is activism (for)?



Thinking questions that are different and yet the same



A Waymo autonomous vehicle in Chandler, Ariz., where the driverless cars have been attacked by residents on several occasions. Caitlin O'Hara for The New York Times

By Simon Romero

Dec. 31, 2018



CHANDLER, Ariz. — The assailant slipped out of a park around noon one day in October, zeroing in on his target, which was idling at a nearby intersection — a self-driving van operated by Waymo, the driverless-car company spun out of Google.



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Ulrich Beck
Risikogesellschaft
Auf dem Weg
in eine andere Moderne
edition suhrkamp
SV

What would classical sociology with its accounts of class conflict have to say about a nuclear incident, about toxic food, changing climate?

Science and experimentation are required to cope with the risks, at the same time as Science is demonopolised or dethroned.

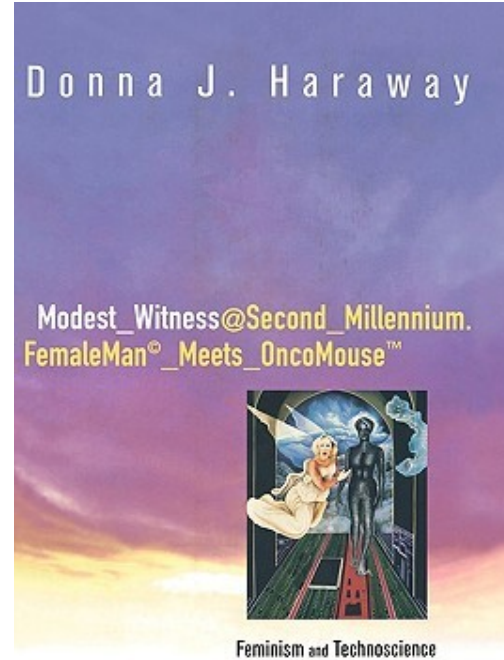
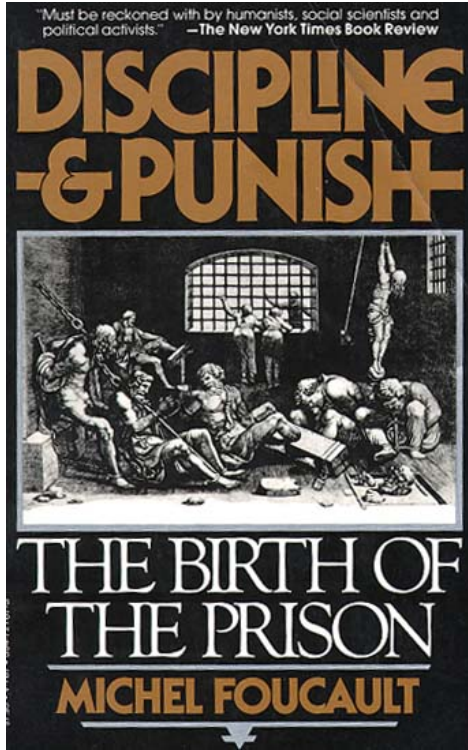
It would be good to read about the history of science... and society

Krohn and Weyer (1994) 'Real Life Experiments', *Science and Public Policy* Vol.21(3): 137-200.

Collins, H. M., and T. J. Pinch. 1998. *The golem: what you should know about science*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press.

Shapin, Steven and Schaffer, Simon. 1985. *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Strathern, Marilyn (2000) 'Audit Cultures: Anthropological Studies in accountability, ethics and the academy, London and New York: Routledge.



Also of interest

Donna Haraway 1991

‘Situated knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective’, in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* (and reproduced in many other places, including a version in *Feminist Studies* 1988)

Martina Angela Caretta 2015

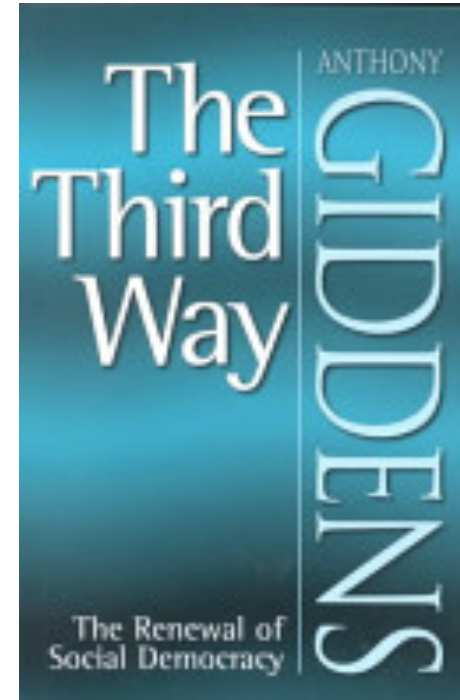
‘Situated knowledge in cross-cultural, cross-language research: a collaborative reflexive analysis of researcher, assistant and participant subjectivities’, *Qualitative Research*, 2015(4): 489-505.

DISCUSSION: Readings

Estalella, A. and A. Corsín Jiménez (2016) 'Matters of sense'

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade(2003) “Under Western Eyes” Revisited

Focus groups are part of the history of propaganda



What is a focus group?

Multiple interviews of around 5 – 8 (usually) people. The background of the method is in market research, later politics and policy.

Compare with 'Delphi' studies.

Similar to but different from in-depth interviews:

- Iteration and dialogue ideally mean an "individual response becomes sharpened and refined, and moves to a deeper and more considered level" – interaction leads to insight
- More naturalistic setting despite being carefully set up. Has typical progression (see Finch & Lewis)

Need to be aware of contextual effects:

- seeming agreement; social power; impact of practical arrangements

Comparison of in-depth interviews and focus groups (from Ritchie & Lewis 2003 *Qualitative Research Practice*)

In-depth interviews

Questions & data focus on personal or at least individual accounts

Subject matter complex, sensitive or about motives

Study population could be infinitely varied.

Focus groups

Questions & data on social context, differences; to encourage creative thinking or new questions

Subject abstract or emergent; illuminated by social norms

Study population clustered (or will travel!), uninhibited by group setting.

How to run a focus group

Roles:

- Researcher or facilitator
 - Guides discussion by setting limits and using probing questions
 - Reflects back a summary of what was discussed
- Rapporteur or note taker
- Ground rules – basically respect and give participants freedom to talk
 - Confidentiality is still an issue
- Think voices – introduce everyone to the audio recorder
- Think non-verbal communication
 - 'Why is everyone nodding?'

Strengths or weaknesses

- **Focus groups as 'ethnography on the cheap'?**
- **'One-shot case studies'?**
- **Biased to the point of being useless to scholarship?**



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Your portfolio