



EXPLORING DILEMMAS AND OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN COMPLEX MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

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WHO IS THE WEBINAR PRESENTER?



- WHERE IS THE VOICE COMING FROM?
- WHERE IS THE  UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
- WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE OUTSIDE MY WINDOW CURRENTLY?



SOME OF MY MMR WORK

COMPLETED

1. MMR TEACHING

POTH, C. (2014). WHAT CONSTITUTES EFFECTIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN A MIXED METHODS RESEARCH COURSE? AN EXAMINATION FROM THE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIPLE RESEARCH APPROACHES*, 8(1), 74-86. DOI: 10.5172/MRA.2014.8.1.74

2. MMR TEAMS

POTH, C. (2012). EXPLORING THE ROLE OF MIXED METHODS PRACTITIONER WITHIN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH TEAMS: A CROSS CASE COMPARISON OF THE RESEARCH PLANNING PROCESS. SPECIAL ISSUE OF "MIXED METHODS RESEARCH IN EDUCATION" *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIPLE RESEARCH APPROACHES*, 6, 315-332.

3. MMR QUALITY

ONWUEGBUZIE, A., & **POTH, C.** (2016). EDITORS' AFTERWORD: TOWARD EVIDENCE-BASED GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWING MIXED METHODS RESEARCH MANUSCRIPTS SUBMITTED TO JOURNALS. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF QUALITATIVE METHODS*, 15, 1-13 DOI:10.1177/1609406916628986.

IN PROGRESS

1. COMPLEXITY IN MMR

POTH, C. (IN PRESS). THE CURIOUS CASE OF COMPLEXITY: IMPLICATIONS FOR MIXED METHODS RESEARCH PRACTICES, *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIPLE RESEARCH APPROACHES*,

POTH, C. (IN PREPARATION). *INNOVATIONS IN MIXED METHODS RESEARCH: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO INTEGRATIVE THINKING WITH COMPLEXITY* LONDON: SAGE (UNDER CONTRACT FOR PUBLICATION 2018).

2. MMR IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

POTH, C. (UNDER REVIEW). THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MIXED INSIGHTS TO ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS



THIS WEBINAR AS A **CREATE-YOUR-OWN-JOURNEY ABOUT COMPLEXITY**



- CONNECTIONS ARE PERSONAL
- READINESS IS INDIVIDUALIZED
- AGREEMENT IS OPTIONAL
- CONSIDERATION IS DESIRABLE
- FEEDBACK IS VALUABLE
 - CPOTH@UALBERTA.CA

WHAT MIGHT OUR JOURNEY INVOLVE?

- WHAT DO I MEAN BY COMPLEXITY AND COMPLEX (MIXED METHODS RESEARCH) MMR?
- WHY DO I FOCUS ON COMPLEXITY WITHIN MMR?
- WHAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MMR INNOVATIONS DO I THINK CAN BE SEIZED THROUGH A COMPLEXITY PERSPECTIVE?



STARTING PLACE: COMPLEXITY AND COMPLEX MMR

- ALL RESEARCH IS COMPLEX REGARDLESS OF WHETHER WE, AS RESEARCHERS, CHOOSE TO RECOGNIZE IT
- IF YOU SEEK TO RECOGNIZE SOURCES OF COMPLEXITY IN YOUR MMR THEN YOU ARE MORE LIKELY TO DESIGN PROCEDURES THAT HELP YOU TO CAPTURE IT AND THUS BE MORE ABLE TO TACKLE COMPLEX MMR PROBLEMS



DEFINING COMPLEXITY IN MMR

	Low complexity	Moderately complex	High complexity
Purpose	Easily determined and stated	Somewhat focused and able to be stated	Difficult to pinpoint beyond innovative
Contexts	Predictable and stable	Many known and some predictability	Many yet to be known and dynamic influences
Contributors	Pre-determined and collective roles	Many known and some emergent roles	Many yet to be known and integrative roles
Procedures	High agreement	Some agreement	Low agreement
Outcomes	Known	Able to be known	Unknowable

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU EMBRACE COMPLEXITY IN MMR?



- THINK ABOUT A MMR RESEARCH STUDY YOU HAVE UNDERTAKEN OR ARE INTERESTED IN UNDERTAKING AND
- HOW DID YOU CHOOSE TO SEE THE CONDITIONS OF COMPLEXITY FOR THE RESEARCH?
- WRITE DOWN YOUR IDEAS RELATED TO THE RESEARCH PURPOSE, CONTEXT, CONTRIBUTORS, PROCEDURES AND OUTCOMES
- NOW CONSIDER IF YOU SAW THESE ASPECTS AS LESS OR MORE COMPLEX?
- WHY DO YOU THINK YOU FRAMED YOUR MMR STUDY IN THIS WAY?

HOW DID I COME TO EMBRACE COMPLEXITY IN MMR?



I began to apply similar thinking, that is, *more complexity-sensitive thinking* to the challenges I was hearing about in MMR – specifically I identified 5 patterns of dilemmas.

DILEMMAS POSED BY CONDITIONS OF COMPLEXITY IN DEFINING MMR PROBLEMS

“I cannot research this problem because it has not been studied before and no literature exists to guide me”

Research phase	Key researcher tasks	Desirable outcomes	Dilemmas posed
Defining problems	Consider experiences, motivations and literature during exploration of foundational study ideas	Articulate research problem by describing topics, purposes, and questions that inform designs	Pinpointing study’s need for integration and mixing purposes when the background influences to the research problem are not well understood

DILEMMAS POSED BY CONDITIONS OF COMPLEXITY IN **SITUATING MMR CONTEXTS**

“I cannot do this research because I do not yet understand the contextual boundaries of my study”

Research phase	Key researcher tasks	Desirable outcomes	Dilemmas posed
Situating contexts	Consider the contexts in which the study takes place	Convey research system by describing societal, local, and personal contexts that influence one another	Bounding study's interrelated system when the contextual influences to the research are not stable or defined

DILEMMAS POSTED BY CONDITIONS OF COMPLEXITY IN DESCRIBING MMR DESIGNS

“My supervisor tells me I need to use a sequential MMR design and it does not fit what I want to do in my study”

Research phase	Key researcher tasks	Desirable outcomes	Dilemmas posed
Describing designs	Refine design features while maintaining methodological cohesiveness and considering issues of feasibility, ethics, and rigor	Communicate research design by describing data procedures that address research questions	Describing suitable research designs when no existing design typology fits

DILEMMAS POSTED BY CONDITIONS OF COMPLEXITY IN REALIZING MMR INTEGRATIONS

“I cannot do this research because no one has integrated the data in a way that I intend to do it”

Research phase	Key researcher tasks	Desirable outcomes	Dilemmas posed
Realizing integrations	Rationalize design adaptations by presenting sufficient evidence while carrying out the integration purpose of the study	Execute research procedures by adapting designs to changing conditions	Responding with agility to changing conditions given the unpredictability of the dynamic influences

DILEMMAS POSTED BY CONDITIONS OF COMPLEXITY IN GENERATING MMR INSIGHTS

“I cannot do this research because I do not yet know what the outcomes might be”

Research phase	Key researcher tasks	Desirable outcomes	Dilemmas posed
Generating insights	Revisit integration processes as needed during generating, representing and drawing inferences from the integrated findings.	Convey the research outcomes by describing integrative evidence that underpins the study’s implications	Creating conditions for interactions that generate novel insights because the yet-to-be-known solutions to the complex problem call for them to draw on diverse experiences and transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries

DILEMMAS: TAKE HOME MESSAGE

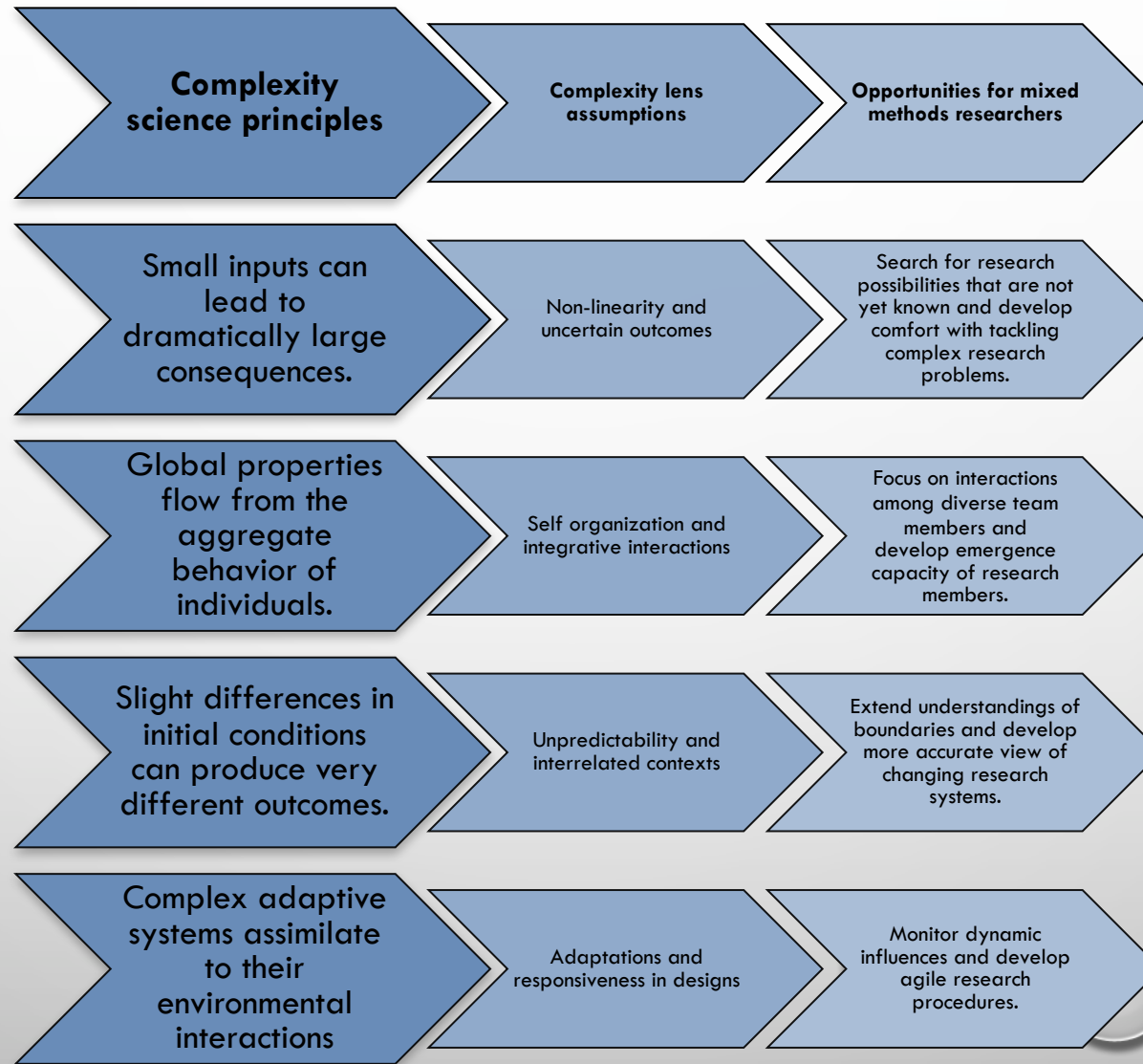
- TOO OFTEN, RESEARCHERS ATTEMPT TO REDUCE, CONTROL, OR SIMPLY IGNORE THE EFFECTS OF COMPLEXITY RATHER THAN REVISITING UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS AND ADAPTING OUR APPROACHES TO MIXED METHODS RESEARCH
- MISFIT OF TRADITIONAL APPROACHES WITH COMPLEX CONDITIONS



CALLS FOR NEW WAYS OF TACKLING COMPLEX MMR PROBLEMS....

- “BUSINESS AS USUAL WILL NOT LEAD TO EFFECTIVE USE OF RESEARCH TO ADDRESS WICKED PROBLEMS, PROBLEMS FOR WHICH TIME FOR SOLUTIONS IS RUNNING OUT” (2015: MERTENS, 2015, P. 5).
- MERTENS AND COLLEAGUES DESCRIBED THE FUTURE OF MIXED METHODS IN THEIR REPORT TO THE MIXED METHODS INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (MMIRA) AS KALEIDOSCOPIIC WITH ITS “SEEMINGLY UNPREDICTABLE PATTERNS FULL OF RICH POSSIBILITIES FOR DIVERSITY AND POTENTIAL TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO SEE THINGS THAT HAVE NOT YET BEEN SEEN” (2016: 222).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MMR AFFORDED BY THE THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF COMPLEXITY SCIENCE



OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIXED METHODS RESEARCHERS

- A COMPLEXITY PERSPECTIVE RECOGNIZES THAT RESEARCH CONDITIONS CALLS INTO QUESTION **FIVE** TRADITIONAL MAINSTAYS OF MIXED METHODS RESEARCH PRACTICES:
 - PURPOSE FOR INTEGRATION CAN BE IDENTIFIED
 - FRAME THE STUDY'S MIXING PURPOSE ABOUT THE INNOVATION NEED
 - STABILITY OF THE RESEARCH CONTEXT CAN BE ASSUMED
 - DIAGNOSE THE STUDY'S INTERRELATED CONTEXT USING A SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE
 - EXPERTISE NEEDED FOR THE INSIGHTS CAN BE PRE-DETERMINED
 - DEVELOP THE STUDY'S EMERGENCE CAPACITY THROUGH INTEGRATIVE INTERACTIONS
 - DESIGNS FOR GUIDING THE PROCEDURES CAN BE FIXED
 - DESCRIBE THE STUDY'S AGILE PROCEDURES ADOPTING ADAPTIVE INTEGRATIONS
 - FINDINGS UNDERPINNING THE INSIGHTS CAN BE ANTICIPATED
 - GENERATE THE STUDY'S MIXED INSIGHTS USING RESPONSIVE VALIDATION
- BY RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY INNOVATIONS IN MMR PRACTICES ARE LIKELY

BY ASSESS THE COMPLEXITY OF....

- **MMR PROBLEMS WE CAN...**

- RECOGNIZE INNOVATION AS A MIXING PURPOSE AND THUS A DESIRABLE MIXED METHODS STUDY OUTCOME

- **MMR SYSTEMS WE CAN...**

- PROMOTE DIAGNOSIS OF MIXED METHODS RESEARCH SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS AND MONITORING FOR SYSTEM INFLUENCES AND EFFECTS

- **MMR MEMBERS WE CAN...**

- ACCESS THE NECESSARY EXPERTISE AND DEVELOP THE INTEGRATIVE CAPACITY OF THE MIXED METHODS RESEARCH CONTRIBUTORS

- **MMR PROCEDURES WE CAN...**

- SUPPORT RESPONSIVENESS TO CONDITIONS AND THINKING BEYOND EXISTING MIXED METHODS RESEARCH DESIGNS

- **MMR INTEGRATIONS WE CAN...**

- REPRESENT INTEGRATED FINDINGS AND EMBED THE VALIDATION PROCESSES FOR MIXED INSIGHTS

CHECK IN: WHERE ARE WE AT IN YOUR JOURNEY ABOUT COMPLEXITY?

- LETS REVISIT THE MMR RESEARCH STUDY YOU HAVE UNDERTAKEN OR ARE INTERESTED IN UNDERTAKING AND
- HOW MIGHT YOU CHOOSE TO SEE THE CONDITIONS OF COMPLEXITY FOR THE RESEARCH?
- HOW MIGHT YOUR IDEAS RELATED TO THE RESEARCH PURPOSE, CONTEXT, CONTRIBUTORS, PROCEDURES AND OUTCOMES HAVE SHIFTED?



WHAT ARE OUR TAKE AWAY MESSAGES FROM THIS WEBINAR?

- PAY ATTENTION AND RESPOND TO **VARYING CONDITIONS OF COMPLEXITY**
 - ASSESSING SOURCES OF COMPLEXITY PROACTIVELY
 - MONITOR ATTENTIVELY
- THE **ABILITY TO TRANSFORM IS A VALUED** MMR PRACTICE COMPETENCY
 - OFTEN LEAD TO INNOVATIONS THAT THEN CAN ‘MOVE DISCIPLINES FORWARD’
- RESEARCHERS WHO **ATTEND TO CHANGING CONDITIONS** ARE BETTER POSITIONED FOR ADAPTING APPROPRIATELY
 - RESEARCH CONDITIONS ARE DYNAMIC

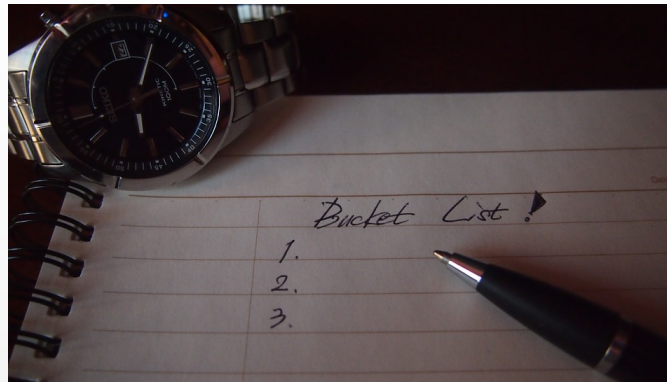
BEFORE QUESTIONS.... WHAT'S ON YOUR MMR BUCKET LIST?



- Rather than death...perhaps a different goal...
- Before I graduate..
- Before I get tenure..
- Before I reach 5 years as a prof..
- Whatever works for you..

IDEAS FOR YOUR MMR BUCKET LIST...

- ✓ Publish a MMR paper
- ✓ Complete a MMR dissertation
- ✓ Attend a global MMIRA conference
- ✓ Attend MMIRA webinars
- ✓ Host a MMIRA webinar
- ✓ Give a MMR keynote



All these are possible and MORE...

- ✓ Teach MMR course
- ✓ Teach MMR workshop
- ✓ Host a MMIRA regional conference
- ✓ Create a MMIRA chapter
- ✓ Establish a MMIRA affiliate
- ✓ Join MMIRA
- ✓ Join the MMIRA executive board

WE ARE INDIVIDUALS PART OF A COMMON MMR MOVEMENT...



MMIRA_IIQM Webinar_November_14_2017

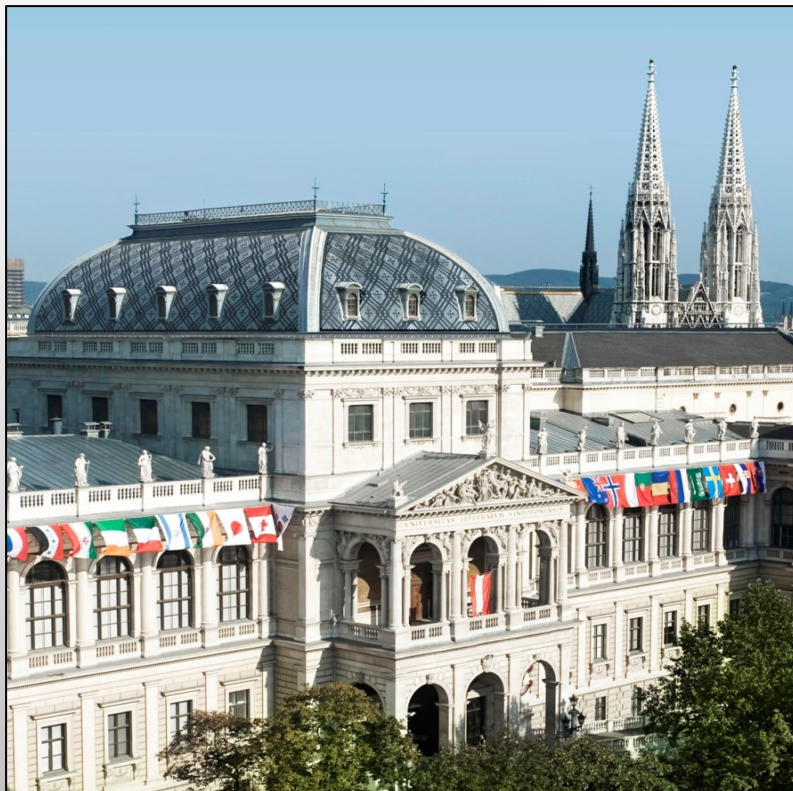
MMIRA Regional Conference in 2017:
Jamaica, US, Indonesia, South Africa, & Japan

MMIRA Global Conferences:
US (2014), UK (2016), Austria (2018)

WHERE CAN YOU LEARN MORE ABOUT MMR?

- AS A MMIRA (MIXED METHODS INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION) MEMBER YOU HAVE ACCESS TO:
 - MEMBERS-ONLY RESOURCES
 - 10% MMIRA CONFERENCE FEE REDUCTIONS
 - LISTS OF UPCOMING TRAINING
 - FREE MMR MONTHLY WEBINARS
 - AND MUCH MORE!
- WE ARE CONSTANTLY ADAPTING TO THE CHANGING NEEDS OF OUR MEMBERS
- VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND BECOME A MEMBER TODAY! [HTTP://MMIRA.WILDAPRICOT.ORG/ADMIN/](http://mmira.wildapricot.org/admin/)

2018 MMIRA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE HOSTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA, AUSTRIA 22-25 AUGUST 2018



- [HTTPS://MMIRA2018.UNIVIE.AC.AT](https://mmira2018.univie.ac.at)
- CALL FOR PROPOSALS:
- AVAILABLE NOW! AND DUE DECEMBER 31, 2017
- CONFERENCE CHAIR: DR. JUDITH SCHOONENBOOM
- JUDITH.SCHOONENBOOM@UNIVIE.AC.AT

Our Workshops – from least to most advanced (approximately)

(Workshops are still subject to change)

- Vicki Plano Clark and Peggy Shannon-Baker, **Navigating Mixed Methods Research: Connecting the Field of Mixed Methods to Your Research Practices**
- Elizabeth Creamer, **Fully Integrated Mixed Method Research Approaches**
- Sharlene Hesse-Biber, **Qualitative Approaches to Mixed Methods Research Inquiry: Design & Analysis**
- Donna Mertens, **Mixed Methods Design as a Tool to Enhance Social Justice**
- Nataliya Ivankova and Ivan Herbey, **Using Mixed Methods with Community-Based Participatory Action Research to Facilitate a Meaningful Change**
- Udo Kuckartz, **Mixed Methods Data Analysis with MAXQDA (Featuring Joint Displays)**
- Pat Bazeley, **Integrating Mixed Methods Analyses**
- Mike Fetters, **Meet the Editor of the Journal of Mixed Methods Research**
- Jennifer Greene, **Meeting the Challenges of “Voice” in Writing up the Results of Mixed Methods Social Inquiry**
- John Creswell, [Title to be announced]
- Kathy Collins and Cheryl Poth, **An Integrated Approach to Designing a Mixed Methods Research Course: Applicable for Face-to-Face and Online Settings**
- Judith Schoonenboom and Burke Johnson, **Causation in Mixed Methods Research**
- Floryt van Wesel, **Conducting a Mixed Studies Review**
- Tony Onwuegbuzie and John Hitchcock, **Advanced Mixed Analyses**

Third Global Conference of the Mixed Methods International Research Association



Gaining New Ground: Deepening and Expanding the Field of Mixed Methods

August 22-24, 2018: Conference

August 24-25, 2018: Post-conference workshops

University of Vienna, Department of Education

Location: Juridicum, Schottenbastei, Vienna, Austria

IMPORTANT DATES

August 2017	Submission system open
December 31, 2017	Abstract submission deadline
January 2018	Conference registration open
April 30, 2018	Deadline early bird registration
May 31, 2018	Deadline presenter registration deadline

More information: mmira2018.ac.at & mmira2018@univie.ac.at

Our key note speakers

Professor Nancy Cartwright is a methodologist/philosopher of science working at Durham University in the UK and the University of California at San Diego in the USA. She has done research on modelling in the natural and social sciences, causal inference, objectivity and, most recently, evidence, especially for evidence-based policy. She has co-authored two books on evidence-based policy, one of which is on general topics, including the need for mixed methods research, the second of which is directed towards child protection practitioners, as well as a number of more philosophical monographs, including two on causation and causal inference.

Professor Burke Johnson is a professor in the Department of Counseling and Instructional Sciences at the University of South Alabama. He is currently an Associate Editor of the International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches. Burke is first author of *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches* (Sage, 2017, 5th edition); second author of *The SAGE Dictionary of Statistics and Methodology* (2015); coeditor (with Sharlene Hesse-Biber) of *The Oxford Handbook of Multimethod and Mixed Methods Research Inquiry* (2015); Burke's current interests are in advances in mixed methodology and the history and philosophy of social science.

Dr Barbara Soukup is an Austrian Science Fund sponsored Elise-Richter Research Fellow at the University of Vienna English Department. A central theme in Soukup's work is the strategic, agentive use of linguistic variation (the various styles/ dialects/ languages available to speakers) for purposes of rhetorical goals and interactional meaning-making. Soukup's publications have straddled the concomitant divides by applying a mixed-methods rationale to her research. She currently explores the patterns of occurrence and interactional functions of "English in the Linguistic Landscape of Vienna, Austria" in a large-scale project of the same name, financed by the Austrian Science Fund (Project Nr. V 394-G23).

Your contribution

Everyone, whatever their current experience in mixed methods research is cordially invited to provide a contribution to the conference. Submit your abstract at mmira2018.ac.at in one of the following formats. All sessions have a duration of 1,5 hour.

Individual presentation sessions

Paper presentation. A traditional paper presentation session, including 10 minutes for a discussant, and 20 minutes for discussion.

Round table paper. Traditional round table session with 20 minutes per presentation, including questions

Poster presentation. Poster presentations will be held during designated coffee and lunch breaks.

Sessions

Symposium session. Paper presentations about one theme, invited by the symposium organizer.

Panel session. Exploration of an issue in depth by panelists and audience.

Research design forum. Questions on their research design are submitted beforehand by researchers and discussed by experts.

Mentoring session (upon invitation only). Novice researchers can meet, greet, and question experts on specific mixed methods topics.

Demonstrations

How-to session. One expert explains one "how-to" topic in detail. E.g., "how to publish mixed methods research."

Research tool demonstration. A specific computer or other tool is demonstrated in depth. Examples include demonstration of a specific type of visualization or a tool for social network analysis.

USEFUL REFERENCES

- DECUIR-GUNBY, J., T., & SCHUTZ, P. A. (2017). *DEVELOPING A MIXED METHODS PROPOSAL: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR BEGINNING RESEARCHERS*. THOUSAND OAKS, SAGE.
- LEWIN, R. (1999). *COMPLEXITY: LIFE AT THE EDGE OF CHAOS*. CHICAGO, IL: UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
- MERTENS, D. M. (2014). A MOMENTOUS DEVELOPMENT IN MIXED METHODS RESEARCH. *JOURNAL OF MIXED METHODS RESEARCH*, 8, 3-5. DOI:10.1177/1558689813518230
- MERTENS, D. M., BAZELEY, P., BOWLEG, L., FIELDING, N. G., MAXWELL, J. A., MOLINA-AZOR, J. F., & NIGLAS, K. (2016). EXPANDING THINKING THROUGH A KALEIDOSCOPIIC LOOK INTO THE FUTURE: IMPLICATIONS OF THE MIXED METHODS INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION'S TASK FORCE REPORT ON THE FUTURE OF MIXED METHODS RESEARCH. *JOURNAL OF MIXED METHODS RESEARCH*, 10(3), 221-227. DOI:10.1177/1558689816649719
- PLANO CLARK, V. L., & IVANKOVA, N. V. (2016). *MIXED METHODS RESEARCH: A GUIDE TO THE FIELD*, THOUSAND OAKS, CA: SAGE