

SQUIP 2022 Conference

## **Round Table Discussion: Advancing the field of Qualitative Research in Psychology – a European Perspective**

Moderator: Carolin Demuth, Aalborg University

Speakers:

- Charlotte Højholt, Roskilde University, Denmark
- Julia Katila, Tampere University, Finland
- Brendan Gough, Leeds Beckett University, UK
- Angelo Benozzo, University of Valle d'Aosta, Italy

Overall abstract:

As qualitative research in psychology is gaining increasing popularity, we can see two major trends in the field: the first one is a canonization of a limited number of established procedures represented in various text books. This trend has been associated with the risk of conceiving of qualitative methods merely as analytical techniques without reflecting the theoretical traditions in which they were developed. Moreover, these prevailing procedures have been developed in anglo-american traditions and there has been an increasing call for decolonizing qualitative research in recent years. The second trend is a flourishing trend towards pluralization and increasing creativity in qualitative social research. While some scholars see a risk of not meeting established scientific criteria, others see great potential in these new developments. With this round table discussion, we aim at fostering a lively debate about how we can advance the field of qualitative research in psychology by broadening the scope of qualitative methods. Scholars from diverse European countries will present various approaches from their own research and discuss the potential of these approaches for genuinely psychological research questions.

Charlotte Højholt

Collaborative practice research: Inequality in school as an example

Rooted in a certain understanding of science - leading to a conceptual split between being in the world and knowing about it, between the practice of everyday life and the practice of creating knowledge and between researchers and professionals in social practice - qualitative research still seems to confront contradicting scientific criteria. This is restricting the possibilities for creating relevant and many-sided knowledge about common problems of persons' everyday life and about their contextual connections in social practice. As an illustrative example about current general problems and methodological challenges this paper will involve inequality in education. The increasing problems about inequality require new ways of understanding, conceptualizing and exploring unequal conditions of everyday life, and this is calling for innovative and collaborative ways to explore the dynamic

interrelation of societal and psychological processes. The paper will discuss methodological challenges for qualitative psychological research, particularly the relationship between researchers and those with whom they are researching, and both in relation to conceptual development, situated generalisation and more practical guidelines for research collaboration and fieldwork.

**A video-analytic perspective on studying kissing and hugging among romantic couples**  
**Julia Katila, Tampere University, Finland**

In this presentation, I will explore how intimate forms of human interaction can be studied by bringing together two different qualitative methods: phenomenologically informed video analysis and interviews. As an example, I will introduce my current research on kissing and hugging among romantic couples and describe how to combine the researcher's empathetic interpretation of the video materials with the research participants' accounts of their own interactional events after watching themselves on video. I will also reflect on whether and how these two perspectives can provide an avenue to understanding both the interactional and experiential aspects of the tactile interactions between the study participants.

**Brendan Gough: "The post-qualitative turn: promises and pitfalls"**

In this talk, I want to explore what the post-qualitative turn might mean for qualitative psychologists. On the one hand, an exciting world of creativity and experimentation can be envisaged, where researchers engage in flights of fancy, radical reflexivity and unconventional dissemination. On the other hand, an uncritical embrace of the post-qualitative may risk obfuscation, narcissism and alienation from (mainstream) qualitative psychology. My reflections stem from a recent paper where I imagined doing [post-]qualitative research centred around a topic of personal significance – my [difficult] relationship with my father – which entailed a mix of traditional [interviews; ethnographic observation] and 'experimental' [creative writing; conceptual interruptions] 'methods'. I conclude by advocating that the old and the new can inform each other and act as curbs on research that might otherwise be regarded as too safe or too indulgent.

**Art, experimentation and pluriverse in (qualitative) research**

Angelo Benozzo, University of Valle d'Aosta Italy

In this presentation, I show what has recently fueled my research, which can be summarized using three terms: art, experimentation and pluriverse. Firstly, in more recent years, I have found inspiration in the intertwining of the arts (literature, film, painting, installations...) with research; art is thinking, acting, and exploring emotions and this has recently become part of how I work creatively with empirical material and across the research process. A second trend that I am following closely comes under the heading experimentation, with all its implications of trying out new actions, new techniques, and new juxtapositions. Experimenting means breaking with what is taken for granted, doing something different, creating something new.

Lastly, I am guided by methodological pluralism and methodological pluriverse. Pluriverse is a world in which many other worlds can exist; it is a concept that moves between the politics of the real and the politics of the possible. The idea of pluriverse helps me to conceive of a methodology capable of constructing something different, something unusual and unique. What is needed is research and pluriverse methodologies that act to disturb the world, in the knowledge that all inquiry is both moral and political.