

# *Qualitative Psychology: Critical and Post-Structural Possibilities*

Conference and Special Interest Group at the  
11<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Qualitative  
Inquiry

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> –  
Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

Now that Qualitative Inquiry is a recognized approach to knowledge and research practice in psychology, it's time to think about the ways in which the process of constructing knowledge can embrace the complexity of contemporary life, beyond representations, reductions, and universals. This gathering of scholars, practitioners, and students explores some of the most significant and exciting innovations related to post-structural and critical philosophies.

## **Post-structural and critical inquiries in psychology**

*Critique is understood as an interrogation of the terms by which life is constrained in order to open up the possibility for different modes of living. (Butler, J. Undoing Gender, p. 4)*

We see post-structural inquiries as moving away from attempts to provide realistic, stable, or fixed representations and from referents and answers that are not situated in historical, political, and cultural positions. In underscoring the close link between (institutional) knowledge and power, poststructural approaches to knowledge explore, participate to, and deconstruct experiences and meanings as part of discursive frames, linguistic practices, and relational realities. Knowledges that are created are non-linear, fluid, and liminal between fields and disciplines. Rather than finding finite answers, it opens up possibilities, questions, and complexities, with an eye toward issues and constructions of social justice, inequality, and liberation.

*Qualitative research opens a space inside psychology to do something radically different to link human experience with social action (Parker, I. Qualitative Psychology, p. 1)*

Critical methodologies of research aim at creating social change while cognizant of the oppression that liberatory discourses may create on the supposed beneficiaries or participants. Aware of the political and agentic situatedness of every form of inquiry, critical researchers seek to achieve equality and/or foster resistance, usually through collaborative and mutual approaches to an identified social issue and the

knowledge/practice that may be developed or performed for its amelioration. Research is transformed into a reflexive and political practice that contributes to the empowerment of participants and to their resistance against institutionalized oppression.

### **Keynote Talks**

**2014 – Norman Denzin and Kenneth Gergen discuss post-structural and critical inquiries in psychology**

**Video 1 of Denzin & Gergen**

**Video 2 of Denzin & Gergen**

**2015 – Thomas Teo** has edited the brand new *Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology*, and is editor of the *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*. Dr. Teo's research focuses on critical studies in the history and theory of psychology.

### **Event Structure**

#### **Wednesday**

- We will start Wednesday morning with Thomas Teo's keynote presentation. His talk will be followed by a conversation/social hour with refreshments.
- His talk will be followed by a conversation/social hour with refreshments. Conversation roundtables, data playgrounds and selected paper sessions will round out the day's events.
- All attendees are invited to dinner Wednesday night at a local restaurant to be announced. Join our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/QualPsych.ICQI/> to see photos from last year.

#### **Friday and Saturday**

- Further paper and symposium sessions will be run in conjunction with the regular conference sessions Friday and Saturday.
- We will wrap up with a discussion session on Saturday afternoon, providing a venue for qualitative psychologists to reconnect and follow-up earlier conversations before we end for the year!

Come join us for these exciting events – even better submit a paper, host a conversation roundtable or share your intellectual challenges with us in a data playground. We would love to hear from you!

#### **Briefly:**

- Please submit your abstracts for the DAY IN QUALITATIVE PSYCHOLOGY through the conference website: <http://www.icqi.org/>.
- Abstracts need to be of 150 words or less.
- Each submission should clearly specify its category: conversation roundtable, paper presentation, or data playground.
- ***Follow specific directions unique to each type of presentation. Complete submissions will be given first consideration.***

**Abstract submission deadline: 1 December 2014**

More details of the requirements of various sessions and submission directions are presented in our call for papers:

Please be aware that this conference does not provide electronic equipment, such as computers or projectors. Please feel free to contact the conference organizers for clarification or assistance related to your submission or attendance at the Day in Qualitative Psychology. We look forward to seeing you in May 2015!

Conference organizers:

- Michael Kral, Wayne State University, USA, [michael.kral@wayne.edu](mailto:michael.kral@wayne.edu) (co-chair)
- Heather Adams, Trauma & Change Research Group, USA, [Heatheradams@Traumaandchange.com](mailto:Heatheradams@Traumaandchange.com) (co-chair)
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