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Culturally Responsive Research: Answering the Call

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Culturally Responsive Research: Answering the Call

Maria K. E. Lahman, Ph.D.

Answering the Call

- Research should create change for the good.
 - Goodness (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman Davis, 1997)
 - Positive Psychology (coined in 1998 by Martin E.P. Seligman, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi)
 - Hope Psychology
- How can we begin to discern what is “good” in research?
 - Create trust with research participants
 - Listen to research participants
 - Collaborate and co-create research with participants



In this session we will—

- become grounded in the Tenets of Culturally Responsive Qualitative Research
- explore the qualities of a qualitative researcher
- consider a culturally responsive methodology
- receive actionable reflexive takeaways

The Tenets of Culturally Responsive Qualitative Research

- One Another
- Intersectionality
- Critical Whiteness
- Story as Sacred
- Commitment



An unrestrained
acknowledgement of the
Other . . .
a genuine turn to the Other is
needed.

—Avakian (2015, p. 81)



One Another

NOT “the Other”

- othered, othering, otherness, otherization, study of the “foreign” other
- “*Othering* is a process that identifies those that are thought to be different from oneself or the mainstream and it can reinforce and reproduce positions of domination and subordination” (Johnson et al., 2004, p. 254).
- *Othering* dehumanizes, objectifies, and distances the research participant as an exotic specimen from the researcher.
- *Othering* is powerful and hard to sway or influence since it is not only the way we mark people, but also the way we identify ourselves in relation to others.
- Schwandt (2015) reminds us we cannot escape **Othering** through a critical stance; all research is based on an attempt to understand the Other. understood, there would be no Other.

One Another

- What is needed then, is a deep reflexive consideration of self and
- a genuine turn to the other characterized by
 - attentive listening
 - consideration
 - collaboration
 - co-creation
 - relationship with one another



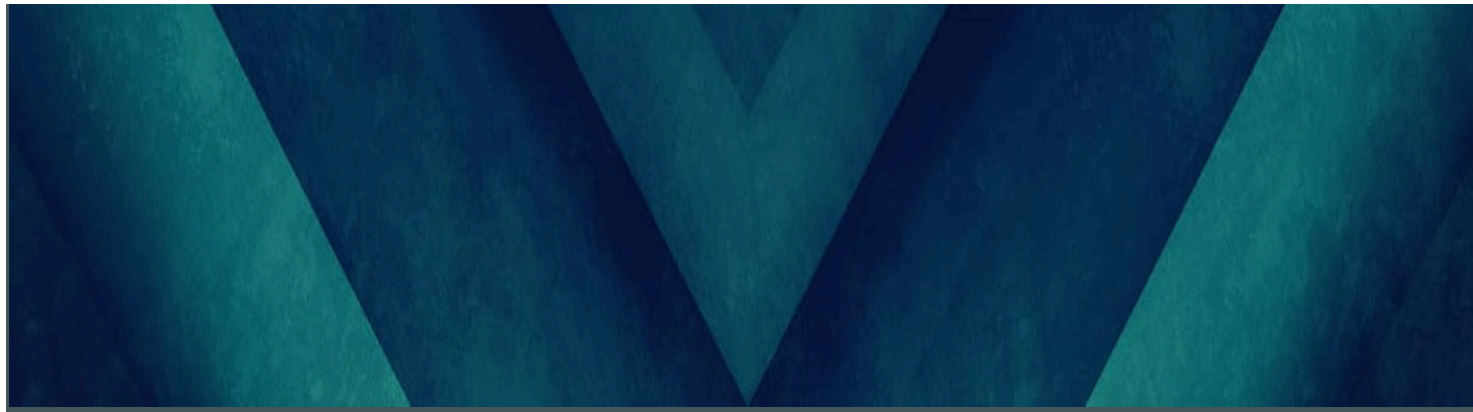
Intersectionality

- A consideration of your personal identities and those of the people you research
 - how these identities are integrated
 - how these identities change and shift contextual
 - the impact of identities on you as a researcher and your research
 - the impact of research participants' identities on their research experiences
- A commitment to “pre-research” about and with those you plan to do research with
 - “reading up” on groups and their historical relationship to research
 - consulting with community members and scholars prior to research commencing

See Collins, Hill, & Sirma , 2020; Crenshaw, 2017; Ric, Harrison, & Friedman, 2019, and The Journal of Intersectionality

Critical Whiteness

- Critical Whiteness in research is a theoretical stance that all researchers can use. It is a commitment to
 - researching and seeking to change the structures that create white privilege
- For white researchers, it is an acknowledgment of our white privilege and how we have benefitted from it historically and contemporarily
 - being attentive to perspectives other than ours
 - being open to ideas, stories, and perspectives that we may feel defensive about or initially not understand
 - a candid assessment of the space we occupy in higher education
 - consideration of how we got there and
 - sustained, collaborative effort to create space where all can thrive
- See Delgado, & Stefancic, 1997; Journal of Whiteness and Education

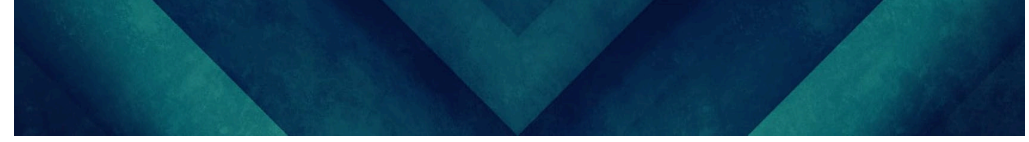


“until we...are willing to break down whiteness, the hope of racial justice and anti-racism become a faint balloon rising beyond the horizon and drifting away ”

—Cheryl Matias &
Janiece Mackey (2016)

Story as Sacred

- Story as Sacred has two important aspects
- **reverence**—as researchers, we need to revere the stories participants have shared with us.
 - reverence—a deep and abiding respect, regard, honor
- commitment to looking for those moments in stories where research participants share **memories they return to**—turn to
 - to glimpse the transcendent
 - that inform who they are becoming
 - or to address life's big Wonder or small moments of wonders.

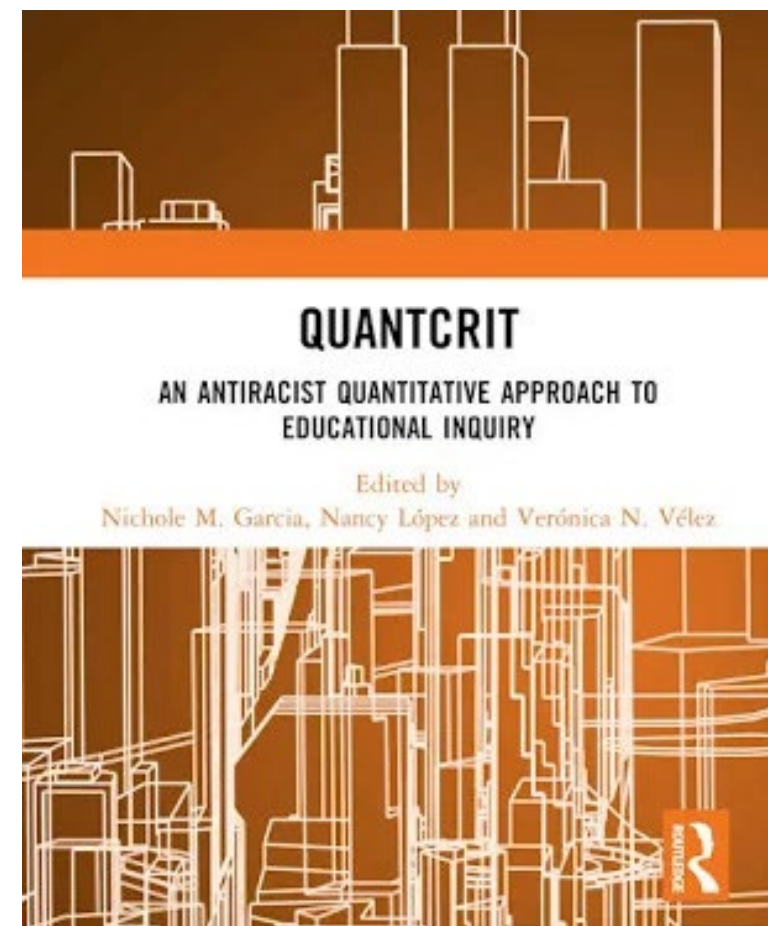


Commitment

- to an extensive effort to understand oneself before researching others
- to a sincere attempt to create research *with* the research participants and NOT of the participants. This may include but is not limited to, **co-constructed research, collaborative research, participant action research (PAR), and critical research methods.**
- to an integration of moments throughout the research where research participants may express
 - their experience with the research and
 - how the research might be amended for the current research or
 - for future research experiences

An Aside to Quantitative Researchers

- Culturally responsive research is beginning to burgeon in quantitative ways.
- Quant/Crit is an excellent example—“The five tenets of QuantCrit include
- recognizing the centrality of racism and how it is "intertwined in the fabric of society";
- acknowledging that numbers are not neutral since there can be a lack of objectivity in how data is collected;
- understanding that categories of race are not natural or given and that race can be socially constructed;
- conceding that data cannot speak for itself because biased people need to analyze it; and
- orienting the focus of research around social justice and equity” (Mazarakis, 2023).



Qualities of a Culturally Responsive Researcher

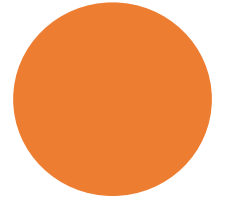
The Qualities of a Qualitative Culturally Responsive Researcher

- Reflexive
 - Curious
 - Caring
 - Trustworthy
 - Responsive
 - Flexible
 - Joyful
 - Humble
 - Intrepid
 - Becoming
- What else?
 - Which 2 to 3 **qualities of a culturally responsive researcher** can you choose as a focus in your current or upcoming research?



Joyful

- I think of this quality seen in one who
 - researches their joy and
 - can experience and relish moments of joy in research.
- Researching joy does not exclude sadness or “the bad”
 - We can not feel joy if we have never felt sorrow
- Researching your joy allows research to renew and sustain us.



“Your joy is your
sorrow
unmasked”.

—*Kahlil Gibran*

Please share in the chat what gives
you joy.

Joy

- “Joy” without sorrow is merely pleasure, a fleeting sensation.
- We see this idea born out in major spiritual and religious beliefs across history and the globe.
- Poets, philosophers, and spiritual writers have long described the inseparable nature of joy and sorrow

For instance

- “Praise and blame, gain and loss, pleasure and sorrow come and go like the wind. To be happy, rest like a giant tree in the midst of them all”.

—*Buddha*

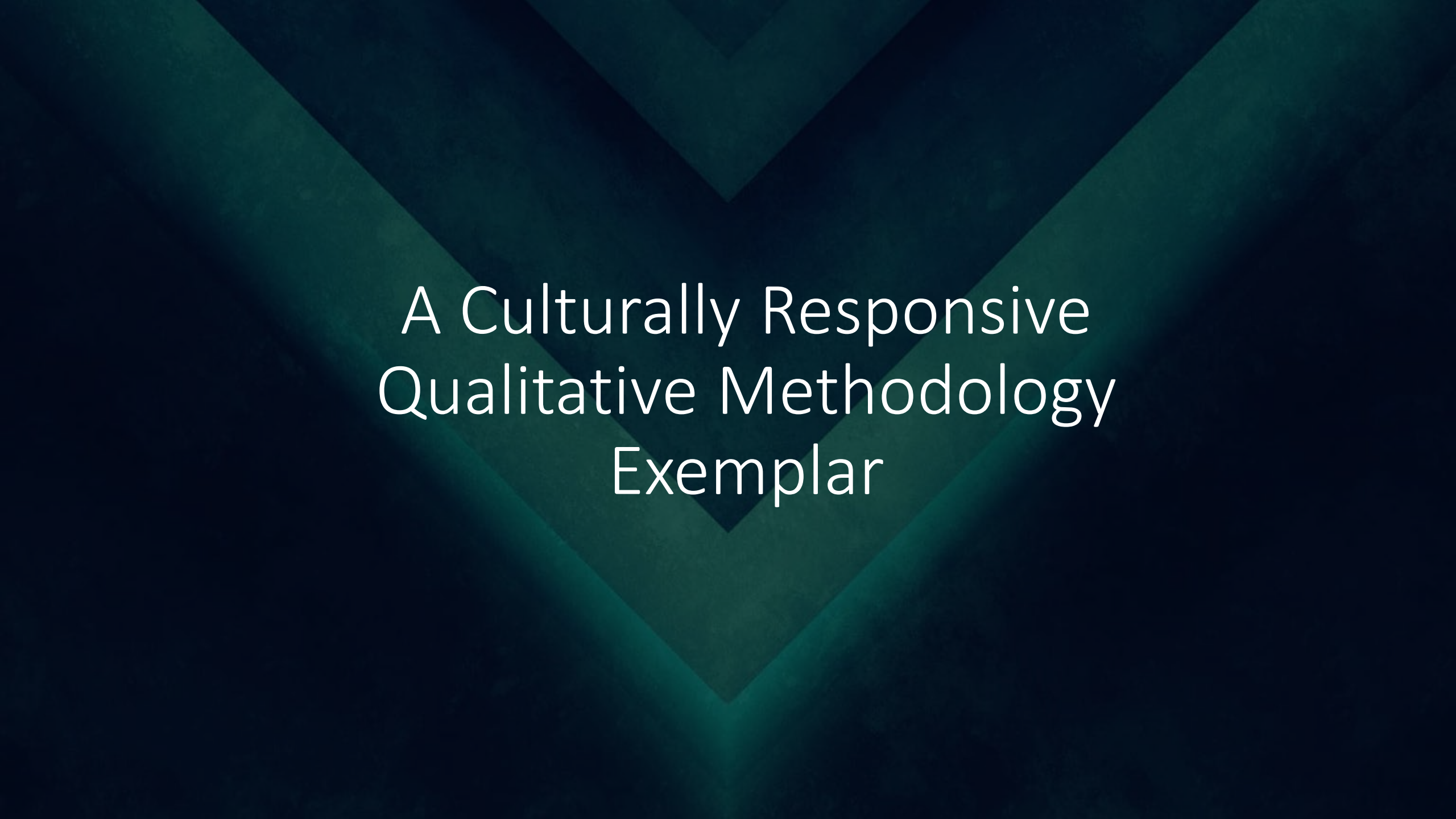
An Exemplar of Joy

- Dr. Muhammad (2022) writing in the context of critical pedagogical research with Black children, says,
- “*criticality* is a pursuit that teaches students the ability to name, understand, question, interrupt, and ultimately dismantle oppression, including racism” (p. 200).
- “Black joy involves a collection of memories of resistance, trauma, survival, love, and cultural expressions and that when we center joy, it allows Black children to see not just pain and struggle but hope and aspirations” (p. 200).
- Dr. Muhammad seeks to understand
 - 1. “What is joy and why does it matter for education, particularly for Black youth?
 - 2. How can joy be cultivated alongside nurturing students’ genius?
 - 3. How do genius and joy look in classroom learning through lesson examples?” (p. 196)

"Weeping may
endure for a night,
but joy cometh in
the morning."

—Psalm 30:5

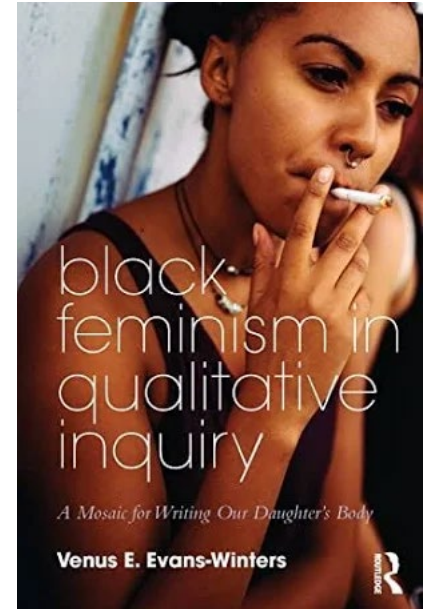
Please share in the chat what gives
you joy *in research*.



A Culturally Responsive Qualitative Methodology Exemplar

Daughtering and Black Feminism in Qualitative Inquiry

- Dr. Venus Evans-William (2019), *Black Feminism in Qualitative Inquiry: A Mosaic for Writing Our Daughter's Body*
- *Daughtering* is used to center one aspect of “black girls’ and women” stories.
- In Dr. Evans-Winters’ text, daughtering represents black girls’ relationship with their family and larger community.
- Dr. Evans-Williams offers that black girls’ families and communities teach them to support their household and be advocates who stand up for vulnerable people in their neighborhood.
- Through the perspective of daughtering in black feminism, researchers may better understand these women’s experiences.



Actionable Reflexive Takeaways

Can you commit to making an entry in a research journal several times a week about your intent to craft **culturally responsive research**?

What can you commit to reading, following, attending, or doing that will deepen your culturally responsive qualitative research understandings?

Consider volunteering for AuthorAid <https://www.authoraaid.info/en/about/>

a free, volunteer run global network that provides support for researchers in learning how to publish their research.

Consider the qualities of a qualitative researcher

- What qualities would you add to this list?
- Which of these qualities do you have in abundance?
- Which of these qualities do you have but could cultivate more?
- Which of these qualities are not ones you think of yourself as having?
- How could you grow in these areas?
- Which 2 to 3 **qualities of a qualitative researcher** can you choose as a focus in your current or upcoming research?

References and Resources

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Crafting Culturally Responsive Qualitative Research Part I: Webinar 2 April 17, 6:00 pm USA Mountain Time

Topics covered include

- creating rich metaphors for research with a Guest Cameo—Stephen Vaughn, Ph. D. Candidate in Music Education and a contributor to the text.
 - crafting research for global audiences/avoiding localism
 - creating a comprehensive culturally responsive literature review
 - co-research and collaborative research
 - crafting a personal critical theoretical perspectives
 - methodological exemplars
 - personal research qualities
-
- We will raffle two more copies of my forthcoming text!