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**QUALITATIVE INQUIRY IN TROUBLED TIMES**

May 16-19, 2018

The theme of the 2018 Congress is “Qualitative Inquiry In Troubled Times.” These are troubled times. The global right is on the rise, north, south, east, west. It is setting the agenda for public discourse on the social good. In so doing it is narrowing the spaces for civic discourse. A rein of fear is on the rise. Repression is in the air: Brexit, the Trump presidency, global protest. Dissent is silenced. The world is at war with itself. The moral and ethical foundations of democracy are under assault. The politics may be local, but the power is global, the fear is visceral. We are global citizens trapped in a world we did not create, nor want any part of.

Public unions, education and civic, participatory social science are in jeopardy. Academics and pacifists critical of the public order risk being as branded traitors. Critical qualitative, interpretive research risk being stifled by federal administrators who define what constitutes acceptable science. Right-wing politicians silence criticism while implementing a “resurgent racism... [involving] punitive attacks on the intellectuals, the poor, urban youth, and people of color (Giroux, Henry. 2016. “Donald Trump and the Plague of Atomization in a Neoliberal Age.” Truthout. 8 August).

There has never been a greater need for a critical qualitative inquiry that matters, a discourse that pushes back. A discourse committed to a politics of resistance, a politics of possibility, a politics that dares to dream of social justice, to dream of equity, peace and a world without violence.

This is the calling of the 2018 Congress, can we collectively live our way through these troubled times, and push through into newly imagined utopian spaces. Can we train a new generation of engaged scholars and community leaders who will lead us into these uncharted territories.

The 2018 Congress offers scholars the opportunity to foreground, interrogate, imagine and engage new ways of doing critical qualitative inquiry in these troubling time. Sessions will take up such topics as: redefinitions of the public university, neoliberal accountability metrics, attacks on freedom of speech, threats to shared governance, the politics of advocacy, value-free inquiry, partisanship, the politics of evidence, public policy discourse, indigenous research ethics, decolonizing inquiry.

Scholars come to the Congress to resist, to celebrate community, to experiment with traditional and new methodologies, with new technologies of representation. Together we seek to develop guidelines and exemplars concerning advocacy, inquiry and social justice concerns. We share a commitment to change the world, to engage in ethical work what makes a positive difference. As critical scholars our task is to bring the past and the future into the present, allowing us to engage realistic utopian pedagogies of hope.

Scholars from around the world have accepted the challenge to gather together in common purpose to collectively imagine creative and critical responses to a global community in crisis. The Fourteenth International Congress offers us an opportunity to experiment, take risks, explore new presentational forms, share experiences, problems and hopes concerning the conduct of critical qualitative inquiry in this time of global uncertainty.

## Keynotes:

### *Seduction and desire: the power of spectacle*

Bronwyn Davies., University of Melbourne and Western Sidney University

Since January 2017 we have been witness to an extraordinary spectacle. Courtesy of the e-media we can get up each morning to gaze aghast at the latest episode of a drama we have fast become addicted to — America’s “very big” real life reality tv show. Such spectacles, in their capacity to engage avid, global attention, work on us all, in ways we are not necessarily conscious of. There is a dynamic at work in this spectacle that is, I will suggest, the culmination of neo-liberal ideology and practice, and is made possible by the global explosion of internet usage. The task for qualitative researchers, I will argue, is to bring concepts to bear on the micro and macro elements of the spectacle, to make sense of how January 2017 and its aftermath became possible; and to produce an insightful analysis of the lines of force at work shaping and produced by the spectacle. Never have we had such rich data to work with! The video clips of Trump, and of his Greek chorus cheering him on; his tweets; the protesters; the comedians; the political activists; the judges; the journalists of the alt-right and those holding the ground of critique. Our job as social scientists is to pry open the dynamics of the spectacle to discover how they work—and how to deconstruct them. In this paper I will mobilise Baudrillard’s concepts of seduction and desire to see how they might be put to work in such an analysis.

### *Stitching Tattered Cloth: Reflections on Social Justice and Qualitative Inquiry in Turbulent Contexts*

Karen Staller, University of Michigan

Chaos, it appears, is the order of the day. Democratic practices, principles, and institutions are under attack. Freedoms of religion, movement, assembly, and speech are being threatened. Hostilities, fears, and suspicions of “others” are being stoked based on differences by nativity, ethnicity, race, religion, class, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and ability status. Political and social battlefronts have sprouted everywhere: borders and bathrooms, coastlines and clinics, embassies and airports, sacred lands and sanctuary cities. All seem to require immediate attention. We are facing troubled times, giving rise to questions about the role of qualitative inquiry in these turbulent contexts.

Historically, qualitative researchers have asked questions about the politics of evidence; but what does that look like in an era of “alternative facts” and “fake news”? We have resisted the ‘audit culture’ in the academy, but what happens when the academy itself is under attack? We have

asked whose interpretation or narrative counts; but how do we honor local and situated knowledge when those views may deeply offend our own sensibilities and appear threatening to human rights? We have advocated community engagement but what is the role of action-based and participatory methodologies, where action is being called for on both sides of ideological battle lines? Is it possible to ‘give voice’ to others and take action in a world comprised of political camps informed by fundamentally incompatible views of reality? In general, we have used qualitative inquiry to expose fault lines and resist oppressions but have we done enough to bridge differences, to find common ground, or to stitch seams along frayed edges?

This keynote will be based on a year long project musing about the role of qualitative inquiry in turbulent times. Using critical inquiry and social work values this keynote will be pieced together from scraps gathered in a diary of field notes reflecting on conversations in classrooms, on campuses, at community forums, between protesters, over email, through tweets, or derived from news accounts, political cartoons, or other threads of qualitative evidence.

For over a decade the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry has incubated ideas and conversations in a cozy cocoon. More than ever before the time feels right to reflect on its significance as an organizing space for global advocacy and as a collective force for infusing a more hopeful, compassionate, and forgiving worldview by inviting all those who share similar values and principles to join the movement.

# Qualitative Book Award

Athens, GA30602, USA  
roulston@uga.edu

## Call for Nominations

This award is conferred annually to a member of the qualitative and ethnographic community who has published the English-language book that best represents an important contribution to qualitative inquiry. Eligible books should not be edited books or anthologies. They should be single or co-authored. They will use and advance qualitative methods to investigate any topic or aspect of qualitative inquiry and may involve research reports, interpretations, and analyses. Please note that material intended to serve as textbooks rarely meets the criteria outlined here.

Applications for the award will be judged by criteria that signify a major contribution to the study and practice of qualitative approaches. Such criteria may include success in experimenting with new or traditional writing forms, inclusion of critical reflections on the writing and research process, contributions to living meaningful lives, and insights into creating a socially just world. The award will be presented at the annual meeting of the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry in May 2018.

To be eligible for the 2018 award, the book must be published between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017. Nominators are expected to arrange for copies of the book to be mailed to and received by each member of the three-judge panel.

A letter of nomination for the book should be sent via email or hard copy, no later than 13 November, 2017, to Kathryn Roulston, chair of the committee, at [roulston@uga.edu](mailto:roulston@uga.edu)

Nominators must arrange for hard copies of the book to be mailed to and received by each member of the three-judge panel by December 1st, 2017.

Addresses are as follows:

Kathryn Roulston  
Department of Lifelong Education, Administration  
and Policy  
College of Education  
University of Georgia  
308 Rivers Crossing

Pat Sikes  
University of Sheffield  
School of Education  
Edgar Allen House  
241 Glossop Road  
Sheffield  
S10 2GW UK  
[p.j.sikes@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:p.j.sikes@sheffield.ac.uk)

Ronald Pelias  
109 Gentry Circle  
Lafayette, LA 70508  
[rpelias@siu.edu](mailto:rpelias@siu.edu)

# Lifetime Achievement Award

## Call for Nominations

The International Center for Qualitative Inquiry is pleased to announce the call for nominations for the 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award in Qualitative Inquiry. The award is conferred annually to a member of the qualitative and ethnographic community for lifetime contributions to the methods, theory, practice, and dissemination of qualitative inquiry.

The award will be presented at the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry Conference in May 2018. The recipient will be notified no later than March 26th, 2018 and is strongly encouraged to attend the Congress for the formal presentation of the award.

Nominators should send a letter outlining the nominee's qualifications for the award—preferably by e-mail—no later than January 15. Include a curriculum vitae for the nominee, if available. Because a lifetime of achievement does not diminish from one year to the next, those nominated for this award in 2010-2017 will automatically be considered for 2018. A list of the people already under consideration is available below. There is no need to resubmit nominations from previous years, though anyone wishing to supplement an existing nomination or write an additional letter of support is encouraged to do so by the deadline.

Recipients in previous years have been:

2009 Norman K. Denzin  
2010 Yvonna S. Lincoln  
2011 Janice M. Morse  
2012 Carolyn S. Ellis  
2013 Laurel Richardson  
2014 Judith Preissle  
2015 Patricia Lather  
2016 Arthur P. Bochner  
2017 Ron Pelias

Send letters of nomination, supporting information, and a current curriculum vitae of the nominee to Stacy Holman Jones, Chair of the Lifetime Achievement Award in Qualitative Inquiry Committee via email at: [stacy.holmanjones@monash.edu](mailto:stacy.holmanjones@monash.edu)

## LIST OF ACTIVE NOMINEES

### 2018 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

Howard Becker  
Daniel Bertaux  
Kathy Charmaz  
Ron Chenail  
Jean Clandinin  
Fred Erickson  
Kim Etherington  
Robert Gephart  
Theophilus Gokah  
Jaber Gubrium  
Valerie Janesick  
Joe Kinchloe  
Patricia Leavy  
David Maines  
Mary Katherine O'Connor  
Deborah Padgett  
Bert Peltó  
Jerry Philipsen  
Naama Sabar  
Johnny Saldaña  
Barbara Sharf  
Robert Stake  
David Silverman

# Submission guidelines for the Illinois Qualitative Dissertation Award

The International Institute for Qualitative Inquiry is pleased to announce the annual Illinois Qualitative Dissertation Award, for excellence in qualitative research in a doctoral dissertation. Eligible dissertations will use and advance qualitative methods to investigate any topic. Applications for the award will be judged by the following criteria: clarity of writing; willingness to experiment with new and traditional writing forms; advocacy, promotion, development, and use of qualitative research methodologies and practices in new fields of study, and in policy arenas involving issues of social justice.

There are two award categories, experimental (Category A), and traditional or a combination of methodological strategies (Category B). Submissions are expected to address social justice issues. Category A submissions experiment with traditional writing and representational forms. Submissions in Category B use traditional qualitative research and writing forms, including a combination of methodological strategies.

All doctoral candidates are eligible, provided they have successfully defended their dissertations within the past three years. Receiving or being considered for other awards does not preclude a student from applying for this award. Applications are due 16 January. The award, co-sponsored with Sage Publications, Francis & Taylor, and MAXQDA/VERBI will be made at the closing townhall meeting of the Congress. During the Congress award winners will be showcased in a spotlight panel, where they will be expected to present a sample of their work. Award winners will be announced by 24 March.

Applicants must submit one (1) electronic copy of the following documents:

A cover letter indicating interest in the award that includes the applicant's name, address, university, telephone number, email address, department, date of dissertation proposal defense, the current status of the dissertation, and the category to which the applicant is applying (Category A=Experimental; Category

B=Traditional)

A letter from the applicant's dissertation advisor/chair recommending the applicant's work for the award and verifying the date of the dissertation proposal defense. (note: this letter may be sent under separate cover).

A research description of no more than five (5) double-spaced pages: approximately two (2) pages of introduction and theory, two (2) pages on the methodology, and one (1) page on the significance of the work. Finalists may be asked to submit their full proposal or additional information at a later date.

One (1) sample chapter from the dissertation that shows through example your direct engagement with qualitative inquiry.

A Table of Contents from the dissertation.

An electronic copy should be submitted via e-mail as attachments (PDF format or MS-Word only) to [icq-idissawards2017@gmail.com](mailto:icq-idissawards2017@gmail.com)

Note: An application will not be considered complete until an electronic copy is received in our office.

## 2017 Congress Award Winners

2017 Illinois Qualitative Dissertation Award—  
co-sponsors: Sage Publications, Emerald Publishing  
Group, MAXQDA

2017 Illinois Distinguished Qualitative Disserta-  
tion Award

Category A: Experimental

Dominique C. Hill (2014). *Trangressngroove: An  
exploration of Black girlhood, the body and education.*  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Category B: traditional (co-winners)

Erin Parke (2016). *Chasing zebras: Rediscovering  
identity after illness.* University of South Florida.

Shuning Liu (2016). *Becoming International:  
High School Choices and Educational Experiences of  
Chinese Students Who Choose to Go to U.S. Colleges.*  
University of Wisconsin, Madison.

2017 Outstanding Qualitative Book Award

K. Bhattatharya, & N. K. Gillen (2016). *Power,  
Race, and Higher Education” A Cross-Cultural Paral-  
lel Narrative.* Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Honorable Mention

T. Spry (2016). *Autoethnography and the Other:  
Unsettling Power Through Utopian Performatives.*  
New York: Routledge.

2017 Lifetime Achievement Award in Qualitative  
Inquiry for dedication and contributions to qualitative  
research, teaching, and practice

Ronald J. Pelias

## Dissertation Award Winners 2017

Experimental category:

Dominique C. Hill (2014). *Trangressngroove: An  
exploration of Black girlhood, the body and education.*  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Advisor: Dr. Ruth Brown

In her dissertation, Dr. Hill has interrogated the  
Black female body and its embodiment, including the  
body in dance, creative writing, fluidity, and perfor-  
mance. This text grabs the reader, the word choices  
move those engaging with the text, and the readers are  
left with sense of care, transformation, cultural speci-  
ficity, and experimentation. Many risks were taken in  
this theoretically very well informed and arts-infused  
feminist auto/ethnography making this work vulnera-  
ble and humble yet extremely powerful. Using poetry,  
dance, and performance, her work serves to disrupt  
the normative and to reject a compartmentalization  
of identity by integrating workshops with Black girls,  
photos, texts, and art-based poetry and dance recollec-  
tions. Creation of terms, labels, forms of representa-  
tion were inspiring; fusions of not only methodology  
but also subjectivities, expressions, styles, images,  
discourses were well executed. *Transgressn!*

Traditional category:

Shuning Liu (2016). *Becoming International:  
High School Choices and Educational Experiences of  
Chinese Students Who Choose to Go to U.S. Colleges.*  
University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Advisor: Dr. Michael Apple

Dr. Liu’s dissertation exemplified wonderful,  
thick, deep, multilayered investigation into Chinese  
students’ school choices and educational experiences.  
Liu’s dissertation involved extensive field research  
on Chinese students who are preparing to study in the  
United States and on their schooling experiences in  
China. This is an important topic since large numbers  
of Chinese students and their families are turning to  
alternative educational routes to gain and practice  
national and international mobility. Theoretically this  
dissertation is not only highly sophisticated and care-  
fully thought out but also multidimensional. This work  
offers a substantive examination of complex educa-  
tional and intracultural processes, political and educa-  
tional assumptions followed by many important policy  
implications. The topic could not be timelier during

# Report from the 2017 International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry Qualitative Book Award

Members of the Qualitative Book Award committee, Ron Pelias, Pat Sikes and Kathy Roulston reviewed 18 nominations for the Qualitative Book award this year. The books nominated each contribute in unique ways to the field of qualitative inquiry by experimenting with new forms of writing, and represent diverse approaches to how we think about writing and the research process, and how qualitative studies might contribute to creating a more just world. Overall, the panel members had a very difficult time making decisions this year.

Honorable mention was awarded to:

Spry, T. (2016). *Autoethnography and the other: Unsettling power through utopian performatives*. New York and London: Routledge.

In this book, Tami Spry outlines a performative autoethnography that both unsettles the “I” and represents the Other. Reflecting on examples from her earlier work, Spry reframes performative autoethnography as transgressive, liberatory, and decolonizing for both self and Other. Using performative and poetic texts interwoven with theoretical reflections, Spry examines the reception to earlier performances – both at the time of performances and in written responses and debates that have followed. These reflexive examinations of performative ethnographies both illuminate the challenges in doing this kind of work, and point to the ways in which a “utopian performative methodology” can be used for the work of “autoethnographic engagement for the Inappropriate/d Other and the unsettled performative-I” (Spry, 2016, Ch. 1). Spry also offers an example of how this approach might be integrated in teaching. Spry’s book shows how utopian performative autoethnographies entangle past and present, self and other; and point the way to an autoethnographic methodology “beyond a representation of differences” (Ch. 1).

The winner of the 2017 Qualitative Book Award went to:

Bhattacharya, K., & Gillen, N. K. (2016). *Power,*

*race, and higher education: A cross-cultural parallel narrative*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

“Riveting, courageous, innovative and brave!” is how Rita Irwin describes this book. *Power, race, and higher education: A cross-cultural parallel narrative* represents tells the story of a South Asian woman, scholar, mentor and advisor as she works with a white male doctoral student undertaking dissertation research with a woman of color. The book is rich and engaging, and innovative in scope and organization. Using stories, reflections, dialogue and ethnodrama, the authors explore questions to do with cross-cultural studies, and the challenges entailed in recognizing how one might benefit from systemic privilege, as well as what to do next. This narrative about the dilemmas involved in interrogating white privilege raises important issues, questions and strategies for teachers in higher education to ponder along with their students. To quote Laurel Richardson from the foreword of this book, “this book is a gift to any academic who wants a pedagogy that can construct bridges between cultures, genders, and race.” The authors conclude the book with suggestions for others whose teaching involves race, ethnicity, multiculturalism, power, qualitative methods and arts-based research (p. 189), while recognizing that in doing this work, anything can happen, and there are no easy answers or quick fixes.

Members of the book review panel commend these books to you.

Kathryn Roulston, Pat Sikes & Ron Pelias

current political climate partially because it is situated in global educational spaces where various forces impact students' educational choices and well-being and shape the increasing marketization of education.

Erin Parke (2016). *Chasing zebras: Rediscovering identity after illness*. University of South Florida.

Advisor: Dr. Patricia Jones

This autoethnographic journey through Dr. Parke's illness—anti NMDAR encephalitis—recounts her symptomatic emotional outbursts, her puzzlement and confusion, her decline and regression, her diagnosis, and her subsequent return to working and academic life. This work is real. It is passionate. It is painful. Through her remarkable path, we see traces of human error and emotional ebb and flows of the mental healthcare industry, of interpersonal relationships with family and spouse, and of Dr. Parke's slow dawning of recognition of her own fallibility within a system that historically and currently relies on stigmatization as a way of locking people into easily-digestible stereotypes.



# Journal of Interdisciplinary Voice Studies

We are pleased to announce the publication of issue 2.2 of the Journal of Interdisciplinary Voice Studies, a special issue on the topic of 'Voicing Belonging: Traditional Singing in a Globalized World' co-edited by Konstantinos Thomaidis (University of Exeter, UK) and Virginie Magnat (University of British Columbia, Canada).

## CONTENTS

### A DIPHONIC EDITORIAL

Voicing belonging: Traditional singing in a globalized world

by Konstantinos Thomaidis and Virginie Magnat

### ARTICLES

Constructing the singing voice: Vocal style, aesthetics and the body in Okinawan music

by Matt Gillan

South Indian singing, digital dissemination and belonging in London's Tamil diaspora

by Jasmine Hornabrook

Singing the nation: Contemporary Greek rebetiko performance as carnivalesque

by Yona Stamatidis

The transmission of voicing in traditional Gwoka: Between identity and memory

by Marie Tahon and Pierre-Eugène Sitchet

### VOICINGS

Maud's Song and Heraclitus's Logos: Journal fragments

by Maria Gaitanidi

Songs of tradition as training in higher education?

by Ditte Berkeley-Schultz and Electa Behrens

### REVIEWS

VoiceEncounters, Wrocław, the Grotowski Institute, 14–24 April 2016, reviewed by Konstantinos Thomaidis

The 21st-Century Voice: Contemporary and Tradi-

tional Extra-Normal Voice, 2nd ed., Michael Edward Edgerton (2015) Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, reviewed by Robert O. Behrs

Vocal Music and Contemporary Identities: Unlimited Voices in East Asia and the West, Christian Utz and Frederick Lau (eds) (2013) New York and London: Routledge, reviewed by Huyn Kyong Hannah Chang

Korean Musical Drama: P'ansori and the Making of Tradition in Modernity, Haekyung Um (2013) Farnham: Ashgate, reviewed by Tara McAllister-Viel

The Voice in the Drum: Music, Language, and Emotion in Islamate South Asia, Richard K. Wolf (2014) Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, reviewed by Daniel Akira Stadnicki

Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia, Ana María Ochoa Gautier (2014) Durham, NC: Duke University Press, reviewed by Jessica A. Schwartz

For further information on the journal, please visit: <https://www.intellectbooks.co.uk/journals/view-Journal,id=248/>

If your institution does not subscribe to the journal, feel free to recommend it to your librarian: <https://www.intellectbooks.co.uk/journals/view-Journal,id=248/view,page=1/>

Kind regards,  
Virginie Magnat and Konstantinos Thomaidis

Virginie Magnat, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Performance

<http://www.ubc.ca/okanagan/fccs/faculty/vmagnat.html>

# Forum of Critical Chinese Qualitative Research

Annual Report—A Reflexive Summary

Ping-Chun Hsiung, Chair

2017

## Second Pre-Conference for the Forum of Critical Chinese Qualitative Research

As a Special Interest Group, the Forum of Critical Chinese Qualitative Research held its 2<sup>nd</sup> pre-conference in conjunction with the 13<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, May 17, 2017. With the intellectual commitment of Dr. Norman Denzin and administrative support of Dr. James Salvo, the Forum became a dynamic, stimulating space of intellectual activism among Chinese practitioners of qualitative research. Seven practitioners shared their substantive findings and/or methodological insights:

- Man Xu (PhD student, Sociology, University of Toronto) discussed methodological challenges arising from her fieldwork in a community of Syrian refugees living in Lebanon. Man illustrated how she has come to recognize her own conceptual baggage and what it means to practice criticality in qualitative research.
- Catherine Cheng (PhD candidate, Sociology, University of Toronto) examined informants' agency in her study of Chinese marriage migrants in Taiwan. Catherine demonstrated how, for example, through emotional connectivity, the Chinese marriage migrants assert their agency in co-producing ethnographic knowledge.
- Yige Dong (PhD candidate, Sociology, Johns Hopkins) problematized the Western-centered methodological presentism in studying women and work in a non-Western context. Through her research on Chinese care providers in the public sphere, Yige argued that it is imperative for qualitative practitioners to develop a "lens of the past" to understand societies that have undergone radical changes in the political economy.
- Jiling Duan (PhD student, Department of Gender Studies, Indiana University Bloomington) discussed the mobilizing strategies and de-centered networks employed by a new cohort of Chinese feminist ac-

tivists. She also reflected upon her own feminist involvement and practices.

- Di Wang (PhD student, Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison) analyzed how Chinese LGBT activists have challenged homophobic discourse and made the state accountable through litigation. Di examined the legal mobilizing mechanism that transforms personal struggles into collective activism.
- Xiying Wang (Associate Professor, Beijing Normal University) discussed narratives of transnational intimacy among Chinese-Western couples in Beijing. Xiying identified salient patterns in those narratives and how they play out in everyday life.
- Pengfei Zhao, (PhD, Inquiry Methodology Program, Indiana University) presented the findings of her dissertation research on Chinese youth who had studied in the cities but then returned to the countryside for employment. Taking a methodological stance, Pengfei discussed how the notion of "eating bitterness" is used by Chinese returned youth to articulate their employment experiences upon their return.

During the Q & A, participants and presenters engaged in lively discussion on questions such as what it meant to practice critical qualitative research as Chinese diaspora; how individuals could move forward with their research projects; how the Forum as a collective undertaking could advance the field.

## Strategic Planning, 2017-18

In the last session, we identified specific tasks that would simultaneously facilitate individual participants' intellectual development and consolidate the Forum as a space for intellectual activism. We agreed upon three specific undertakings:

### 1) *Writing as a means of intellectual activism:*

Individual participants are invited to submit a reflective piece on their participation in the Forum, intellectual activism, and/or and substantive or methodological issues in critical qualitative research. The pieces will be posted on the Forum's website. They will also be submitted to the news-

letter of ICQI.

2) *Establishing inter-institutional mentorship:*

As the Chair, I will proactively facilitate inter-institutional mentorship by inviting interested participants to co-review journal manuscripts, recommending individual participants for professional opportunities and/or coordinating professional activities using the e-mail lists of 2016 and 2017. This is to utilize the Forum as an intellectual platform beyond individual participants' local, institutional and/or disciplinary bases. The objective is to fully realize the Forum's potential in facilitating individual career development and collective activism.

3) *Organizing and outreach efforts:*

Individual participants will reach out through their own professional networks in planning for the Forum's pre-conference, 2018.

**“Assembling a We” in the Forum of Critical Chinese Qualitative Inquiry: Reflections on Intellectual Activism in the Forum of Critical Chinese Qualitative Inquiry**

**Xiuying “Sophy” Cai, Ph.D. in Education  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**

Drawing upon Judith Butler’s *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (2015), Holman Jones (2016), in ICQI 2016 under the theme, “Qualitative Inquiry in Neoliberal Times,” argued for the importance of “assembling a we in critical qualitative inquiry” (p. 130). For Holman Jones, “it is important to consider critical qualitative inquiry as action and speech that creates a space between participants—between we, as a community of scholars, artists, and teachers” (p. 131). Following Holman Jones, here, I am thinking about the Forum of Critical Chinese Qualitative Inquiry as an act of “assembling a we.” That is, we consider the Forum as what Hannah Arendt (1958) called, “action and speech that creates a space between participants which can find its location almost anywhere and anytime” (p. 158. Cf. Holman Jones, p. 130). Further, we consider our intellectual activism in the Forum by connecting, mentoring, and supporting each other to act critically, ethically, and responsibly, with and toward one another.

First, our intellectual activism is, and should be, as we did during ICQI 2017, invested in connecting, in “gathering people together to create an us” (Holman Jones, p. 131). Throughout our discussion on Wednesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017, almost all of us found our presence in the Forum as a collective in which, and with which, we can finally connect. We articulated the isolation, confusion, passion lost in our own respective institutional space. In the Forum, we celebrated the presentations, relations, and passion found in our collective, in our “assembly” of a “we.” The Forum is open, public, and shared, as we act to connect fellow critical Chinese (diaspora) qualitative researchers from around the world, in all disciplines, at all professional and educational stages. By doing so, we assemble a bigger “we.”

Second, our intellectual activism is, and should be, as Professor Hsiung insisted in our discussion session, invested in mentoring graduation students, emerging scholars, and each other, in doing critical qualitative research, as Chinese diaspora, within and beyond Chinese contexts. As we act to mentor, we connect, relate, and respond to fellow critical qualitative researchers

across disciplines, across institutions, and across ages and stages. By doing so, we assemble a stronger “we.”

Third, our intellectual activism is, and should be, as we did during our roundtable at dinner, invested in supporting each other to act, critically, ethically, and responsibly, in our call for justice and equity in the world. From Professor Hsiung’s stories about Norman Denzin’s commitment to social justice through qualitative research, to our sharing of experiences in intercultural relationships, interdisciplinary inquiries, and international journey, we support each other in our pursuit of critical inquiry and activism. By doing so, we assemble a more persistent and resilient “we.”

This reflection has not meant to be a five-paragraph scholarly essay about the Forum.

This reflection is meant to show the Forum as originated not only in our conversations in ICQI 2017, but also in the tradition of critical qualitative research as intellectual activism, as shared by Professor Hsiung, Holman Jones, Norman Denzin, Judith Butler, Hannah Arendt, in and beyond ICQI, in 2016 and before.

This reflection is meant to articulate my vision, my imagination, and my pursuit of intellectual activism as a critical Chinese qualitative researcher.

I thank you for “assembling a we” in the Forum of Critical Chinese Qualitative Inquiry.

**Why do we need a Critical Chinese Qualitative Research Group?**

**Catherine Man Chuen Cheng, Sociology  
PhD candidate**

**University of Toronto**

I had the pleasure to form a panel with Yige Dong at the Critical Chinese Qualitative Research this year. The original intention of this panel came out of my frustration as a graduate student studying in North America but doing research in Chinese societies. As a self-identified young critical feminist scholars studying Chinese societies, I mostly travelled two worlds of academic communities—the community of critical feminist scholars and the community of Chinese study scholars.

Critical feminist scholars have challenged the uncriti-

cal transfer of many preconceived notions produced in the west to studying East Asian societies, and have argued forcefully the importance of attending to locally grounded meanings instead of looking at research context through already constructed categories. Despite the enlightenment I received at conferences organized by this critically engaged community, I often wish there could be a stronger presence of critical Chinese feminists with whom I can exchange ideas and observation with.

On the other hand, at conference organized specifically on China studies, I was disappointed at the lack of criticality in discussing gender issues happening in Chinese societies. Within the field of marriage migration, for example, women's intention to marry across border is often assumed, particularly by quantitative sociologists doing China studies, to be the result of "global hypergamy" rather than constructed narratives produced by Chinese women that are intimately connected to globally connected geopolitical economy.

This gap between critical feminism and China studies was what propelled me to organize a young feminist panel with Yige Dong. At this conference, I was grateful to be able to get in touch with fellow feminist scholars Di Wang and Jiling Duan, to understand their research and concerns as critical Chinese feminists studying in North America. I was also pleased to meet other China study scholars who are interested in producing critically engaged scholarship.

My hope for this Critical Chinese Qualitative Research Group is that it could provide a platform of critical exchange between feminist scholars who are at different stages of their career doing research in Chinese contexts. I hope that this platform not only can be place for feminist mentorship, but also a land for breeding intellectual activism that potentially changes the "view" and "landscape" of "knowing" of Chinese societies with the vision of producing knowledge that is more reflexive, more relational, and more grounded to where we stand.

**Yige Dong, Sociology PhD candidate  
Johns Hopkins University**

As an advanced PhD student in sociology, I have been to many academic conferences, presenting my work to interdisciplinary audiences from sociology, history, gender studies, etc. But I have never encountered an

arena as unique as the critical Chinese qualitative research forum, which pushed me to think hard about the role of methodologies in knowledge production and to reflect on what it means to be a critical scholar. Both could be easily missed when a PhD student is busily doing her empirical investigation and constantly occupied with various publication obligations.

It was in the process of working with my colleagues in preparing a panel at this forum, "Seeing like a junior Chinese feminist," that I have gradually developed a reflexive methodological consciousness. Before, qualitative methodologies such as oral histories and ethnography to me had meant some generic paragraphs to fill out in the method section in research proposals. After the forum, I have become aware that each methodological approach is a unique mode of knowledge production and has its particular strengths and limits. More importantly, researchers should not stop at where a particular method reaches its limit but should push ourselves further, asking in what way tensions and weaknesses in a given format of inquiry can shed light on our critical examination of the process of knowledge production. In other words, we should "always problematize the problem," as Dr. Hsiung put it at the forum. That was really a moment of enlightenment.

I also enjoyed the cozy and democratic space this forum provided, which made voices of junior Chinese qualitative researchers heard, encouraged and inspire each other. In the era when "big data" has taken over social science inquiries, scholars who sense the urge of doing conceptualizing and interpretative work through inductive, qualitative approaches have inevitably felt insecure and sometimes isolated. Participating in this forum made me realize I am not alone and there is so much work to be done. I would like to see this community of critical inquiry to grow and become a platform of producing solidarity and new ideas.

**Family Matters: A Reflection on the Forum of  
Critical Chinese Qualitative Research**

**Ming Yuan Low, PhD in Creative Arts Therapies  
Program**

**School of Nursing and Health, Drexel University**

I have always been a part of the minority race – in my home country of Malaysia, and now as a student in the United States. Throughout my academic career, I have

found myself feeling out of place, especially through my undergraduate, masters, and now in a doctoral program of music therapy. Models and systems of health-care and music have been presented exclusively from a euro/western model. Even in classes on multiculturalism and ethnomusicology, everything is seen from a euro/western centric lens. Classes on human development, aesthetics, and group dynamics came from a euro/western centric point of view that I felt, didn't apply to the culture and community I grew up with.

This was my first time attending the ICQI conference, and it was a class requirement. I was excited and curious to see that there is a whole day dedicated to Chinese Qualitative Research. I wondered if this was where I could fill the gap that I always felt existed throughout my education. I entered the room Union 209 tentatively, and was immediately greeted by Professor Hsiung and the other presenters. Every person in the room was communicating in mandarin which struck me as a fresh and curious experience. I have only used English in my academic and professional life, so I had to rapidly translate in my head to communicate in mandarin. I then created a comfortable nook for me at the back of the room, and started this fascinating journey through the day.

The presentations were inspiring and courageous. The researchers took a critical look at research methods and existing societal systems in China, and came up with many fascinating results. Among the most inspirational ones were Yige Ingrid Dong's The Limits of "Double Burden" in Studying Women and Work in Socialist China that challenged the application of western feminism standards on China. This presentation affirmed that there is no one-size fits all model of understanding society.

There were times in my studies where my professor asked me why do I not compare western philosophies with Chinese philosophies. Attending this forum confirmed that there is no way to compare them on an equal footing because there is not enough knowledge of Chinese philosophies published, and in certain circumstances it would be like comparing apples and oranges. At the end of the forum, there was a rousing call for Chinese researchers to use our unique understanding of the world, especially with Chinese culture and peoples, to contribute to research and knowledge. I, for one, am motivated to answer the call.

**Di Wang (王迪), Sociology PhD candidate**

**University of Wisconsin–Madison.**

This is my first time attending at International Congress of Qualitative Inquires. Critical Chinese Qualitative Research provided me an invaluable opportunity to engage with scholars of similar empirical interests, both theoretically and methodologically. This forum has built an intellectual hub by connecting scholars from different institutes. This space, carefully curated with unconditional support and constructive feedback, is critical for junior sociology scholars, like myself. In addition, the forum's objectives for advancing Chinese qualitative studies speaks to the heart of ICQI. As an action-oriented taskforce, it visions a blueprint to mobilize sustainable resources to continually fuel qualitative researches, facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration, and address gaps in cross-methodological communication. I am thrilled to join this forum, as well as its effort to build a robust critical Chinese qualitative scholarship.

**Man Xu, Sociology PhD candidate**

**University of Toronto**

ICQI provided me with a great opportunity to critically reflect on the epistemological and methodological issues in my previous and current research practices. I was especially glad to present at the Critical Chinese Qualitative Research Forum, and exchange ideas with other Chinese students there. I found the conversations at the forum inspiring, not only because they cover topics across disciplines but also because they manifest the passion and aspiration of a new generation of critical Chinese scholars. It was encouraging for me to meet so many fellow students who share the ambition of intellectual activism, who strive to foster intellectual dialogue across national borders through and beyond academic research.

The influence of transnational experiences on intellectual practice emerged as an interesting issue for me. Many participants in this forum are Chinese students who have lived and pursued academic study abroad. The methodological discussion at the forum allowed us to think about our intersectionality, the ways in which

our cultural background and transnational experiences affect our intellectual development. I find the interdisciplinary conversation at the forum especially fruitful and necessary, as it illuminated my “blind spots”: after spending years conducting research in and about the Middle East, I have become less familiar with social issues and critical research in China. Throughout the conference, I have reflected on and have come to realize the bias I had in my previous work. Lastly, engaging in such a platform also forces us to think about how our research can address social inequality. While recognizing our privilege to live across national and cultural borders, I hope our intellectual activities can have some modest contribution to social justice - within the Global South, and across global societies.

**Pengfei Zhao, PhD, Inquiry Methodology Program  
Indiana University,**

I am trained as a qualitative research methodologist and most of my empirical work has been conducted in China. ICQI is a major conference that I regularly attend. In the previous ICQI conferences, while I enjoyed sharing ideas with scholars from different methodological and disciplinary traditions, I always hoped to have a space where the conversations on methodological and substantive issues can be more tightly integrated. Therefore, I could not be happier to meet the attendees of this year’s Forum of Critical Chinese Qualitative Studies (FCCQS)—a group of wonderful scholars who either are from China or conduct empirical work on China. For me, the experience of participating FCCQS was more like attending a support group meeting. We not only presented our projects, but also engaged in much broader conversations about doing and teaching qualitative research in China, engaging in feminist movement in an authoritarian state, and supporting each other’s work. What I love most about FCCQS is, as the attendees, we all share a critical methodological approach, and doing qualitative research for us is simultaneously a political activism in a country where different voices could easily be silenced or ignored.

I am very grateful to Dr. Ping-Chun Hsiung for taking the lead in organizing FCCQS. I certainly hope I can continue to engage in conversations with the colleagues I met on the Forum, and I am sure I am not the only one who feels this way. FCCQS has connected like-minded scholars successfully. With everyone’s commitment, I am very positive that FCCQS will grow into a progres-

sive platform where active political activism and thorough qualitative studies mutually strengthen each other.



**Updates from the Chair of the Collaborating Sites Network (CSN) Advisory Committee**  
Ellis Hurd

The CSN's Advisory Committee continues to actively work on several strategies under the direction of Dr. Norman Denzin. Updates from 2016-2017 are detailed below.

As communicated on 9-28-16, the central goal guiding our committee's work and its strategies for this 2016-2017 year is: **to constantly expand the CSN through filling up the vacuum. We will continue with this focus and goal.**

Included below is the progress of the CSN Advisory Committee's progress within these strategies. Thank you to all who responded to the inquiry! The progress and new work below is impressive!

**Updates on CSN Strategies for 2016-2017:**

- **Global Calendar**—The 2016 and 2017 calendars are current. Thank you, Lubo!
- **Qualitative Resources/Teaching Materials**—Serge organized a new solicitation of qualitative resources through the ICQI list serve last fall, reviewed and organized the materials that were submitted by delegates, did a separate on-line search for qualitative resources, and then sent all of the new qualitative resources to James in early February, for addition to the IAQI website. Thank you, Serge!
- **CSN Panel Session at QI2017**—This area was tabled for 2017. We can revisit the idea for a panel session for the 2018 Congress. Anne is willing to help and work with anyone interested in organizing a panel session. Thank you, Anne.
- **Identify Sources of funding for Qualitative Research**—Mercedes was able to find some reliable information for financing qualitative research. I have attached this information. Cesar and Mercedes will continue to look for more sources. Thank you, Mercedes and now Cesar.
- **Build Informal Communication Channels**—Aitor will help in the general organization of the Congress and also in the Day in Spanish and Portuguese and the CSN of course. Thank you, Aitor!
- **ICQI 2017 Poster Session**—Aitor has begun updating the CSN poster. He will provide a collaborative sites map (one-page) to put it into the bag of the Congress. In this way, all participants will have the concrete information of all collaborative sites that we have right now. He can use one side of the page for the Map and on the other side, a brief explanation about the collaborative sites and announcing the town hall and all activities related with the sites. He will also have his computer ready for sign-ups to the CSN. Thank you, Aitor!
- **ICQI 2017 Town Hall Meeting**—James Salvo has scheduled the CSN Town Hall for **Friday at 1:00pm**. Ellis will again prepare a statement. Anne is planning on attending the Congress this year and will take notes for us. Thank you, Anne. Our thanks also to Dr. Denzin and James for coordinating a new time for the town hall this year to garner more interest and support.
- **ICQI Newsletter Service**—Ellis prepared a statement for the Newsletter for May 2017. He will send to James Salvo.







The International Association of Qualitative Inquiry (IAQI) was launched in 2005 at the First Congress. Currently, this umbrella association has a Newsletter and over 4500 members. IAQI and IIQI is currently active in establishing mutually beneficial relationships with existing national qualitative research associations in, among other countries, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, South Africa, South Korea, and Spain.

The IAQI Newsletter is a place to extend conversations about the association. We invite your contribution. The Newsletter offers a venue for taking up controversial topics. It is a site where new publications and up-coming conferences can be announced. Please send us your announcements

Norman K. Denzin and James Salvo

## **IAQI**

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