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## Introduction

∞*Advancing Culturally Responsive Research and Researchers: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods* edited by Penny Pasque and e. alexander, released earlier this year from Routledge, is a bound version of some of the greatest hits by the people who bring us the Ohio State University (OSU)s [Advanced Methods Institute](#) and the [Unapologetic Educational Research](#) series. Rarely does a book offer so much in the way of theory, justice, and application to ensure that readers will practice the concepts while reading and then take the ideas home to their research communities. The book, which is of modest length at just over 200 pages, presents a concise introduction to the practice of culturally responsive research in approaches spanning post-qualitative inquiry to R programming.

As the output of many OSU [QualLab](#) collaborators, *Advancing Culturally Responsive Research and Researchers* (henceforth, *Advancing CRR&R*) is uniquely poised to bring the dynamic conference experience to the classroom for committed students and teachers who will use each chapter to steer through the culturally responsive turn in applied social sciences. *Advancing CRR&R* integrates many lenses on contemporary education research including the practical, political, procedural, and moral axis of our work, showcasing topics and designs attentive to issues of power and inequities (p. 2, emphasis in the original). The chapters are generally consistent in format from one to the next, with key points outlined in focus boxes to reinforce structured inquiry, reflection, and comprehension checks.

## Overview of the Text

The book begins by justifying its own provenance and scope. Drawing heavily from the presentations at OSU's inaugural/2021 Advanced Methods Institute, each chapter invokes an unequivocal stance toward recasting education research with culturally responsive and responsible commitments to equity, social justice, and participation. The chapters detail how positionality, reflexivity, and intersectionality wend throughout the research

process from the selection of a research question to representative sampling, data collection, analysis, and dissemination. That the writings began as conference presentations is evident in both the pragmatism and enthusiasm that undergird each chapter. Journal prompts, art essays, and discussion suggestions for your peers accompany each issue and provide ample opportunity for reflective practice and rich contemplation.

A unique strength of this volume is the authors and editors skill at illuminating how a set of principles for antiracist and emancipatory research apply across methodological approaches. Too often, researchers can excuse themselves from prosocial aims by designing their projects within paradigms that do not explicitly require a justice orientation, but Pasque and alexander offer no quarter to quantitative or mixed methods researchers based solely on a difference of methods: All education researchers, and their disciplinary collaborators, can be held to account and reflect with regard to how their methodologies enact or dismiss aspirational research ethics (Lahman, 2017). To wit, many chapters include an emphasis on how graduate students, methodology instructors, and dissertation committees are implicated in culturally responsive research. Such underscoring of generational and institutional dynamics subtly and elegantly highlights the points made in each chapter about its respective point of focus.

## Chapter Highlights

Hurtados Transformative Paradigm (Chapter 2) lays out the ethos for the rest of the chapters, asserting that all aspects of the research enterprise can be reassessed in terms of cultural responsibility and responsiveness, from methodology instruction to data debriefing, to peer review and citation practices. Neatly imbricating ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology into a cogent quadrillogical schema, Hurtado outlines the guiding principles for the remainder of the text as: (a) social justice values, (b) an embrace of multiple realities that nevertheless accommodates hope for agreed-upon material aims, (c) participant-centered consciousness of power dynamics in

research, and (d) dialogically sensitive, action-oriented methods. Coursing throughout is a strengths-based approach to Participant empowerment that eclipses limited positivist views of how knowledge is produced and negotiated (p. 20).

Thompson's Chapter 4 on ethics builds around the provocative question of, Must an education in research ethics engage issues of context, culture, and community? This chapter draws readers into the larger question of whether notions of cultural responsiveness form the basis, the content, or the process of social inquiry or some combination thereof. Unafraid and unapologetic in the QualLab tradition, Thompson squarely introduces *research morality* as a concept worthy of our urgent attention, pressing beyond desirability to duties (p. 55). The astute rhetorical contour of this chapter coaches readers on anticipated counterarguments (and rebuttals) to boot.

Reminding us that culturally responsive research and quantitative approaches need not be strange bedfellows, Blake et al.'s *Examining Discipline from an Intersectional Lens* (Chapter 10) serves as a primer on how to operationalize critical race theory (CRT) to measure constructs in a quantitative study, allowing for data analyses that afford a racialized gender lens (p. 168), including a readable overview of *risk ratio*, *risk gap*, and *composition indices* that is accessible to non-statisticians. Specifically, intersectional experiences of school discipline among Black girls can be disentangled into multiple pertinent variables in order to conduct a variety of quantitative studies of interest to policy makers and school administrators. Blake's team brings critical methodological prowess to the study of school discipline and other educational inequities, arguing that, While school discipline gaps have largely been viewed based on differences across racial groups, there is a need for an intersectional approach in calculating and interpreting school discipline disproportionality and advocating for more nimble and sophisticated techniques (p. 169). The authors ably articulate why their technique addresses extant methodological weaknesses in intersectional scholarship.

Elsewhere in the book, DeCuir-Gunbys team (Chapter 12) resoundingly answer Sablans (2019) question, Can you really measure that? regarding quantitative instruments and critical race work. The authors annotate a full explanatory sequential study with details of how CRT shapes each aspect of the work, demonstrating that Critical Race Mixed Methodology fulfills not just the aspirations of rigorous mixed methods research but also of intersectional theory. Relatedly, Duran and Jones's *Intersectionality as a Lens in Qualitative Research* (Chapter 7) is apt for newcomers and experienced intersectional research scholars alike. The beauty of this chapter is that it makes clear and direct links between theory and method where intersectionality is concerned and offers practical tips across qualitative sub-approaches (e.g., how to contend with grounded theory coding in intersectional projects).

## Synthesis

Threads recurring in *Advancing CRR&R* include accountability to complexity (p. 30), particularly in mixed designs; critical positionality and reflexivity, insider-outsider dynamics, and the outsider within; routine interrogation of how data are collected, from whom, and at what potential cost or harm to Participants; harmony, and harmonization of principles with methods; space and place; emancipatory aims and material change, in concert with CRT tenets; and ongoing adaptation. On this last point, the book argues in no uncertain terms that methodology has to change. Toward this aim, the authors and editors place an impressive and heartening emphasis on instruction how to implement the principles presented for graduate students and candidates, and how to infuse these principles on doctoral committees and in classrooms.

Despite a preponderance of typographical errors resulting from what must have been a rushed production, as well as the endorsement of Harris (2016) walking interviews (cited on p. 25) which could be rightly critiqued as ableist, the value-add of this book will come when readers use it to establish, recharge, plan, or implement a Community of Practice within their departments to encourage each other and hold each other accountable to the arguments and exemplars put forth. As faculty gear up for a new academic year, it is recommended that they allocate the time and other resources needed to purchase, read, and discuss this book with four or five colleagues monthly. Begin by exploring the notion of researchers as gatekeepers (p. 27) or choose a chapter to focus on that is outside your comfort zone; the prescribed sequence is not sacrosanct. When you arrive at a chapter that hits close to home for your chosen method(s), commit to employing something new in your next project, and debrief with a critical friends group. Involve students in this process, too, to model for them that social inquiry is eternally a work in progress, and never a matter of set it and forget it. We must continually learn new ways to improve ourselves and our methodology to meet the current moment of challenge in higher education and justice-oriented research.

Jim Gee (2014) once wrote that methods are through and through social and communal (p. 11). *Advancing CRR&R* embodies this notion in its assumptions, intentions, breadth, and depth, urging readers to affirm the humanity of all persons involved in the research process and to create, as Lather puts it in Chapter 3, a science worthy of the world (p. 32). It is time to advance ourselves to and through this vision of education research.

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