"Beyond" Quantitative Research

Assorted Research Orientations in Kinesiology
KIN 250

Types of Research

• Not just Quantitative or Qualitative
• Many aspects of physical activity are investigated through a variety of differing research methods.
• Different techniques for different types of research.
• No consensus on subject or method!
• An overview of some research types and an example.

Different Types of Research

• Historical
• Philosophical
• Cultural Criticism
• Media Analysis
• Narrative Analysis
• Emerging types of research (and methods) in the area of physical activity.
Historical Research

• “Systematic examination and explanation of change, or the lack of it, in human affairs” (p. 203)
• Can cover almost any topic in human movement
• “History of Sport” is an emerging field but not without growing pains...or paradigm debates.
• Modernization v. Agency paradigm

Historical Research Cont.

• Topics? The sky is the limit! Many topics can be approached from a multitude of historical perspectives...Baseball, for example.
• Sources? Primary and Secondary.
  – Secondary (books, articles, and other media)
    - Direct – anthologies, monographs, journal articles
    - Ancillary – From other scholarly disciplines

Historical Research Cont.

– Primary – archival original library materials, special collections, newspapers, private collections.
  - Historical criticism
    - External – authenticity of source
    - Internal – establish credibility of source
– Reading the Evidence
  – Must interpret the context of the information. Network of facts and meanings of some historical evidence.
  – Must make sense of the event or activity under investigation. No one “right” answer
  – Historian creates meaning based on any number of factors.
Historical Research: Issues

• "Pose questions that both expand our understanding of the historical function of sport in society and simultaneously engage the concerns of contemporary audiences and publics" (Pope 1998, p. vii).
• Must fight for institutional approval. Sport History has been/is marginalized. Borrows from sociology and cultural studies.
• Must make sport history meaningful!

Philosophical Research in Physical Activity

• Philosophical Research?
• Non-empirical analysis still has value!
• Philosophical debate surrounding real-world issues.
• Examines reality through reflective procedures.
• Not what they look at but how
• Philosophers look at ideas, ideals, meanings, and logical relationships.

Empirical investigation alone is incomplete.

Branches of Reflective Inquiry:
- Metaphysics – nature of things
- Axiology – value of things
- Epistemology – How do we come to know things
- Deconstructionism – Interrogate assumptions

Locating a research problem

Ethics as an example. Should athletes be allowed to take performance enhancing drugs?
Philosophical Research in Physical Activity

• Analyzing a Research Problem
  – Inductive reasoning – From the general to the specific. Use reason to move to the abstract
  – Deductive reasoning – Start with general claims and move to specific claims
  – Descriptive reasoning – Based on lived experience
  – Speculative reasoning – Postulate based on experience. “Cooperation is the most valuable part of competition”
  – Critical reasoning – Debunk traditional notions of philosophy.

Other types of Research...

• Media Analysis
• Narrative Analysis
• Cultural Criticism
• Cultural Studies/Praxis/Action Research
• An example...
  “History”, Culture, Myth and Media:
  The 1919 Chicago Black Sox and the Construction of American Dreams