

Ethics and values

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- Social research is rarely value free
 - Our own context and values
 - Funders
 - Resources we can access
- Politics of research
 - Relationships/politics
 - Researcher and researched
 - ◻ E.g. Define research question, who should participate, how to report findings
 - ◻ Approach depends on epistemological position
 - Researcher and funding bodies
 - ◻ Manage expectations and interests of funders
 - ◻ E.g. How much control will they have over the reporting?
 - Reporting research findings
 - ◻ E.g. Criticalist perspective, looking at disadvantage
 - ◆ Find out group is a cause of disadvantage
 - ◆ Report it?
 - ◇ Integrity vs risks for group involved
 - Researcher paradigm underpinning the research

Research ethics

- Principles/concerns:
 - Has integrity
 - Has to be balanced with beneficence
 - ◻ E.g. Some findings may not be able to be reported
 - Researchers should be competent
 - Conflicts of interest
 - ◻ Financial
 - ◻ Relationship with participants
 - The responsibility of researchers to be honest and respectful to all individuals
 - Who are affected by their studies or their reports of the studies' results
 - Respect for persons
 - ◻ Privacy and confidentiality of data
 - ◻ Anonymity of participants' records/data
 - ◆ Could retain data but not attribute it to their real individual identity
 - ◻ Autonomy
 - ◆ Able to make their own decisions
 - ◻ Participants should provide informed consent
 - ◆ Or debrief at the end
 - ◆ Those who cannot give their consent should be protected
 - ◇ E.g. Children
 - ◻ Researcher must not harm participants
 - ◆ Minimize risks
 - ◆ Maximise possible benefits
 - ◻ Fairness in selection procedures
 - ◻ Voluntary participation
 - ◆ Participants may feel coerced to participate or perceive that they have limited choice
 - ◆ Issues with this feeling when paying participants
 - ◇ Introducing maximums of e.g. 99c
 - ◆ Should feel that they can opt out
 - ◻ Use of deception when necessary

- ◆ Passive deception (omission)
 - ◇ Withholding or omitting info
 - ◇ Intentionally not telling participants some info about the study
 - ◆ Active deception (commission)
 - ◇ Presenting of misinformation about the study to participants
 - ◇ E.g. Misleading participants about the specific purpose of the study
 - ◆ Need to debrief at the end, when deceived
 - ◇ Provides a full description of the true purpose of the study
 - ▶ Including the use and purpose of deception
- The safety of the researcher and participants
 - Physical and psychological
- When reporting research
 - Should not fabricate data
 - Correct significant errors in published data
 - Plagiarism
 - Do not present portions or entireties of another's work/data as their own
 - Freud vs error
 - Fraud
 - ◆ Explicit effort to falsify or misrepresent data
- Benefice
 - Always a cost/benefit of the risk vs what the research might produce
 - Risk to researcher, researched, institution
- Research merit
 - Must be some potential benefit from the research
 - Otherwise, no justification for undertaking it
- Ethics committee
 - Each institution is required to establish a committee
 - Has to contain scientists and lay/outsider people
- History
 - 1949 First ethical code
 - Nuremberg code
 - 10 guidelines for the ethical treatment of human participants in research
 - 1979 Belmont Report
 - Individuals should give consent
 - Those who can't should be protected
 - Researcher must not harm participants
 - Minimise risks and maximise possible benefits
 - Fairness in procedures for selecting participants
 - APA Guide
 - Protected from physical and psychological harm
 - Participants may feel anxious, angry, low self-esteem or depression when they feel they have been cheated, tricked, deceived, or insulted
 - Shouldn't use them in an instrumental way
 - Need to be given complete info about the research and their roles before agreeing to participate
 - Including why, not just what will be done
 - Simply telling participants about the research does not necessarily mean they are informed
 - ◆ Especially when the participants may not be competent enough to understand

Theories (and values?)

- Political/social sciences
 - Has laws
 - Has methods
 - Power in being able to say that 'our' theories are scientific

- And yours are pseudoscience
 - Attribution of 'science' meta tag to political studies is a battleground
- Philosophy of science
 - Includes:
 - Ontological claims
 - Epistemological considerations
 - Methodological implications
- Due to bias, can we ever categorically and objectively explain things?
- 'Legitimate' research is supposed to be value neutral
- Ontological
 - Theory of being
 - The form and nature of reality
 - What is there that can be known about it?
 - If reality exists independently of our knowledge of it
 - Claims about existence
 - Foundationalism/realism
 - Real world causality exists independently of our knowledge
 - Objectivists
 - Existence of objective, absolute and unconditional truths
 - 'Probabilistic' account for causality
 - Rather than absolutist
 - Anti-foundationalism/constructivism/relativism
 - World is socially constructed and capable of being interpreted in different ways
 - 'Reality' of social institutions and entities have no social role or causal power independent of the agents' understanding of it
 - Guba and Lincoln 1994:
 - Realities are local and specific
 - ◆ They vary between individuals/groups
 - ◆ Constructions (ontological elements) are not true, but informed/consistent
 - ◆ All constructions are meaningful, but some are flawed
 - ◇ Because they are inconsistent or complete
 - Reality is not discovered, but actively constructed
 - ◆ So distinction between ont/epi is blurred
 - ◆ Actor/their values decides what is rational
 - ◇ No actor can be objective
 - Reality is socially constructed, but individuals who construct it are influenced by social, political and cultural processes
- Epistemological
 - Also see 'Politics of research' above
 - Meanings
 - Theory of knowledge
 - What we can know about the world
 - The ontology: The form and nature of reality
 - How do we know about the world
 - Claims about what would constitute a valid knowledge claim
 - Grounds we have for accepting or rejecting beliefs
 - Concerns:
 - Sources and criteria of knowledge
 - Kinds of knowledge possible
 - ◆ Is this not ontological?
 - Degree to which each is certain
 - Exact relation between the one who knows and the object known
 - How humans can enquire about, and make sense of, ontology
 - Key questions (textbook)
 - Can an observer identify real/objective relations between social phenomena?
 - Can we do this through direct observation?
 - Or are there some relationships that exist that are not directly observable?

- If so, how?
- Implications
 - Methodological
 - See below
 - Determine the role of theory in empirical research
 - Shape the way researcher conceives of the relationship between theory and practice
 - Position forms basis of how we undertake political science research
 - What is studied
 - How
 - What is expected from findings
 - ◆ E.g. Generalisability, specification, contextualisation
 - Status given to findings
- Bhakser:
 - Sciences are concerned with different domains, thus no epistemology could be expected to fit all cases
- Examples
 - You can know things from logical deduction
 - Reasoning from one or more statements to reach a logically certain conclusion
 - Authority
 - E.g. Lecture (i.e. instruction) setting
 - Empiricism
 - See below
 - Conventionalism
 - Societal agreement on a topic
- Paradigms
 - Share naturalism
 - Anti-foundationalist
 - **Interpretivist/hermeneutic/post-positivist?**
 - ◆ It is interpretations/understandings of social phenomena that directly affect outcomes
 - ◆ Can only be established/understood
 - ◇ Within:
 - ▶ Discourses
 - ▶ Contexts
 - ▶ Traditions
 - ◆ Understanding
 - ◇ Should focus on understanding those aspects and establishing the interpretations and meanings they attach to social phenomena
 - ◇ Way actors make sense of their experiences with X
 - ▶ Explain events or phenomena in terms of actors' understanding of their own context
 - ▶ E.g. Deliberative practices in textbook example
 - Agency
 - How actors make sense of deliberate norms and practices
 - Rather than testing the predefined actors identified by the researcher at the outset of the research
 - ◆ Not explanatory/predictions
 - ◆ Illogical to argue for our capacity for independent knowledge of an external world we do not believe exists
 - ◇ Social phenomena are not subject to the same kinds of observation as natural science
 - ◆ Theory
 - ◇ Offers a lens/heuristic for making sense of the practice
 - ▶ Defines analytical problem
 - ▶ Gives direction to empirical analysis
 - ▶ Required for interpretivist research

- ◇ Rather than serving as a basis for developing hypotheses
- ◆ No observer can be objective because they live in the social world and participate in the social constructions
 - ◇ Knowledge is theoretically/discursively laden
 - ◇ Double hermeneutic
 - ▶ World is interpreted by the actors
 - E.g. How a voter understands the parties and their position may affect voting behaviour
 - ▶ Their interpretation is interpreted by the observer
 - E.g. Also need to acknowledge the dependence of the observer on socially constructed filters affecting frameworks of knowledge
 - ▶ Parsons
 - Be aware of our inclination to interpretive bias
 - Take this into account when interpreting her respondents' interpretation of their experiences/actions
 - Careful research design and submit arguments for debate
- ◆ Tend to prefer qualitative analysis
 - ◇ Quantitative methods can be blunt instruments and may produce misleading data
 - ◇ E.g. Interviews, focus groups, ethnography, etc.
- ◆ Interdependence of theory and observation
- ◆ Normative questions are important and not easy to separate from empirical ones
- ◆ Other traditions have a key role to play in political and social analysis
- ◆ Results = one interpretation of the relationship between the social phenomena studied
- ◆ Criticisms
 - ◇ To positivists:
 - ▶ King and colleagues' 1994
 - ▶ Merely offers opinions of subjective judgments
 - No basis on which to judge the validity of interpretivists' knowledge claims
 - One person's view is good as someone else's' different view on relationship between social phenomena
 - Difficult to address because it is based on differing ontology/epistemology
- ◆ Strands
 - ◇ Bevir and Rhodes 2002
 - ◇ Hermeneutic
 - ▶ Idealist
 - ▶ Need to understand meanings people attach to social behaviour
 - ▶ Interpretation of texts and actions
 - ▶ Establish their own constructions of other people's constructions
 - ▶ Develop narratives and generalise
 - ▶ No absolute truth claims
 - ▶ Still objective
 - Standards of excellent
 - Remain subject to critical debate
 - ◇ Post-structuralism
 - ▶ Knowledge is constructed through power
 - ▶ No desire to return to inquiry based upon the subjectivity of agents
 - ▶ Deny the existing of extra-discursive reality
 - ▶ Would deny that they have an ontological position

- ▶ Epistemology as prior to ontology
 - Spencer:
 - ◆ Everything becomes thought and discourse and the material world/social structures have no causal power
 - ▶ Experience of reality is mediated by language and discourse
 - ▶ Influenced feminism
 - ◇ Wight on post-positivism
 - ▶ All observation is fallible and can have error
 - ▶ All theory is revisable
 - ▶ Participants as information providers
 - ▶ Constitutive theory?
 - Does not attempt to link causes in time
 - E.g. What is a state?
 - ▶ Researcher's role is to interpret and report findings as objectively as they can
 - Thus unlikely to seek to empower the participants
 - ◆ E.g. What/how much meaning do individuals attach to their ethnic identity?
 - ◆ E.g. What is positivism?
- Foundationalists
 - See above
 - **Positivism**
 - ◆ Lecture components
 - ◇ **Empiricism**
 - ▶ The only secure knowledge we have is that based on experience
 - ▶ Insistence on data
 - ▶ All concepts that are considered to be empirical must be defined operationally
 - ▶ Not broad enough for how we come to understand the world
 - With alternatives such as logical deduction
 - ◇ Believe that the world is governed by regularities
 - ▶ By applying reason, we can uncover these regularities
 - Propose a generalisation
 - Observe whether it applies to next case
 - ▶ **Identify causal relationships and laws**
 - Given set of conditions = regular and predictable outcomes
 - ▶ Develop explanatory/predictive models
 - Instrumentalism?
 - ◆ "Facts are what matter and theory is simply a better way of collecting them"
 - ▶ Inductive?
 - Stages
 - ◆ Observational puzzles
 - ◆ Theoretical explanations
 - ◆ E.g. Post-materialism
 - ◆ Derive hypotheses
 - ◆ Test with data
 - Post-behaviouralists differ
 - ◆ See Behaviouralism
 - ◇ Naturalism
 - ▶ You can view the social world in the same way that you view the natural world
 - Cognitive arms of the natural and social sciences are the same

- ◇ Fact/value distinction
 - ▶ It is possible to distinguish fact from values
 - ▶ Researcher can be objective
- ◆ Diane Mutz
 - ◇ What makes a social theory productive is its falsifiability
- ◆ Article components:
 - ◇ Phenomenalism
 - ▶ Appearances, not realities, are the only objects of knowledge
 - ◇ Nominalism
 - ▶ Words and concepts are conventional symbols or names
 - ▶ Do not pick out any actual objects or universal aspects of reality
 - ◇ Cognitivism
 - ▶ No cognitive value can be ascribed to value judgments and normative statements
 - ◇ Naturalism
 - ▶ See above
 - ◇ Beliefs about the practice of science
 - ▶ Covering-law model
 - Explanation is only valid if it invokes a law which covers all cases of the phenomena to be explained
 - ▶ Instrumentalist treatment of theoretical terms
 - Those terms do not refer to real entities, but entities are understood as if they existed
 - ◆ No epistemological ground that such entities really exist
- ◆ Textbook additions
 - ◇ Can separate empirical from normative questions
 - ◇ Tend to prefer quantitative analysis
 - ◇ Behaviouralist chapter
 - ▶ Analytic statements fall into categories:
 - Tautologies
 - ◆ Definitional statements that assign meaning to a phenomenon/concept
 - Empirical
 - ◆ Tested against observation in order to see if they were true or false
 - ◆ Falsifiability
 - ◆ Must specify causal antecedents that are defined independent of the phenomenon being explained
 - Meaningless
 - ▶ Meaningful analysis must use tautological and empirical statements
 - ▶ Findings must be replicable
 - ▶ Empirical theory
 - Interconnected statements, consisting of assumptions, definitions and empirically testable hypotheses
 - Which purport to describe and explain the occurrence of a given phenomenon
 - Theory must make causal statement, otherwise it cannot explain anything
 - ▶ Explanation
 - Causal account of the occurrence of some phenomenon
 - Crucial question for positivists: How would we know if this theory were incorrect?
 - ◆ Internally consistent

- ◆ Consistent with other theories explaining related phenomena
 - ◆ Capable of generating empirical predictions that can be tested against observation
- ▶ Systematic use of relevant empirical evidence rather than limited set of illustrative supporting examples/anecdotes
 - Uses representative sample of all cases
- ▶ Uses qualitative and quantitative
- ◆ Dictionary definition
 - ◇ A philosophical system recognising that only which can be scientifically verified or which is capable of logical/mathematical proof
 - ▶ Therefore rejecting metaphysics and theism
- ◆ Criticisms
 - ◇ Not objective
 - ▶ Quine 1961
 - Any knowledge we derive from senses is mediated by the concepts we use to analyse it
 - ◆ There is no way of classifying, describing experience without interpreting it
 - ◆ Thus theory affects the facts we focus on and how we interpret them
 - ◆ Undermining objectivity and notion that observation alone can falsify a theory
 - ▶ Kuhn 1970
 - Scientific investment is dominated by a particular paradigm at any given time
 - ◆ Affects questions asked and interpretations
 - ◆ Discard findings that don't fit and embrace results which confirm the paradigm
 - ◇ Differences between social and physical/natural sciences make social 'science' impossible
 - ◇ Social structures don't exist independently of the activities they shape
 - ▶ Lived experiences
 - ▶ E.g. Marriage
 - ◇ Social structures don't exist independently of agents' views of what they are doing in the activity
 - ◇ Social structures change as a result of the actions of agents
 - ◆ Relative demise means that there is no definitive canon of scientific explanation in social science
- **Critical realists**
 - ◆ Shares epistemological position with interpretivism?
 - ◆ Still establish causal relationships between social phenomena
 - ◇ To explain:
 - ▶ Identify and understand the external reality
 - ▶ And the social construction of the reality
 - ◆ Recognise the partialities of researchers
 - ◆ Do not privilege direct observation
 - ◇ Deep structural relationships between social phenomena which can't be observed
 - ▶ Consequences of them can be
 - E.g. Patriarchy
 - ▶ Understanding crucial for explanation of behaviour
 - ▶ They do not determine, but constrain and facilitate
 - ◇ Can only be established indirectly
 - ▶ We can observe other relationships which our theory tells us,

- are the result of those unobservable pre-relationships
 - ▶ Emphasise the role that theory plays in interpretation of the causal power of social structure/institution
 - Real world effect on actions is mediated by ideas
 - ◇ Posit their existence
 - ▶ Best explanation of social action
 - ◇ Dichotomy between reality and appearances
 - ▶ What appears to be may not necessary be an active version of reality
 - ▶ E.g. Marxism
 - Difference between:
 - ◆ Real interests
 - ◆ Material reality
 - ◆ Perceived interests
 - ◆ May be manipulated by powerful forces
 - ◆ So cannot ask people what their interests are
 - ◆ Knowledge of the world is fallible
 - ◇ Theory laden
 - ◆ May use quantitative and qualitative
 - ◇ E.g. Globalisation
 - ▶ Which financial markets are globalised
 - ▶ How globalisation is perceived (discursively constructed) by governments
 - ▶ Both affect what gov does in response to social pressures
 - ◆ Scientific realism?
 - ◇ Objects posited in scientific theories should be considered to be real
 - ◆ Criticisms
 - ◇ Positivists:
 - ▶ Deny existence of unobservable structures
 - They also make the knowledge claims of realism untestable and un-falsifiable
 - ◇ Interpretivists
 - ▶ They are no structures that are independent of social action
 - ▶ No objective basis on which to observe the actions/infer deep structures
 - ▶ Reject claim that structures cause social action
- Rationalism
 - Claims that reason rather than sense-experience is the foundation of certainty
 - Opposite of empiricism
- Historicist
 - Impossible to make legitimate generalisations about human behaviour
 - ◆ Human actions are not subject to the regularities that govern the natural world
- Feminist
 - Critique science on the basis of male-centred assumptions and lack of attention to gendered forms of knowledge construction
 - Types
 - ◆ Empiricist
 - ◆ Standpoint
 - ◆ Postmodern
- Critical theory
 - Scientific knowledge aimed at technical control was not the only legitimate type of knowledge
 - Particular social justice goal that would involve active participation of the participants
 - ◆ Design thus facilitates shared power between participants and researcher
- Post-modernism

- Critiques of:
 - ◆ Reason
 - ◆ Truth
- Constructivism
 - No 'real world' independent of social construction for political scientists to study
 - Social science involves an interpretive search to understand the meanings attached to actions
 - ◆ Rather than a scientific search for explanation
 - ◇ I.e. Positivism
 - Participants are active agents in the research process
 - ◆ Power to participate or not, and be candid or not
 - ◆ Power shared between researchers and participants
- Structuralism
 - Develop an objective science of social structures
 - Understanding social practices requires the decentering of individual subjectivities
 - Focus on structural modalities and organising principles
 - ◆ Within which social practices are framed

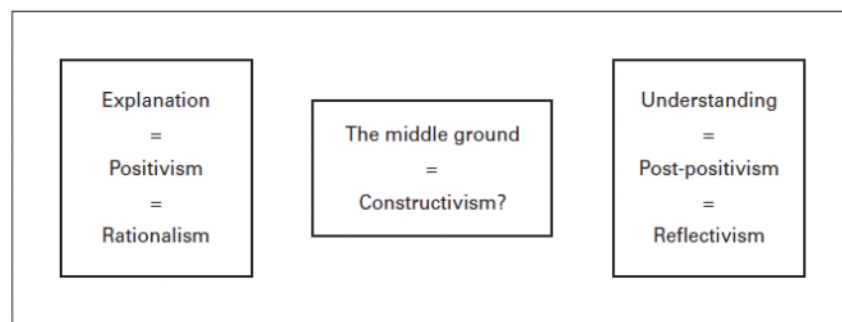
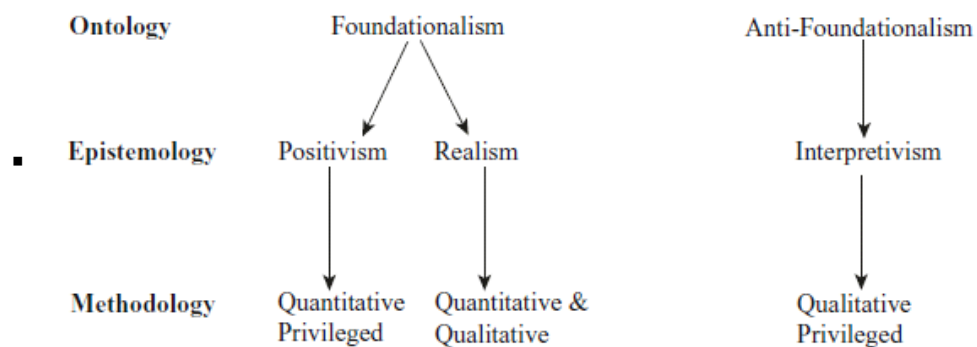


Figure 2.2 Contemporary IR

Figure 11.1 Connecting ontology, epistemology and methodology



- Methodology
 - If you believe in X (ontology)
 - And wish to ground the claim re X in Y (epistemology)
 - Then you should follow method Y
- E.g. Materialism is the view that material reality exists, regardless of perception or interpretation, and what we know is a faithful representation of reality out there"
 - Ontological: Material reality exists
 - Epistemological: hat we know is a faithful representation of reality
- Paradigm shift
 - Kuhn
 - Epistemological shift when scientists encounter anomalies that cannot be explained by the universally accepted paradigm
 - Within which scientific progress has thereto been made
 - Problems
 - Conservatism
 - ◆ To progress knowledge production, scholars would need to adopt a

- dominant paradigm
 - ◇ E.g. Realism
 - Incommensurability
 - ◆ No inter-debate/way to compare paradigms
 - ◇ Contrasting frameworks whose languages do not allow scientists to cite empirical evidence to favour one over the other
- Martin Friedman
 - Theories should be useful simplifications
 - Do not have to be realistic