



DMin 399

Dissertation 1: Research & Writing at the DMin level

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DMin Students only



Step #2: Conceptualising a research design

Ontological

What is the nature of reality?

Epistemological

What is the nature of knowledge? What is the relationship between the knower & the knowable?

Methodological

How can the knower go about getting the desired knowledge?

3 Spheres of Knowledge



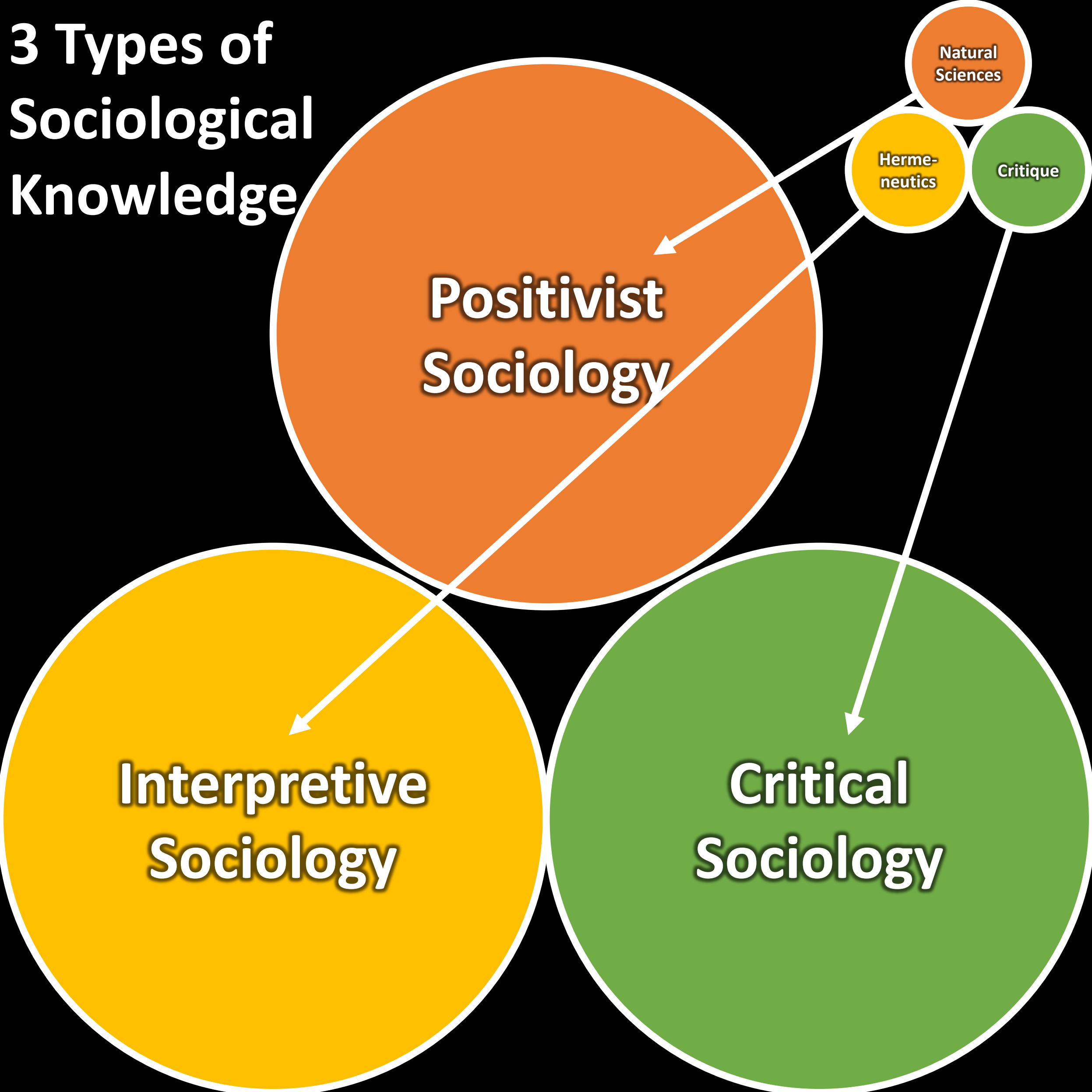
A Venn diagram consisting of three overlapping circles. The top circle is orange and labeled 'Natural Sciences'. The bottom-left circle is yellow and labeled 'Hermeneutics'. The bottom-right circle is green and labeled 'Critique'. The circles overlap in a triangular pattern, with each circle touching the other two.

**Natural
Sciences**

Hermeneutics

Critique

3 Types of Sociological Knowledge



Paradigms for Research			
Ontology	The world is composed of observable facts. Reality is objective, independent of the researcher.	The world is constructed of symbolic meaning observable in human acts, interactions, & language. Reality is subjective & multiple as seen from different perspectives.	The world is governed by power relations that influence acts & perceptions. Reality is negotiated & differs according to status & power.
Epistemology	Facts are revealed through standard scientific processes & are context-free	Meanings are derived from perceptions, experiences, & actions in relation to social contexts.	Power, control, & contextual factors can be heard in personal accounts that reflect different versions of reality.
Methodology	Pre-structured data collection, controlled measurement, clinic trials are the norm. Ex: surveys, clinical trials, rating scales, structured observation.	Semistructured, open questions, & observations enable participants to express thoughts & actions in natural ways. Ex: in-depth interviews, focus-group discussions, participant observations, case histories.	Participatory forms of observation & guided conversation enable both marginal & dominant groups to voice opinions & tell their stories. Ex: participatory action techniques, reflexive listening, challenges to political & personal barriers to entrenched positions.

Paradigms for Research			
	Positivist	Interpretivist	Critical
Research Intention	Quantitative studies seek explanation, verification, & prediction of human behavior through causal or associative relationships.	Qualitative studies seek discovery, understanding, & insight into the circumstances of human behavior.	Seek insight into the influence of differentials in power & control on human behavior, in an agenda for social change.
Levels of participation	Subjects answer specific, predetermined questions in a structured response format.	Participants are active partners in data collection & respond to semistructured questions spontaneously & naturally.	Participants have relative freedom to direct the data collection process & define follow up.
Impact on Study Participants	Impact is neutral. Research subjects may gain new information or insight from the results.	Participants are aware of their engagement in the research process; may gain insight into their own perspectives & behaviors, as well as the research topic.	Participation is empowering. Results may lead to a participant-defined action agenda & empowerment to initiate or participate in policy change.

Sociological Theories or Perspectives. Different sociological perspectives enable sociologists to view social issues through a variety of useful lenses.

Sociological Paradigm	Level of Analysis	Focus
Positivism	Macro	How each part of society functions together to contribute to the whole
Interpretivism	Micro	One-to-one interactions & communications
Critical Sociology	Macro	How inequalities contribute to social differences & perpetuate differences in power

Sociology of Radical Change

Radical Humanism

Critique/Emancipate
Radical Change

Radical Structuralism

Emancipate/Potentiality
Radical Change

Understand

Interpretive Sociology

Predict & Control

Functional Sociology

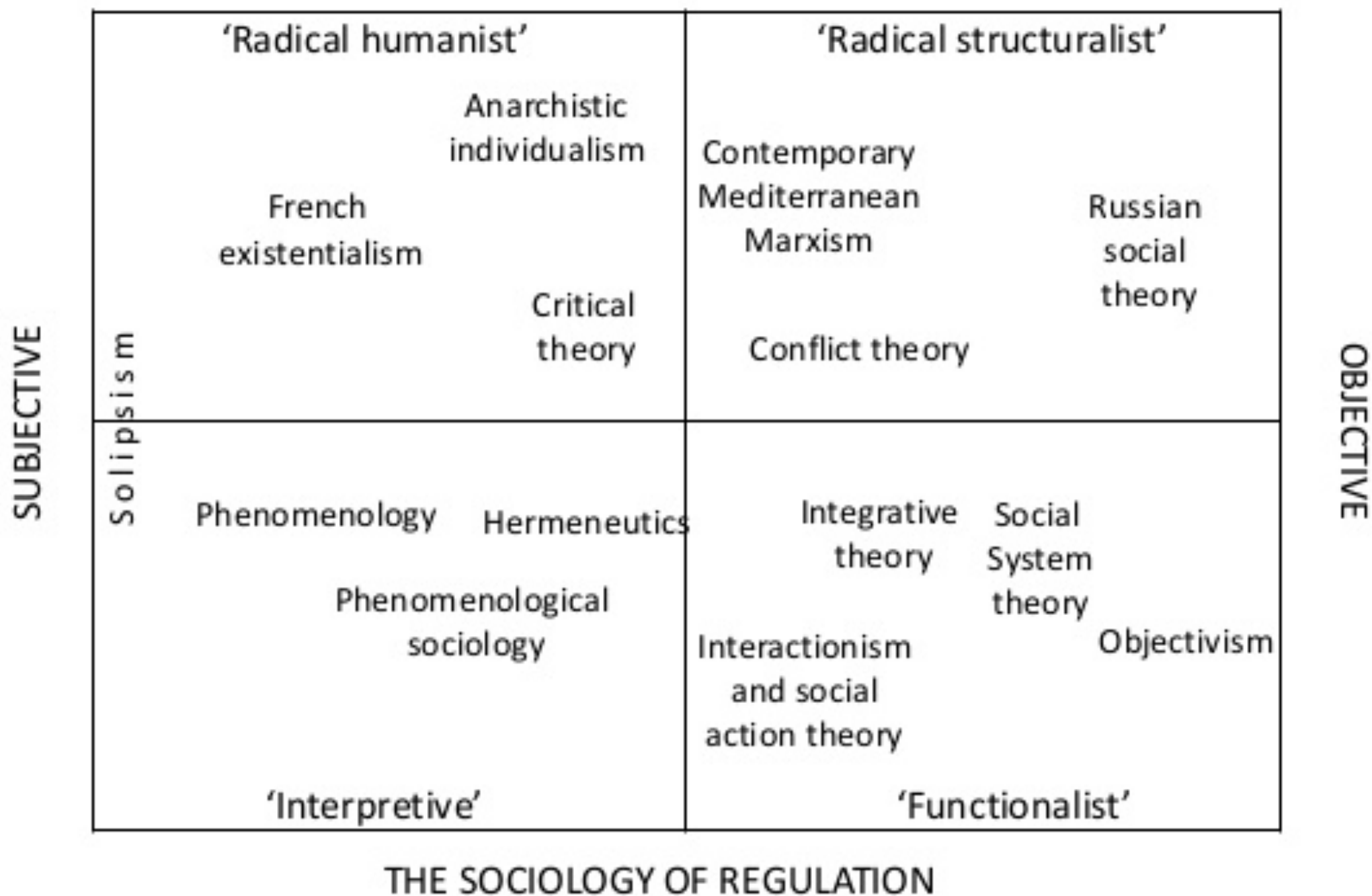
Sociology of Regulation & Stability

Subjective

Objective

Theories within the Four Paradigms

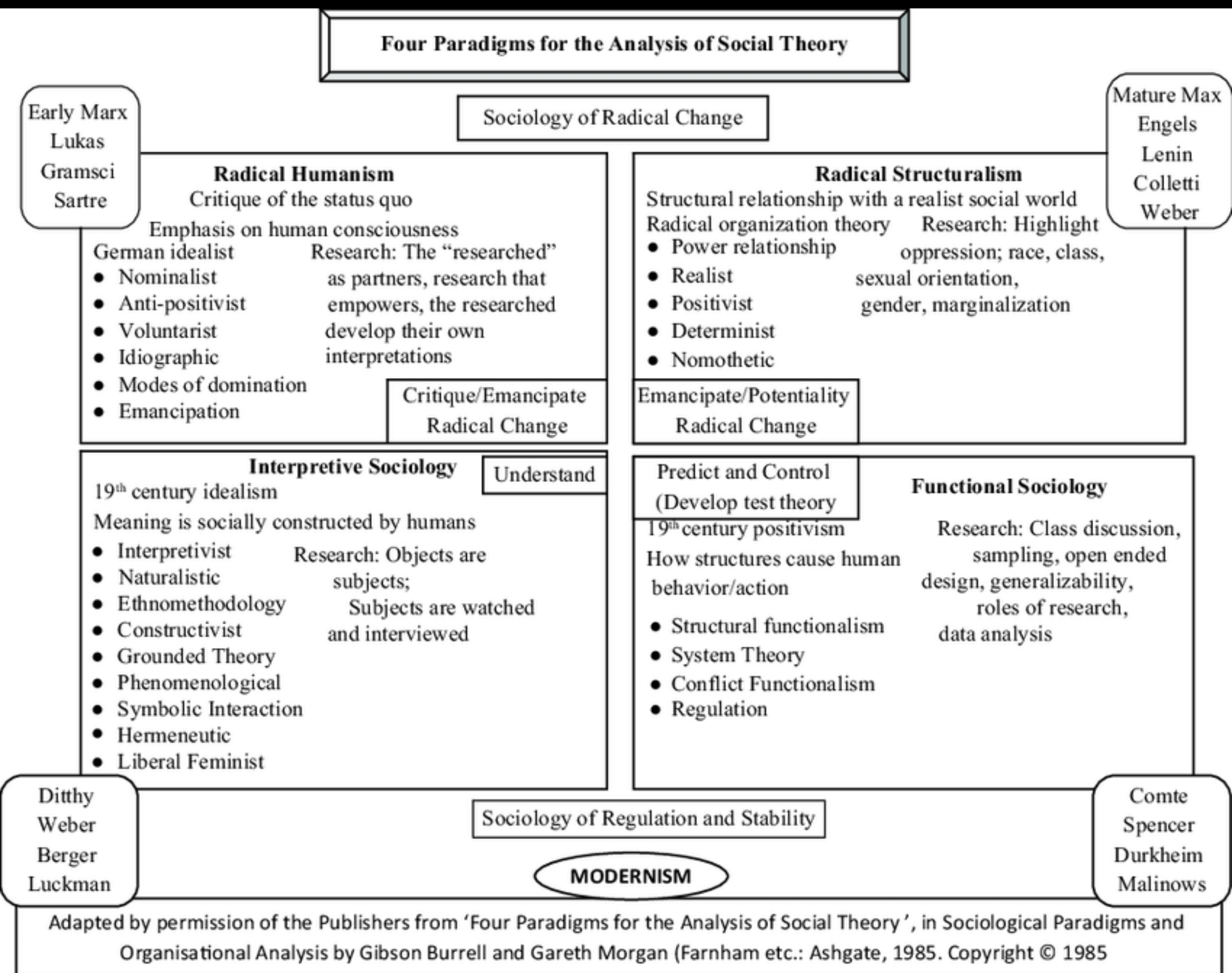
THE SOCIOLOGY OF RADICAL CHANGE



Burrell and Morgan (1979), p29

@louisedrumm

Burrell, Gibson & Morgan, Gareth. *Sociological paradigms and organizational analysis: elements of the sociology of corporate life* (Heinemann Educational Books, 1979)



Adapted from Burrell, Gibson & Morgan, Gareth. *Sociological paradigms and organizational analysis: elements of the sociology of corporate life* (Heinemann Educational Books, 1979)

American Anthropological Association Principles of Professional Responsibility http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/	
Do no harm	“must consider potential unintended consequences & long-term impacts on individuals, communities, identities.”
Be open & honest about work	“should be clear & open regarding the purpose, methods, outcomes, & sponsors of their work”
Obtain informed consent & permissions	“researchers working with living human communities must obtain the voluntary & informed consent of research participants.”
Weigh ethical obligations	“must weigh competing ethical obligations to research participants (primarily), students, professional colleagues, employers & funders”
Make your results accessible.	“should not withhold research results from research participants, especially when those results are shared with others.”
Protect & preserve your records.	“responsible to use appropriate methods to ensure the confidentiality & security of field notes, recordings, samples or other primary data & the identities of participants.”
Maintain professional relationships	“may gain personally from their work, but they must not exploit individuals, groups, animals, or cultural or biological materials.”

Informed Consent



- Research goals, methods, funding sources or sponsors, expected outcomes, anticipated impacts of the research, & the rights & responsibilities of research participants.
- Expectations regarding anonymity & credit.
- Researchers must present to research participants the possible impacts of participation, & make clear that despite their best efforts, confidentiality may be compromised or outcomes may differ from those anticipated.
- Visual media in particular, must be carefully used, referenced, & contextualized.
- SEATS requires written consent from all research participants.

Research paradigm	Positivistic	Postpositivistic	
Research Methodology	Quantitative & Empirically Based Qualitative	Qualitative	
	Empirical (Scientific)	Interpretive (Humanistic)	Critical (Power)
Intent of Inquiry	Explore, describe, predict, control, & explain	Understand	Emancipate (Liberate)
Methods common to each methodology	<i>Seeking causality, laws, & relations via:</i> Quantitative: Experiments, Quasi-experiments, Field experiments, Surveys <i>Seeking relations & regularities via:</i> Qualitative: Quasi-experiments, Field experiments, Surveys, Ethnoscience, Ethnography, Phenomenology, Case Studies, Content analysis	<i>Seeking theory, meanings & patterns via:</i> Phenomenology, Case Studies, Content analysis, Grounded theory, Natural/interpretive inquiry, Discourse analysis, Thematic analysis, Document analysis, <i>Seeking meanings & interpretations via:</i> Case studies, Discourse analysis, Ethical inquiry, Life history study, Narrative research, Hermeneutic inquiry, Heuristic inquiry	<i>Seeking reflection, emancipation, & problem solving via:</i> Action research, Discourse analysis, Participatory research, Critical analysis, Feminist inquiry, Reflective phenomenology

Sources: From McGregor & Murnane [2010] with permission from John Wiley & Sons. Sources used by the authors to develop the appendix included: Howe, 1992; Lather, 1994; Niglas, 2001; MacDonald et al., 2002; Khazanchi and Munkvold, 2003; Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Ponterotto, 2005; Salmani and Akbari, 2008). Acknowledgment and deep thanks to Dr.Ann MacCleave, Professor Emerita Mount Saint Vincent University [MSVU], for vetting and validating the core concepts contained in this table.

BEHAVIORAL

WHAT PEOPLE DO

WHY &
Ethnographic Field Studies
HOW TO FIX

HOW MANY &
HOW MUCH

Diary/Camera Studies

Focus Group Discussions
Interviews
WHAT PEOPLE SAY

Email Surveys

ATTITUDINAL

QUALITATIVE (DIRECT)

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QUANTITATIVE (INDIRECT)

Ethnographic Field Studies: researchers meet with & study participants in their natural environment.

Focus Groups: groups of 3–12 participants are lead through a discussion about a set of topics, giving verbal & written feedback through discussion & exercises.

Interviews: a researcher meets with participants one-on-one to discuss in depth what the participant thinks about the topic in question.

Diary/Camera Studies: participants use a diary or camera to record & describe aspects of their lives that are relevant to the study.

Email Surveys: a survey in which participants are recruited via email.

Reflexivity Defined

“... reflexivity, a concept we define as purposeful, often challenging reflection about ourselves, how we identify, and what we take for granted as true or right.”

“how might one’s gender/race/class/religion or other aspect of one’s identity affect the choices one makes about what questions to ask an interview participant or how one interacts with participants of similar or different backgrounds during the interview?”

Reflexivity

“the researcher should constantly take stock of their actions & their role in the research process & subject these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of their “data.”
(Mason (1996, p. 6)

Ask 2 questions:

- “What do I know?”
- “How do I know what I know?” (Hertz 1997, p. viii)

Reflexivity

“The role for fieldworkers is especially difficult because ethnographers need to be participants in the culture they study as well as objective observers. This forces the researcher to be aware of his own biases, to acknowledge personal viewpoints, & to consider how these influence the final report. This is known as reflexivity & has become a major part of the process in recent years. The researcher’s expectations or hopes about what she will discover are additional impediments to a completely objective account. This too requires the fieldworker to constantly reassess & reanalyze during the processes of observation and writing.”