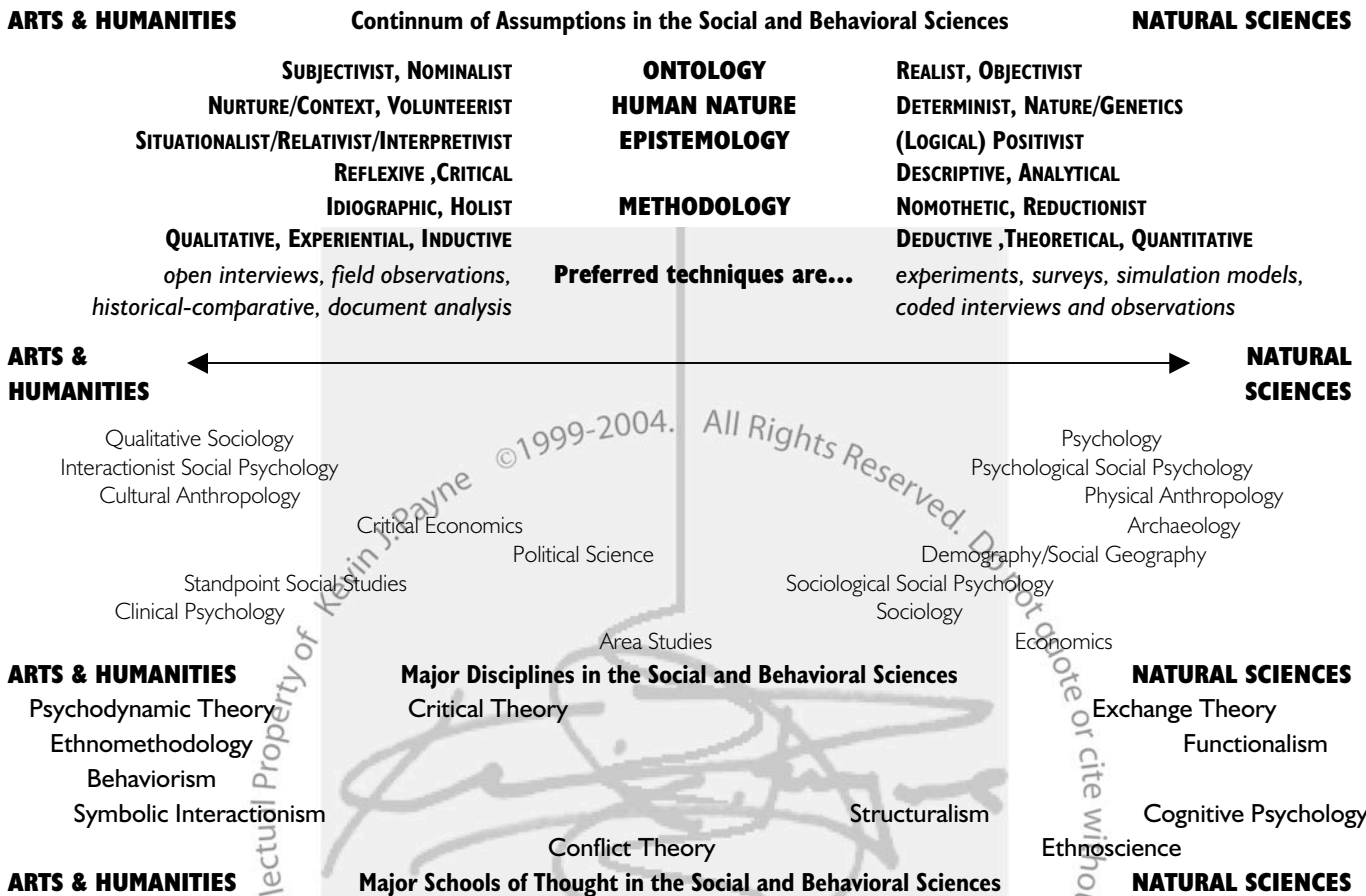


Lecture Notes:



- ① Social scientists, however, do research in very different ways; compare and contrast:
- nomothetic and ideographic emphasis:
    - **ideographic**: emphasizes individual events & entities, historical trajectories, particularities, situated conditions
    - **nomothetic**: emphasizes regularities in patterns and processes, generalities, lawful properties
  - emic and etic perspectives:
    - **emic**: how things appear from WITHIN the case, circumstance, system, milieu, etc
    - **etic**: how things appear to an outside observer of some case, circumstance, system, milieu, etc. according to his or her externally imposed theoretical structure.
  - deductive and inductive logics:
    - **inductive**: looks at the data first and then attempts to build a theory that will explain it
    - **deductive**: starts with a theory and then looks at the evidence
  - quantitative and qualitative methods:
    - **qualitative**: data takes the form of words and pictures, are not easily quantifiable, and non-mathematical techniques are used for analysis
    - **quantitative**: data takes the form of numbers and statistical and mathematical analysis techniques are used
  - pure and applied research:
    - **applied**: project that directly examines a real world issue or problem, often used to help guide policy or action, and often of general public interest and relevance
    - **pure**: project undertaken for solely theoretical or methodological grounds, no direct relevance for the general public and so not usually of interest to many outside of the profession

- Common positions regarding the relationship between nomothetic and idiographic research. *Where are you?*
  - 1 nomothetic is the preferred method because it looks more like “science”
  - 2 idiographic is the preferred method because it better captures the nuances of meaning and human experience
  - 3 idiographic is appropriate for new areas of inquiry, or even pilot studies, but should give way to mature nomothetic research as more is known
  - 4 nomothetic and idiographic research simply answer different kinds of questions, and so your choice of approach should depend on the kind of research questions you have
  - 5 nomothetic and idiographic research can be used in a complimentary and symbiotic fashion; the two working together say much more than either alone

③ **criteria for judging** a good theory:

There are then several grounds upon which to judge whether any theory or method is a good one or not. Although not many theories will successfully pass all of the following criteria, those that compare favorably against other possible viewpoints on these standards can reasonable be deemed better. Thus, in no particular order, here are eleven standards by which to ascertain the value of any theory, usually in comparison to other competing frameworks:

We should prefer one theoretical explanation over another when one theory...

- 1 **parsimony:** (Occam’s razor) is more simple
- 2 **precision:** better explains, predicts, or describes
- 3 **testability:** can be compared to real world events
- 4 **generalizability:** can organize, describe, explain, or predict more cases
- 5 **encompassability:** does something new while still doing the jobs of one or more existing theories
- 6 **justifiability:** is backed by better reasons or more developed logic
- 7 **consistency:** has all parts working together or generates results compatible with itself
- 8 **stability:** specified relation holds across small perturbations in the parameters
- 9 **validity:** is unbiased and free from systematic error
- 10 **reliability:** allows understanding or explanation across multiple usages
- 11 **fails to be falsified:** has yet to be contradicted by evidence (Popper)

**Key Ideas:**

**Subjective, objective, interpretivism, positivism, holism, reductionism, ideographic, nomothetic, inductive, deductive, qualitative, quantitative, applied sociology,.**