

## **SSWR Methods Workshop**

Thursday, January 12, 2017, 8am – 12 noon

**Title:** InDIGIqualitative<sup>1</sup> research methods: Incorporating Indigenous science into social work qualitative research methods training.

### **Presenter:**

Ramona Beltrán (Mexica/Yaqui), University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work

### **Abstract**

Indigenous science and corresponding art and media-based qualitative methods holds the potential to offer deeply contextualized and nuanced data gathering strategies and responses to pressing social issues in Indigenous and other marginalized communities. As such, it may help provide more complex and holistic understanding of social problems and effective solutions to pressing community health and wellness needs. This workshop is designed to provide participants with a foundation for advanced qualitative research methods with Indigenous and other diverse communities through using arts-based inquiry, visual praxis, storytelling, and interpretive methods for collecting and analyzing data. In her landmark book, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) describes qualitative research as particularly responsive to Indigenous communities because “it has the potential to respond to epistemic challenges and crises, to unravel and weave, to fold in and unmask the layers of the social life and depth of human experience” (p. 103) by challenging representations, contextualizing and sharing storylines, and making meaning from “complex and shifting experiences, identities, and realities” (p. 103). Grounded in an Indigenous epistemological framework applied across intersectional and diverse communities, participants will explore how to rigorously investigate deeply contextualized questions about individual and social phenomena. Consistent with Indigenous ways of knowing, self-reflexive praxis and location of self in relation to community and knowledge will be prioritized as qualitative questions are developed and considered.

**Objectives:** Social work scholar, Ramona Beltrán, with expertise in utilizing arts-based, digital/visual, and storytelling methods in Indigenous health disparities research will design the workshop to provide the following objectives:

- **Provide an introduction to the contributions of Indigenous science to social work research** with an emphasis on critical analysis of the strengths and weaknesses as well as differences from and commonalities with traditional western approaches to science and research.
  - **Introduce basic application of Indigenous epistemological frameworks to scholarly questions** including an overview of the values and ethics of utilizing these frameworks for both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous scholars.
  - **Introduce self-reflexive methodological approaches as they integrate Indigenous epistemologies, values and ethics** along with consideration of developing a personal and scholarly stance in relation to rigorous inquiry.
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- **Provide an overview of arts-based, visual praxis, and storytelling methods** including examples of successful research projects utilizing these methods. Concrete examples of scholarly products will be used as illustration (e.g., digital stories, digital photography, poetry and samples of poetic analysis).
- **Review analytic techniques** including the use of analytic software for organizing and systematically analyzing data (e.g. Dedoose).
- **Underscore the importance of relational accountability and community participation** in the research design, implementation, data collection, data analysis, and dissemination including performances, installations/demonstrations as well as manuscript publication.
- **Present a summary of research resources** and examples of publication and dissemination venues, discussion of managing on-going collaborative relationships, identifying funding sources, and implications for interventions and capacity building in community.
- **Foster a space for dialogue** utilizing related pedagogical techniques (e.g. visual praxis, storytelling, poetic, performative activities) so participants can work in small groups to apply new knowledge and skills to current and planned projects.

At the conclusion of the workshop participants will be able to describe the basic principles of Indigenous science, values, ethics, and relational accountability involved in designing and implementing critical indigenous research using arts-based, digital/visual, storytelling, and interpretive methods.

**Activities:** Participants will work in small groups to apply the methodology and methods to their current and/or future research projects. They will practice utilizing their respective chosen method live including collaborative analysis of their data that they will share at the end of the workshop. Workshop content will be presented in a format designed for social work researchers without a formal background in Indigenous science and arts-based methods and will integrate multimedia and examples from actual studies, small group discussions, and illustrations drawn from the presenter's own line of research (e.g., historical trauma in Indigenous communities, HIV and STI/health disparities, digital storytelling as method and intervention, role of narrative in interrupting intergenerational trauma and building positive cultural identity).

**Career Level and Prerequisites:** This workshop is intended for social work researchers at all career levels, from doctoral students to late career scholars interested in learning about innovations in qualitative methods and methodologies with indigenous and other marginalized populations.

**Preferred maximum number of registrations:** 30 – 40

### **Methods and Approach**

Consistent with the methodological innovations, pedagogical techniques will include art-based exercises, storytelling activities, and live analysis in small groups. Presenter will also use powerpoint slides with accompanying handouts, lecture interspersed with questions and answers, and group dialogue.

**Presenter Bio**

**Ramona Beltrán** is an Assistant Professor at the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work, her scholarship is committed to interrupting legacies of historical trauma that affect indigenous communities. She focuses on disrupting the problem-focused approach to understanding indigenous health and well being that is profuse in mainstream research through centering culture, resilience, resistance, healing and arts-based and storytelling methods in collaborative knowledge production with and for indigenous communities.