

Possibilities and Tensions in Educational Research

Edited by
Ruth Nicole Brown
Rozana Carducci
Candace R. Kuby

Disrupting Qualitative Inquiry is an edited volume that examines the possibilities and tensions encountered by scholars who adopt disruptive qualitative approaches to the study of educational contexts, issues, and phenomena. It presents a collection of innovative and intellectually stimulating chapters which illustrate the potential for disruptive qualitative research perspectives to advance social justice aims in educational policy and practice dialogues. The book defines “disruptive” qualitative methodologies and methods in educational research as processes of inquiry which seek to disrupt:

- 1) Traditional notions of research roles and relationships
- 2) Dominant approaches to the collection and analysis of data
- 3) Traditional notions of representing and disseminating research findings
- 4) Rigid epistemological and methodological boundaries
- 5) Disciplinary boundaries and assumptive frameworks of how to do educational research

Scholars and graduate students interested in disrupting traditional approaches to the study of education will find this book of tremendous value. Given the inclusion of both research examples and reflective narratives, this is an ideal text for adoption in introductory research design seminars as well as advanced courses devoted to theoretical and practical applications of qualitative and interpretive methodologies.

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Praise for

DISRUPTING QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

“Love. Truth. Stouthearted. Intuition and hope, not exempt from struggle, controversy, and tensions, where love for infinite possibilities offset conflicts. *Disrupting Qualitative Inquiry* is a refreshing and timely dialogue, engaging new and old generations of critical qualitative researchers in an ongoing, ever-flowing discussion on the challenges and hope for a framework and methodology in education that does the risky, dirty, but ever-so-needed work of disruption. This energetic collection disrupts static norms of inquiry, teaching, and research practices to energize and move educational inquiry onward.”

—*Blair E. Smith, Doctoral Student, Syracuse University*

“In this edited collection of methodological disruption, Ruth Nicole Brown, Rozana Carducci, and Candace R. Kuby have assembled a new generation of qualitative researchers who exhibit a healthy disregard for tradition, and a willingness to explore uncharted methodological territory. The research exemplars and theoretical discussions presented in this text are sure to serve as a model for both emerging, and established scholars looking for fresh examples of how such disruptive practices work.”

—*Lisa A. Mazzei, Associate Professor, University of Oregon*

DISRUPTING QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

critical qualitative research

CRITICAL ISSUES FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Shirley R. Steinberg and Gaile S. Cannella
Series Editors

Vol. 10

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and Tensions
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Research*

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Dedications

To my parents, Lawrence and Evelyn Brown, for making a way when there was not one and expecting me to do the same for those I love.—Ruth Nicole Brown

To Melissa Contreras-McGavin, a dear friend whose courage and conviction serve as constant sources of inspiration and motivation. Thank you for helping me realize the power, possibility, and necessity of disrupting educational organizations.—Rozana Carducci

To Nick, who inspires and supports me in living-out disruptively.—Candace Kuby

And collectively we dedicate this book to all those who seek to live as disruptive scholars and educators, and work for social change and justice.

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—Ruth Nicole

Peter Magolda, professor of Student Affairs in Higher Education at Miami University, played an important role in nurturing my fascination with and passion for qualitative inquiry. In addition to helping me understand the difference between methodology and method, Peter’s cultural inquiry courses opened my eyes to a new way of seeing, studying, and practicing higher education. I am a better writer and thinker for knowing Peter, and I will be forever grateful for the gifts of his wisdom, mentorship, and expert editing skills. Penny A. Pasque, Aaron M. Kuntz, and Ryan E. Gildersleeve provided excellent company on my initial explorations of disruptive inquiry. Frustrated with the narrow conceptualizations of qualitative research advanced in our doctoral programs and the field of higher education, Penny, Aaron, Ryan, and I engaged in a series of disruptive methodological dialogues that spanned seven years, significantly shaping my perspectives on the nature, aims, and possibilities of educational research. I dedicated my contribution to this book to my dear friend and colleague Melissa Contreras-McGavin. To put it simply, I am a better person for knowing and collaborating with Melissa, an exceptional mother, scholar, and friend who inspires me to live life to the fullest and reach my disruptive potential. Casandra Harper helped keep me sane during this editing project, reminding me to laugh and put life in perspective. The unconditional love and support of my husband and best friend, Seth, makes each day better than the last; I know I am lucky to have him as a partner. I would also like to thank my co-editors, Candace and Ruth Nicole, for their intellectual energy, patience, and grace during our collaborative endeavor. It has been a true joy to work with you.

—Rozana

Being disruptive is not always easy. In fact, usually it is met with resistance. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge those who have supported my work as a disruptive scholar. I believe that living disruptively is both a personal and

professional way of being. From a young age, my parents encouraged me, not necessarily with words, but in how they raised me to be independent as a woman. I was encouraged to color outside of the lines, literally and figuratively. Nick, my partner in life, has challenged me to disrupt normalized ways of being a woman, teacher, Christian, wife, and so forth. Professionally, when I think of one mentor scholar who modeled and encouraged me to disrupt, it is Barbara Dennis. While at Indiana University, her courses on feminist methodologies and narrative inquiry as well as conversations on critical theory and poststructuralism, fed my soul as a researcher and opened my eyes to endless possibilities. The readings and learning engagements in her courses gave me the space to think about the tensions and possibilities of disrupting qualitative inquiry. Thank you for teaching me what it means to research *with* people, not *on* people. Many thanks to each of you for encouraging me (whether or not you realized it) to disrupt. And finally, I remember sitting in a coffee shop with Rozana discussing the idea and vision for this book and then us meeting Ruth Nicole and thinking she was just the right match for a third editor. I learned so much from you both—thank you for sharing your beauty as humans, passion for justice and change, and savvy skills as editors. Thanks for making this journey so pleasurable.

—Candace

The visioning, organizing, writing, and editing of this book have not happened in isolation. The three of us are grateful for the support we have received, not only in editing this book, but also in our lives beyond this project that led us to the point of collaboration.

Collectively, we are also grateful for the support and wisdom of Gaile Cannella, the series editor, and the editorial and production team at Peter Lang. We are thrilled that Teri Holbrook and Nicole Pourchier accepted our invitation to live out their artist/researcher/teacher identities in creating the art for the cover of the book. Finally, we would like to acknowledge the hard work and inspirational disruption of the scholars contributing chapters to this book. Individually and collectively these authors offer an exciting vision of methodological possibility, helping advance the disruptive potential of qualitative educational inquiry.



Foreword

As we are now well into the twenty-first century, a new generation of critical qualitative researchers have entered academia. As graduate students, most of these early career scholars have had the opportunity to work with older colleagues who have spent their careers practicing qualitative, feminist, poststructural, postcolonial, or other forms of research that have never been valued broadly in the academy either epistemologically or methodologically. This earlier generation dealt with faculties who were, most commonly, powerful senior-level white males, who believed in scientific truth and method. These faculty members, who were also predominately post-positivist and believers in inferential statistics/measurement, often dismissed and disrespected those who conducted qualitative research of any type. Further, the work of women and people of color has for the past 30 years often been treated with disdain and disregarded as if it were not legitimate, even when it did follow traditional, post-positivist structures and practices. This earlier generation stood up literally every day of their careers for diversity in research, even arguing for basic introductory qualitative research courses, as well as for the acceptance of feminist, critical, and postcolonial dissertations. At this point, many books (and book series) have been constructed and published, as well as qualitative and critical scholarly journals that serve as outlets for scholarly work that literally did not exist for the first generation.

We are now at a moment in history in which scholars who would be qualitative, critical, disruptive, and transformative have a generation before them who

have attempted to change the academic environment, to open doors and opportunities that would center diversity, multiplicity, and issues of social/environmental justice. Further, calls for a critical social science have emanated from multiple locations for 20-plus years. However, the postpositivist power structure remains strong for a range of reasons. Faculty from some disciplines and academic institutions never accepted qualitative research in any form; in these locations, no coursework was offered, and no tenure has ever been granted for qualitative or critical work. Additionally, and more broadly, both obvious and veiled forms of backlash against the successes of qualitative research are now impacting life in academia, from patriarchal challenges to diverse perspectives such as feminism, to the construction of hegemonic discourses that co-opt and reinscribe such as mixed methods and evidence-based practices. Underlying all of this are both local and global neoliberalism that locks one into forms of governmentality through which all aspects of human functioning are interpreted as related to capital, as privileging production (e.g., test scores, audit culture, funding), and as entrepreneurial (e.g., research/teaching that produces capital).

The authors in this volume are dealing with these complexities: higher education that has opened doors to diverse qualitative forms of research; backlashes against much of this research as diverse ways of being have gained attention; an increasingly neoliberal, corporatized, managerial, and self-interested academic environment; and, the intellectual, emotional, and bodily struggles and pressures of being a critical researcher who wants to survive in, while transforming, a society (and institution) that has, despite the work of previous generation scholars, remained patriarchal, oppressive, capitalist, and competitive. In different ways, the chapters in *Disrupting Qualitative Inquiry: Possibilities & Tensions in Educational Research* represent the complex struggles that we all face as critical qualitative research scholars, as researchers who hope to make changes that address injustices of all types. The reader is invited to interact with this text in multiple and diverse ways as the authors share their constructions of both disruptive inquiry and disruptive teaching.

Gaile S. Cannella, Series Editor
Critical Qualitative Research



Introduction

RUTH NICOLE BROWN, ROZANA CARDUCCI,
AND CANDACE R. KUBY

The best method to use is the one that answers the research question. I was taught this as a graduate student and now, as a professor, I teach the same lesson to my students. It succinctly ends unproductive conversations about shopping for “methods” like one does for clothes. Should I go with what is trendy? Designer? Second-hand? Clearance? Which method will cost me less (time, stress, coursework), I am often asked? Methods are controversial; sometimes methods are rendered inconsequential, taught strictly within a disciplinary tradition, and/or chosen according to market demand. Some methods are stereotyped as threatening, and even if it is the best method for the question, students may resist because of what they’ve heard about a “qualitative” or “quantitative” project. Fear looms large, and it shows up in unexpected ways—even in conversations about methods.

—REFLECTION, RUTH NICOLE

As the opening reflection illustrates, decisions concerning the selection of research methodologies and methods remain a contested terrain, studded with assumptions, ideologies, and fears regarding the proper and/or most efficient way to conduct research. It is now acknowledged (at least by researchers anchored in critical, feminist, and postmodern schools of thought) that the process of inquiry is not a neutral activity (Brown & Strega, 2005); it is a highly political endeavor with significant implications for the researcher as well as the individuals and contexts that serve as the focus of study. While the opening reflection from Ruth Nicole sheds light on a particular strategy for shaping the methodological choices of graduate students beginning their socialization

as educational researchers (i.e., teaching them to let the question guide the selection of method[ology]),¹ it is important to recognize that Ruth Nicole's counsel is only one of the many ideologically anchored discourses influencing the development of researcher identities and methodological preferences. In addition to the guidance of mentors and educational inquiry instructors like Ruth Nicole, who themselves teach from a particular, although often unnamed, political point of view, the research beliefs and practices of emerging scholars are also shaped by global, national, disciplinary, and organizational discourses that delimit the parameters of legitimate inquiry and exert subtle (and occasionally overt) pressure to conform to particular prescriptions for what counts as research. The National Research Council's (NRC) (2002) treatise, *Scientific Research in Education*, American Educational Research Association's (AERA) (2006) *Standards for Reporting on Empirical Social Science Research in AERA Publications*, and institutional review board protocols predicated on the medical model of research (Koro-Ljungberg, Gemignani, Brodeur, & Kmiec, 2007) are three common examples of national and organizational discourses that seek to govern the practice of educational research.

Unfortunately, despite the proliferation of qualitative research methodologies over the last 20 years—Denzin and Lincoln (2005) asserted that “an embarrassment of choices now characterizes the field of qualitative research” (p. 20)—educational research continues to be dominated by discourses that extol postpositivist and constructivist assumptions of data, analysis, representation, and knowledge production (Pasque, Carducci, Kuntz, & Gildersleeve, 2012) that serve to constrain methodological imagination and perpetuate the inequitable status quo in our schools and communities. Innovative ways of being a researcher and doing qualitative research are often met with resistance in the advising meeting, dissertation proposal defense, peer review process for publication, funding, or promotion and tenure. Whether in actual conversations with mentors, instructors, and colleagues or through subtle, nonverbal cues communicated via actions, educational researchers seeking to engage in new ways of producing and disseminating knowledge often hear, “*This isn't how we do things in academia. This is not how educational research has been done before.*”

Perhaps you have heard this refrain or something similar when discussing a research idea with an advisor, colleague, or reviewer. How did you respond to this challenge in the moment? How did the normalizing statements of your colleague shape your research decisions moving forward? Did you change your research plan to conform to dominant inquiry norms or opt to move forward with your “disruptive” study? Where do you think these disciplining messages come from and how might they be contested?

In the process of reflecting on, and sharing, our individual responses to the preceding questions, we discovered the inspiration and strategic value derived

from exchanging stories of disruption. As we compared notes and anecdotes, we realized that despite our frustration with the discourses of methodological conservatism (Denzin & Giardiana, 2006; Lincoln & Cannella, 2004a, 2004b), which characterize the contemporary era of educational inquiry, we could identify mentors, colleagues, and, most importantly, early career peers, who were successfully engaging in innovative qualitative studies of educational contexts and phenomena. The idea for this book emerged from these deeply personal and empowering conversations. *Disrupting Qualitative Inquiry: Possibilities and Tensions in Educational Research* aims to interrupt prevailing postpositivist and constructivist approaches to qualitative research, challenging established norms of inquiry and illuminating ways of disrupting research practices, dissertating, teaching, and disseminating research in order to *move educational inquiry forward*. Forward in innovative ways of doing research *with* others, in questions we ask and method(ologie)s chosen, in how we choose to (re)present research, in disrupting life within academia, and in sharing how our disruptive paths have been shaped. Our hope is that emerging and established scholars (and those in between) derive energy, support, and respite from this book.

We want to begin with a strategic disruption. Think back to the time before you found yourself entrenched in graduate school and department politics, constrained by the norms of academic dress and vocabulary, and weighted down with the formal and informal advice of colleagues. Remember the research questions and educational issues that captured your mind and heart before you were told, “while it sounds promising, it’s better to wait to do that project until you get a tenure-track job and have tenure.” It is those questions and issues, those unmentionable projects that will not let you go even as they lay buried underneath the scripted elevator spiel you have prepared about who you are and what you study, that we would like you to focus on as you read this volume. To fully receive the gift of what we aim to offer in this book, we need you the reader to abandon any and all messages about the “right” way to do research, “appropriate questions,” and “best methods and methodologies.” This is the regularly scheduled program we aim to disrupt with this suggestive: where there is passion, there is possibility; where there is a haunting (longing), there is a research question begging to be spoken. If you dare speak the project, a methodology and method can be devised. As the research examples and personal narratives compiled in this book attest, disrupting qualitative research norms in educational inquiry is both challenging and possible. It requires conviction, a healthy disregard for tradition, and a willingness to explore uncharted methodological territory. To be sure, there are tensions associated with disruptive work (e.g., navigating disciplinary politics, maintaining resilience despite the inevitable fatigue associated with repeatedly explaining and defending your work); however, for us and the authors who contributed to this book, the possibilities far outweigh the tensions. Rather than distancing you from the academy,

engaging in disruptive scholarship may bring you closer to others similarly interested in transforming stale academic routines, innovating both what we know and how we know, contributing diverse ideas to old and new questions while at the very least charting new fields of study made possible because you stayed with what was uncomfortable, different, and disruptive.

FRAMING DISRUPTIVE INQUIRY

When brainstorming potential titles for this book we considered the terms critical, non-dominant, and untraditional qualitative research. We selected the term “disrupting” for several reasons. First, critical is a loaded word in educational research often tied to critical social theory. While some of the chapters in the book draw on critical theories, not all research that disrupts aligns with the tenets of critical social thought. We also struggled with our intent in using words like non-dominant or untraditional. While at this time, many of the methodologies and methods described in the book might be considered non-dominant and untraditional, our conversations about potential book titles challenged us to carefully reflect on and articulate the overarching goals driving our collaborative work. Do we want non-dominant (or untraditional or critical) method(ologie)s to become dominant and traditional, replacing or at least expanding the postpositivist and constructivist discourses that currently frame the parameters of educational inquiry? After a series of discussions and email exchanges, we reached consensus that methodological dominance is not the aim of this book; rather, we seek to engage in methodological advocacy, calling attention to the new forms of knowledge and social change made possible by embracing a wider repertoire of method(ologie)s than are currently acknowledged by the disciplinary powers that be. Ultimately, we came to a consensus on a title that centers on a verb that we feel best captures our aim in editing this volume: disrupting. The chapters in this book are actively disrupting ways of being, researching, writing, advising, and teaching qualitative inquiry in academia.

Having reached agreement on the goal of disruption, we next turned our attention to elaborating on the nature of the disruption we hoped to incite. For the purposes of this book, we identified five specific ways scholars may disrupt qualitative method(ologie)s in educational research. Each of these focal disruptive practices is described below. It is important to note first, however, that our disruptive framework is by no means fixed or complete. It is a fluid and evolving framework intended to illustrate the possibilities and tensions embedded within disruptive qualitative educational inquiry. We hope this discussion will spark your methodological imagination and encourage you to extend our framework by reflecting on and enacting your

own notions of disruptive research principles, processes, and practices. Disruptive qualitative educational research:

Disrupts dominant notions of research roles and relationships—Disruptive qualitative researchers redefine the nature of what it means to participate in research and by whom. These relationships enact new approaches to recognizing and negotiating power within the research site as well as the education scholarly community.

Disrupts dominant approaches to the collection and analysis of data—Disruptive qualitative researchers seek alternative ways of collecting and analyzing data. In doing so, expanded ways of knowing and being are valued, and perspectives that are not always valued in educational research are foregrounded.

Disrupts dominant notions of (re)presenting and disseminating research findings—Disruptive qualitative researchers intentionally seek alternative publication formats and venues. They realize that research journals are not the only, or even the best, venue for work to be shared if the goals are to create change and honor the stories of co-researchers/collaborators. Disruptive researchers ask, to what end do I research? And how best can I share with co-researchers? And why and with whom do we wish to engage in dialogue?

Disrupts rigid epistemological and methodological boundaries—Disruptive qualitative researchers view theories as malleable and encourage the application of non-traditional theories in educational research. They understand that new theories and ways of researching are needed to examine current educational practices and policies. Disruptive researchers also understand that theoretical readings are not fixed, canonical, and rigid, but can be interpreted in various ways by various people.

Disrupts disciplinary boundaries and assumptive frameworks of how to do educational research—Disruptive qualitative researchers interrogate how knowledge is produced and organized, challenging rigid and unproductive disciplinary boundaries. Utilizing knowledge situated across and beyond the academy, they seek to intervene and create new ways of doing research that disrupt the status quo in educational research.

Drawing upon research examples and personal reflection, the educational scholars featured in this book bring our disruptive framework to life. Their narratives illustrate the potential for theoretical and methodological disruption to improve educational practice and policy in the interest of fostering more socially just schools and communities. Our hope is that directing attention to the nuances of disruptive qualitative inquiry will open up spaces to think through the promises, limits, privileges, and shortcomings of research approaches that are typically overlooked or dismissed within the field of education.

DISRUPTION AS BEING AND DOING

As evidenced in the personal reflections of the authors contributing to this volume, for some educational researchers, disruption is a way of being; it is who they are

as people, as scholars. Disruptive researchers often feel they do not have a choice with respect to the work they do. On many occasions, the research emerges from the researcher's personal biography and lived experience, which is used to inform how they review previously written academic literature, the ways in which they go about gaining access and building relationships with those who they do not see as "data" but rather as peoples and partners in research. Skills and talents that lie outside of the traditional purview of researchers, say, for example, those who identify as artists may also argue that how they present their research grows as much from who they are as it does from the research question posed (see Chapter 5 by Pourchier and Holbrook). Much of what we understand as disruptive relies on the individual, which begs a valuation of diversity and embrace of fluid identities (see Chapter 10 by Nicolazzo and Chapter 11 by Pasque).

For other disruptive scholars, disruption is more about what they do, the practices and actions that intentionally work against the academy's collusion with militarization, violence, privatization, and elitism. The kinds of disruptive actions taken often depend on the context in which they labor, their location in hierarchies of power, position, and prestige, and the resources they have access to. Disruption as practice is dynamic, and they act in ways both small and large to transform processes and productions of knowledge to become accessible and accountable to the minoritized and marginalized. Disruption as being and doing is not easy, but it nourishes us and, hopefully, the people we humbly and respectfully call collaborators in research.

To acknowledge methodological disruption as a way of being and doing, we asked the authors contributing to this volume to include personal reflections on their methodological disruptions. Authors were encouraged to write about the ways in which multiple and fluid identities shaped their guiding research questions, methodological perspectives, and career decisions. The inclusion of personal narratives is intended to help readers recognize the personal in the politics of inquiry and gain insight from others' lessons learned.

THE ORIGINS OF OUR DISRUPTIVE WORK

3019. What will disruption look like in the future? Who will remember this book? What will be laughable? What will seem ancient? What problems will endure? I dream of a music studio in a comfortable office that emits no dangerous smells and is spacious, safe, and fun enough for collective meetings, children, and theatrical performances. It would be supplied with materials for doing our best work, which includes a free-of-charge working copier and printer for students and professors alike who will not take for granted their dreams, and who do recognize the full humanity of those they work with. We will not struggle to make ends meet. We undo boundaries that construct "the university" and "the community" as false binaries. My kind of music plays as loud as I want and so does yours.

Surprise. Profound revelation. When I create the space for students to ask questions that sincerely motivate them, when I spend the necessary hours (a no-deadline kind of time) to converse, share ideas, name a life's work, divulge secret yearnings, un-taboo topics, make profound observations, interrogate personal experiences, claim individual gifts and talents, plot, plan, write, and conduct the dream of researchable projects, while sensing us all being, there is an awful lot of freezing up. Changing of the mind. Blame. Guilt. Resistance. Circling back and forth. Reduction. Retreating. Playing small. I mean, when I say, "yeah let's create this playground from the ground up ... bringing only those things we most want and desire, and I mean let's really get free, and not just free for ourselves, but for those who did not make it, for those we've left behind, for those yet to come"—fear shows up where I was looking for love.

Long sigh. Deep breath. Transformation. I remember wanting to perform, to create, to be an artist that was well-versed in the science of politics. How naïve I was to the ways knowledge is managed and organized in the academy! I do know now that feeling my blackness, feminism, body, penchant for the wild and the performative, working class values, unparalleled optimism, Midwestern pleasantness, and deep desire to create what does not exist, disrupts more than I initially imagined. My struggle sometimes looks like being overly defensive, hyper-supportive of students, and unresponsive to my own humanness. But struggle is no match for my fearlessness. Perhaps, "soft," "fluff," and "indecisive" are code for interdisciplinary scholarship. I remember. Let's change it all.

—RUTH NICOLE

I was a first-year doctoral student in 2002 eager to embed myself in my new academic home, the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Sciences (GSEIS). When I received an email notice of a brown bag meeting to discuss the newly published National Research Council's (2002) methodological manifesto, *Scientific Research in Education*, I saw an opportunity to expand my social and scholarly network. It was at this informal lunchtime gathering that I first learned about the politics of inquiry—global, national, disciplinary, organizational, and individual efforts to discipline (educational) scholars who engage in research that disrupts the normative principle and practices of postpositivism. Although I was in the early stages of formulating my scholarly identity and commitments, I had long ago discovered my preference for qualitative research and was disheartened to learn of a movement to marginalize qualitative perspectives within the educational research community.

The politics of inquiry became personal during my second year of doctoral work as I completed the three-course qualitative research sequence (222 A—B—C) offered by the GSEIS Social Research Methodology unit. Qualitative research was narrowly conceptualized in the 222 sequence as participant observation. The core texts were ethnographies (Jay MacLeod's, 1995, *Ain't No Making It*, and William Foot Whyte's, 1943, *Street Corner Society*). Class assignments focused on learning the steps of drafting a standard research proposal (Maxwell, 1996) and practicing the skills of participant observation data collection and analysis. As I was relatively new to the study and practice of qualitative

research, I did not realize the sequence was providing me with a rather limited introduction to the world of qualitative educational inquiry. I did not know what I was missing as I had not yet heard of performance ethnography, autoethnography, a/r/tography, critical race theory counterstorytelling, poetic narratives, or photovoice. Thankfully, Carla (a pseudonym), a student in my 222B seminar opened my eyes.

Carla was a doctoral student studying indigenous epistemologies and education. We had taken 222A together and were enrolled in the same section of 222B, the field methods class. On the first day of the methods seminar, the professor explained the aims of the class and the nature of the semester-long participant observation project. Each student was required to propose and carry out a mini-ethnography of a site of our choosing, spending a minimum of five hours a week engaging in participant observation. At the end of the course overview, Carla raised her hand, and when called on by the professor, politely articulated the concern that the class's exclusive focus on ethnographic data collection methods was at odds with her indigenous epistemological and methodological commitments. She asked if there was a possibility of modifying the project so that she could carry out a research project informed by her evolving understanding of indigenous educational inquiry—a research paradigm that emphasized conducting research with, not on, “others.” Although the professor acknowledged Carla's epistemological and methodological dilemma, she quickly denied the request, stating that this was a participant observation seminar and everyone needed to complete a traditional participant observation project. Carla opted to remain enrolled in the seminar but quietly resisted the professor's attempt to discipline her research agenda by designing and carrying out a class project that reflected her indigenous beliefs and values (i.e., her study did not include participant observation). The professor penalized Carla for her disobedience by deducting points from her final project grade. To my knowledge, Carla did not contest the lower grade because, for Carla, the grade wasn't the point—methodological congruence and intellectual freedom were more important.

Although I can no longer recall the specific focus of Carla's project, I can tell you her study had a profound influence in shaping my beliefs about the nature and purpose of educational research. Carla opened my eyes to the possibility—indeed the necessity—of disrupting the politics of inquiry that seek to narrowly define what counts as legitimate educational research. Carla taught me that the threat of methodological discipline and punishment is not solely embedded in the global neoliberal discourse that informs research policy documents such as those that the NRC report. The threat is also local and personal and can come from those you least expect, like the instructor of your qualitative research seminar, the same person who co-sponsored the brown bag on resisting the narrow inquiry parameters imposed by the science-based educational research movement.

—ROZANA

Shocked. Confused. Blind-sided. Unsure how to respond. These are descriptions for how I felt when I left my dissertation defense. While I thought I had worked closely with committee members on the theories and methods of analysis for my research (even sought their review of research talks for job interviews), this is not what materialized in the

meeting. In studying emotions as a verb (as a performance) I sought to create a new method for analysis bricolaging three theoretical perspectives: critical sociocultural, performative aspects of narrative, and rhizomatic. My memory from the defense meeting conversation was that I could not use critical sociocultural theory without using an activity theory approach to analysis and I could not claim to use rhizomatic theory without visually mapping-out analysis. I was asked to take out these two perspectives from the description of theories and methodology sections and move them to a last chapter on future directions of research.

I was frustrated because I did not understand these requests. My reading of critical sociocultural theory (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007) did not dictate one approach for analysis. Not all studies I read that applied rhizomatic analysis created a visual mapping (Alvermann, 2000; Hagood, 2009; Kamberelis, 2004). I knew it was risky to create a new method of analysis for emotions, but, felt that being asked to remove these two aspects was not reflective of the thinking, analyzing, and writing up of research that I did for my dissertation. After much discerning (and little sleep) and seeking advice, I did what the committee requested, in a sense, to jump through the hoop and graduate. I submitted a letter to the committee expressing my concerns along with the revised dissertation.

Since then, I have published peer-reviewed articles that I believe truly reflect my dissertation process (Kuby, 2013a; in press). From a faculty position now, I understand how and why these requests might have surfaced from my committee members. Having served on dissertation committees, I know that the chemistry and dynamics of committee members materialize behind closed doors, and graduate students are not always privy to that knowledge. While I view theories as malleable and intentionally seek for ways to create new understandings with innovative method(ologie)s, I understand that not all faculty are socialized in this way, and it can be perplexing. I have the utmost respect for all of my committee members and value their support in writing a non-traditional dissertation (i.e., structure of chapters), and as a teacher/researcher using autoethnographic methods. They each encouraged me to think about moving forward with a book publication, which has now come to fruition (Kuby, 2013b). I look back at the defense meeting (several years later) as a defining moment and fissure in my career that served as a catalyst for embracing disruptive qualitative inquiry.

—CANDACE

As the vignettes illustrate, we have each experienced moments in our work as educational researchers that prompted us to find alternative ways of being in the academy. We have each encountered tensions with educational inquiry and processes of inquiry socialization. Research and writing are not neutral; therefore it is important for us to share the previous vignettes as a way to invite readers into our lives and how we embody disruptive educational research—these were pivotal moments in our lives that prompted us to be and do disruptive inquiry. We came together because of our unifying interest in making public the tensions and possibilities of disrupting qualitative research.

We also feel that readers need to understand our story of collaboration—how we found each other, so to speak. As many of the authors in this book share, being and doing disruptive research happens in relationships with others. Specially, seeking out like-minded colleagues is necessary, as disruptive researchers (see Chapter 12 by Hughes and Vagle and Chapter 13 by Osei-Kofi). We share how our collaboration developed in order to encourage readers to seek out people, in a grass-roots sort of way, as collaborators of disruptive inquiry. This organic movement is needed to sustain, support, and encourage us as researchers, and the projects and people we choose to collaborate with as educators. We see grassroots partnerships as a way to deliberately disrupt macro, meso, and self-policing micro ways of doing traditional, normalized, and/or accepted research.

Candace and Rozana were both part of an organic collaboration of faculty at the University of Missouri (QuaRC: Qualitative Research Consortium) that sought to support graduate students who were interested in approaches to qualitative research (e.g., seminar and panel discussions, schedule of advanced qualitative research classes, help with writing proposals for conferences, and so forth), and to support other faculty members in their research and advising. The larger aim was to develop a culture of valuing qualitative research within our College of Education, something that was not evident in practices, discourses, and policies. Candace and Rozana had conversations sharing the frustrations and hopes of disruptive qualitative approaches. We had a vision for creating an edited book but wanted a third editor to embark on the journey with us. One of the QuaRC seminar sessions was on performance ethnography. Ruth Nicole and doctoral students from the University of Illinois came to Missouri to share about their experiences in SOLHOT (see Chapters 2 and 10) and to perform ethnographically from their collaborative research. It was at this meeting that Candace and Rozana—somewhat synchronously—thought that Ruth Nicole would be a perfect editor! We sensed a passion and vision in the work Ruth Nicole shared and invited her to join us in this endeavor. The friendship and professional relationship began.

While we each have varied disciplinary homes—Candace is an early childhood literacy researcher; Ruth Nicole is trained as a political scientist with a joint appointment in women and gender studies and educational policy, organization, and leadership, whose scholarship is dedicated to Black girlhood and youth culture; and Rozana studies higher education organizations and leadership—we find energy and solace in a desire to question the established ways of doing research and encourage innovative ways of researching. It is our hope that the experience readers have with this book will provide inspiration and information about methodological disruption. Our focus is on several different levels of inquiry including structural (the disciplinary norms which govern research), technical (exploration of disruptive methods), and personal (the experience of engaging in disruptive

research). These different levels are meant to highlight the complex possibilities of doing intellectual labor that challenge hegemonic norms of academic inquiry. Our desire is for this book to continue and mediate conversations about the politics and possibility of departing from disciplinary norms on methods as well as critiques of newer methods and disruptive approaches.

THE TIME IS NOW FOR DISRUPTIVE QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

As described in the previous section, this book was born out of a shared interest in advancing disruptive approaches to qualitative inquiry in educational research. We have been wrestling with this project for years as doctoral students and assistant professors in disparate educational specialties, confronting and resisting within our own work the disciplining politics of inquiry embedded within the science- and evidence-based research movements (National Research Council, 2002) that have dominated education scholarship over the last 10 years (Baez & Boyles, 2009; Pasque, Carducci, Kuntz, & Gildersleeve, 2012). Social scientists in general, and educational scholars in particular, continue to be mired in an era of methodological conservatism (Denzin & Giardina, 2006; Lincoln & Cannella, 2004a, 2004b), which frames large-scale, random-sample, (quasi)-experimental designs as the gold standard in educational research. Through the demarcation of “legitimate” educational inquiry parameters (e.g., rigid publication formatting guidelines, postpositivist institutional review board protocols), agents of methodological conservatism (for example, journal editors, funding boards, doctoral committees, government agencies) seek to discredit and marginalize what the National Research Council (2002) described as “extreme epistemological perspectives” (p. 25)—postmodern, critical, queer, indigenous, etc., approaches to knowledge production that challenge the possibility (and indeed the necessity) of identifying and disseminating objective, generalizable, and reliable educational “Truths.”

An impromptu conversation over bagels at the 2012 International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry included a collective observation that in spite of the increasing prominence of the disciplining discourses and practices of methodological conservatism, disruption abounds within the educational research community as scholars and their collaborators advance innovative forms of data collection, analysis, representation, engagement, and knowledge dissemination that reflect new ways of being, doing, and knowing within the educational research community. As we swept up the crumbs from our conference breakfast, we began to envision a book that placed these disruptive qualitative methodological perspectives and practices at the center rather than at the margins of educational scholarship. We were particularly interested in shining a spotlight on the cadre of emerging educational scholars (graduate students