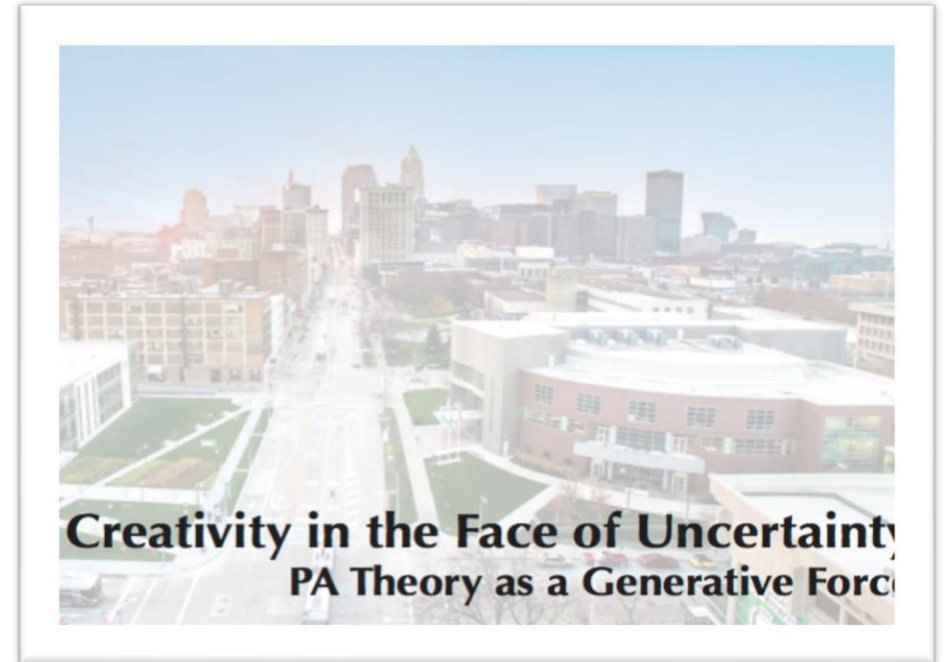


Pragmatism and Public Administration Research Methodology

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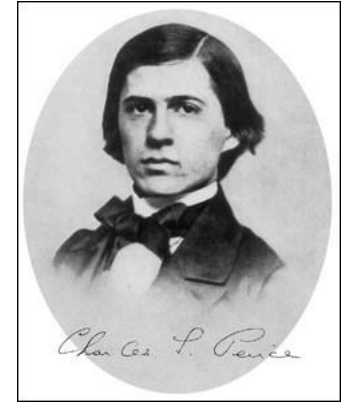
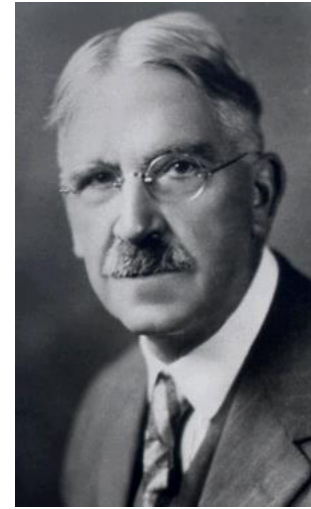




We Argue:

Philosophical pragmatism provides a robust basis for research methodology in PA

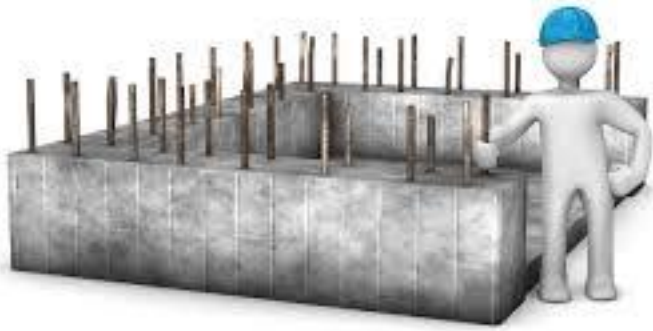
John Dewey



C. S. Peirce

Focus:

- Problems of the public
- Connection between theory and practice
- Logic of Inquiry >>>>> resolution of public problems



Simultaneously
objective and subjective

1980s- 1990s
Dismal status of
dissertation
research in PA



“Courses and textbooks on research methods deal mostly w/ methodism And fail to .. Address philosophy of science”

Missing:

- Causal Relationships
- Connection to theory
- Research design
- Clear purpose

PA research “requires a type of **practical reasoning** that justifies the method and purpose.”

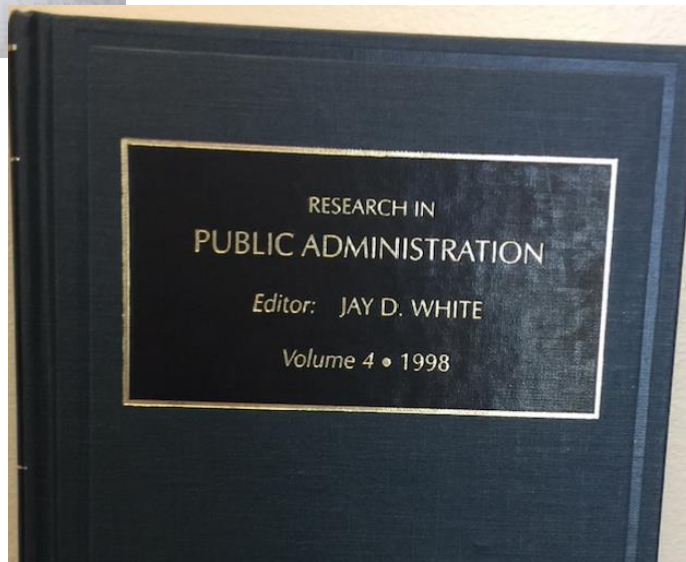
J. White (1986)



Guy Adams

J. White

1994



- Mindless empiricism
- Research question ignored
- Missing explicit framework
- Theoretical Wasteland



NASPAA

Weak

- Lit Reviews
- Conceptual Frameworks

Admit

-- I did not know the answer

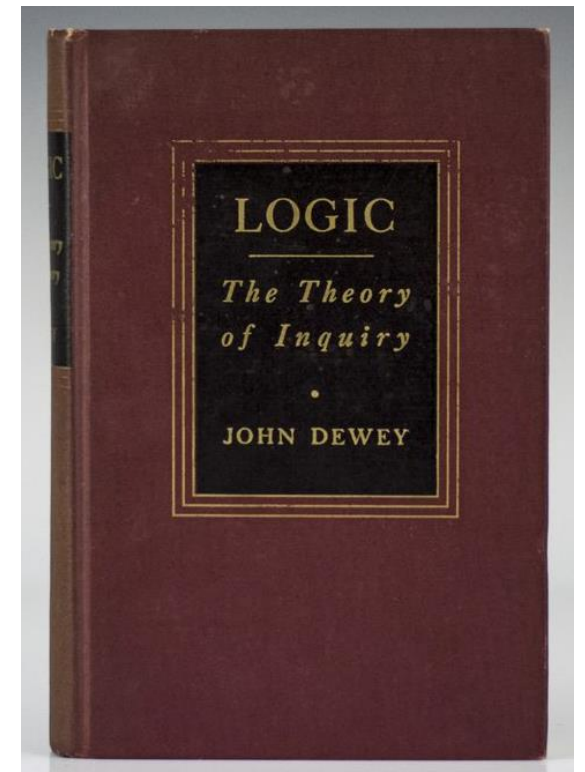


Mumble, mumble



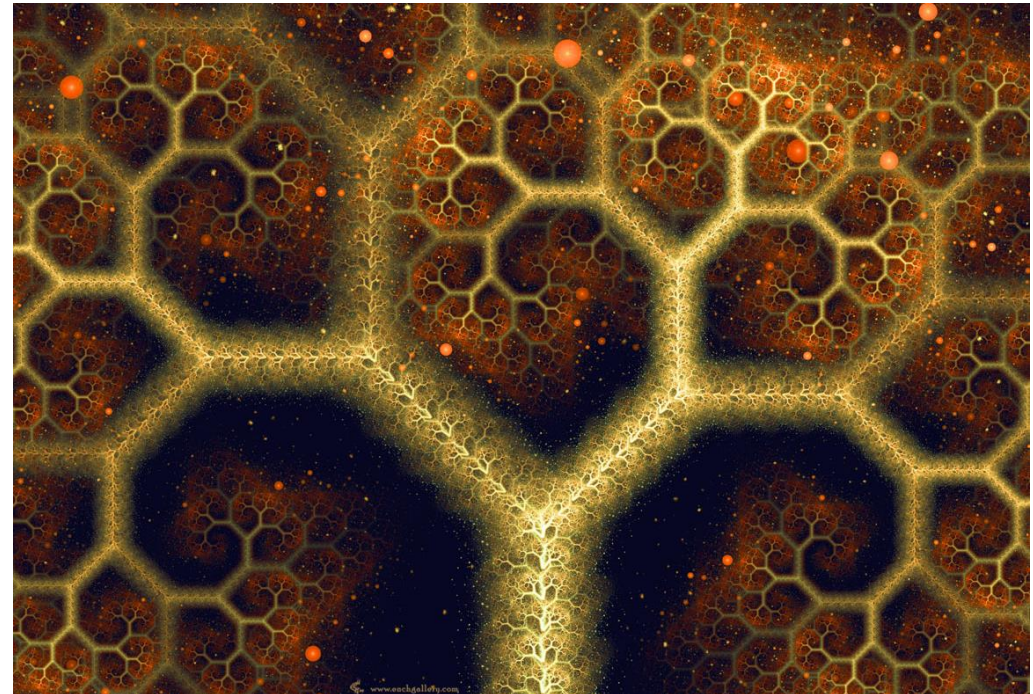
Pragmatism

1. Problematic Situation – relevancy to practice
2. Experimental notion of inquiry
 - unify logic & experience >> theory
3. Focus construction of tools resolve conceptual & empirical issues
4. Theory and method pluralism
5. Community of Inquiry
6. Process of inquiry – surprise, fallible, provisional



Problematic Situation

- Public Administrators always facing problems
- Independent of scale



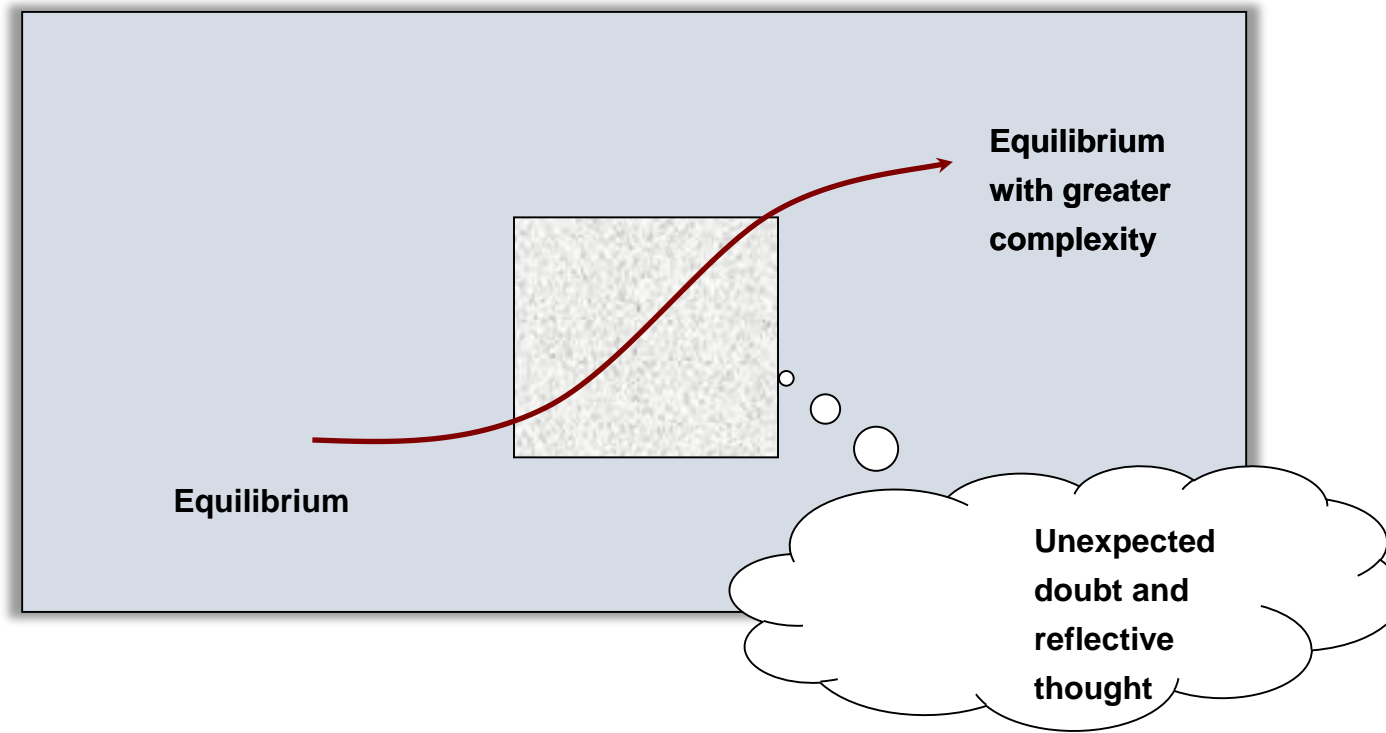
Fractal

Inquiry is

the controlled or directed
transformation of an **indeterminate situation** into
one that is so determinant in its
constituent distinctions and relations to convert
the elements of the original situation
into a **unified whole**. (Dewey, 1938, 104)



As scholar confronts the unexpected while doing the reading- confusion-doubt



- Primary Experience
Habits honed to skill
(writing, computer, library
statistical...)
- Secondary Experience
Creative insights to use skills
(often overlooked in methods
courses)



Emphasizes
Doing & Making

Tools of Inquiry

Transforms writing a paper
into organizing a project

Organizing

- Materials
- Time
- Ideas



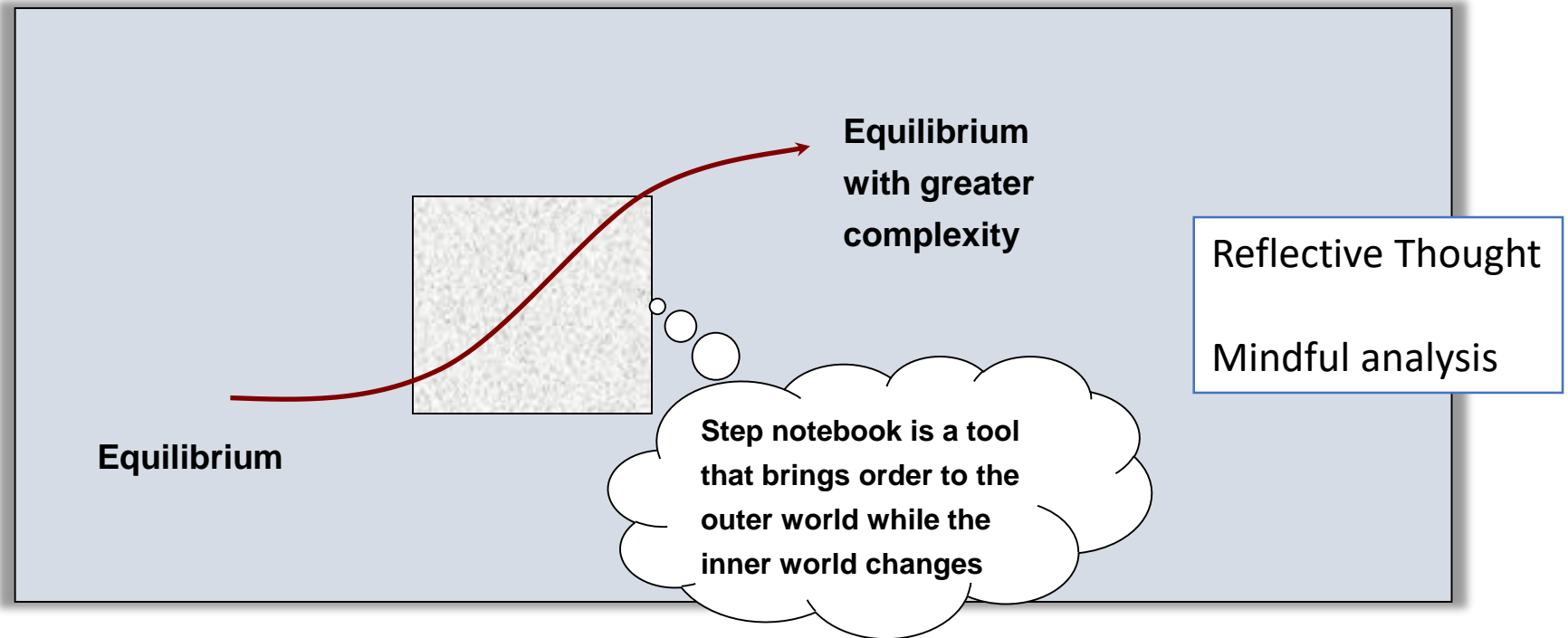
Primary experience

Build:

- Organizing skills (stuff & ideas)
- Reading comprehension
- Writing skills
- Critical thinking skills

Making and Doing

Notebook is a tool to manage the 'doubt and confusion' stage

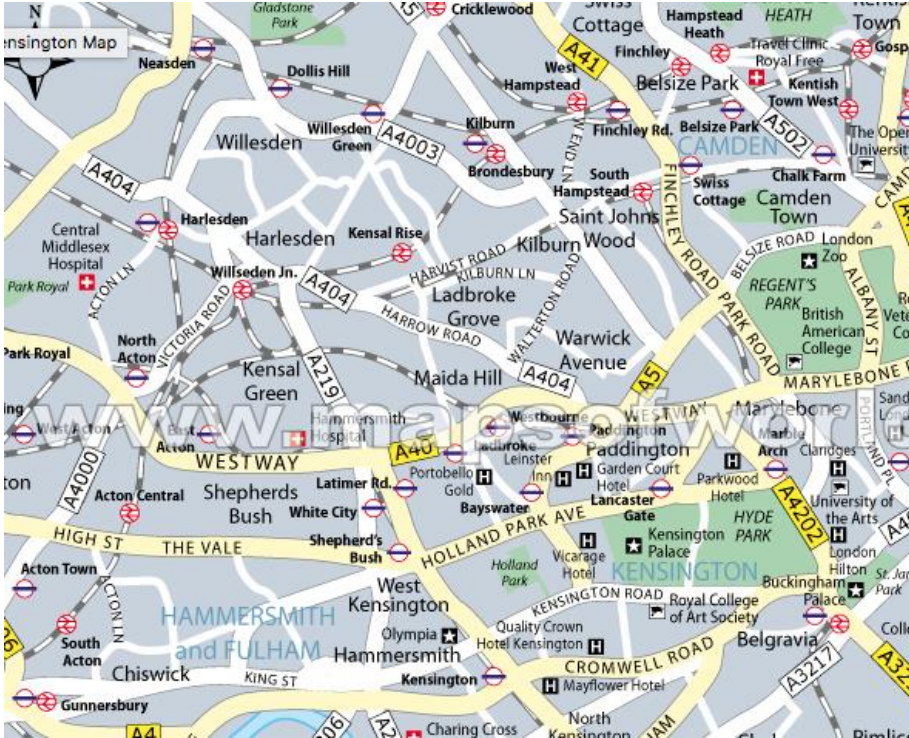


Comfortable with
Confusion

Secondary Experience
– Surprise, connections, reflection

Transformations of Inquiry

Theory as tool - Map



Theory helps

- Navigate a problem
- Achieve purpose

Theory pluralism



Theories connected to

- Resolving problem
- Achieving purpose.



Blinded to their Confusion



Mumble, mumble

Dr. Shields:
What is a
Conceptual Framework ?

Admit
-- I did not know the answer



BEGAN
Earl Babbie's
Practice of Social Research



John Dewey

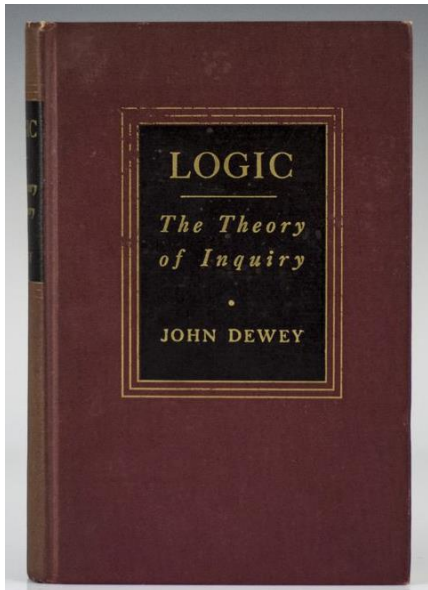
Three Research Purposes

Exploration
Description
Explanation

Description - Categories
Explanation - Hypotheses
Exploration ??????

Working
Hypotheses

Use literature to build frameworks



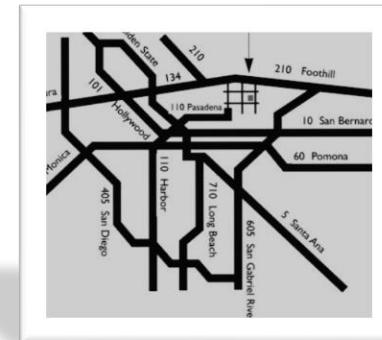
Pairing purpose and framework

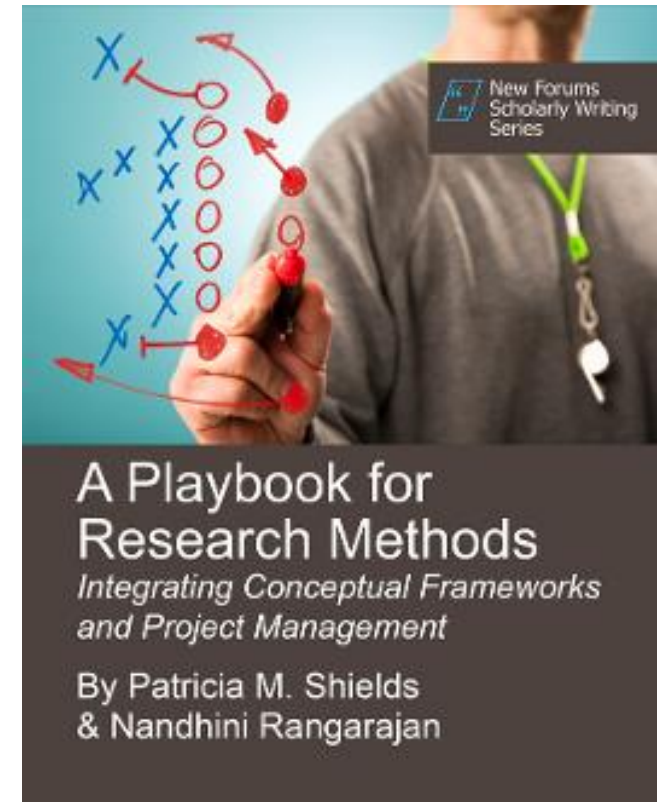
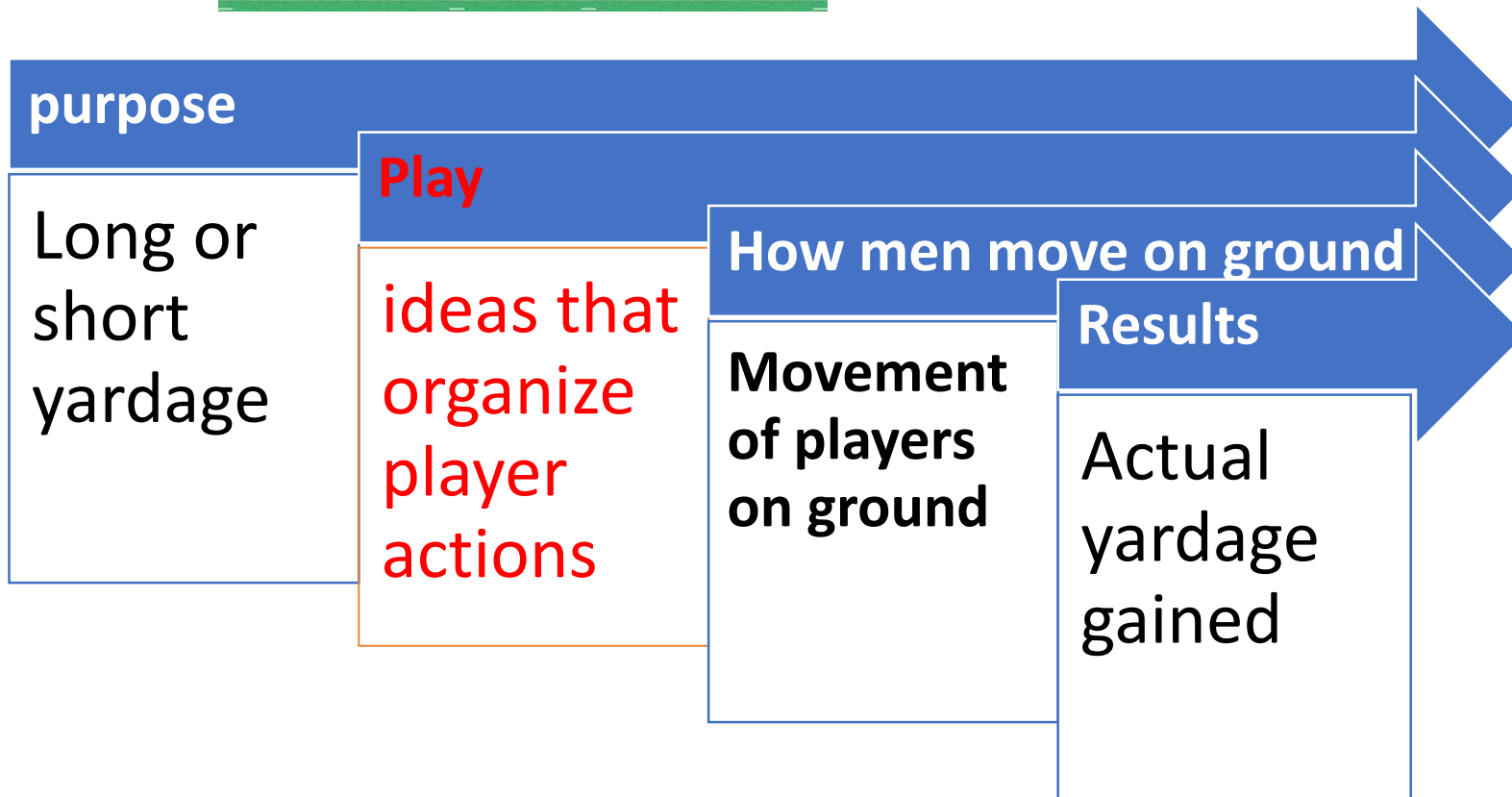
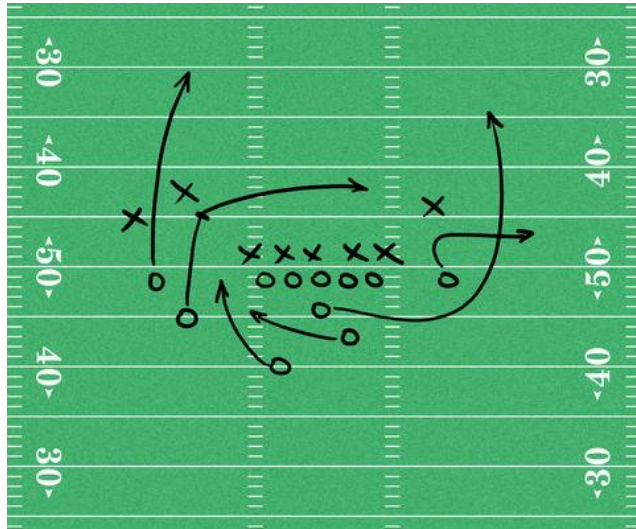
Research Purposes

1. Exploration
2. Description
3. Gauging
4. Decision Making
5. Explanation/
Prediction

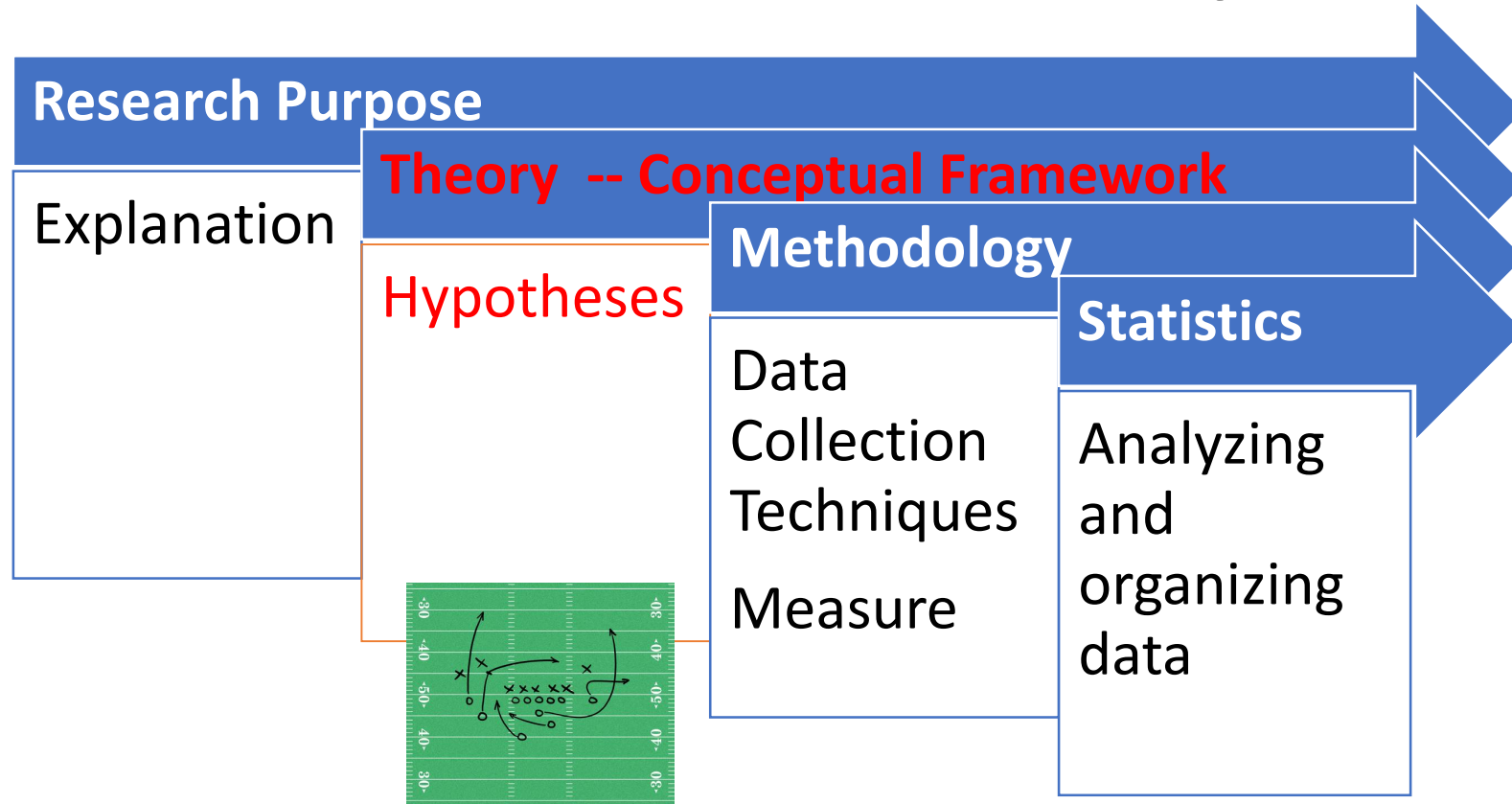
Conceptual Frameworks

1. Working Hypotheses
2. Descriptive Categories
3. Practical Ideal Type
4. Models of Operations
Research
5. Formal Hypotheses





Research Process Taking into account Traditional Research notions of Theory



Conceptual framework – close to the data theory

Combines
Quantitative and Qualitative
data collection and
Data analysis techniques



Table 5.2. Linking Purpose, Framework, and Methods

Research purpose	Conceptual framework	Data collection techniques	Data analysis
Explanation	Formal Hypotheses	Usually quantitative, experimental and quasi experimental design, time series analysis, survey, existing data analysis	T-statistics, correlation, chi-square, analysis of variance, simple and multiple regression, structural equation modeling
Description	Categories	Survey research and content analysis most common	Simple descriptive statistics: Mean median, mode frequency distribution, percentages, chi square, network analysis
Exploration	Working Hypotheses Pillar Questions	Usually qualitative techniques: case study field research, structured interviews, direct observation, focus groups, document/archival record analysis, geographic information system data, narrative analysis	Qualitative evidence may not be statistical. But, since exploratory anything goes. Any type of statistics is possible
Gauging	Practical Ideal Type	Usually qualitative case study (document analysis, structured interviews, archival records, direct observation)	Usually qualitative evidence Sometimes simple descriptive statistics
Decision making	Models of Operations Research (broadly defined)	Cost-benefit analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, linear programming, decision tree, economic base analysis, etc.	Quantitative techniques of operations research, simulation: agent-based modeling, systems dynamics

Basic Frameworks -- Like Middle School Football



- Different Frameworks
- Grounded Theory –
Develop frameworks after data collection

Experiences with Students

Academia.edu



Texas State PA Applied Research Projects

FOLLOWS YOU



9.9



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