THE IMPACT OF BREXIT: A RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE

ONLINE QUAL/TECH TALK
The Future of Research: A Mashup of Qualitative and Quantitative Research

TRENDS
E-commerce and the Power of Right Now

TOOLBOX
Rethinking the Question: How a Twisted Fork Made Me Question Everything
Actually, it is like brain surgery

And you can trust us to make qual & quant data collection easier for you

Schlesinger Associates

Learn more at... SchlesingerAssociates.com
DEEPER CONNECTIONS. DEEPER INSIGHTS.

Our industry is evolving, and so are we!

Whether quick-turn insights or more in-depth research, FPG leverages new techniques and technologies that make market insights more accessible, accurate, and affordable.

Ask us about

FPG ThinkTank™

Premier data collection solutions
Online - Mobile - In-person
onecall@focuspointeglobal.com
focuspointeglobal.com

FPG Focus Pointe Global
DEEPER CONNECTIONS. DEEPER INSIGHTS.
ONLINE QUAL/TECH TALK: Tom H.C. Anderson explains how text analytics is poised to erase the traditional boundaries between qualitative and quantitative research and how qualitative researchers can benefit from the change.

TRENDS: As retailers and brands seek ways to enhance consumers’ e-commerce experiences, discover ways that qualitative research is uncovering these insights.

TOOLBOX: As the world becomes more graphically-based, this short “how-to” article is designed to give you the confidence to incorporate custom graphics and icons into everyday deliverables.
Times change. People, not so much. We all want to be cool with the latest technology tools, but still need the human touch. Get both with Fieldwork Webwork. A virtual facility with personalized training and support for moderators and respondents; easy to use bulletin boards with photo and video upload; online assignment and collage tools with real-time monitoring. All available in mobile formats. All with Fieldwork quality recruiting and support. Let us show you how easy it is to go virtual with Fieldwork, and get your cool on.
SNEAK PREVIEW OF THE QRCA ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN PHOENIX

NEWS FROM QRCA: There is no better place to keep up with what’s happening in the qualitative research industry than the QRCA Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, January 24-26. Here is a preview of the hands-on workshops and info-packed sessions at this year’s conference, along with hotel and registration information.

HOW TO STEP MORE POWERFULLY INTO THE DRIVER’S SEAT OF YOUR BUSINESS

BUSINESS MATTERS: Address three questions to uncover the warning signs, autopilot tracks, and blind spots that can derail your business success.

FREE LISTENING—LET’S DO SOMETHING CRAZY

SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT: QRCA 2017 Annual Conference Keynote Speaker Benjamin Mathes from Urban Confessional talks with Tamara Kenworthy about what it really means to listen to people, and about his international Free Listening movement.

DISCOVER VALENCIA: HOST CITY FOR THE 2018 WORLDWIDE CONFERENCE

TRAVEL WISE: Discover Valencia, the host city for the 2018 Worldwide Conference.

RETHINKING THE QUESTION: HOW A TWISTED FORK MADE ME QUESTION EVERYTHING

TOOLBOX: Asking questions that elicit the most authentic insights from respondents is essential to the value qualitative research consultants provide. This article provides a thought-provoking perspective and suggests some techniques to consider to improve the quality of your questions.

BOOK REVIEW: The Brain: The Story of You offers an excellent introduction to anyone who is curious about this part of our central nervous system that controls and coordinates our reactions and actions as humans.

BOOK REVIEW: Doorbells, Danger, and Dead Batteries: User Research War Stories, by Steve Portigal, is a collection of user research war stories told by a broad cross section of research storytellers. This collection is a fascinating read and helps readers understand they are not the only ones who have strange user experience research encounters.

BOOK REVIEW: Hit Makers: The Science of Popularity in an Age of Distraction offers an engaging explanation of how and why some movies, songs, apps, or similar cultural products become hits, and others don’t. The author provides theories and examples, both old and new, to support his case.

BOOK REVIEW: White Working Class: Overcoming Class Cluelessness in America is a thought-provoking, fast-paced book on how the white working class and professional managerial elite perceive and experience the world differently.

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

FROM THE PRESIDENT

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS
Online Focus Groups

INCLUSIVE
Ages 8 to 80+
Any language
Any internet connection
(even dial-up)
Any device with
a browser
Across the globe

EFFICIENT
90 minutes
15+ participants
45+ questions
Unlimited observers
Live interpreters in
any language

FLEXIBLE
Full Service or DIY with ad hoc support
Branded to you or your client
Text only, or text +
moderator audio

AFFORDABLE
No licensing fee, pay
only when needed
Free training +
guidance from
experienced online
moderators
Free groups for trials,
demos + gratis projects
Full credit for
group cancellations
No rescheduling fees

EFFECTIVE
Uninhibited + revealing
discussions
Display text, images, videos + live websites
Instant transcripts
Time-tested, stable + secure facility
24/7 system monitoring

INSIDEHEADS.COM
877-IN-HEADS

proud member and supporter:
QRCA

QRCA Members Get 20% Off All Services
A World of Change

In this issue of VIEWS, we explore how market researchers are grappling with the implications of radical change. In our cover story, Colm Murphy’s Global article alerts those doing research in Ireland as to what to expect as Great Britain pulls out of the European Union. In Trends, Shaili Bhatt outlines the multiple fronts that e-commerce is evolving, and shares ways qualitative researchers can capitalize on online companies’ commitment to improving shoppers’ experiences. And going beyond how we typically think about qualitative and quantitative research, Online Qual editor Robin Wedewer explores the future of research with forward-thinking Tom Anderson, founder of OdinText Inc.

Then we go granular. In Schools of Thought, Tamara Kenworth offers tips from last year’s QRCA conference keynote speaker on how to take the quality of your listening to an even deeper level. In our two Toolbox articles, Chris Kann brings a fresh eye to creating great interview questions and Caryn Goldsmith shows us how to upgrade reports with stunning graphics and clever icons. Business Matters author Alicia Randolph asks three focused questions that will help practitioners catch early those issues that could derail their businesses.

And we have another fine shelf full of Book Reviews for you this issue. Shaili Bhatt reviews The Brain: The Story of You by David Eagleman, who explains how our brains work (and don’t work) when it comes to the accuracy of our recall or when making judgements, opinions, and decisions. Bruce Peoples writes about Derek Thompson’s Hit Makers: The Science of Popularity in an Age of Distraction, which explains the secrets behind why some products become popular hits and others don’t. In the review of Doorbells, Danger, and Dead Batteries: User Research War Stories by Steve Portigal, George Sloan shares entertaining stories of what can go wrong out in the field and sometimes unexpectedly just right. Susan Fader’s review of White Working Class – Overcoming Class Cluelessness in America by Joan C. Williams zeros in on how by failing to understand how consumers define their personal and group identities, we can miss out on crucial market research findings.

Read and get ready for the QRCA Annual Conference, January 24-26 in Phoenix, Arizona. Our conference preview has all the key info you need to register, review the session presentations, see the action-packed schedule, and plan your trip. As a teaser for the AQR and QRCA Worldwide Conference on Qualitative Research in May, Deanna Manfredi paints an enchanting picture of Valencia, the host city.

Please enjoy this last issue for 2017, and Happy Holidays!
My Problem with the QRCA Annual Conference

It’s the exquisite agony of the conference: having to choose between the different breakout sessions in the same time slot. Let me give you an example. As I look at the very last set of breakout sessions that will take place on Friday from 2p.m. to 3p.m., I see three sessions listed. The first is “A Case Study on Designing Buyer Personas—While Leveraging Your Research Skills into Marketing Consulting.” I know personas are becoming more and more important to my clients, and I like the marketing consulting angle. So perhaps I’ll go to that one. But wait, the next one listed is “Backroom Games and Debrief Delights,” about ways to keep your clients engaged in the back room. That’s always important. And the presenter is Melanie Bernstein—I know her personally, and I know she’ll be a dynamic presenter. So what to do? Oh wait, my eye moves down to the third session: “The Conundrum of Success,” about how to keep evolving your business and not rest on your laurels. That’s really important to me. Now I really don’t know what to do!

It’s a problem, but it’s a good problem—that’s why I call it “exquisite agony!” And of course, the great thing about having breakout sessions is that there are options for people who come to the conference with different areas of interest and in different stages of their careers. As I look through the conference schedule (which you can find in this issue of VIEWS and see the more detailed version at http://www.qrca.org/page/2018_Schedule), I’m struck by the variety of truly interesting sessions on topics including ways to design, conduct, analyze, and report on research, things we can learn from related fields, and ways to market ourselves (whether it’s our own businesses or proving our value to our employers).

But wait, there’s more! I am particularly excited about this year’s keynote speaker, the fabulous Naomi Henderson. Naomi is a captivating speaker and a wonderful, warm person. I was lucky enough to attend a presentation she gave a few years ago, and I was truly inspired to “up my game” and do better as a moderator and qualitative research consultant to my clients. I can’t wait to hear what she has to say about the challenge of how to turn subjective data into insights to support decision-making.

When I attended my first QRCA conference, I was quite new to qualitative research and had a lot to learn. By the end of the conference, my head was exploding with new ideas! And I was surprised by how friendly and welcoming the other attendees were. I was even more surprised to discover that conference presenters, essentially my competitors, gave away their “secrets” in their presentations, teaching me to do what they were doing! All these years later, that friendly, sharing atmosphere continues. I can’t wait to see you all there!
Research Technology

Smartly Packaged

IVP offers accessible, smartly-packed testing labs for qualitative researchers wanting to adopt innovative solutions with ease and confidence.

Usability
Eye Tracking
EEG
Facial Coding
Biometrics
Integrated

Let's Talk
+1 (732) 970-9446
Info@InteractiveVideo.com

IVP
INTERACTIVE VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

See Our Facility Partners at InteractiveVideo.com
Top Rated by Impulse
Experienced Management
Web Streaming
Personal Client Service
High Quality In-House Recruiting
Video Conferencing
Ethnographies
Wi-Fi Throughout
Living Room/Auditorium Set Up

Phone: 847.827.9840 | Toll Free: 877.286.8439
www.clearviewresearch.com
For a quote: info@clearviewresearch.com
THANK YOU TO OUR VIEWS ADVERTISERS

Clearview Research ........................................ 12
www.clearviewresearch.com
847.827.9840

Consumer Opinion Services ........................... 9
www.consumeropinionservices.com
206.241.6050

Fieldwork .................................................... 5
www.fieldwork.com
800.863.4353

Focus Pointe Global ..................................... 3
www.focuspointeglobal.com
888.873.6287

InsideHeads .................................................. 7
www.insideheads.com
877.INS.HEADS

Interactive Video Productions, LLC ............ 11
www.interactivevideo.com
732.970.9446

J.S. Martin Transcription Resources ....... 52
www.jsmartintranscription.com
818.691.0177

Paramount Market Publishing Inc. ............ 52
www.paramountbooks.com
888.787.8100

Practical Imagination Enterprises ............ 36
www.practical-imagination.com
908.237.2246

RIVA Market Research & Training Institute ........... 31
www.rivainc.com
301.770.6456

RRU Research .............................................. 45
www.rruresearch.com
212.889.4777

Schlesinger Associates .... Inside Front Cover
www.schlesingerassociates.com
866.549.3500

The REC ROOM ............................... Back Cover
www.goodrunresearch.com
804.554.5499

ThinkGroup - Austin ................................. 36
www.thinkgroupaustin.com
512.637.6690

Send Your Clients a Subscription to QRCA’s VIEWS Magazine

QRCA encourages members to add your clients to our magazine distribution list. Help keep QRCA (and yourself) top of mind with research buyers—and help expand our circulation while attracting and retaining advertisers. Send names and contact information to Laurie Pumper (lauriep@qrca.org). All client information will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shared with members or other organizations. If your clients would like to receive emails regarding our Qcast webinars and/or publication of the digital version of the magazine, please provide email addresses.
Attend the 2018 QRCA Annual Conference: Elevate & Cultivate

Elevate & Cultivate will provide QRCs the opportunity to focus on the art and science of our profession—uncovering and disseminating insights.

At the 32nd Annual QRCA Conference, you’ll have countless opportunities to elevate and cultivate your skills. Prepare to expand your knowledge and collaborate alongside the best qualitative research professionals in the industry.

Come ready to learn about emerging areas of semiotics, behavioral economics, and virtual reality research methods while continuing to push your talents in research design, projective techniques, storytelling, and online communities. Cultivate skills in analyzing unstructured data, identifying optimal methods and techniques for eliciting rich learning. And you won’t want to miss our keynote speaker, a master among masters in qualitative research, Naomi Henderson of RIVA Training Institute, as she shares her experiences and tricks of the trade.

Explore, learn, and share so you are equipped to elevate your game from beginning to end, making your clients shine and taking your own business to the next level.

2018 Conference Co-chairs:
Mark Sumpter & Kendall Nash

25% DISCOUNT
on conference registration fee for all first-time new members. Call (651) 290-7491 to learn more.

Visit QRCA.org/2018
for full workshop descriptions and to register!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>On or before 12/14/2017</th>
<th>After 12/14/2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>$945</td>
<td>$1,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified Non-Members</td>
<td>$1,395</td>
<td>$1,545</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2018 QRCA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
January 24-26, 2018 • Phoenix, AZ

2018 QRCA VIEWS WINTER 2017 www.qrca.org
## Schedule at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TUESDAY, JANUARY 23</th>
<th>THURSDAY, JANUARY 25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:00pm</td>
<td>Leadership Meeting (invited event)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30pm</td>
<td>Leadership Dinner Start (invited event)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30pm</td>
<td>Early Arrivals Event (open for all—requires registration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30am-4:30pm</td>
<td>Registration Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30am-8:30am</td>
<td>Healthy Connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00am-4:30pm</td>
<td>Marketplace Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00am-9:00am</td>
<td>Breakfast in the Marketplace and Optional SIG Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00am-10:00am</td>
<td>Breakout Sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|   • Persuasive Storytelling Tips & Tricks  
|   • Using Behavioral Economics to Elevate Fitbit’s Game  
|   • Achieving the Unimagined: Discover the Secrets of Effective Workshops and Co-creation Sessions |
| 10:00am-11:00am | Annual Meeting and Town Hall |
| 11:00am-11:50am | Round Table Discussions #1 |
| 12:00pm-1:20pm | Awards Luncheon |
| 1:20pm-1:45pm | Dessert/Break in the Marketplace |
| 1:45pm-2:45pm | Breakout Sessions |
|  
|   • 10 Tinder Dates in a Week? In a World of Social, Who Needs Traditional Recruiting Methods?  
|   • PKG 101: Packaging for Abecedarians  
|   • Using Data Visualization to Remove the CX Memory Barrier |
| 2:45pm-3:00pm | Break in the Marketplace |

## QRCA 2018 CONFERENCE INFORMATION

### Why QRCA 2018 is the one conference you must not miss!

#### Keep Current

There is no better place to keep up with what’s happening in the qualitative research industry than the QRCA Annual Conference. One result—new ideas to use on your next pitch to new or current clients!

### By Researchers, for Researchers

The QRCA Annual Conference is a mix of top veterans and bright newcomers, coming together to talk about joys, challenges, and solutions in qualitative research. And along the way, we have fun with old friends and connect with new ones.

#### Naomi Henderson—Keynote Workshop

A renowned Master in the qualitative industry and a pioneer in qualitative education, Naomi’s workshop will help us each elevate our skills to further our qualitative practice.

#### Grow Your Business

Whether you’re relatively new or a decades-long practitioner, you’re sure to be wowed by the hands-on workshops and info-packed sessions. Expect to come away with items you can use—knowledge that lasts.

#### Exposure to Vendors Serving Our Industry

The Marketplace offers a wide range of exhibitors, showcasing the latest tools and top-rated facilities. Meet them face-to-face. BONUS: Demo Connections—presentations by a select group of new product/service providers to learn about the latest and greatest.
THURSDAY, JANUARY 25 (CONT’D)

3:00pm-4:00pm  Breakout Sessions
• Millennials and Video Ethnography—So Happy Together!
• Top 5 Projective Techniques, and How & When to Use Them
• Semiotic Profiling—Research for “Wow” Effects

4:00pm-4:30pm  Break—FINAL Marketplace Opening

4:30pm-5:30pm  Breakout Sessions
• Elevate Your Deliverables: Build a DIY Website for Immersive Reports
• Confessions of a Subcontract Researcher: Dirty Secrets and Winning Tips to Succeed in Subcontracting
• When Qual Met UX: How to Combine Traditional Qualitative Methods and User Research Approaches to Satisfy Your Clients and Add Value to Your Findings

5:30pm-7:00pm  President’s Reception

7:00pm  Thursday Night Event—Party on the Lawn

After a day of focusing on thought-provoking content, come unwind at a beautiful backyard BBQ with all the fixins. Join us at La Hacienda, a gorgeous outdoor lawn space at the foot of the Butte, to enjoy the desert paradise air, picturesque mountains for a backdrop, and good times under a starry sky while connecting with colleagues and friends.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26

8:00am-4:00pm  Registration Open

7:30am-8:30am  Healthy Connections

8:00am-9:00am  Breakfast and Optional Chapter Meetings

9:00am-9:50am  Round Table Discussions #2

10:00am-11:30am  Breakout Sessions
• From Foundation to Elevation: Blueprints for Building Successful Online Communities
• What’s Next? Options for Maturing Qualitative Research Consultants
• A Fresh Look at Business Development—It Can Be Easier Than You Think!

11:30am-12:30pm  Lunch

12:30pm-1:45pm  Breakout Sessions
• The Future Is Virtually Here
• Master Class: Designing Spectacular Methodologies
• A Gentle Nudge, a Kick in the Pants: Designing Research Around Behavior Change

1:45pm-2:00pm  Break

2:00pm-3:00pm  Breakout Sessions
• Building Buyer Personas—Expanding Your Research Toolkit and Adding Value for Clients
• Backroom Games and Debrief Delights
• The Conundrum of Success

3:00pm-3:30pm  Closing Remarks

6:00pm  Dine Arounds

QRCA 2018 CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Abundant Collegiality
First-timers are often stunned by the amount of sharing that happens at this conference. We may be “competitors,” but we are all interested in raising the level of professionalism in our industry.

Outside Speakers, Too
Professionals in fields outside of qual have always been invited to share how some of their skills match ours, and how we can learn from them.

Phoenix Marriott Tempe at The Buttes
Set against an inspiring backdrop of a majestic hillside butte with breathtaking panoramic views of blue skies and desert sunsets, The Buttes Marriott attracts attendees with its cascading waterfalls, sparkling pools, first class dining, and exceptional meeting facilities. Find yourself nestled away in a desert paradise while only being 3 miles away from Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport and minutes away from ASU in Tempe, shopping in Scottsdale, and entertainment venues downtown.

Single & Double Occupancy
QRCA has secured a special room rate of $229 USD/night for single/double rooms available until December 14, 2017 or until the room block is exhausted, whichever comes first.

http://www.qrca.org/?page=2018_Hotel

Have Fun, Too!
It’s not all business; there’s lots of fun as well. Multiple social events, Marketplace door prizes, and our gala party will let you unwind and have fun.
REGISTER NOW!
QRCA’s 32nd Annual Qualitative Conference
REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.QRCA.ORG/2018

ELEVATE & CULTIVATE

JANUARY 24-26, 2018 | PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Content that will enhance your skills, networking that will increase your business, knowledge to keep you on the cutting-edge.

Elevate & Cultivate your research expertise at the 2018 QRCA Annual Conference. Presentations are carefully chosen to meet the needs of new and experienced QRCs. This is the only conference with a sole focus on all things qualitative — and it’s open to members and many non-members! Topics include behavioral economics, co-creation, customer experience, semiotics and user experience.

Expand your knowledge and share your expertise alongside the best qualitative research professionals in the industry. Elevate your game from beginning to end. When our clients succeed, so do we.

Register by December 14 to SAVE $150
www.QRCA.org/2018

Leading the Conversation in Qualitative
Ireland gained independence from the United Kingdom nearly a century ago; however, the two countries remain tightly intertwined. Due to this close relationship, Ireland is expected to be hugely affected by Brexit. Ireland is heavily reliant on trade with Britain, even though Ireland is not as economically reliant on Britain as it once was. So far in 2017, the biggest export destination of Irish goods has been the United Kingdom.
States, not Britain. Furthermore, the European Union has facilitated trade with the rest of Europe, meaning the British are not the dominant trade partners they once were, with countries like Belgium rivaling them in terms of exports thanks to the lucrative pharmaceutical industry. However, Britain is undoubtedly one of Ireland’s most important trade partners, particularly in terms of imports, and the British leaving the EU is a serious cause for concern.

More than this, Ireland also shares significant cultural ties with Britain, as the only two native English-speaking countries in Europe, has a shared heritage, and of course, a shared border.

**What Does This Mean for the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland?**

The shared border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland is a significant topic for debate, and one of the most important discussion points from an Irish point of view for Brexit negotiations. Indeed, a top question on many people’s minds is the fate of Northern Ireland in this entire furor. When Ireland achieved independence in 1919, the six northern, largely Protestant counties remained part of the United Kingdom, a situation that led to significant violence and strife in the region, particularly during the infamous ‘Troubles’ period. However, this violence significantly ended with the Good Friday
Agreement in 1998, and thanks to this historic agreement, peace has reigned in the region for almost 20 years.

The Brexit referendum has even reopened the question of a “United Ireland,” as the decision to leave the EU was not unanimous across the United Kingdom, with majorities in London, Scotland, and Northern Ireland voting in favor of remaining within the EU. Consequently, Scotland appears to be headed towards a second independence referendum, despite a previous independence referendum failing in 2014, demonstrating the strong desire for those in favor of the EU to remain within it. Using this same desire, many would like to see Northern Ireland gain independence from the United Kingdom, an action that would almost certainly result in a United Ireland.

This outcome appears unlikely, due to the snap election called by Theresa May in June. According to the polls at the time when she called the election, it seemed as if her Conservative Party would gain a huge majority. So, despite already holding a majority in government, she called the election in order to gain extra bargaining power in Europe when negotiating Brexit. However, a lot can happen in a few weeks and the popularity of the Tories plummeted in the weeks approaching the election, to the point where they lost the majority they had and needed to find another party to share power with. This has led to a coalition with the DUP, a Northern Irish unionist political party. The DUP favor strong ties to Britain, and so this makes the possibility of an independence referendum such as that in Scotland and eventual reunification very unlikely for the near future. Of course, talk of reunification will persist in some circles, as it had long before Brexit became a reality. Even if this reunification were to proceed, it would be far more complicated than it seems. The cultures of Ireland and Northern Ireland have deviated substantially over nearly a century of political, if not geographical, separation, and these cultural nuances need to be considered when conducting research on the island.

A prime example of the cultural differences between the North and South stems from Northern Ireland being more of a melting pot (though not on the level of the US). There is a clash of Irish and British cultures that leads to its own hybrid culture. This can be seen during “marching season,” a time when tensions in the North rise. Both cultural factions have created their own holidays to celebrate their own heritage. These parades are unique to Northern Ireland, and there are no similar celebrations occurring anywhere in the Republic of Ireland or in mainland Britain. There is significant debate over how politicized rather than celebratory such parades really are.

**How Has Qualitative Research Been Conducted in Ireland Up to Now?**

When conducting research, the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland are generally considered to be different markets and may or may not be analyzed separately. The single EU market enables companies to operate as if there were no physical borders. Research firms conducting research in Northern Ireland are often based in the Republic; this makes logistical sense—Dublin is only an hour and a half from the border, and by basing your company there, you are much more centralized and can just as easily conduct a focus group in Cork as you can in Belfast. Second, the market in Northern Ireland is relatively small, with a population of 1.8 million people. This is roughly the same size as the Greater Dublin Area, which has 1.9 million people. Currently, research firms based in other parts of the UK are at an immediate disadvan-
tage; those operating out of England, Wales, or Scotland all have to travel across the Irish Sea, requiring flights, hotel rooms, and all other sorts of additional expenses and logistics that a Republic of Ireland-based company wouldn’t have to worry about. Of course, the same could be said of Northern Ireland-based firms accessing the Republic of Ireland, as they can easily travel south at the behest of their “mainland”-based clients.

Despite the differences between denizens of the North and South, they are also very similar, perhaps more similar than when comparing Northerners to their Welsh, Scottish, or English UK counterparts. The similarities and shared cultural heritage of Northern Ireland and the Republic lends itself exceptionally well to conducting qualitative research locally; we have an inherent understanding that only comes from having a shared life experience. Furthermore, we are actually able to understand each other! The variety of Irish accents is truly astonishing, and some verge on the indecipherable. Talk to someone from Cahersiveen in County Kerry and then someone from Carrickmore in County Tyrone, and see how well you get on!

**How Might Brexit Disrupt the Status Quo?**

What Brexit will mean for market research in Ireland will depend on whether we get what they call a “soft Brexit” or a “hard Brexit.” These loosely defined terms basically cover the difference between the United Kingdom keeping a lot of its current deals with Europe in place, or massively stripping down these agreements and cutting most of its ties to Europe. Until we start seeing results from the long negotiation process, all we can do is speculate on what will happen. Confusion over how the border between the North and South will work is the first major hurdle for market research to overcome. A worst-case scenario for the border would be a hard Brexit. Currently, the border between Ireland and Northern Ireland is completely free of any border controls. One can freely move people and goods between the two nations, which is a key benefit of the European Union and the “single market” it provides. However, a hard Brexit would see the UK leave the single market completely. This could result in the creation of border controls between Ireland and Northern Ireland—something that hasn’t been seen since the ending of the “Troubles.”

One positive result, for the Republic of Ireland, is that Brexit may lead to significant potential research opportunities. Ireland already has a reputation for harboring multinational organizations, with its infamous status as an international tax haven, with the likes of Apple taking advantage of our tax system to avoid paying billions in US taxes. As the only native English speaking country left in the European Union if the UK leaves the single market, many multinationals see Ireland as a prime location to relocate their headquarters. Indeed, the Republic of Ireland is currently in a battle with other EU countries such as France, Germany, and Luxembourg to lure UK based companies to their respective countries. This could lead to substantially lucrative market opportunities for research companies. From my experience, an organization will generally want to hire a local firm to conduct its research, wherever that may be, and let the research company work out the logistics, like recruiting for focus groups, liaising with recruiters, finding venues, etc. That means more trips to France, Germany, and the rest of the continent might be on the horizon!

On the other hand, there are far fewer potential opportunities enabled by Brexit for Northern Ireland. Many people living there expected this as seen by their rejection of the referendum. From a research point of view, Northern Ireland may become more marginalized. As expenses rise for Irish firms, so too do costs for conducting research in Northern Ireland, and companies will have to ask themselves if research there is worth it economically. How much different is the Northern Ireland market to the English, Welsh, or Scottish markets, or even to the Republic of Ireland? I would argue there are substantial differences between these cultures, but clients will begin to question whether the increased costs (post Brexit) of understanding these different markets outweigh the incremental learning to be gained.

Northern Ireland also has its own native media and TV channels, but it receives most of its media, advertising, and marketing from the mainland UK. While there is an appetite for natively produced content, homegrown marketing will suffer. Of course, this retraction of the market in Northern Ireland will take its toll on the Republic as well. However, the Republic will hopefully be able to exploit other opportunities to more than make up the deficit. Of course, as the Northern Ireland-based DUP are now in a coalition with the Tory party in the UK, Northern Ireland may see significant boosts to its economy as a result of this perhaps inflated share of the power in Westminster, at least in the short term.

Despite the hopes of some, Brexit is essentially inevitable at this point. The most favorable result for both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland would probably be a Soft Brexit with a border that remains as free as possible, namely, an attempt to maintain the status quo which has seen significant benefits economically, culturally, and politically for both sides of the border.
How to Step More Powerfully into the DRIVER’S SEAT OF YOUR BUSINESS
The life of an entrepreneur is glamorous …

**UNTIL IT’S NOT!**

My guess is that a small smile just crept across your face as you recognize the truth of that statement. Regardless of how long you’ve been in business for yourself, you know the day-to-day life of an entrepreneur is different than what you dreamt it would be like.

Let’s face it—when you’re in business for yourself, **you** are responsible for everything. It’s your job to create the culture, vision, and mission for your organization. It’s your responsibility to market and sell your products, services, and talents or the talents of your team to your clientele. This is, of course, while doing the work you’ve sold, addressing customer service needs and managing all the back-end operations for your business (i.e., accounting, HR, legal). It’s exhausting just reading about all that you do daily, isn’t it?

Sure, you might have a team (internal or external to your organization) that supports some of these efforts, but they still look to you as the leader of the organization for direction. With or without a team, you’re stretched thin as demands hit you from every angle in your business. It’s when you’re in this stretched state that things can go horribly wrong.

**So, what happens when you become stretched too thin to focus?**

Simply put, you ignore the warning signs, slip into autopilot mode, and fail to see the blind spots that you have in your own business. This is when accidents—big and small—happen. Your business and personal life are sputtering out of control and yet, you’ve either not acknowledged this for yourself or you’ve not taken a step back to ask (from a heart-centered place), “How can I do better?”

I’m telling you now, “You can do better!” But, we first must examine where things might be going wrong through the lens of three questions.

**Question 1:**
Are you paying attention to the warning signs?

Vehicles have sensors that detect when something is not functioning right or is about to be compromised. Those sensors trigger a warning light to alert the driver of a potential problem.

But, what do we too often do when we first see those warning lights? We ignore them. You think, “I have time. It can wait.” We often approach the “warning lights” flickering in our business the same way. “I have too much to do. I’ll get to it.” Yet, the longer you prolong addressing problems in your business, the bigger little problems can become.
“So, what happens when you become stretched too thin to focus? Simply put, you ignore the warning signs, slip into autopilot mode, and fail to see the blind spots that you have in your own business. This is when accidents—big and small—happen.”

Here’s an example. I was recently coaching a small team of experienced leaders through a team dynamic, interpersonal relationship situation. The business owner’s management style didn’t support his team in delivering quality work. As the owner discovered needs in his business, he would delegate actions to his team. (This part of his instinct was good.) However, how he delegated tasks was not. He mandated action but only gave piecemeal information to his team to effectively deliver on those actions. When things didn’t happen exactly as he wanted (which was often), he blamed his team for their incompetency, lack of reliability, etc. He never stopped to ask, “What part of this problem am I being called to own?”

Unfortunately, the business owner never owned his contribution to the “quality results” issue in his company and grossly underestimated the impact of his management style. This leadership and quality issue ballooned until ultimately his business imploded.

I don’t want you to implode—financially, physically, or emotionally. So, I ask you:

- Where in your business right now are you choosing to not see the warning signs?
- Where do you find yourself constantly placing blame on others?
- What might you learn if you ask yourself, “What part of this problem am I creating?”

A critical look and some internal reflection on these three questions will go a long way to shining light on the warning signs demanding your attention in your business.

Question 2:
Are you operating on autopilot?

Have you ever driven somewhere and, when you think about it later, can’t remember driving to that location (meaning you don’t remember getting in the car, the streets you took to get to your destination, waving at your neighbor along the way)?

When this happens, you are operating on autopilot. Our brains create autopilot tracks from our experiences so we can react more quickly to our environment and demands around us without thinking.

We do this in our businesses as well. Instead of using insight, self-reflection, and critical thinking to manage our businesses, we operate them using automated protocols of what has worked before.

Don’t get me wrong… I advocate for systems that can support work getting done with ease and in a repeatable fashion. What I caution against is rote action. Operating a business on autopilot causes leaders to miss opportunities for new ideas, growth, and innovation.

This happened to another small business owner that I coach. She had been working with the same client for 5 years. She knew her client company well and had an excellent track record of delivering quality work and excellent customer service to this client. Yet, a recent project challenged that proven track record in a big way.

The business owner accepted a new project with her client and assumed she understood the project’s success parameters. After all, they had done many projects like this before! Yet, this project was just different enough that the assumed parameters didn’t hold. The business owner was too quick to jump to assumptions about the client’s situation. She missed her opportunity to explore the real needs of this project and make sure her products and services were the right fit to address the problem. In the end, she damaged a relationship 5 years in the making and the reputation of her company.

I don’t want autopilots to harm you, your company, and all that you’ve worked so hard to create. So, I ask you:

- What tasks or activities are you engaging in today with a rote mentality in your business?
- How might you improve yourself—or the services you provide to your clients—by bringing more consciousness to those tasks or activities?
Question 3: What blind spots are obstructing your vision for your company?

Every vehicle has a blind spot. We must learn where our car’s blind spots are and seek ways to work with and around them. Otherwise, we risk putting other drivers, our loved ones, and ourselves in danger.

Business owners have blind spots too—every one of us without fail. The question is, “What is your blind spot, and what contributes to it?”

Recently, I worked with a client named Clark, a new entrepreneur who was trying to get his business up and running while continuing his full-time job as a well-respected executive. He was afraid to officially leave his job, fearful of making the wrong decision. He decided to do both, thinking he could maintain the status quo with his employer while simultaneously building his future. His assumption that he could do both well was his blind spot. He’s a high performer who gives 110% always, but his divided focus caused blurred vision on what he was truly capable of. He was unable to give 110% to two demanding career options. Even though he was physically present, his heart and mind were not. The longer Clark tried to do both full force, the more his divided focus resulted in confusion, incoherence, uncertainty, and compromised relationships. He ended up choosing the path where he could minimize the fallout and regain his high-performer title in a way that felt most authentic to him.

Your blind spot, like Clark’s, might be about stretching yourself too thin or perceiving yourself to be superman/superwoman, able to take it all on. Or, your blind spot might be about something else completely (i.e., staff expectations, business culture, finances, social media management, communication styles, marketplace trends and positioning).

I don’t want you to be like Clark and cause fender benders or traffic jams in the wake of your blind spot. So, I ask you:

- What foundational trait about you is a double-edged sword in your business? What makes you stand out from the rest, but, if you cross the line just so, it comes back to bite you in a negative way?
- Have you revisited your vision? Is it still clear and relevant?
- What fears are keeping you from making informed decisions and actions?

Take the time for a full tune-up!

I encourage you to regularly step outside the day-to-day operations of your business. Give yourself the space and time to shine the light on what is working and what is not working for your business, for yourself, your clients, your family, etc. And please, do not wait until your business is in crisis mode to do this. Schedule regular maintenance for you and your business. The questions above are a great starting point for you as you seek to answer the question, “How can I do better?”

You might find that a business coach would be helpful. My graduate psychology professor repeatedly reminded us, “Know yourself. Every counselor needs a counselor.” I believe the same is true for coaching. I find that business owners (including me) can overestimate their ability to handle the multiple demands in their business. Instead of getting help, you tinker on your business alone and can end up feeling stressed, isolated, and overworked. It doesn’t have to be that way. Business coaches can help you to see the warning lights, autopilot tracks, and blind spots that are present in your business, usually well before you yourself can. They can also help you maximize your time and capacity while providing a safe place to breathe and explore. I work with a business coach for precisely this reason.

I wish you much success and joy as you navigate this reflective process about your business. I find it cathartic, and it always gets me to a better place. May the same to be true for you.

“Instead of using insight, self-reflection, and critical thinking to manage our businesses, we operate them using automated protocols of what worked before.”
THE FUTURE OF RESEARCH:
A Mashup of QUALITATIVE and QUANTITATIVE Research

Tom H.C. Anderson, founder of OdinText Inc., the most awarded text analytics software firm in the marketing research industry, discussed the future of research with VIEWS feature editor Robin Wedewer. A pioneer in text analytics, in 2005 Tom founded Anderson Analytics, the first market research firm designed to analyze unstructured data. He is also a recipient of numerous research industry awards, has served on the AMA Insights Council, and was elected the US representative to ESOMAR.

Tom says he is a reformed quant researcher who has come to hate the Likert scale batteries and long surveys that are so common in marketing research. However, he’s not a qual researcher either, preferring to call the data his software handles “mixed data.” These days, he wants to challenge all researchers to think differently about text or unstructured data, as it is also called, and to think differently about how they use and analyze text data.

Tom frequently blogs on the OdinText blog, Text Analytics Tips, as well as the NGMR blog.
Robin: Text analytics seems to straddle the worlds of qualitative and quantitative research. Where do you see text analytics fitting into the traditional framework of qualitative versus quantitative?

Tom: It’s my belief that this quant-qual terminology is just about ready to be put to bed. It won’t happen this year, but in the next few years it should significantly decline in usage. It no longer makes any sense really. Thanks to text analytics, you can now do with unstructured/text data anything you can do with structured and numeric (and actually more). So, the description quant versus qual is already rather meaningless. Perhaps the only other differentiator remaining is sample size. But it would be more accurate to just refer to size then without the structured/unstructured connotation. So maybe in the near future we’ll be saying, “I work primarily with big data, mid-data, or tiny data.”

So that’s the high-level answer. I’ll continue to use these terms quant and qual for a bit longer, by the way, since they won’t be totally dead for another couple of years.

Where I think qual researchers can offer quant researchers real help is in writing questions. Quant researchers think they’re really good at writing survey questions, but for the most part they’re actually quite bad and lazy. According to our research, about a quarter of quant researchers avoid open-ended questions. They have not yet realized that unaided top-of-mind voice of customer comment data are far more powerful than combinations of Likert scales in most quantitative analyses, even with advanced...
“All of us need to start putting the qual-quant idea behind us... In the future we need to mash these up. This will produce better insights, both cheaper and faster.

approaches like segmentation and multivariate predictive analytics.

Robin: Most qualitative researchers working with small data sets from focus groups or interviews, for example, utilize manual analysis. What, if anything, are they missing by not using text analytics software?

Tom: Well, it’s more about what they are missing by not having large enough data to see patterns and make statistically valid projections and comparisons. If they were to start using text analytics software, then there wouldn’t be a need to keep the data so small. It’s ultimately about quant and qual researchers meeting somewhere in the middle. In the meantime, yes, you can technically use text analytics on very small data sets. The question is, of course, what you will get in return—the ROI. If the data are very valuable, then a more thorough text analysis would help you catch things that humans don’t have the capacity to spot.

For instance, in analyzing political debates with OdinText, one can instantly see exactly how many times a candidate mentioned a certain topic, like health care, and what emotions were more prevalent in one candidate’s choice of words versus the other candidate’s.

Similarly, in a group of 12, if 11 all mention “Twitter” yet one respondent didn’t, a human is likely to miss a detail like that. Text analytics can pick it up since it’s so precise. That said, the capability to do analysis better, faster, and cheaper will put pressure on clients to increase sample sizes. So,
I think that's what will happen; you don't need big data, but why would you want tiny data? Data that's just right—smart data, mid-data—is best!

It's sort of like the story of the three bears. (I've been reading to my son lately.) Big data aren't better just because they're bigger; though if the data are good, more is usually better than less. There is a point though where you don't need more data even in that case, where the cost of adding more data doesn't positively affect the quality of the analysis, but just lowers your ROI. So, we need to think about what data are "just right" or "Lagom," as I like to say in Swedish.

Robin: You've made the point that text analytics software doesn't obviate the need for a human analyst. But what, exactly, is the role of the human analyst when using text analytics software? And what are the skills this analyst must bring to a project using text analytics?

Tom: Software: I'm trying to refrain from using buzzwords like machine learning or artificial intelligence as there is so much confusion and hype around them. Good text analytics software can detect the most important attributes or topics—we typically prefer to call these features—in your data. The software in most cases will be smarter than you. But in some ways, it's also going to be a little dumb. This is because, in the end, you have to take the output from the software and explain it to another human. Therefore, it's necessary for the human analyst to make the ultimate decisions on what features to include and not include in the report and how to best tell a convincing story.

Software can't do that yet, and it will probably be some time before we get there (thankfully, or most of us would be out of a job).

Robin: The role of the qualitative researcher in the scenario you describe sounds like one of curator and storyteller. Is all the analysis work going to disappear in the scenario you describe?

Tom: No, not all at once anyway. Some, certainly though, and it depends on what you consider "analysis," of course. In the short term, I see the analyst role as one who guides the software in processing the data and focuses on those topics that are most important. This latter part is a two-way communication between the software's knowledge and the analyst's knowledge, deciding what to include and what to ignore. After that, the software does the majority of the work in terms of reading, ranking, organizing, etc. Then at the end, the analyst can again come in as the storyteller who communicates what has been done to other humans.

Robin: We usually think of text analytics as appropriate for large sets of unstructured data—such as open-ended questions on a quantitative survey. Is there a role for text analytics for the smaller data sets gathered in the type of qualitative research we do today—in focus groups, interviews and such?

“"I am challenging quant researchers to give up their 15-plus-minute surveys with boring attribute batteries that kill respondents and data quality, and to instead think about how much they could do with just a five or six question survey with two of those being open ends.”
“Qual researchers should start thinking more about how they could do what they do with larger samples.”

**Tom:** Certainly the usefulness of text analytics is much more limited with small data sets, since analysis is about objective pattern recognition, and you can’t have patterns in a set of five or ten. Other than the examples I mentioned, combining multiple groups might provide this opportunity to have more data and find interesting patterns.

I also see groups getting much bigger in online communities, in focus groups, and, of course, in discussions in the wild. I do think, though, that qual researchers should start thinking more about how they could do what they do with larger samples. I am challenging quant researchers to give up their 15-plus-minute surveys with boring attribute batteries that kill respondents and data quality, and to instead think about how much they could do with just a five or six question survey with two of those being open ends. I think qual researchers should be thinking along those lines too! If they only ask two to six questions, what would they be? They can still be projective and eliciting subconscious thought, and by adding open ends, I think qual researchers should be asking to do more.

Qualitative researchers need to overcome their uneasiness around statistics and more robust objective analysis, and I don’t buy the argument that all you need to do is talk to a few customers face-to-face. You will bias data the more you engage in discussion, and quite often, the most interesting things we find with text analytics are extremely low incidence features that are important. These will be missed by both qual and quant researchers who seem to think they know what questions to ask, and often treat these low incidence features as “outliers,” thus justifying throwing them out.

**Robin:** You have conducted several single-question projects that you have written about on your blog, including one about the U.S. presidential election in which a single-question survey indicated problems for Hillary Clinton, and, one of my favorites, the Valentine’s Day edition that revealed the top three complaints people have about their significant other are their snoring, their attitude, and—their hair! When it comes to structuring a project that will utilize text analytics, what makes a good question and what makes a question not so good?

**Tom:** A question that gets respondents to talk is usually a lot more interesting than a short answer question. Asking, “What do you think brand B stands for?” is not as good as asking, “If brand B magically became a person and you met them at a party, what do you think they would be like?”, which is likely to lead to much richer information.

Again, this is one area where I think many qual researchers can teach quant researchers, including myself, a heck of a lot. There really is no reason that you can’t turn any good qual question into an open-ended survey question and utilize text analytics on it.

I really think all of us need to start putting the qual-quant idea behind us, and by that I do not mean that they both are equal in value, nor that they both need to be done in good research. Rather, that in the future we need to mash these up. This will produce better insights, both cheaper and faster.

**For instance,** why would one ask a 20- to 50-question Likert scale attribute battery in a survey, only to use factor analysis/PCA to reduce these to ten or so meaningless dimensions, when one to three well-thought-out open-ends would allow for far more meaningful features/dimensions in respondents’ own words and allow for a shorter survey?

These questions could be projective, like those used in qualitative research, to get at emotions, etc., but at the same time have statistical validity not existent in common qual research.

**Robin:** Tell me about how a qualitative researcher should shop for a text analysis tool. Can you provide a sketch of the types of tools available and what someone should consider?

**Tom:** That depends on the data in question. I’m not aware of any good software for tiny data, such as a one-hour, 12-person focus group. I’m sure there are vendors who claim that they have software for that, but I’m telling you it won’t be very useful.

As data start getting bigger and slightly more structured, there are more options. Again, you would need to tell me about what your data look like first and how much you had before I could make a proper recommendation. For any software, a demo with your actual data is the best way to evaluate.

The best way to evaluate a tool is not on the number of buzzwords the sales people mention, but by giving the firm your own data to demo with, just before the demo so they can’t spend too much time preparing. Then evaluate the tool based on how easily and quickly you can get to important insights in the data.
RIVA TRAINING INSTITUTE

- Principles of Qualitative Market Research - November 6, 2017
- Moderator Training:
  - Fundamentals - Offered twice a month
  - Skill Acceleration - December 4-6, 2017 & March 21-23, 2018
  - AdvancedModerating - April 23-25, 2018
- Fundamentals of IDI/Moderating - March 12-14, 2018
- Project Management and Screener Development - April 30, 2018
- Kid/Teen Research - March 8-10, 2018
- Ethnography - February 12-14, 2018
- Qualitative Toolbox - March 19-20, 2018
- Qualitative Analysis & Reporting - February 26-28, 2018
- Facilitation - April 9-11, 2018
- Principles of UX/Usability Research & Testing - June 11-12, 2018
- Webinars - Offered monthly
- Master Moderator Certificate Program - May 14-16, 2018
- Coaching
- Custom Courses: Customized to fit your specific needs.
  Save time and money by having our instructors come to you.

[ For more information or to enroll in one of our courses, email Linda at linda@rivainc.com ]

RIVA MARKET RESEARCH

- Full Service Qualitative Research Design
- Moderating
- Consulting
- Facilitating
- Mock Juries
- QRE’s
- Focus Panels

[ For more information on our market research services, email Amber at amber@rivainc.com ]
Let me set some context. When I registered for the QRCA annual conference in January 2017, I signed up to participate in the Free Listening Workshop with Benjamin Mathes from Urban Confessional, based in Los Angeles. The workshop included a briefing, an actual free listening assignment (on the streets of LA, no less), and a debriefing—followed by a keynote session by Benjamin. I thought it sounded very interesting, and

QUALITIES—we listen for a living, right? We like to talk with people and get people to share their ideas and perceptions. So, how hard can it be to stand on a street corner and hold a “Free Listening” sign with the goal of listening to passers-by who may want to talk? I love a challenge and like to meet new people.
I was curious about the exercise and a little skeptical. What could I learn from standing on a street corner listening to complete strangers? Would they really stop to talk to me?

Well, it was probably one of the most unique assignments I’ve ever had, and it ended up being my favorite session of the conference—in large part because of Benjamin and his passion for this movement. He raised my awareness for an enhanced way of listening—which is so applicable for qualitative researchers—and, even more importantly, how to listen better to family, friends, and acquaintances. Benjamin shares some of his key insights that can make us all better listeners and researchers.

**Tamara:** What is Urban Confessional?

Benjamin: I started Urban Confessional in 2012. I was at a place in my life when I needed a refocused direction, and someone listened to me—really listened to the point that I felt loved and cared about. It was an epiphany for me. I started this Free Listening movement which now has volunteers in 40 US states and 73 countries.

**Tamara:** What is the true mission of Urban Confessional?

Benjamin: Our mission is to listen. We make ourselves available for anyone who needs to be heard. We listen for others, believing that people need to be seen, heard, and understood. And we listen for ourselves, having found the exercise of engaging strangers with open ears and open hearts to be life-giving.

**Tamara:** I love one of your T-shirt slogans, “Hear the person, not just the opinion.”

Benjamin: I think there are three key things to why listening is so awesome.

1. **Listening is an act of courage.** Let’s face it—listening with a desire to understand, not a desire to respond, is a courageous thing to do. You’re surrendering your time and presence to another person. Listening is a commitment to value the thoughts, emotions, and experiences of another person over your own thoughts, emotions, or experiences. In that moment, you have decided that they are more important than you. Other over self. That is the definition of courage. That’s the nature of listening.

2. **Listening cultivates patience.** If you’re like me, you’re always in a hurry. When we rush, time moves very quickly, and it’s hard to stay present to the moment. But listening gives us the opportunity to be patient, to slow time, and to be more present to the things around us. After all, you can’t listen to someone if you’re in a hurry to get to your next appointment.

3. **Listening validates the speaker.** When a person has been heard, they feel as if their story mattered. Since stories are the substance of our lives, when we feel that our stories mattered to someone, we feel as if we matter. Every time you listen to someone, you validate them and remind them that they matter.

**Tamara:** You talked about the correlation between Free Listening and Southern hospitality and giving the space to be you. How do you connect listening to Southern hospitality?

“Why suddenly did it feel so weird to stand on the street, holding a sign that said, ‘Free Listening,’ and listen to people who walked by?”
Benjamin: Empathetic listening is one of the key tenets to Southern hospitality and I believe there are four blocks to hospitality that keep people from effectively listening: avoidance, self-consciousness, responsibility, and prejudice. Let me share some examples of how we view empathy in our work.

**Intention vs. Attention**

Here's the difference: Intention is all about me, attention is all about them. When we place intention ahead of attention, we stop listening. We become so concerned with what we want that we can't hear what they need. When we lead with intention, we have placed our needs above theirs.

This often happens when we listen to people we don't agree with. In disagreement, we often force our intentions. We try to change their minds, defend ourselves, or prove them wrong. They stop being a person, and they become an opinion. Intention, no matter how genuine, is the enemy of listening. If you want to listen, pay attention before you pay intention.

**Judgement**

We often interpret our present through the lens of our past. We also learn through the lens of our past. I once put a quarter on a railroad track and almost got hit by a train. As the train went by, a cop turned his lights on, pulled up to me, and we had a “talk.” That’s a story for another day, but I can say that I haven’t done it since. The lens of our past can be the filter through which we develop wisdom. But, sometimes the lens of our past is a rear-view mirror, and we stop listening because we don't like or trust the person speaking.

We use the lens of our past to judge others. We become deafened by thoughts like: “what he did to me,” “people like this usually,” or “she always does this.” Our past can interrupt our ability to be present with the person in front of us. When we reduce the other person to their past, we fail to listen in the present, and we miss who they are becoming in their future.

**Comfort in the Disconnect**

Listening is a shared moment when two people experience the unspoken peace of self-forgetfulness. Sometimes, I describe the Free Listening experience as “Free With-ing.” But, it’s hard to listen when we don’t see ourselves in the other person. When we keep a sterile distance between their problems and ours, we never fully realize what it means to listen. Empathy, not sympathy, is the key to listening. If you want to listen and be with someone, you must be with them in their weakness, their fear, and their insecurity and realize they are just like you. You have to see them not as something separate from you, but as something beautifully connected to you. Disconnection is comfortable and easy. Connection is risky and dangerous, but beautiful and required.

Tamara: A particular section in your talk that was so relevant to the work we do as qualitative researchers was regarding an imbalanced conversation. As moderators, our objective is to ask questions in just the right way, while the participants do most of the talking. Can you share some examples of the type of questions you use in your work?

“Intention vs. Attention—Here’s the difference: Intention is all about me, attention is all about them.”
Benjamin: When Free Listening, we practice the art of the Imbalanced Conversation: 80% listening, 20% redirected responses. We use four types of questions that will redirect the conversation back to the person sharing and maintain the proper imbalance between the speaker and the listener.

Open Questions
These are often the most important. An open-ended question requires the speaker to think and respond. They are often used to initiate contact with a curious would-be speaker (How are you doing?) and can also be used to redirect the conversation when the speaker asks you questions. This communicates a genuine interest in their beliefs and stories and helps to maintain an imbalanced conversation.

Clarifying Questions
These are questions that ask the speaker to clarify points of their “confession.” Questions like, “When did this happen?” are the natural result of interest in their story. They show the speaker that you are actively listening and are truly interested in understanding the details of their confession.

Leading Questions
First, let me say, I know that in research, leading questions are bad words. (Laughter.) For Free Listening, these questions can be used to lead the speaker into more (or less) detail about their story. They are more specific than open questions and are best used to encourage the speaker to continue speaking about a particular topic—especially when you notice that they want to talk about something but are a little nervous to get started. Questions like, “Have you been looking for work lately?” let the speaker know that it’s ok to continue talking about a difficult topic. They communicate trust and can inspire courage in the speaker.

Positive Redirect
These questions can be used when you notice a speaker cycling into hopelessness. These are the questions to use after a degree of trust and intimacy has been established. Questions like, “What are you grateful for?” and “What’s the best thing about your life?” can give the speaker a new perspective and help stop a downward spin. Often, if the speaker is struggling with depression or despair, these questions swerve to redirect their mindset and help to ensure that they leave you in a better place than when they approached you.

Tamara: You also talked about the importance of being present in a conversation. Can you explain this further?

Benjamin: There are three ways to be present for effective listening:

1. Present to one person—you must be present to yourself before you can listen effectively.
2. Present to two persons—you must be present to the other person.
3. Present to three—you must be present to yourself, the other, and the circumstance of what and where you’re listening.

Out of My Comfort Zone on the Streets of LA
Back to the workshop. Twenty of us participated. Our assignment was on the streets of Los Angeles, with traffic from the People’s Choice Awards, yet not far from some questionable parts of LA. I was thinking, “hmm, this will be interesting.”
We were partnered up (always good for safety reasons), and I partnered with my new friend, John from China, who I had partnered with as Ambassador/New Attendee. Rules? No. Guidelines? Yes, which Benjamin reviewed with us. Solicit folks to talk to us? No. Give advice? No. We made our signs and headed out to grab our spot on the street.

As you can imagine, there were people of all stripes, ages, clothing, ethnicity, etc. We didn’t hear a troubling personal story, which was just as well, since this was our first Free Listening activity. We did hear from three young females who were out on the town so they could forget about being dumped by their boyfriends. We were just what they needed—someone to listen. We had a young male talk to us because he “felt bad for us as no one was stopping by.” He was having a great day and was headed to a big rap concert. We had a lot of people who stopped to ask us what we were really doing. And I could tell there were a few who wanted to stop and talk but didn’t, maybe because they were also skeptical or didn’t want to share. We mostly got a lot of stares, funny looks, and looks of judgement.

1. I can’t get too comfortable in my moderator chair.
2. I need to always be present in my work, so I’m really listening to participant stories and not just snippets of thoughts.
3. When designing a discussion guide, I need to remember patience and quality of time. The client may want too many different topics in the guide, which doesn’t allow for a level of quality information, and I need to continually design guides with this in mind.
4. I believe I have great empathy, but I need to remember to pay attention to every word said instead of thinking ahead about my intention of the next question.
5. I need to always remember that when I go home from focus groups, the participants should feel really good, that someone really cared about what they had to say.


Start a Free Listening movement in your area today! I know Benjamin would love it!

“We were partnered up (always good for safety reasons), and I partnered with my new friend, John from China, who I had partnered with as Ambassador/New Attendee. Rules? No. Guidelines? Yes, which Benjamin reviewed with us. Solicit folks to talk to us? No. Give advice? No. We made our signs and headed out to grab our spot on the street.

As you can imagine, there were people of all stripes, ages, clothing, ethnicity, etc. We didn’t hear a troubling personal story, which was just as well, since this was our first Free Listening activity. We did hear from three young females who were out on the town so they could forget about being dumped by their boyfriends. We were just what they needed—someone to listen. We had a young male talk to us because he “felt bad for us as no one was stopping by.” He was having a great day and was headed to a big rap concert. We had a lot of people who stopped to ask us what we were really doing. And I could tell there were a few who wanted to stop and talk but didn’t, maybe because they were also skeptical or didn’t want to share. We mostly got a lot of stares, funny looks, and looks of judgement.

I kept asking myself, “Why did I sign up for this?” Why suddenly did it feel so weird to stand on the street, holding a sign that said, “Free Listening,” and listen to people who walked by? This is what I do when I moderate—I listen to people.

As I listened to Benjamin at his keynote, and reflected on the Free Listening exercise, it made me think about all the participants in the focus groups and interviews over the years. We are asking them to share personal stories, many times over, some so personal that I’m sure they were uncomfortable.

It hit me, that’s why it felt weird. I no longer had control over the circumstance, and I was bringing my own insecurities to the exercise—how I was being viewed by others. It became about me, not them. I was violating so many of Benjamin’s tenets of success with Free Listening.

I haven’t made the time yet to Free Listen in Iowa, but I do think about Benjamin’s lessons often. Here’s my list of the key things I plan to work on to continue these lessons and to enhance my qualitative work.
WHAT’S IN IT FOR YOU?

- Offers you as the advertiser the opportunity to reach a diverse group of professionals within the qualitative research industry.
- QRCA offers advertising rates to fit everyone’s budget.
- Reach a wider audience of those reading the digital edition exclusively on the QRCA website.
- As an advertiser, you will receive a FREE copy of this magazine.

ADVERTISER’S GOAL

ADVERTISING ALLOWS YOU TO:

- Market to a well-defined group of your potential buyers.
- Gain maximum exposure to members that read this magazine to gain important information related to their industry and profession.
- Introduce your new products and/or services.
- Build and maintain your product and/or service awareness.
- Educate readers to ways of using your products and/or services.
- Communicate features & benefits.
- Open the door for your sales reps.
- Generate sales leads.
- Direct traffic to your website.

DISTRIBUTION

1,500+ MAILED TO

- Media Companies
- Product Developers
- R&D Directors
- Research Managers
- Fortune 500 Companies
- Market Research Companies
- Research Managers
- and much More!

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ad Size</th>
<th>1x</th>
<th>4X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Double Page Spread</td>
<td>$2,099</td>
<td>$1,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Cover</td>
<td>$2,099</td>
<td>$1,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inside Covers</td>
<td>$1,999</td>
<td>$1,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Page</td>
<td>$1,799</td>
<td>$1,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 page</td>
<td>$1,499</td>
<td>$1,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 page</td>
<td>$899</td>
<td>$849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Card</td>
<td>$549</td>
<td>$499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Banners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Side Banner</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Box</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>$350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Box</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discover Valencia: Host City for the 2018 International Conference

RCA’s 2018 International Conference will be held May 16-18 at the Westin Valencia in Valencia, Spain. Valencia is the third largest city in Spain after Madrid and Barcelona. It is a port city that lies on Spain’s southeastern coast, where the Turia River meets the Mediterranean Sea. It is known for its City of Arts and Sciences, with futuristic structures including a planetarium, an oceanarium, and an interactive museum. Valencia also has several beaches, including some within nearby Albufera Park, a wetlands reserve with a lake and walking trails.
recommended as a must-see for any first-time visitor to the city, this group of futuristic buildings was designed by local architects Santiago Calatrava and Félix Candela, who built this amazing place in stages, starting in 1998, at the seaward end of the old Turia river bed.

2. Barrio del Carmen and its Palaces

This thousand-year-old city neighborhood has labyrinthine cobbled streets flanked by imposing medieval buildings. Enter its palaces by going through the medieval gates of the Quart and Serrano Towers. Be sure to look for the impressive frescos of the Church of San Nicolas.

3. Plaza de la Virgen and the Cathedral Quarter

Twenty-one centuries of history right at the heart of the city, where you'll find such historical treasures as Valencia Cathedral, the Micalet, the Basílica de la Virgen, and the Almoina. Don't miss the Tribunal de las Aguas (Water Court), a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage site by UNESCO. At the Cathedral, you can view what is supposed to be the Holy Grail, the actual cup that Jesus drank from at the last supper (although that claim is also held by several other places around the world). You can climb to the top of the Miguelete bell tower for great views of the city. There are also two Goya paintings in the San Francisco de Borja chapel of the cathedral.

4. Plaza del Mercado y Lonja de la Seda (Silk Exchange)

One of Europe's biggest markets, the Mercado Central, is situated inside a jewel of pre-modernista architecture. One of the most iconic examples of Gothic architecture in Europe, the neighboring Lonja de la Seda has been declared an Intangible Cultural Heritage site by UNESCO.

5. Museums

Valencia has 34 museums to choose from, offering art, history, and architecture. You can soak up 18th century Valencia at the Museo Nacional de Cerámica (National Ceramics Museum), situated in the Palacio del Marqués de Dos Aguas. Discover the Silk Museum and the legacy left by the silk industry on Valencia. Muse over pieces by Sorolla, Goya, or Zuloaga in the Museo de Bellas Artes San Pío V or contemplate the contemporary art pieces on offer at the IVAM and the MUVIM.

6. Plaza del Ayuntamiento

In a triangular layout, eclectic architecture, a central fountain, and colorful flower stalls brighten the landscape of this plaza surrounded by some of the city's most iconic buildings including the Plaza de Toros, the Estación del Norte, the Ayuntamiento de Valencia (town hall), the Edificio de Correos (post office), and Plaza Redonda.

7. Valencia's Marina and Beaches

Valencia’s Marina is one of the city’s most important landmarks, not only due to the events that are held there, but also due to its unique buildings. There are shops, terraces, and restaurants with spectacular views, as well as a children’s park, the Superyachts Berthing with its

Here is a list of the top 10 spectacular must-sees that you won’t want to miss on your stay in Valencia…

1. The City of Arts and Sciences

This colossal complex houses an IMAX cinema, Europe’s largest aquarium (the Oceanogràfic), interactive educational exhibits in the Príncipe Felipe Science Museum, and an avant-garde opera house (Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia). Widely
amazing yachts, and the North and South Marinas, filled with boats. Next door are the beaches of El Cabanyal (Las Arenas) and La Malvarrosa, next to the attractive Paseo Marítimo promenade. Try a delicious paella in one of the sea-front restaurants or have a drink in one of the bars. A bit further away you will find the other local beaches such as Playa de Pinedo and Playa el Saler, which also has a golf course. North of the city you will find Playa Port Saplaya and a bit further still, the Roman area of Playa Sagunto.

8. The Albufera Nature Park

The Albufera Nature Park will transport you to a world of untouched, pure nature where the only sounds you’ll hear are the birds singing and the sound of the water. The reserve is located just 10 km from the city. A visit here will show you the Valencian passion for the environment and help you to discover the origins of its gastronomy.

9. The Turia Gardens

A garden covering 9 km and situated on the old bed of the River Turia, this is a designated green area, stretching from the west of the city to the east, reaching as far as the City of Arts and Sciences. The river Turia once ran through the middle of the city and out toward the sea, but in the mid '50s, a horrendous storm and high tide caused the river to burst its banks, and it flooded the center of Valencia under six feet of water. A plan was created during the massive clean-up afterward to divert the river from its present course and it was re-routed elsewhere to ensure that this kind of flooding never happened again. The upside is that this project created a beautiful park right in the middle of the city. The park can be walked or cycled along, and you can rent bikes at one end and then drop them off at the other.

10. Bioparc and Oceanogràfic

Enjoy an African safari through the Bioparc or take a tour of the underwater world in Oceanogràfic, where you’ll be able to see fish from as far as the Arctic and the seas of Japan.

All of that sightseeing will certainly work up an appetite and Valencia is replete with neighborhoods offering dining options that celebrate the local gastronomy.

The neighborhood of South Ciutat Vella features:
- El Poblet, serving modern French and Spanish cuisine in an elegant setting.
- Navarro, known for its quality rice dishes and offering outdoor seating.
- Vuelve Carolina, an upbeat bar-restaurant offering an inspiring selection of tapas.
- El Encuentro, offering stalwart Spanish cuisine at fair prices.
- Ostras Pedrin, with white tiles and a simple backstreet vibe, this pleasing little place serves three varieties of oysters—grilled, tempura, or raw—freshly shucked to order.

The neighborhood of North Ciutat Vella offers:
- Delicat, offering an unbeatable value, five-course menu of samplers for lunch.
- La Salvora, an intimate spot decorated with black-and-white portraits of Flamenco stars, has a menu of Spanish favorites like beef cheek, bull tail, and croquettes.
- La Pilareta, over a century old and great for hearty tapas and clochinas (small, juicy local mussels) available between May and August.
- Bar Almudin, uses fresh produce from the Valencian market gardens to produce fine tapas dishes including the delicious escalivada (cold grilled vegetable medley).
- Tasca Angel, a no-frills place that has been in business for 70 years and is famous for its fishy tapas, in particular grilled sardines.

When exploring Valencia’s beaches, be sure to check out the following:
- Bodega Casa Montana, one of Valencia’s most colorful spots that has been in business since 1836, offers a superb, changing selection of wines, and a long list of exquisite tapas.
- La Mas Bonita, turquoise and white and idyllically situated on the beachfront, this place has a large outdoor seating, a hipster vibe, and is a charming venue for breakfast in the sun.
- La Pascuala, a block back from the beach, this neighborhood bar has barely changed since the ‘20s and is legendary for its huge bocadillos (filled rolls) that come absolutely stuffed with fillings.
- La Lonja del Pescado, one block back from the beach this neighborhood bar has been in business for 70 years and is famous for its fishy tapas, in particular grilled sardines.

With its history, beaches, green spaces, and celebrated local gastronomy, Valencia promises to be an exciting destination for International Conference attendees, who may want to add a few days before or after the conference in order to fully enjoy all this city has to offer.
SAVE THE DATE

STAY CURIOUS

WORLDWIDE CONFERENCE ON QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

MAY 16-18, 2018 | VALENCIA

Visit wwwqualconference.com for more information
It happens every minute of every day—instead of walking into a store, customers are placing orders online. There’s the rush of ordering something, the fun of opening a box, and the great anticipation of what is inside.

We are beyond the age of mere pizza delivery. You can order anything right to your home, ranging from toys, picture frames, power tools, or an entire box of clothes that a stylist picked for you, thanks to the power of e-commerce. It’s delivered right to your mailbox or door, or you can get it more quickly by pre-ordering, so it is waiting for you when you physically arrive at the store.

Quick online purchases are allowing us to mentally check something off from a to-do list or make an impulse purchase with just a few taps on a phone screen. Thanks to conveniences like these, a 2017 study by eMarketer predicts US retail e-commerce sales will double between 2015 and 2020, reaching $692 billion in sales.

A big driver of e-commerce growth is mobile commerce, influencing more than a third of total retail purchases in the United States, or more than $1.4 trillion in sales. A retail sale is “influenced” if consumers discover, search for, research, or compare prices for products during the purchase path. Now, more than ever, qualitative researchers are helping retailers and brands to understand e-commerce shoppers’ intentions and experiences.

Digital Deal Domination
E-commerce is shaping our discount mentality as frugal consumers even before we shop, as digital coupons and discount codes are increasing in popularity vs. traditional paper coupons.
Nearly 85% of shoppers are looking for coupons (non-grocery) in advance of visiting a store. In this “mobile-first” world, nearly 43% of consumers turn to mobile apps when seeking coupons, while 35% check in print.

In a recent study by Placed and RetailMeNot, most consumers are using up to two apps to help them shop online. Consumers' top 5 favorite shopping apps (for non-grocery) rank from the top with Amazon, RetailMeNot, Walmart, Groupon, and eBay, which have arguably been forming the nucleus of our e-commerce landscape.

Omnichannel Perspective

Shoppers have ready access to an influx of digital coupons, marketplace and retailer shopping apps, email newsletters, easy price comparisons, and various social media ads/posts teeming with new ideas, inspiration, and “must-haves.” Qualitative researchers are helping retailers and brands to identify exactly what sites, apps, social media ads, and influencers their consumer segments are encountering and following from an omnichannel paths-to-purchase perspective.

With more longitudinal forms of qualitative research, we can uncover online and offline touchpoints for the micro-moments of brand-building or explore the conversion cycle from the consideration set to purchase in-depth.

Newer online qualitative research capabilities—ranging from spontaneous mobile journaling to an even more meticulous analysis of data from passive metering—allow us to assess when and what is breaking through to consumers as it happens. We can connect the dots to understand if and how customers are acting upon what they see vs. their existing loyalties, if any.

Herd Mentality in Prime-Time

In July 2017, Amazon held its third annual “Prime Day” and in effect, has been regulating its own shopping holiday. The event offered 30 hours of deals instead of the 24 in the two previous years, and only Amazon Prime members could shop the event. In the heat of summer, these online-only, limited-time deals drew enormous buzz across generations of shoppers. (Perhaps you were one of the many curious shoppers who glanced at the deals or even made a purchase?) Amazon's astonishing sales from Prime Day 2017 surpassed both Black Friday and Cyber Monday 2016—all without pairing a family-centric holiday like Thanksgiving with the guilt of self-indulgence.

While Amazon is the biggest player in online retail, there is still room for other online retailers to craft their own e-commerce celebrations. Qualitative research is helpful for exploring these types of specialty retail opportunities, including consumers’ affinity, influences, and suggestions for these types of events.

Rave Reviews

Over a decade ago, we might have laughed at “5 stars, A++” feedback on eBay, but today's e-commerce thrives on this not-so-subtle foundation of user-generated reviews and mass endorsements.

Some recurring challenges with online shopping include failure to provide a sense of product size, overwhelming browsing and search filters, and pictures/videos or product descriptions that offer insufficient information.

Authentic reviews (from “Verified” purchases) are known to help consumers buy products with confidence, even though they cannot touch, taste, smell, or fully compare them. It is comforting and reassuring when thousands of other customers have purchased and used an item with success and long-term satisfaction. But trustworthy, detailed reviews are not always available for every site/retailer.

Even a marketplace giant like Amazon battles seller reviews that artificially embellish product popularity; they attempt to curb these practices by marking buyers’ posts as a “Verified Purchase,” to curate and promote passion for actual purchases vs. sellers’ motives.

Qualitative research can provide a rich canvas of observations and stories from online shoppers’ perspectives, revealing their needs and frustrations from their actual online experiences on one or more e-commerce sites.
E-commerce and the Power of Right Now  CONTINUED

“Digital ethnographies are minimally intrusive, mostly observational, and self-narrated, with the added ability to capture System 1 thinking.”

Courting New Customers

Many e-commerce retailers are interested in exploring ways to help customers overcome the hurdles of building a cart and making their first purchases.

In a relatively quiet roll-out, Amazon Dash Wand serves this exact function, removing the pain points of building a cart. The Dash Wand with Alexa is a handheld device that can easily scan the barcode from most home essentials. You can also say a product category, “Alexa, add ____ to my cart,” and it will add a placeholder product to your cart.

While the wand primarily serves as a grocery assistant, it can also scan non-grocery items. It’s a game of trying to figure out what you can add into your cart. (The wand is also magnetic, sticking to your refrigerator.) As of this printing, shoppers may find unusually overpriced items from Amazon Prime Grocery in their baskets before checkout, but those who are shopping entirely for convenience might not care about competitive pricing.

For grocery and even some non-grocery consumable goods, customers appreciate being able to glance at their order history and place another order with a few clicks. To motivate these first-time and return purchases, what kinds of deals or incentives are needed? What kinds of external influences are shaping their decisions? Qualitative researchers can dive into all of this and more.

Qualitative E-commerce Solutions

It is no secret that foot traffic in physical brick-and-mortar (B&M) retail stores has been declining. Shopping malls are experiencing major retail store closures and bankruptcies.

Yet, with so many consumers doing their planning and prep with phones, comparing prices, and scoping out reviews, the value of customers’ visits to B&M stores has increased. Physically visiting a store to buy something “right now” and being able to taste, touch, and smell are aspects of the in-person retail experience that continue to be differentiating strengths.

As more customers are walking into B&M stores with a plan about what they want to buy, their decisions continue to be influenced by what they encounter in stores. Retailers like Target have been positioning popular, top-rated merchandise adjacent to “in-store only” offerings to drum up additional consideration and interest. Amazon has opened a limited set of B&M bookstores with curated selections based on top-rated books, pre-orders, popularity on Goodreads, and local reviews; books are presented face-out on shelves with a review card featuring the Amazon.com customer rating and review.

Just as retailers and brands are working to keep up with these shifts in the way we shop, qualitative researchers are marrying new and existing research techniques to effectively share the consumer voice in the omnichannel path-to-purchase.

According to Daniel Kahneman’s Thinking, Fast and Slow, two systems are said to shape our judgments and decisions: System 1 is intuitive, fast, and emotional; System 2 is slower, more logical, and deliberate.

An online qualitative exploration is a popular way to access System 1 thinking and examine the entire path-to-purchase process; these methods can capture experiences and opinions from a nationwide audience on a more individual basis.

Potential shoppers can be recruited into an online portal or community, where they participate in spontaneous mobile journaling (e.g., social media/digital interactions in the planning stages) and complete a shopping mission when they are ready to make a purchase.

Alternatively, we can capture the e-commerce shopping experience on video with a remote digital ethnography via webcam and screen-sharing. This can be done with or without a moderator, where interviews are loosely guided, scavenger-hunt-style, or unstructured to give the shopper free rein to shop around and build their baskets. Digital ethnographies are minimally intrusive, mostly observational, and self-narrated, with the added ability to capture System 1 thinking, non-verbal behavior, and reactions.

With hybrid qualitative research designs (i.e., mixing online, face-to-face, livestreaming, and/or webcams), retailers and brands have even more flexibility to understand the breadth and depth of e-commerce influences in omnichannel planning, shopping, and buying.

The e-commerce game is hotter than ever, and today’s qualitative tools are well-suited for understanding the detailed nuances of shoppers’ stories in this changing consumer buying landscape.
“Delivering on our promises and providing unmatched service and experience. That’s how we help our clients and that’s always our focus.”
- Maryanne Livia, President, RRU Research

“My favorite facility ever! Such kind, helpful people in a beautiful space. Couldn’t be better!”
- Alina and Lauren, Flamingo

RRU Research has been providing excellence in recruiting and project management for over 40 years.

We believe our clients deserve an experience that brings together not only the highest quality recruiting, project management, and service, but also a visually pleasing and comfortable facility experience that fuses the latest in technology with the finest design. We believe all these factors combine to give our clients not only the most enjoyable experience but also will produce the most valuable research results. We are happy to say, our clients seem to agree!

TESTIMONIALS

“The RRU Research team provide a great end-to-end recruitment service. Everything they and others told me about their facility was true – a great location, first rate facilities and the most friendly staff.”
- Andrew G., City Football

"I've been in qualitative market research for a long time and the team at RRU has distinguished themselves like no other! Again and again you all have taken on challenging recruiting projects for us with superb results. I am thrilled, and my clients are thrilled. The beautiful facility and awesome staff are the icing on the cake. Love you guys and can’t wait to work with you again. You all are rock stars!"
- Stacey Y., Aising Research

"Easily the best research facility I've ever worked in. The staff is attentive and upbeat, the rooms are comfortable, modern and far from bland. My team was made to feel welcome from the moment we walked in the door. Thank you Fusion Focus! Our clients had a great experience and so did we! We will be back!"
- Cory, Ministry of Culture
It was at that moment that I realized that this, in fact, was the real question. The answer to my confusion about the bent fork was within my reach, and yet in that moment, I realized that the answer was not as important as this question: Did I want to know? Did I want the curtain pulled back on the rush of awe I experienced while watching the trick being performed? Wasn't there some giddy mystery in believing that magic does exist? It took me only a moment to realize that, in fact, I liked living with the wonderment and fantasy that the unknown offers. But I was changed by the question and the fact that it had stopped me in my tracks.

If you had the chance to learn the secrets behind some of the most mind-bending magic and mentalist tricks, would you want to? I found myself faced with that dilemma while having coffee with an entertainer friend of mine whom I had watched perform fork-bending tricks that had left me confused and befuddled. In this private moment, away from the eyes and ears of an audience, I leaned in and asked him, “Since it’s just you and me here, tell me: how do you bend the fork?” He paused for a moment before responding, and then said, “Do you really want to know?”

RETHINKING THE QUESTION:
How a Twisted Fork Made Me Question Everything

By Chris Kann
CSK Marketing, Inc.
President
Racine, WI
chris@cskmarketing.com

It was at that moment that I realized that this, in fact, was the real question. The answer to my confusion about the bent fork was within my reach, and yet in that moment, I realized that the answer was not as important as this question: Did I want to know? Did I want the curtain pulled back on the rush of awe I experienced while watching the trick being performed? Wasn’t there some giddy mystery in believing that magic does exist? It took me only a moment to realize that, in fact, I liked living with the wonderment and fantasy that the unknown offers. But I was changed by the question and the fact that it had stopped me in my tracks.
Each respondent comes to us with a story that is at the ready—that they will automatically draw on whenever possible—to perpetuate the narrative they have created about who they are.

The inevitable result was that I realized I had to step back and take a closer look at how I was asking questions. It was time to rethink the way I had been trained oh-so-long-ago as a researcher and revisit my habits, taking into account not just two decades as a qualitative researcher, but all of the things I had learned in four years as a radio show/podcast host and as a business coach. In bringing all those things to bear, I set out to develop new techniques so that I could derive more from my questions.

**Better Questions. More Value Added.**

As qualitative researchers, a key part of the value we add lies in the questions we ask. In a world of Google and Siri, answers are in our pockets, on our smartphones and at our fingertips. Even questions such as “What does the color green signify on packaging?” can be entered into Google and an answer will be revealed. Our job is to ask better questions than can be typed into Google and refine how we access emotion, motivation, and inspiration—the essential keys to unlocking the secrets of brand loyalty—in a way that is authentic and human.

What should be our key focus as we seek to raise the bar on the questions we ask? Here are three key question development strategies to consider:

1. **Disrupt the Narrative**

   Each respondent comes to us with a story that is at the ready—that they will automatically draw on whenever possible—to perpetuate the narrative they have created about who they are. This story makes it faster and easier for them to respond to questions. Daniel Kahneman’s best-selling book *Thinking, Fast and Slow* speaks of System 1 thinking that leads to instinctive responses; this is what every good interviewer ultimately hopes to disrupt. The publicly-acceptable answers in the narrative allow researchers to check the box that we have asked the question and gotten an answer. Done. But is it the most honest, authentic answer? How might we ask the question initially to elicit a more thoughtful, considered response?

   When do you know you have posed a question that disrupts the narrative? A hesitation, and even a “gosh, I had not thought about that before” comment is a good sign! There is no better feeling for me as a podcast host than to have one of my guests react to my questions by saying, “No one has ever asked me that before!” That moment of reflection before a response can signal a shift to Kahneman’s System 2 thinking and a more thoughtful, conscious answer. By asking re-phrased follow-up questions that confirm the answer they have given, it signals that you won’t be accepting their first response and that you will be double checking the data and confirming the motivations behind their behavior.

   In the past year, I have taken a big step toward disrupting the narrative by eliminating traditional “biographic” introductions, especially introductions that include anything resembling the respondent’s personal story. Allowing a respondent to begin a research discussion with: “Hi, I’m Patty; I am a teacher; I have four kids; and I love to cook” only puts forth and reinforces a narrative that they now will spend the rest of the discussion consciously or unconsciously supporting in their responses. If the key reason that we do introductions is to build some perceived connection between respondents, I would argue there are more effective verbal and non-verbal ways to create intimacy and connection between the researcher and the respondents that don’t build a narrative and that allow for more original and authentic responses to questions later in the discussion. By consciously using other means to build that connection, I have seen respondents and clients respond positively to eliminating what can be a bland beginning to a group discussion and that can alter answers later in the research.

2. **Cause Pause**

   Especially when time is tight during our research interviews, we can err to the side of focusing more on getting through the questions we had planned than ensuring that we are asking good questions and getting authentic answers. By working to ensure that we create pauses in a respondent’s thought process, we have a better chance of getting at quality information and feedback. Causing a respondent to pause gets the respondent more present in the moment and tapped into how they really feel about the topic at hand.

   A good way to cause a pause is to not accept the “that’s just what I do”-type, reflexive first responses that they might be inclined to give. These responses often lack depth and true insight. Ask for clarification, consider using a projective, or ask them to expand on a specific word they have used or emotion they have expressed in order to get them to re-think their response and to ensure it is not pre-programmed. These techniques can be the speed bump needed to prevent a respondent from trying to race through their responses. Take pause yourself; don’t rush to fill the space while the respondent is re-considering their feedback.
3. Point Them to Themselves

One of the best shifts we can make to ensure more authentic, insightful responses is to strive to ask questions that point respondents back to themselves: how they feel, their memories of the past, or expectations for the future. Questions like these get them present, reflective, and connected to their feelings. Asking “What words would you use to describe your emotions when you are using this product?” requires more reflection, for example, than “Tell me about using this product.” Posing the question “How will this feature change your experience of cooking meals?” creates richer feedback than asking “What do you like about this feature?” Adding a dimension of how they feel into questions about their use of or reaction to a product, rather than prompting them to respond only with left-brain feedback, requires more reflection on their personal interaction with the product and their experiences using it.

Getting respondents to ask questions of themselves is a technique that coaches know well and translates well to use in research when seeking to get respondents more engaged and insightful. One of the key places I put this to use is replacing the outdated “Is anything confusing?” question I traditionally asked about concepts that I was presenting in a research study. Consider how much more insight you gain when you point respondents to themselves by asking: “What questions would you ask the people who designed this product so that you understood it better?” or “What would you need to know to make you feel more confident that the product is going to perform as it says it will?” Rather than the likely “no” response you receive when asking if “anything is confusing,” this approach requires more thought and honest reflection on if they really understand how the product will work and creates more expansive, helpful feedback on how to refine communications about the product or concept to help them understand it better.

“…a good question is a preventive against sleepwalking, a way to keep present the awakening question that’s under all other questions: “What else, what more?”

– Jane Hirschfield

Learning from Other Industries

There is value in considering how other industries use questions in helping us see how we might integrate some of that thinking for better techniques in qualitative research.

Teachers

Teachers famously ask questions of their students to assess if they are listening and if they comprehend the lessons being conveyed. More importantly, the questions they ask strive to encourage students to not just hear and repeat back the information, but to learn to analyze and evaluate it so that their learning is more complete, sustainable, and transferrable. From teachers, we can learn to encourage questions that ask our respondents to engage with the stimuli, and even to co-create and synthesize what they are seeing to share how they relate to the product and how to make it even better.

Forensics and Business Strategy

In business negotiations and when investigating a potential suspicious incident, opening questions that lead to establishing rapport and intimacy help diffuse what can sometimes be potentially tense discussions. At the heart of these conversations, similar to research, is a specific objective that needs to be the result of the exchange. These professionals are trained to ask questions that get at the specifics of times, locations and motivations. While researchers can open research interviews with broad wording in their questions to create a soft transition into the research, moving more quickly to incorporate questions that identify specifics can be effective at gaining more helpful insights. Resulting responses can be more actionable and require respondents to be more thoughtful in their feedback.

Coaching Clients

One of the best reasons to “up our question game” is that we can coach our clients by using these techniques to ask better questions as we prepare the research project and methodology. Requiring them to get specific about their objectives and outcomes, tapping into concerns about the project, and even looking more closely at assumptions about the project design using thoughtful questions can improve the research outcome and make you a more valuable resource.

Making it Work

Consider when you might have felt stuck in taking respondents deeper, or felt there was more room for you to create an even more safe and expansive conversation with respondents. How might you disrupt the narrative that respondents present to you or cause respondents to take pause for a bit of reflection before giving a thoughtful response? The next time you are preparing for a study, look at each question with fresh eyes. Ask yourself how much introspection and thought it would require for you to respond. If you have an answer at the ready, or if you realize you have been asking questions the same way for years, it might be time for you to rethink the question!
What are top qualitative researchers saying?

FIND OUT AT OUR FREE QCAST WEBINARS!

Upcoming 2018 Dates:

Thursday, January 25
“Live from the Annual Conference”
Using Behavioural Economics to Elevate Your Qual Research Game
Presenter: Lauren McCrae

Thursday, March 1
Thursday, May 3
Topics and speakers will be announced soon.

All Qcasts are available on demand!

Here are just a few recent titles:

- Qualitative Data Analysis Software
- The Canary in the Political Coal Mine: Why Politics Should Rely on Qualitative Research
- Memory’s Murky Mysteries: Sins of Memory with Particular Relevance for Market Research

TO ACCESS WEBINARS, VISIT WWW.QRCA.ORG/QCASTS
CUSTOM GRAPHICS AND ICONS

AS EASY AS

1. 2. 3

By Caryn Goldsmith
Goldsmith Strategic Services
Principal
Los Angeles, CA
caryn@goldsmithstrategicservices.com
Your reports and presentations are prettier than they were 5-10 years ago, having been infused with stock photos and images taken from actual sessions. You are not a designer, but your goal is to make your work lively and memorable.

I’d like to introduce you to an approach you can use that is fun, creative, and very engaging for your clients. And because this is Toolbox, I’m going to share the steps I take in a very DIY fashion.

Challenge Defined

What is your visual challenge?
Are you trying to bring a persona to life? In all likelihood, your standard template includes a picture and text. Maybe the persona text is organized by topic area (e.g., what they’re thinking, feeling, doing) or maybe it’s narrative storytelling. Let’s look at a way to enhance what you’re currently doing to make it more impactful.

Are you trying to bring a list of findings to life? Creating custom icons is easier than you think and makes those findings easier to remember. (Very handy for creating journey maps, too.) So, let’s also look at a high-impact approach using custom icons.

Seek Inspiration

I like visiting graphic design sites when I have a few free moments. If you do this in one sitting, you can see some trends emerge. (I’ve included a few inspirational sites at the end, just in case you’re interested.) I then leverage what I’m seeing in my own reports.

Creating Personas

Recently, I wanted to create three very different looking personas. The topic was sensitive, laden with heavy emotions to which (thankfully) many clients personally could not relate. I needed to draw them in with words and illustrations. I know that stand-out pages help clients shift from rationally evaluating the findings to making them feel what the target is feeling. So I headed over to a website I like for infographics, Canva. I saw Figure 1 and then modified it to my purposes, as you can see in Figure 2.

A few things to note:
1. Infographics come in “blocks,” which can be moved and edited from within a site like Canva if you’re doing a whole vertical infographic. I look for one block that will suit my purposes and leave the rest behind.
2. Because infographics are designed as narrow verticals, I find it easier to re-create the look in PowerPoint. Leave a bit of room for footer information, but fill the entire page so clients instantly will know this page/slide is different from findings or conclusions.
3. You’ll notice that I did not use an image of a person. My focus here was on an emotional state, which far outweighed how a person might look. It’s highly visual and memorable, even without a human image.
4. Modify some visual elements to make one persona look different from another. In this case, I used a different image to represent each emotional state, and I changed the color scheme to provide an extra visual cue.

Creating Custom Icons

Creating custom icons used to be much harder. The single best resource I can recommend is The Noun Project (www.thenounproject.com). Yes, it is worth the annual fee, in my opinion. The site is great. I think it started as a “Commons” project, where contributors wanted to have an open-source, non-verbal library of icons on all topics. In effect, you search for icons as you would pictures.

Websites are filled with icons—just as our lives are. Very clean sites rely on them, and I, for one, am using them in reports and presentations more and more often. I used to have to re-color them in GIMP, a free program similar to Photoshop, but on a recent visit to The Noun Project (TNP), I saw that with the paid version, I don’t have to...
do that anymore. I can create custom colors in my TNP color palate following these simple steps:

1. Find an icon.
2. Select a color. If the color isn’t something you want, the easiest way to do this is to use a “color picker” tool—like PowerPoint’s “Eyedropper” for text coloration. (If you have a picture you’re trying to match, there are online tools to identify colors or you can use GIMP to do so. GIMP is easy to use. There are many 13-year-olds who present on all aspects of the program (and that’s how I “taught” myself!). Your PowerPoint color match will come in RGB form. Jot down those numbers and use a site like http://www.rgbto-hex.net/ to get your HEX value—the six-digit number that you’ll need to tell The Noun Project your custom color.
3. Enter that six-digit (HEX) number in the area highlighted in Figure 3, and you’ve got yourself a new color you can use repeatedly.
4. Click download; I use the PNG format.
5. Find that image in your Downloads folder and insert it in your report.

Merging Two Ideas

One of my favorite infographic websites is Piktochart. They offer QRCA members a $39.99/year membership. (If you use this link and upload the information required, they will honor this discount rate each year: https://piktochart.com/pricing/nonprofit/). Piktochart "Pro" membership is $348/year, so QRCA membership almost pays for itself.

I often just browse and learn new ways to lay things out. I was once looking for some special icons to demarcate between drivers, hurdles, and barriers for a new product I was concept testing. I wanted to use a stoplight color metaphor. I came across the shape of these icons (Figure 4) and recreated what I needed in Figure 5 by using PowerPoint shapes in different colors, layering them, and then adding a TNP icon on top.

It Really Is Easy

We all have a sense of style, whether we think we do or not. Icons and infographics are current and offer clients a shortcut to understanding what we’re sharing. Give it a try. Set aside one hour to explore and one hour to do; tackle something small (e.g., fancy up a methodology page or recreate a persona using an infographic block). As you become more comfortable, you might do more. It’s not necessary to always include graphic elements you’ve created, but I believe this is a good skill to have when the opportunity arises.

Additional Websites to Visit:

- blog.hubspot.com/marketing/web-design-trends-2017#sm.00000gjs5nfq1vezufgmm69nc—For keeping up-to-date on visual layout trends.
- www.visme.co—Another great infographic site.
- neomam.com/interactive/13reasons—A very cool interactive infographic, delivered online.
Introducing NewQ Membership

QRCA now has a special category of membership for new professionals!

- NewQ members enjoy all of the benefits of membership
- The cost is $175 annually
- NewQ members get the discounted rate for two years

QRCA is the largest international association that focuses only on qualitative research of all types — including ethnography, IDIs, online research, user experience and focus groups.

QRCA membership gives you a stronger voice in the qualitative world and provides professional development to stay ahead of the curve. Membership is open to qualitative research practitioners who value professional development and collaboration.

- Add to your toolbox of skills from top qualitative innovators.
- Learn the newest thinking to stay at peak performance.
- Collaborate with the most talented quallies from around the globe.

Join today using the code **NewQ** and you will be a member for the remainder of 2017 and all of 2018.

QRCA
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION

Leading the Conversation on Qualitative
Much of what we ask qualitative participants to share with us, from decision-making to storytelling to projective activities, elicits reactions from the brain in a series of cognitive functions.

*The Brain: The Story of You*, by David Eagleman (the host of the PBS documentary series of the same name), explains our major neurological processes by distilling them down to relatable principles. It’s a fascinating read.

Did you know that all sensory data—vision, hearing, etc.—are processed by our brains at different speeds? As Eagleman explains, “The strange consequence of all this is that you live in the past,” and “By the time you think a moment occurs, it is already long gone.”

Eagleman introduces us to his internal model, where the brain creates its own reality before receiving information from the eyes. What we experience is a process where our brains fill in the gaps of missing information based on what experiences and information are already there. We can stand in one place and easily pan across a scene, but if you have ever tried using a cell phone to capture a similar video, it usually comes out shaky and unsettling. The accuracy of our recall can be as uneven as our cell video. The gaps (invisible to a participant) can often be seen by researchers in observational forms of qualitative research.

Eagleman also describes another interesting curiosity around “priming,” where one thing influences the perception of something else. For example, scientists have learned that when you are holding a warm drink, you will describe your relationship or family member more favorably. As lovely as that sounds, priming can impede human judgment and opinions—and makes me think twice about offering coffee to participants!

Even when decisions seem spontaneous, such as deciding whether to eat ice cream, they don’t exist in isolation. The neural parliament of the brain decides generously, selfishly, and sometimes with the long view in mind. We are wired to seek rewards that move our bodies closer to their ideal set points. Humans can also put abstract concepts that we find rewarding ahead of our biological needs.

In a fascinating series of examples, Eagleman expresses the power of now, including the seductive nature of immediate satisfaction and gratification. As we make decisions, “we travel in time to our imagined futures to see how much value they will have.”

Options in front of us tend to be valued higher than those we merely simulate in our brains. This twist often gets in the way of good decision-making: “Mental simulations cannot live up to the experience of something right here, right now.”

Empathy is important for human sensitivity, yet did you know that to empathize with another person is to literally feel their pain? Part of our empathy for social interactions results from subconscious mirroring, where our facial muscles copy expressions of emotions that we see.

To help us empathize, our brains run a compelling simulation of what it would be like if you were in another person’s situation. “By getting a better grasp of what someone is feeling, it gives a better prediction of what they’ll do next,” explains Eagleman.

The brain also covers the latest buzz for sensory augmentation and sensory substitution. These breakthroughs could fundamentally change the way our brains work and what we experience.

What if real-time data were streamed to your body as part of your direct experience of the world? What if you could feel data? Extending our sensory inventory would augment our experience of the world.

It will be important for marketers to understand how consumers are adjusting their brains and eyes to virtual reality and augmented reality experiences. In a mind-blowing forethought about uploading consciousness, Eagleman shares that our brains are capable of inhabiting new bodies, and “we may eventually be able to shed our physical forms altogether.”

There is so much more to gain from reading this wonderful book. You might even have an out-of-body experience as you read about the way your brain works!
Any experienced qualitative researcher can recount stories related to interview experiences based on things they forgot to do or situations that came up for them during research. And hard as we try, things can go wrong! In his book, *Doorbells, Danger, and Dead Batteries: User Research War Stories*, Steve Portigal, using colleague stories, presents a collection of stories about interviews gone wrong with helpful suggestions and insights on how the researchers might have been able to manage a better outcome.

Steve Portigal is a leading user experience researcher whose previous book, *Interviewing Users: How to Uncover Compelling Insights*, was reviewed in the Fall 2013 issue of VIEWS. Portigal leads workshops about user experience research and is often a speaker at conferences around the globe, teaching audiences about user experience research.

The 65 stories in *Doorbells, Danger, and Dead Batteries* are riveting, comical, and self-deprecating. Some chapter examples include: “The Best Laid Plans,” “Those Exasperating Participants,” “Control Is an Illusion,” “The Perils of Fieldwork,” and “The Myth of Objectivity.”

In Chapter 5, “Gross, Yet Strangely Compelling,” the storytellers speak of dealing with some disgusting smells, situations, and food when conducting interviews. In one of the takeaways from this chapter, Portigal points out, “Remember disgust is individual. Shift team roles on the fly if another person in the field is more easily able to manage something that you find challenging.”

In the final chapter, “The Myth of Objectivity,” Portigal writes, “We’re going to look more deeply at a specific challenge to our objectivity—that as humans we are not only flawed, irrational, emotional, and judging beings, but we are also individuals who are the results of our accumulated life experiences.” The stories are told by researchers who have had to remain objective when facing issues that made them uncomfortable or with which they had a personal connection.

One researcher had to get frightened young participants through a security checkpoint in Afghanistan; the participants were scared of the soldiers and their guns. Another researcher told of how he culled learnings from his own chaotic family setting and his family’s struggles medicating sick children. He used his family’s experience to help guide him on how to design a study that required him to interact with and interview chronically ill patients. In another story, a pregnant researcher doing observational research in a maternity ward struggled with her own emotions and fears as she listened in on nurses trying to decide if a baby girl who lived only 53 seconds should be registered as a live birth or a still birth.

The stories in this book are valuable in reminding us why we conduct user experience research. This is a book with valuable insights for anyone conducting or using user experience research or ethnography. *Doorbells, Danger, and Dead Batteries* is a book you will read more than once and one that offers even more learning on subsequent readings.
As qualitative researchers and users of qualitative research, we spend much of our time figuring out what consumers like and don’t like and what’s driving them to think that way. This is not too different from determining what is popular and why. In his book, Hit Makers: The Science of Popularity in an Age of Distraction, Derek Thompson, the youthful senior editor at The Atlantic, sets out to explain the secrets behind why some products become popular hits and others don’t.

Thompson does a good job of explaining what appears to be, after reading the book, common sense. He effectively answers the two questions he lays out in the beginning of the book:

1. “What are the secrets to making products that people like across our vast culture—in music, television, movies, and consumer products?”
2. “Why do some products fail in the marketplace while similar ideas catch on and become hits?”

Thompson answers these questions with a combination of academic theories and pop culture examples that cover several centuries and genres, which makes for an interesting and engaging read. The core thesis of the book is that consumers like songs, movies, books, and products that have an element of familiarity but break just enough new ground to catch your attention. Thompson explains this using several theories. One is a phrase coined by the insightful and successful designer Raymond Loewy: MAYA—people respond to what is Most Advanced Yet Acceptable. Another is that people react to new things from the viewpoint of constant tension between neophobia, being afraid of anything that is too new, and neophilia, being curious to discover something new.

Getting the idea right is one thing, but for an idea to become a hit, Thompson correctly points out, it needs distribution and marketing to get it in front of the right people. This confirms what I know as a former consumer products brand manager: you can have a great product, but if you can’t get it on the shelf at Kroger, it’s dead in the water. As Thompson summarizes so well, “Often the most popular things are hardly the ‘best.’ They are the most popular because they are everywhere.” (Think Super Bowl.) Thompson provides a non-traditional, but modern, example of how distribution helped Instagram become a hit, with the founders distributing early versions of Instagram to a network of Silicon Valley heavy hitters who then shared Instagram images with millions of their Twitter followers.

Thompson presents several relatable examples of pop culture hits, going into detail with explanations as to what made each popular. I find fascinating his explanation of how seven of the famous impressionist painters, e.g., Renoir, Manet, and Monet, became popular in the 1890s while arguably better artists did not. Equally intriguing is Thompson’s description of how George Lucas made a movie with familiar Western movie elements—hero, motley crew, bad guys, and lots of action—and added two new twists, outer space and great special effects, to notable effect with Star Wars.

From a qualitative research perspective, the book explains in broad terms what we try to determine in micro terms. There are some great plugs in the book for what qualitative research does and why it’s important. Thompson speaks highly of the value of ethnography, citing George Gallup and Loewy as big believers. Expanding on the concept of familiarity being a key to liking, he states “People’s familiarities—[their] ideas, stories, behaviors, and habits... are the keys to their heart.” And that is what qualitative research does: it gets people to share their stories and behaviors. He addresses the impact of the Internet too, describing it as injecting science into the work of building hits. Thompson uses the example of the music app Shazam, which tracks massive amounts of consumer data. That consideration of the need for consumer insights on a grand scale might serve as a wakeup call to qualitative researchers: will qualitative move from the focus group room to crowd viewing? If so, will we have a role in that? I think most market researchers and users of market research will find this book relevant, informative, and entertaining. And there may even be a bonus for all of us: maybe it will increase the popularity, and the demand, for consumer research and insights.
White Working Class: Overcoming Class Cluelessness in America

Joan C. Williams, Harvard Business Review Press, 2017

Reviewed by Susan Fader

Fader & Associates
Teaneck, NJ
susanfader@faderfocus.com

When people are invited to be part of the market research discussion, there is almost always some demographic profile used to identify the people who will be invited to participate or screened out. Historically, demographic profiles have focused primarily on hard chronological, economical, and product/service experience markers such as age, income, education, and purchase/ownership history. Sometimes attitudinal questions are asked. However, in most non-political market research studies, the role of tribal affiliation or how people specifically define their personal and group identity generally plays no role in recruiting people to a study.

This absence of incorporating how a person self-affiliates, within the hierarchy of what is important to them, can negatively impact market research findings because you may be grouping people who appear to be similar but are not.

Therefore it is imperative for market researchers to better understand how a person’s worldview of themselves can have a bigger impact on their perceptions and behavior than traditional measures such as income, age, and education.

White Working Class: Overcoming Class Cluelessness in America by Joan C. Williams provides much-needed insight on how the white working class tribal affiliation and worldview differentiates them from other demographic groups.

This book helps clarify what is contributing to the widening divide vis-à-vis perceptions, lifestyle, values, and life choices between whites with college educations, which Williams refers to as PMEs (professional managerial elites), and the white working class who generally do not have a college education.

Williams is an expert on social class, focusing on how gender roles and expectations influence career success. Utilizing this expertise, she gives us a fast-paced and interesting book organized around chapters that capitalize on the questions PMEs may have, e.g., “Why Don’t the People Who Benefit the Most From Government Help Seem to Appreciate it?,” “Why Does the Working Class Resent Professionals But Admire the Rich?,” and “Why Doesn’t the Working Class Get with it and Go to College?”

At the beginning of the book, Williams points out, “Class consciousness has been replaced by class cluelessness—and in some cases, even class callousness… (This book doesn’t focus) on white working-class despair, instead, I focus on a simple message: when you leave the two-thirds of Americans without college degrees out of your vision of the good life, they notice…the working class doesn’t want to be examined like some tribe in a faraway land… They want respect for the lives they’ve built through unrelenting hard work. They want recognition for their contributions and their way of life.”

Williams cites many sources and studies throughout the book, with two frequently mentioned ones being J. D. Vance’s Hillbilly Elegy, which was reviewed in VIEWS Summer 2017 issue, and sociologist Arlie Hochschild’s 2016 book about Tea Party members in Louisiana, Strangers in Their Own Land.

White Working Class serves as a good companion book to John Zogby’s book We Are Many, We Are One: Neo-Tribes and Tribal Analytics in 21st Century America, which was reviewed in the VIEWS Summer 2017 issue. While Williams’ book focuses on a particular tribal subsegment, Zogby’s book provides a detailed overview of how the US population is segmenting into different tribal groups. As Zogby observed, “The uniqueness of Tribal Analytics is that it segments the population based on self-identified tribal affinities—shared values, life philosophies, and outlooks. In doing so, it transcends demographics and other category-specific attitudes and behaviors that would be the basis of a traditional market segmentation study.”

Having an understanding of and incorporating tribal analytics into the recruiting process will help ensure that your groupings recognize how people self-affiliate.

The target audience for White Working Class appears to be PMEs and not those who self-define as white working class, so it is not surprising that many of Williams’ sources, except for Vance, tend to be more left than right leaning. Even so, this is a fascinating and insightful read that anyone involved in the market research and marketing field should explore. It will give you insights into white working-class worldview and make you rethink at least some of your screener questions. In the end, this book will impact how you categorize people.
SET ‘EM UP!

Ever notice how the best connections happen when we’re most at ease and having fun, like when we’re hanging around a bar or relaxing in our own living rooms? Ever notice how so few bars and living rooms are equipped with state-of-the-art viewing & AV capabilities? Us too.

Enter THE REC ROOM, by Good Run Research & Recreation: The first QRC-designed, fully equipped, creative research space to conduct anything-but-ordinary research. Come take a seat at our bar to see what we mean, while having a lot more fun, digging a lot deeper, and leaving your clients with Oooohs! and A-HAs!, in equal proportion.

After all, there’s a reason for the RECcreation.

An Anything-But-Ordinary Research Facility in Anything-But-Ordinary Richmond, Virginia

GOOD RUN
research & recreation

www.GoodRunResearch.com