MAKING SOCIOLOGY A SCIENCE

Social Research as the Bedrock of Sociology

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TYPES & PURPOSES OF SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

EXPLORATORY: To document human behavior, social action, and the social world.

EXPLANATORY: To discover laws governing the social world so as to explain and/or predict events

EMPOWER-MENT: To smash myths and empower people to change society.

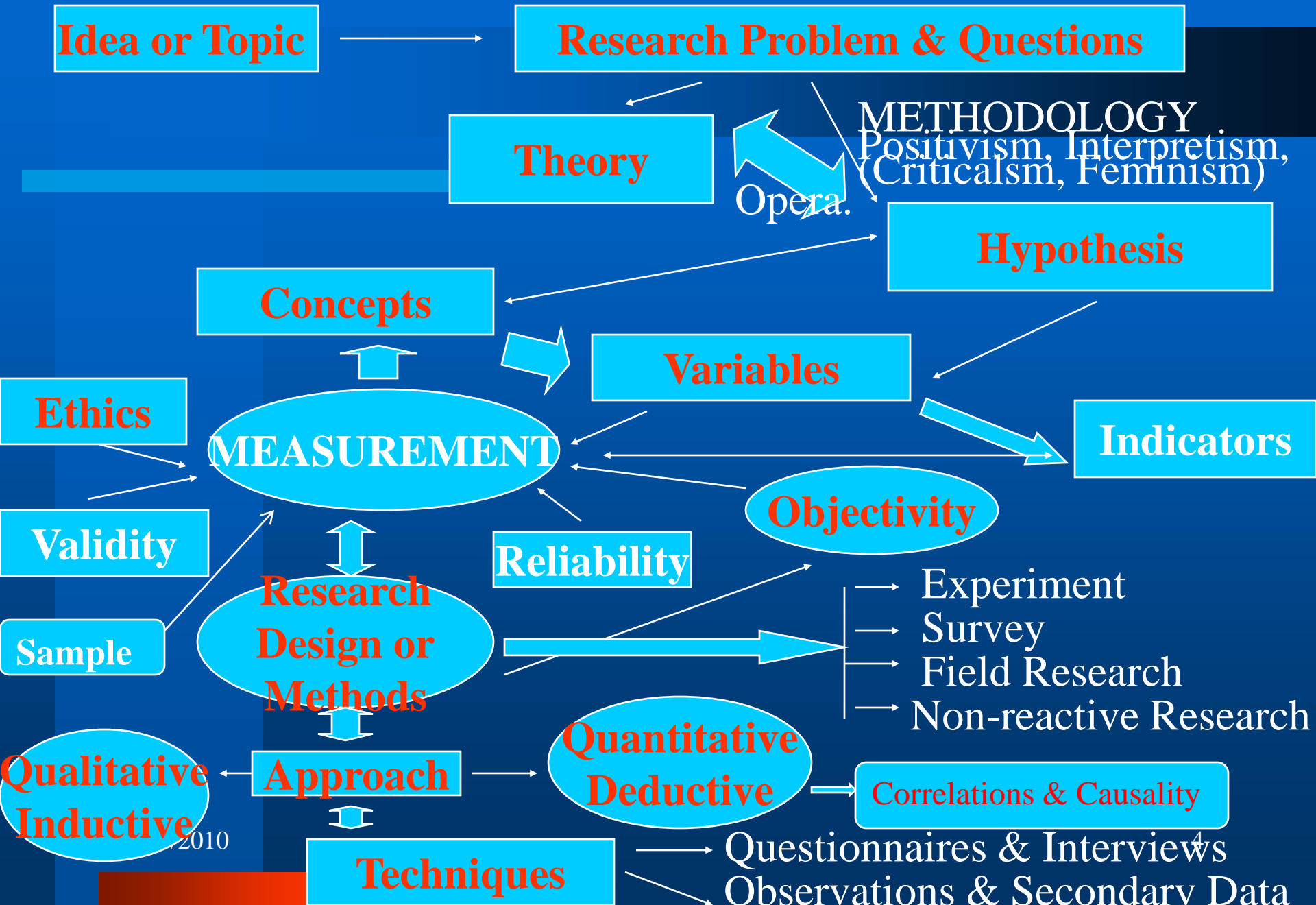**FOCUS OF THE S.M.:** Systematic gathering, analysis and interpretation of information to produce Empirical Evidence

DESCRIPTIVE: To describe characteristics of data, human behavior, social action, and social world
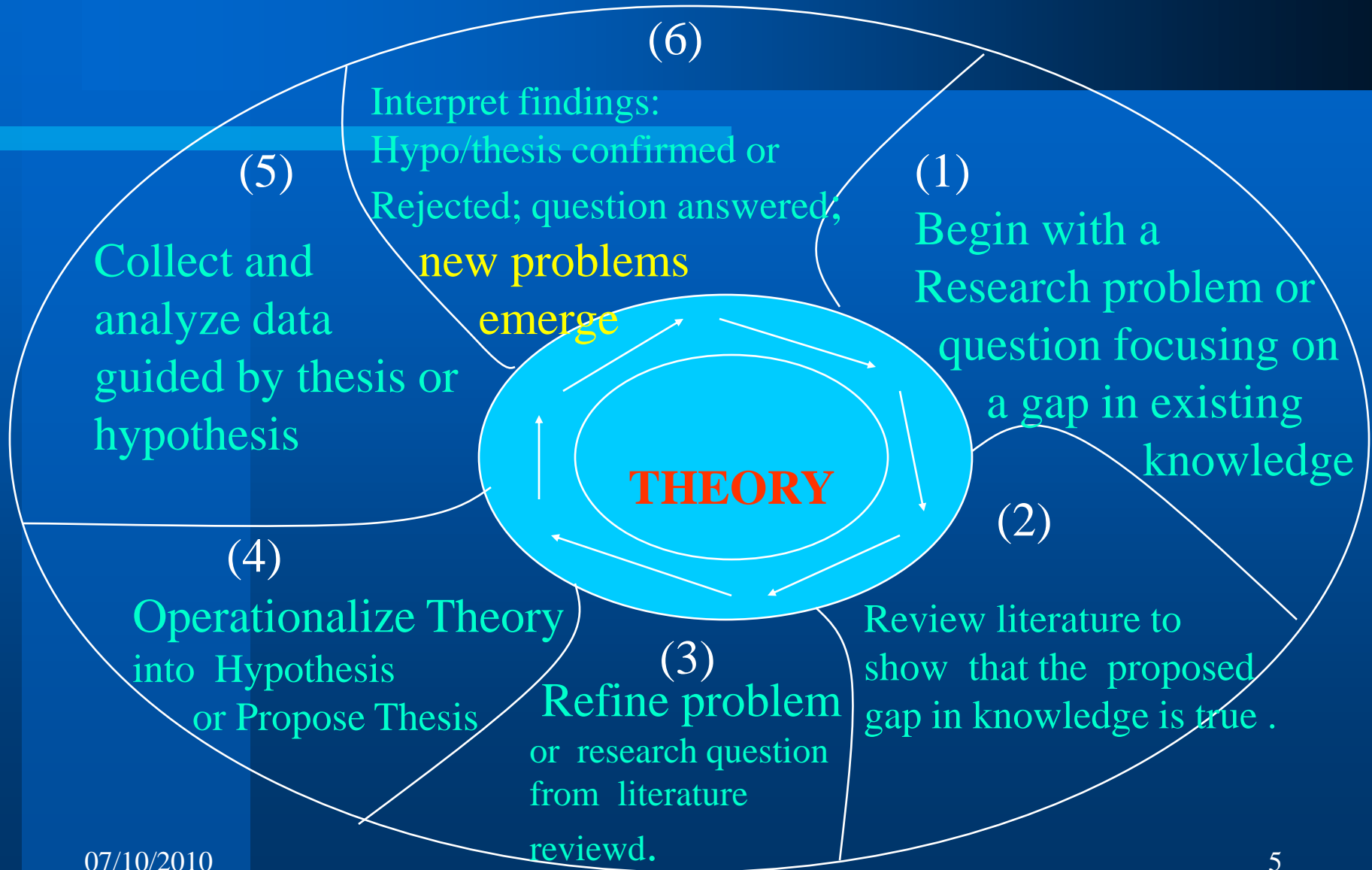
CAUSAL LOGIC

- **Independent Variable** ➡️ **Dependent Variable**

- **x** ➡️ **y**

- **Parents' Income** ➡️ **Likelihood of children's enrolling in college or university**

a) RESEARCH PROCEDURES/PROCESSES:
The Scientific Method

(6) Interpret findings: Hypo/thesis confirmed or Rejected; question answered; new problems emerge

(5) Collect and analyze data guided by thesis or hypothesis

(1) Begin with a Research problem or question focusing on a gap in existing knowledge

THEORY

(4) Operationalize Theory into Hypothesis or Propose Thesis

(3) Refine problem or research question from literature reviewd.

(2) Review literature to show that the proposed gap in knowledge is true.
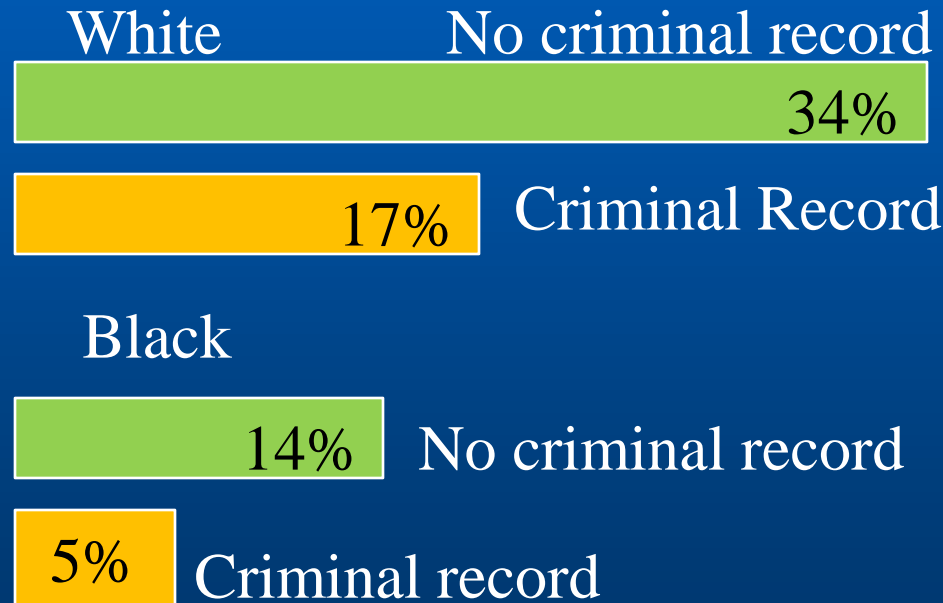
Research Procedures/Processes: ILLUSTRATION

- **1. What is your topic?: Online Networking Programs**
- **2. What is already known about Online Networking Programs—Facebook, Myspace, Twiter—and their effect on communication patterns?**
- **3. What is missing from this knowledge? The pattern of generational gap in the use Facebook Networking Program for Communication in the city of Victoria.**
- **4. What exactly are your research questions? What is the difference in the Facebook use pattern between teenagers and older adults living in Victoria?**
- **5. What is your hypothesis? Teenagers use Facebook to communicate more than older adults in Victoria.**
- **6. What philosophy or theory will inform your research? Interactionism**
- **7.What methods and techniques will you use to gather needed information? Survey and Observation: Interviews and online monitoring.**
- **8. How will you record and analyze the information? Audio-taping**
- **9. What does the data tell you and what is your interpretation of this? There is no difference in the pattern of Facebook usage by teenagers and older adults in Victoria: Interpretation: Similarity in access to technology**

- **10. What is your conclusion: There is no generation gap in Facebook usage pattern in Victoria.**

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: Philosophical Foundations

Philosophical Foundation	Emphasis of Research	Corresponding Theoretical Perspective
Positivism	Objective understanding of the social order Quantitative & Deductive	Functionalism
Criticalism	Encouraging social change Quantitative & Deductive	Social Conflict and Feminism
Interpretism	Understanding how people make sense of the world Qualitative & Inductive	Interactionism and Feminism

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: APPROACHES

- **1. QUANTITATIVE:** **Numerical or Hard Data:** **White Privilege in Job Seeking**

White   No criminal record

	34%

17%	Criminal Record

Black

14%	No criminal record

5%	Criminal record

- **2. QUALITATIVE:** **Non-numerical or Soft Data: (pp. 16, 17, 97, 98 & 106). Focuses on humanity behind the numbers/statistics.**

METHODOLOGY	POSITIVISM	INTERPRETISM	CRITICALISM	FEMINISM
APPROACH & LOGIC	**Quantitative & Deductive**	**Qualitative & Inductive**	**Quantitative & Deductive**	**Quantitative/ Qualitative & Deductive/Indu**
METHOD OR DESIGN	**Experiment, Survey & Unobtrusive**	**Field Research** **Historical comparative &** **Case Study**	**Unobtrusive, Historical Comparative**	**Field Research Survey, Non-reactive, case Study, His/Comp.**
TECHNIQUE	**Detached Observation, Questionnaire, Structured interview, statistics, Content Analysis**	**Participant Observation, unstructured interviews, Content Analysis, Descriptive stats, Focus Groups**	**Statistical Analysis & Content Analysis**	**Participant Observation, unstructured interviews, Content Analysis, Statistical Analysis, Focus Groups**
SAMPLING	**Probability**	**Non-probability**	**Probability**	**Probability & Nonprobability**
FOCUS	**Basic or Pure Research**	**Basic & Applied Research**	**Basic & Applied Research**	**Basic & Applied Research**
PARADIGM	**Structural-Functionalism**	**Interactionism**	**Social Conflict**	**Feminism**

TRIANGULATION

- **Using mixed methods to research the same phenomenon to achieve high validity and reliability (pp. 100 & 101)**

EXPERIMENT

FIELD RESEARCH

SURVEY

UN-OBTRUSIVE