

Book Review

Konecki, Krzysztof T. 2022.

The Meaning of Contemplation for Social Qualitative Research: Applications and Examples. New York: Routledge

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Konecki courageously opens the door for the social sciences to become fully engaged on behalf of making a better world. This book provides a clear pathway for contemplative approaches amidst the thicket of “qualitative” methods in the social sciences. Konecki’s book takes a deep dive into how contemplation may be actively integrated into qualitative research by drawing upon grounded theory, phenomenology, mindful inquiry, and autoethnography. Konecki brings his experience in meditation and as an advanced yoga teacher into the research process, training his students and co-researchers in regular practice. The reader will find each chapter engaging, moving researchers toward the full use of self.

Chapter One presents the inherent similarities between phenomenology and grounded theory methodology. Bringing these traditions together reveals how engaged researchers will provide a deeper understanding of their topics. This promotes self-insight in the researchers and an enriched result for the organizations and communities.

Chapter Two engages researchers further by asking them to bring their whole self into the grounded theory process, including emotional and bodily aspects. Throughout the chapter, Konecki demonstrates how phenomenological processes, such as the *epoché* and bracketing, work towards an enhanced research outcome. An appendix to

this chapter is Konecki's journaling which exemplifies intense self-awareness.

In Chapter Three, Konecki makes a wake-up call. He reveals how our ways of being and researching tend to ignore or obscure the Deathworlds we are creating. Linking Deathworld-making to lying by omission and commission, Konecki encourages social researchers to face these dangers head-on. He illustrates how social sciences may engage in "wrong speech" by overlooking negative, life-threatening, and life-diminishing aspects of our social worlds. Konecki likens such denials to remotely controlled deadly weapons.

Chapter Four is Konecki's mindful diary of living under Covid-19. As a sociologist sensitive to the workings of Lifeworlds, he reminds us of the effects of imposed social isolation.

Chapter Five is a tour de force showing how he trained student sociologists to engage in contemplative observations of visiting a cemetery. The students use embodied awareness based on the yoga training he provided them, as well as meditation and self-reflections in their field notes. What is revealed is how a deeper reflection on a second visit resulted in greater richness and clarity.

Should yoga and meditation training become part of the required curricula for social researchers? After reading Konecki's book, my answer is an unqualified Yes! Today's researchers are engaged professionals concerned with pressing issues of social and environmental justice. It is time to end the stranglehold of cold distancing and objectification promulgated in the academies of learning so that we can halt the spread of Deathworlds before it is too late!

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