Creative Legacy of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research methodologies have roots in a variety of disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, communication, economics, and semiotics. Many of the ideas and people who created this legacy are summarized here. If you have a strong interest in learning more about qualitative research, this summary provides you with keywords and sources to explore further.

Decision Area	Finding	Researcher (Discipline)
Marketing segmentation, all forms of promotion	Customers exhibit several types of social action and decision making: • Goal-oriented rationality: rational thought applied to decisions. • Value-oriented rationality: non-rational goal but approached with rational process. • Affective action: actions driven by emotions. • Custom-driven action: actions driven by custom or habit.	Max Weber (economics)
Advertising, product design, store design	Differences in social learning are based broadly on culture, not on race alone.	Franz Boas and Margaret Mead (anthropology)
Retail store design	The discovery of contradictions and patterns of interaction in human behavior significantly changed observation studies.	George Simmel (philosophy, sociology)
Retail store design	The realization that an analysis of detailed field notes can provide clarity to tallies of observed actions gave us ethnography and participant observation.	Bronislaw Malinsowski (anthropology)
Promotion, sales, advertising, product design, retail design	Humans gain understanding from their perceptions; those perceptions are gained from experience (phenomenology).	Edmund Husserl (psychology) and Alfred Schutz (philosophy)
Advertising planning and creative development	People's level of language influences their perceptual screens for all messages.	Edward Sapir (anthropology)
Package design, product design, pricing, distribution, and all forms of promotion	Projective techniques revealed that while thought occurs at both the conscious and the unconscious level, it is emotion that has the power to motivate.	Sigmund Freud, C.G. Jung (psychology)
Retail store design, product design, product life cycle	While observation reveals how people behave, symbolic interactionism reveals why they behave as they do. People give meaning to things, and these meanings change over time.	George Mead, Herbert Blumer (sociology)
Retail store design	Disguised observation bypasses the perception of human participants: that each must be an actor, behaving and speaking in an accepted way.	Erving Goffman (sociology)
Advertising design and creative development, product design, retail store design	Individual depth interviews gained power as a technique when interviewers learned to use empathy and projective techniques.	Kurt Lewing (psychology)
Advertising, product design, retail store design, distribution strategy	Individual depth interviews (oral histories), focus groups, and in-home ethnography benefit from studies that revealed that tone and voice nuance in nonverbal behavior can reveal hidden meanings in speech.	Edward Hall (anthropology)
Promotional strategies and tactics	The critical incident technique, developed by the military, is a way of studying processes and actions.	John Flanagan (psychology)

This exhibit was developed from Hy Mariampolski, *Qualitative Market Research: A Comprehensive Guide* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001), pp. 14-21; National Institutes of Health Web site on critical incident technique for evaluating Medline, http://www.nlm.nih.gov/od/ope/citmethod.txt, downloaded January 28, 2003; Uwe Flick *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, 2nd ed. (London: Sage Publications, 2002), p. 17; Herbert Blumer, "The Nature of Symbolic Interactionism," 1990, p. 394; and Daniel Pink, "Metaphor Marketing," *Fast Company*, vol. 14, p. 214.