

Scientific Knowledge through Involvement – How to Do Respectful Othering*

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The theme of this article is how we as social scientists can research *others* through involvement, and develop *true* knowledge about the other without “othering” them, that is, not objectifying them or making them an instrument in our research, but rather be respectful of the other as a person. The thesis of this article is that othering is a matter of degree as well as principles. Social science and Action research can do *respectful othering*. Doing that is both a matter of personal skill and the wisdom of the researcher and of complying with some design principles. I argue that these design principles can be related to four areas of knowledge that we are likely to find in an involved research situation: knowledge about *oneself*, knowledge about *the other*, knowledge about the *relation* and knowledge about *the situation*.

Key words: involvement, respectful othering, action research, research design, knowledge

Introduction

The question I will try to discuss in this article is the following: a) how can we as social scientists research *others* through involvement, and develop *true* knowledge about the *other* without “othering” them, that is, not objectifying

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