

Table 3-1 *From: Intro to the Philosophies of Research and Criticism*
 Overview of a philosophical analysis of perspectives. *in Education & the Social Sciences - James Paul*

	Ontology (What is reality?)	Epistemology (What and when is knowledge?)	Methodology (By what manner do we acquire knowledge and truth? How do we know?)	Values (What contributions do our aesthetic sensibilities and our beliefs about what is worthy make towards our knowledge of what is true?)
Postpositivism	Reality is the collection of natural laws and social and social phenomena of our universe; all of these really exist; we can observe (imperfectly) and experience (imperfectly) this reality.	Knowledge is information about the world, constrained by, yet not fully determined by the world. Knowledge is produced through evaluation of evidence and causal events; it cannot, however, be absolutely secure.	The inquirer seeks evidence through rigorous methods that might falsify the knowledge views held; alternative explanations for the same evidence should be sought; there should be an open assessment to a wider community of researchers; the inquirer must win our trust.	Inquiry affects and interacts with the lives of individuals and so it must be trustworthy; it would be immoral to affect those lives without having trustworthy reasons.
Pragmatism	Reality is warranted assertions and justified beliefs; these are held until we have evidence that can make them untrustworthy.	Knowledge is constructed, questioned, refined, and encoded; it is promoted through power structures and contested ideas within social groups; thinking and acting are one process.	The inquirer recognizes that the scientific method is effective but contains inherent uncertainties; knowledge guides method while method also guides knowledge.	Inquiry is not neutral; some benefit from research and some are hurt by it; truth will be applied to society, so a social consequence needs to be a factor. Care theory should be considered.
Constructivism	Reality is constructed through the interaction of the creative and interpretive work of the mind with the physical/temporal world.	Knowledge is a dynamic product of the interactive work of the mind made manifest in social practices and institutions.	The inquirer attempts to understand meaning within a given context, seeking a broad range of inputs and interpretations.	Inquiry is permeated with human values. Because values are inescapable, researchers must make extraordinary efforts to reveal, or uncover, beliefs and values that guide and generate individual and group constructions.
Ethics	Reality is constructed and constrained by the aims societies and professions adopt for themselves.	Knowledge is understood within the context of culture and is negotiated through a democratic process that respects all views.	The inquirer and participants engage each other, searching for collaborative solutions and rationally defensible conclusions.	Inquiry should tie its conclusions to values and include measures to eliminate power imbalances.