

# The Use of Film, Television, and Music in Teaching Graduate Nursing Students Concepts of Qualitative Research

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# Problem

- Qualitative inquiry has gained momentum in nursing in the last decade (Munhall, 1996)
- Munhall (2007) remarked that many graduate students interested in qualitative research must “learn qualitative methods on their own” (p. 155)
- Formal education of qualitative methods are now included in most graduate nursing programs, either as a separate course or integrated within a larger research course (Creswell, 2006)

# Problem



- Adult learners thrive on real-life examples and engaged, active learning opportunities
- Topics related to qualitative inquiry are often foreign to graduate nursing students
- Nursing faculty strive to find engaging teaching strategies to present the concepts of qualitative inquiry and highlight with exemplars

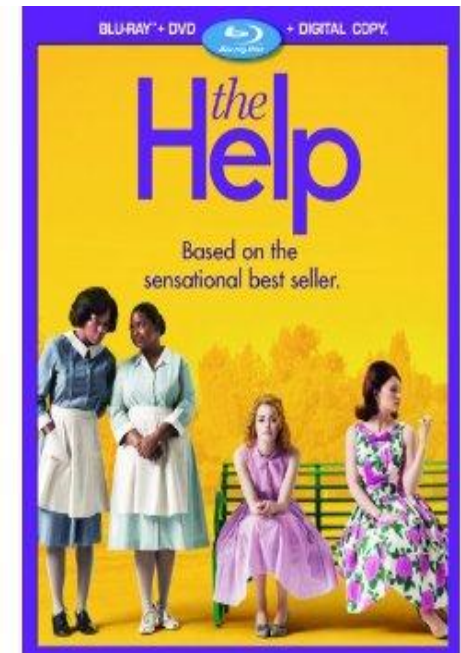


# Objective

- Identify a teaching strategy that incorporates the concepts of qualitative inquiry into an engaged learning opportunity for graduate nursing students

# Teaching Strategies

- Use film in teaching concepts of qualitative research to graduate nursing students
- 28 graduate nursing students watched the film “*The Help*” for in-class assignment regarding various illustrations of concepts in qualitative research





# Teaching Strategies

- In class activities led to class discussion
  - Lyrics from popular songs
    - How these lyrics could be incorporated in the write up of phenomenological findings
  - Episodes of reality TV shows demonstrating concepts specific to ethnographic field observations



# Reflective Writing Prompts

- Students were offered in-class participation points in a Nursing Theory and Research course with one class period dedicated to qualitative inquiry
- After watching the film *The Help*, students submitted group assignments in class responding to the reflective writing prompts
  - Write an example of a qualitative research question as exhibited in the film
  - What type of qualitative approach is being illustrated? Explain
  - Explain what types of interview techniques you saw demonstrated
  - Were there any ethical dilemmas identified as a result of the « research »? Was this a vulnerable group? Explain



# Reflective Writing Prompts

- What type of sampling occurred for this « research » project?
- Did you see any examples of bracketing by the journalist? How well was the voice of the participants « heard »?
- Other concepts of qualitative inquiry as represented in the movie?
- Clips shown related to timer (total time 54 min):
  - 22 min – 46 min
  - 56 min – 1 hour
  - 1 hour 8 min – 1 hour 10 min
  - 1 hour 29 min – 1 hour 31 min
  - 1 hour 48 min – 1 hour 56 min
  - 2 hour 9 min – 2 hour 18 min





# Findings

See handout for findings

**Write an example of a qualitative research question as exhibited in the film.**

- What is it like (lived experience) to take care of another person's child while somebody else takes care of yours?
- What are the perspectives of "the help" on working for white families?

**What type of qualitative approach (phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography) is being illustrated in the film? Explain your response.**

- Phenomenology – lived experience of black maids in 1960s segregated Mississippi – Skeeter sought to gain the perspective of the maids and tell the story in their own words so that others would know what it was like for them
- Some questioned if it was ethnography due to the participants all being from a specific ethnic and cultural group – however lack of field immersion

# Findings

See handout for findings

- **Explain what types of interview techniques (semi-structured/unstructured) you saw demonstrated in the film.**
  - Unstructured – when Skeeter let Abilene just read from her book of prayers which made her feel more comfortable. Became more unstructured and informal as the large group of maids became participants and they could talk about what they felt was important – almost resembling more of a focus group.
  - Semi-structured – when Skeeter tried to question Abilene in the first interview about her son, the toilet, her pay, working for her employer, etc. Also very structured during the first interview Skeeter had with Minny.



# Findings

See handout for findings

- **Were there any ethical dilemmas identified as a result of the “research”? Was this a vulnerable group of participants? Explain your response.**
  - Minority females were definitely vulnerable, very much on the edge of society (marginalized) and at risk for losing their employment, their freedom, their children, their property, and their lives, etc.
  - It was risky for these women to talk to Skeeter and she did not realize this when she first embarked on this project until she read the law in Mississippi preventing racial equality.
  - The maids even discussed using “made up” names if they could not get enough participants to get the book successfully published. Discussed that if this had been original research, would have probably not secured IRB approval due to the increased risk to participants.



# Findings

See handout for findings

- What type of sampling occurred for this “research” project?
  - Purposive sampling – needed participants who had actually experienced the phenomenon
  - Some students thought it was convenience sampling but discussed that it was really a great exemplar of snowball sampling beginning with 1 maid, then 2, then a room full of maids – one student described this as “network” sampling

# Findings

See handout for findings

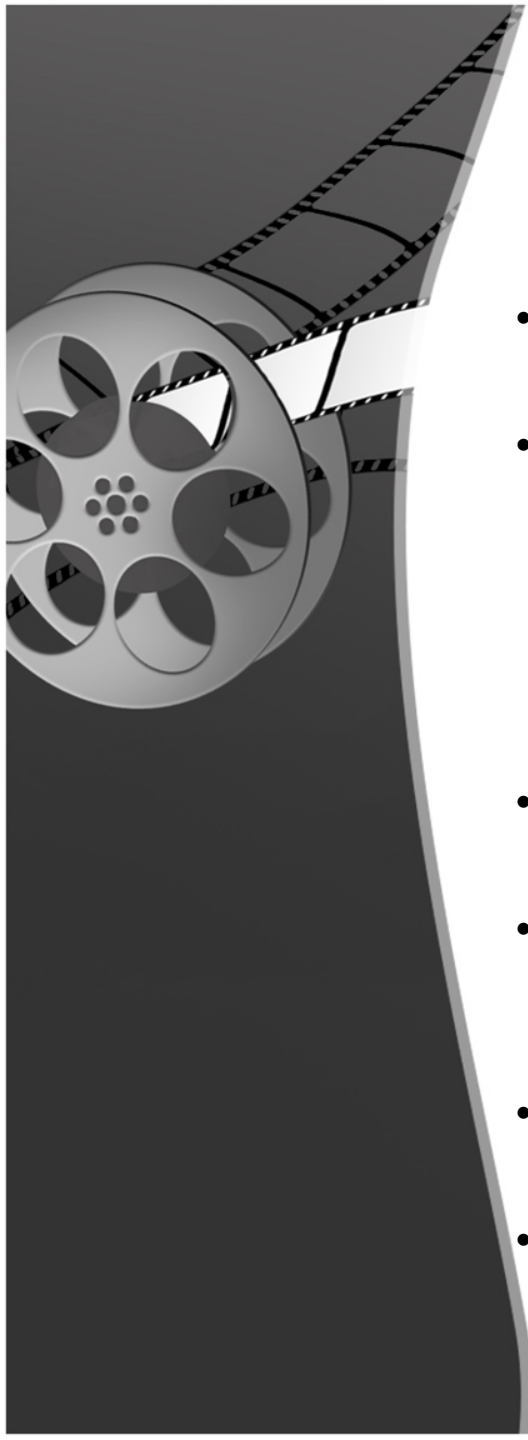
- **Did you see any examples of bracketing by the journalist?  
How well was the voice of the participants “heard”?**

- Skeeter wrote her own story after reflecting on her experience with her own nanny, Constantine.
- No explicit description of what Skeeter did regarding her own bracketing or epoche but 2 flashbacks were shown (from childhood and once as a teenager) – she remarked that Constantine played a huge role in teaching her everything she knows and loving her unconditionally.
- She also talked to her mother about the context of Constantine being fired and later died.
- The anonymous voice of the participants was heard completely and unedited – the maids saw to it that their exact quotes would be included in the book, not just what Skeeter thought was important. When she first met with Abilene for the interview, Abilene said “what if you don’t like what I’ve got to say?” and Skeeter assured her “this isn’t about me...it doesn’t matter what I think.”

# Findings

See handout for findings

- **Other concepts of qualitative inquiry represented in the movie:**
- Close relationship between the researcher and the participant(s) – demonstrated the emotional nature of qualitative research for both the participant and the researcher – demonstrates rationale for participants participating in research as it affords them the opportunity to learn something about self
- Honoring reciprocity – all participants shared in the financial advance
- Social justice advocacy as a product of research – contributed to change and demonstrated importance of social context of the era of Civil Rights
- Illuminating the lived experience – gave Abilene both figurative and literal voice
- Confidentiality



# Limitations



- Small and homogenous group of students
  - (1<sup>st</sup> group) Small with only 4, elective assignment, all were married, females in their 40s or 50s and all but one was Caucasian
  - (2<sup>nd</sup> group) Larger but still NP majority, 10% male, 25-30% had seen the movie, most with > 5 years of Nursing experience
- Only 1 class within the context of a larger course
- Limited foundation on the topic prior to viewing the film

# Conclusion and Recommendations

- The use of film not only provided an effective way to present the concepts of qualitative inquiry, but it was also an engaging opportunity for the learner
- Students responded that it addressed a multitude of learning styles and that it stimulated interest and enhanced their learning on the topic



# Conclusion and Recommendations

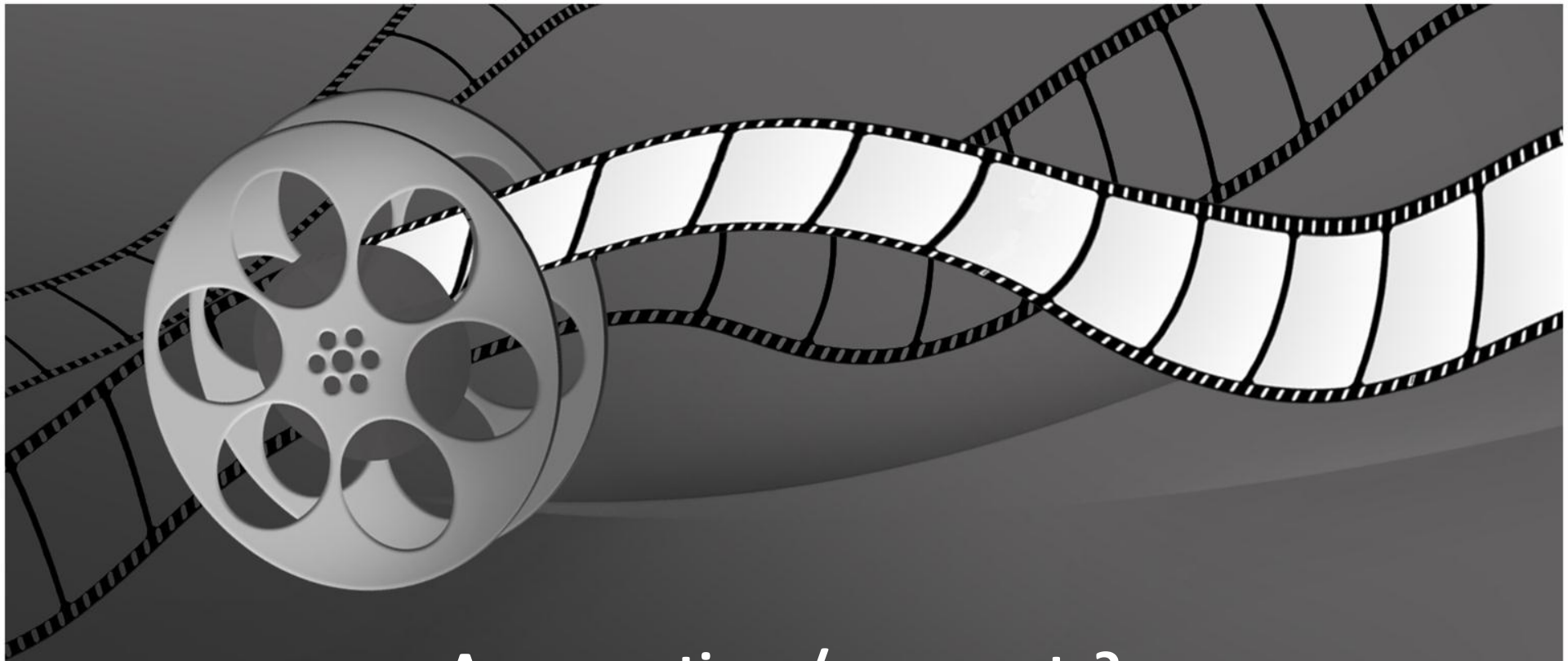


- Film was a powerful adjunct to traditional lecture and provided a realistic example for adult learners on concepts of qualitative inquiry
- Recommendations are to continue the use of this teaching strategy for future offerings of this course and to explore additional ways that film can be utilized as an active teaching strategy for a variety of topics in graduate nursing education



## References

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**Any questions/comments?**

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