PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE AND ITS RELEVANCE TO RESEARCH DESIGN

Patrick Thaddeus Jackson
School of International Service, American University, Washington DC

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THE STORY SO FAR

- neopositivism

  - dualism + phenomenalism

  - systematic search for cross-case covariation through hypothesis-testing

- realism

  - dualism + transfactualism

  - undetectable causal powers, vetted in the lab or via transcendental argument, in case-specific combinations

DUALISM

- philosophical ontology

  - the situation of the observer/knower

  - about a *relation*, not about "mind" or "world"

- dualism = "mind-independent world"

  - the world *is* some way in and of itself

  - mind *discovers* world; world *pre-exists* mind

MONISM

- not "idealism"
  - privileging ideas (mind) over the material (world) presumes dualism
  - idealism = reverse Descartes
- not "subjectivism"
  - autonomous knowing subjects presume dualism
  - thinking does not make things so

DIS-SOLUTION OF DESCARTES

- start with embedded and embodied knowers

  - no constitutively autonomous subjects

  - no mind-independent world to be known; no world-independent minds to know it

- *process* is central

  - in particular, the process of constructing knowledge

  - practical involvement comes first!

(LATER) WITTGENSTEIN

- language-games…

  - no private rules; no private languages

- …and forms of life

  - tacit agreement about how to decide
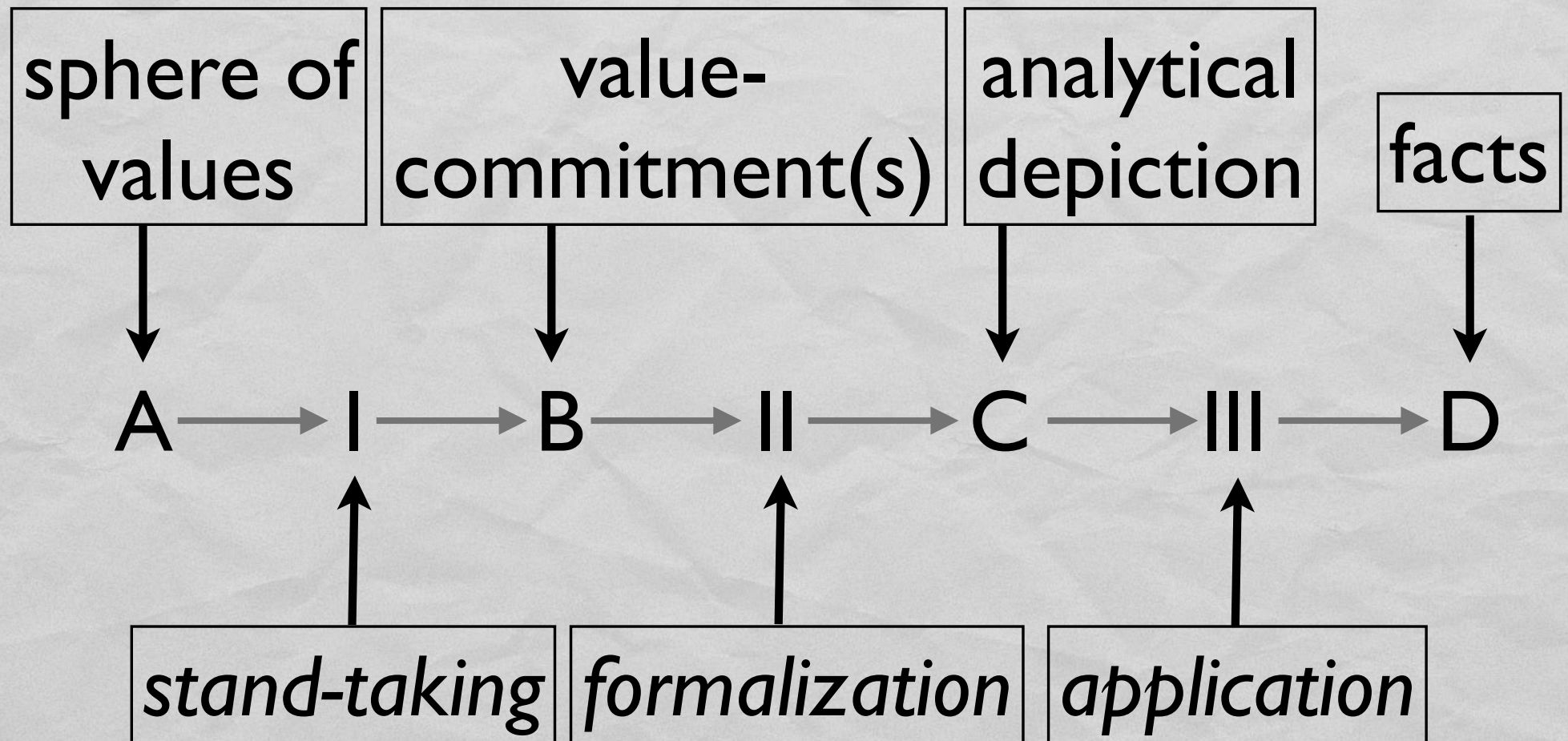
INTERSUBJECTIVITY

- priority of the "between"

  - structured/organized/arranged social space

  - start outside of any individual minds, but not outside of *all* minds

- no independent knowers

  - can't just make stuff up

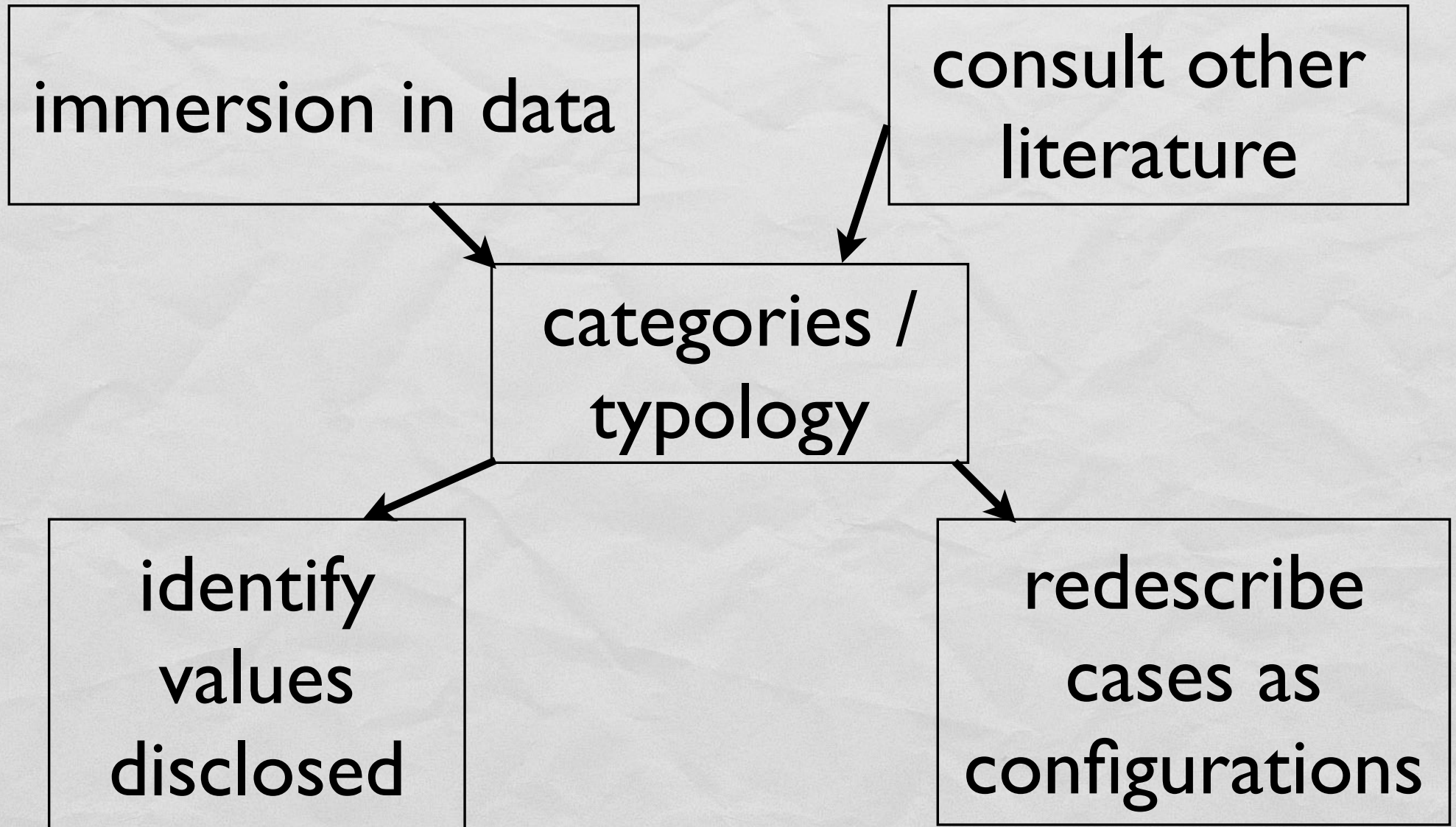 - change and continuity are both negotiated outcomes

WEBER

- an editorial statement

- ideal-types: deliberate oversimplification

  - not "ideals" (but: utopias)

  - not "pure types" (but: both abstract and idealized)

- culturally grounded

IDEAL-TYPIFICATION

sphere of values	value-commitment(s)	analytical depiction	facts

A → I → B → II → C → III → D

stand-taking *formalization* *application*

IDEAL-TYPIFICATION

immersion in data

consult other literature

categories / typology

identify values disclosed

redescribe cases as configurations

IDEAL-TYPICAL ANALYSIS

- central role of *imagined* counterfactuals

  - counterfactual ≠ perfect comparative case

  - helps the community of researchers decide what is causal and what is not

- configurations of factors/processes are key

  - always more than one ideal-type involved

  - mediating tensions key to social life

MONIST PHENOMENALISM

- can't have knowledge of anything beyond possible experience

- ideal-typical tools are instruments for generating knowledge of observables and detectables

- explanation, not critique

  - "value-clarification," not value *correction*

BEYOND INSTRUMENTALITY

- knowledge expresses a set of values…

- …but that set itself is socially determined

  - "language-game" names the epistemic status, but not the content

  - "form of life" points to social foundations, but does not unpack them
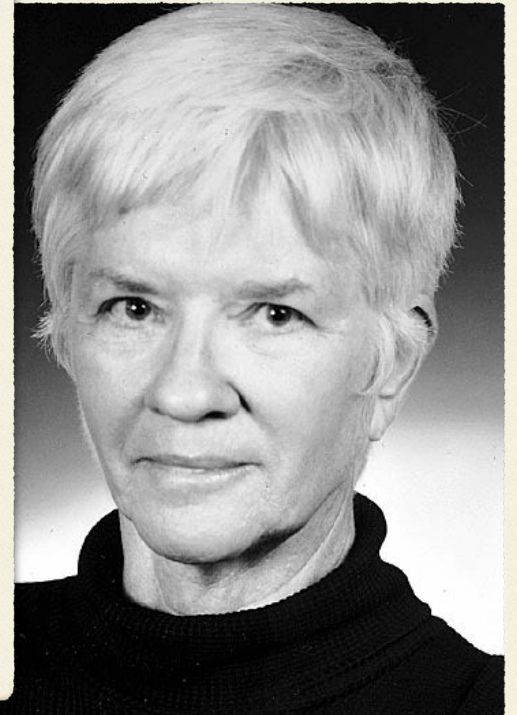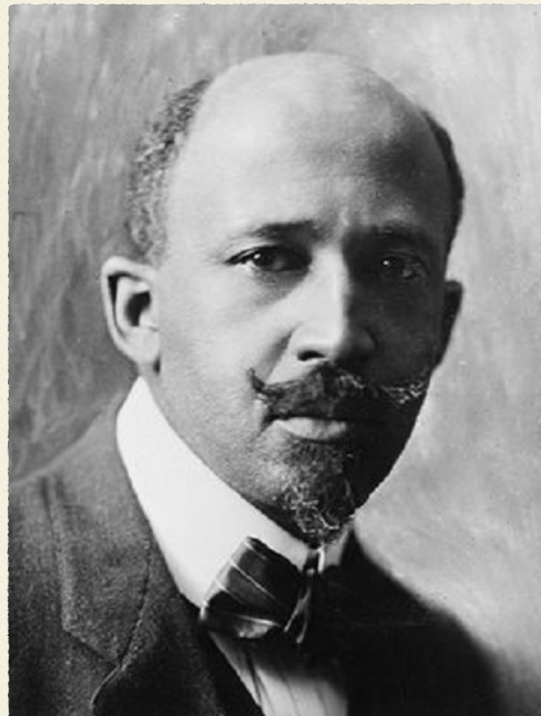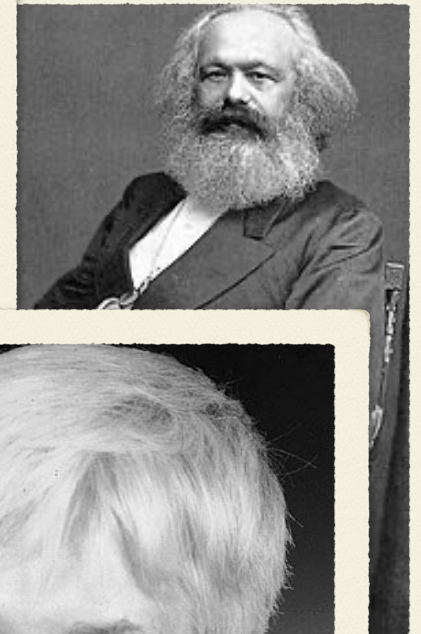
HEGEMONY AND MARGINALITY

- "objectivity effect" of shared assumptions

  - similarity of social origin affects scientific knowledge

  - likewise, similarity of experience based on gender, race, etc.

- not about *who*, but *what* and *where*

  - *what* assumptions

  - *where* the observer is standing

REFLEXIVITY

- know where you stand

- know what assumptions ground your theories and concepts

- can't know this perfectly…

- …but strive to become aware through dialogue

REFLEXIVITY

- places to start:

  - workers

  - intellectuals

  - women

  - racial minorities

- common thread is *marginality*

MONIST TRANSFACTUALISM

- monist: mind and world co-occur

- transfactual: deep structures shape activities of knowledge-production

  - not realism: can't use labs or transcendental argument

  - instead, find the traces of structure in our daily activities

- theory as therapy: reflexivity dispels illusion

REFLEXIVE EXPLANATIONS

- start with self-location
  - not an optional add-on
- adopt a marginal perspective
  - seeing from the limits is *epistemically* preferable
- knowledge critiques society
  - provokes a response, dialectically
  - pay attention to effects