

# Research Methods Festival 2014

## Session:

Methodologically Informed Teaching, Learning and Use of  
Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) Packages

# Resolving the contradictions between qualitative methods and qualitative software

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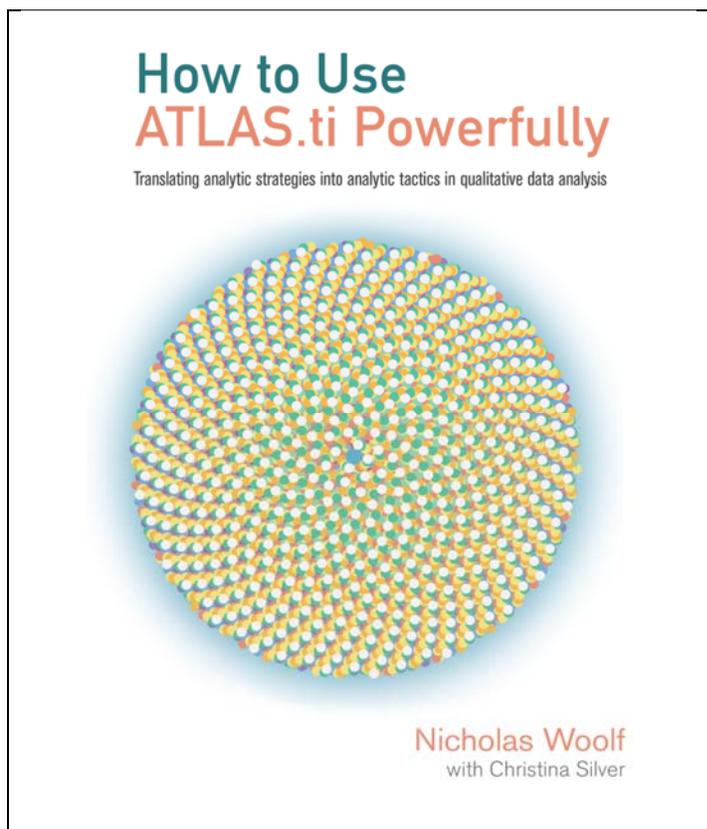
*and*

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# Why CAQDAS is not embedded in the university curriculum

- Lack of institutional support
  - *Compare statistical software education*
  - *No history of formal training passed down*
- Lack of powerful use of software
  - *Software used in limited or superficial manner*
  - *Limits the perceived value of embedding CAQDAS in the curriculum*
  - *Lack of textbooks instructing powerful use*
- “Five-level QDA” proposed as a solution
  - *Principles of powerful use developed from 15 years of teaching experience*
  - *Textbook in preparation:  
How To Use ATLAS.ti Powerfully*

# How To Use ATLAS.ti Powerfully



**ATLAS.ti is a powerful software program**, but it is not obvious how to use it powerfully. The reason is the contrast between the emergent nature of qualitative data analysis and the cut-and-dried nature of computer software.

**Since 1997 Nicholas Woolf and Christina Silver** have taught thousands of participants about the theory and practice of using qualitative software, both in university methods courses and intensive training workshops. Based on over 30 years of collective ATLAS.ti teaching experience they present techniques for using the software that harness its power while remaining within the spirit and ethos of qualitative research.

**How To Use ATLAS.ti Powerfully** will be published with accompanying video instruction in late 2014 by Woolf Publishing.

**The core of the book is *five-level QDA*.** This is an approach to harnessing the software that includes consciously *translating* each analytic strategy into the tactics made available by the software. This contrasts with the approach of first learning the software features and then looking around for obvious ways to use them in a project, which does not lead to powerful use of the program.

## **Nicholas Woolf, Ph.D**

Nick developed *five-level QDA* for using ATLAS.ti powerfully while staying true to the imperatives of qualitative methodology. He teaches intensive workshops and online training through the ATLAS.ti Training Center, and provides consulting and data analysis services to individuals and research projects through Woolf Consulting Inc.

Visit [www.learnatlas.com](http://www.learnatlas.com) for more information.

## **Christina Silver, Ph.D.**

Christina manages the CAQDAS Networking Project at the University of Surrey, leading its capacity-building and training activities. The second edition of her co-authored book, *Using Qualitative Software: A Step-by-Step Guide*, was published in 2014. She provides bespoke consultancy, training, and data analysis services through Qualitative Data Analysis Services. Visit [www.qdaservices.co.uk](http://www.qdaservices.co.uk) for more information.

Please email [HowToUseAtlastiPowerfully@gmail.com](mailto:HowToUseAtlastiPowerfully@gmail.com) for updated information about obtaining the book

# Overview of presentation

- The principles of powerful use of CAQDAS software
- The genesis of *five-level QDA*
- Working with *five-level QDA*

# Principles of powerful use of CAQDAS software

- Distinguishing analytic strategies from analytic tactics
- Recognizing the contradiction analytic between strategies and analytic tactics
- Recognizing alternative ways to reconcile contradictions
- Identifying *translation* between strategies and tactics as the most effective way to manage the contradiction and thus use CAQDAS software powerfully

# The contradiction between analytic strategies & analytic tactics

STRATEGIES

TACTICS

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What you plan  
to do

How you plan  
to do it

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Iterative  
Emergent

Pre-determined  
Step-by-step

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# Ways to resolve contradictions

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|        |   |
|--------|---|
| Denial | Do not use<br>First stages only<br>Suppress QDA ethos |
|--------|---|

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|        |                            |
|--------|----------------------------|
| Choice | 1-level QDA<br>2-level QDA |
|--------|----------------------------|

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|            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| Compromise | 3-level QDA |
|------------|-------------|

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|                            |             |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| Transcend<br>contradiction | 5-level QDA |
|----------------------------|-------------|

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# 1-level, 2-level, and 3-level QDA

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1-level QDA

E.g. Charmaz 2006

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2-level QDA

E.g. Tesch 1990; Miles & Huberman 1994; Bernard & Ryan 2012; Guest, MacQueen, & Namey 2012

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3-level QDA

E.g. Seidel 1998; Maietta 2006; di Gregorio & Davidson 2008;

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# The genesis of five-level QDA

Edward Luttwak (2001)'s five-level model of  
military strategy

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Grand strategy level

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Theater level

*Operational level*

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Tactical level

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Technical level

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# Military strategy and five-level QDA

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## *LEVELS OF MILITARY STRATEGY*

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## *LEVELS OF QDA*

Grand strategy level

Methodology  
& research question

Theater level

Conceptual plan  
& analytic tasks

*Operational level*

*Translation*

Tactical level

Combined & custom uses  
of software tools

Technical level

Standard use  
of software tools

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# FIVE-LEVEL QDA

>>>>>> *from the most general to the most specific* >>>>>>

*Two levels of strategy*

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*Two levels of tactics*

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*Level 1*

*Level 2*

*Level 3*

*Level 4*

*Level 5*

| <u>Objectives</u>  | <u>Conceptual plan &amp; analytic tasks</u>           | <u>Translation</u>  | <u>Combined &amp; custom uses of tools</u>                    | <u>Standard use of individual tools</u>                       |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| The purpose and context of a project, usually expressed as a research question | The general and detailed plan of action for a project | Translating from analytic tasks to software tools, and back again | Combinations of software tools, or tools used in a custom way | Individual software tools that are used in their standard way |

# Principles of translation

- A conscious activity
- Ranges from simple to complex
  - *SELECTION (simple mapping)*
  - *CONSTRUCTION (complex mapping)*
- Direction is from analytic task to software task, never the reverse

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