

Mixing questions, mixing methods

Carl May

LONDON
SCHOOL of
HYGIENE
& TROPICAL
MEDICINE



My research interests (i) empirical *investigation*

Interaction

(individualized knowledge)

Interaction processes,
boundaries of relations,
genetics, rheumatology,
terminal care

Chronicity

(illness trajectories)

Back Pain, cancer,
diabetes, medically
unexplained symptoms,
menorrhagia

Innovation

(intervention trajectories)

Informatics, telemedicine,
shared-decision-making
tools, medical devices.

Evidence

(generalized knowledge)

Randomized trials,
pragmatic evaluations,
guideline development.



My research interests (2)

explanatory models

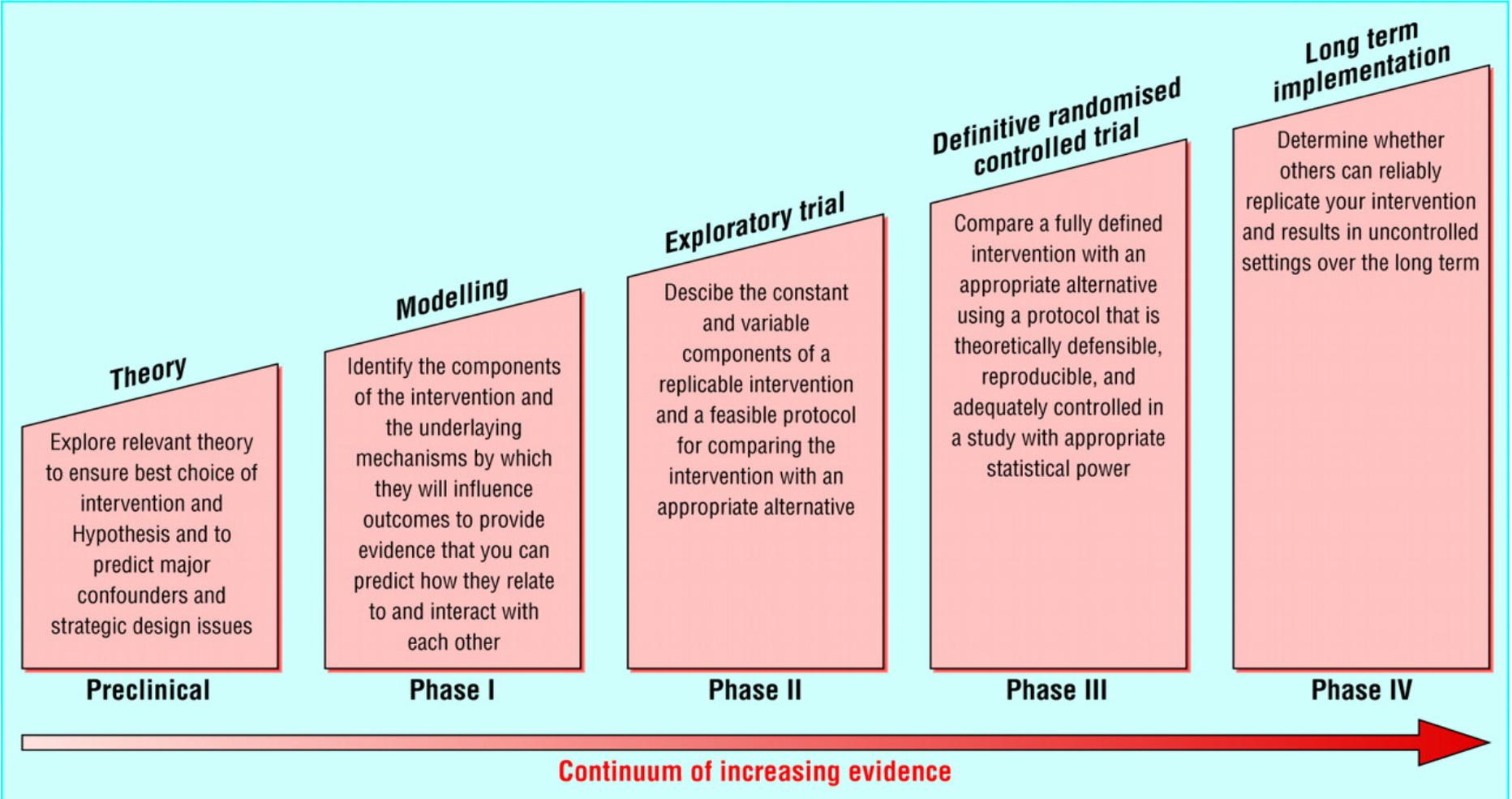
- Understanding the dynamics of the adoption and implementation of new health technologies and organizational innovations.
 - Multiple empirical studies and systematic reviews, leading to novel theory (Normalization Process Theory).
- Understanding how innovation in healthcare technique, delivery and organization affects patient and caregiver experiences.
 - Multiple empirical studies and systematic reviews, leading to novel theory (Burden of Treatment Theory)



MRC Framework for complex intervention evaluation

Complex interventions in health care, whether therapeutic or preventative, comprise a number of separate elements which seem essential to the proper functioning of the interventions although the 'active ingredient' of the intervention that is effective is difficult to specify. (...)





Almost all of my work involves some sort of mixed methods

- Ethnographies in concert with randomised controlled trials
- Attribution analyses in concert with systematic reviews
- Interview studies in concert with decision tree modelling

But I was scarred by the.....

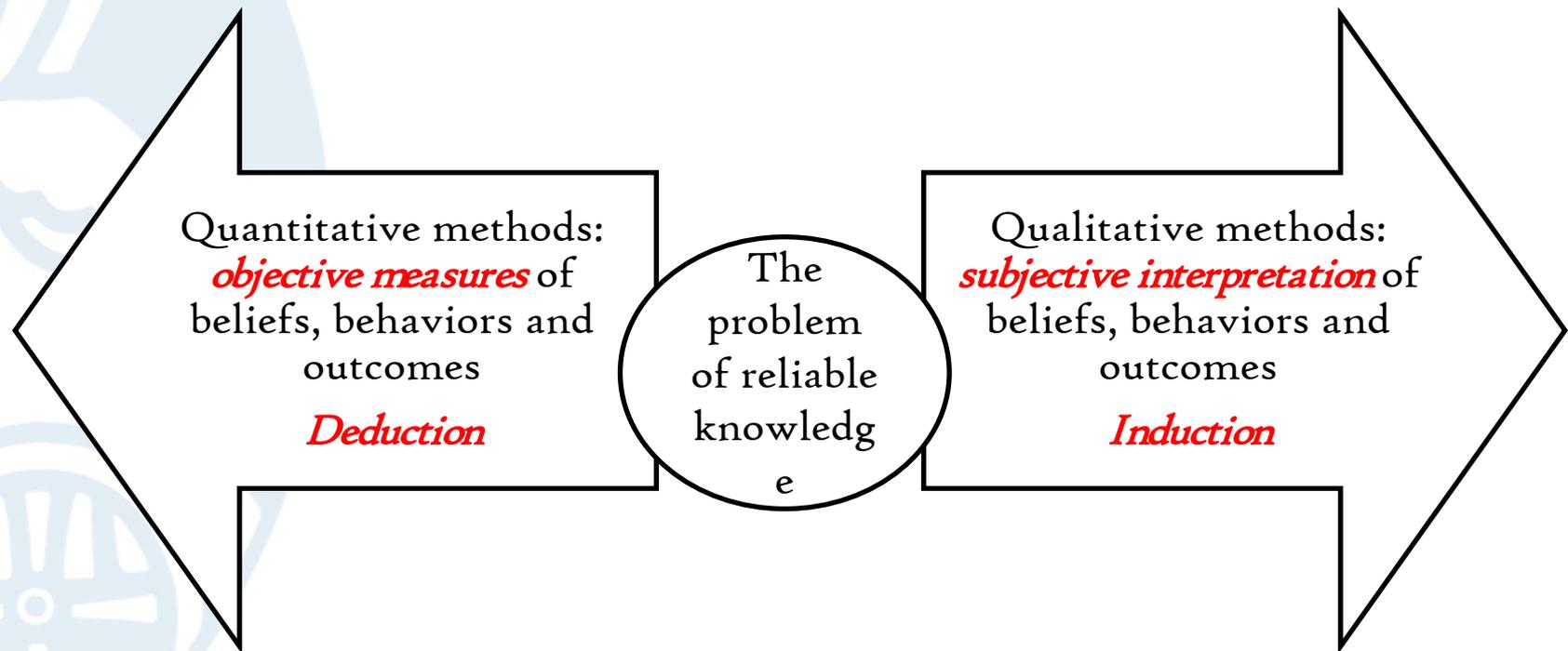


Some methods are more mixed than others, but that's not a problem (or is it?)

- Typically, when we think about mixed methods we *don't* think about
 - Participant Observation + Attribution Analysis
 - Econometric Modelling + Decision Tree Modelling
 - Clinical Trials + Prospective Cohort Studies
 - Status Passage Modelling + Thematic Descriptive Analysis



The methodology wars of the 1980s: subjectivists and objectivists in mortal combat



(No-one won, by the way....)



But here's the thing: when we mix methods, we mix many other things....

- *different paradigms call for different questions,*
- *different questions call for different methods,*
- *different methods call for different answers.*



So, we can either live in a world of uneasy epistemological compromise (and, really, who doesn't?)

Or....we can attack a problem from many angles, with many methods, until we have a set of solutions that can be worked together.

But to get there, we need to....

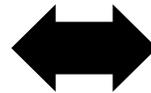


Use
theory as
a bridge
between
methods

Qualitative investigation:
Identifies empirical
regularities that warrant
explanation



Quantitative
investigation:
Tests theories, offers
generalizable
explanations

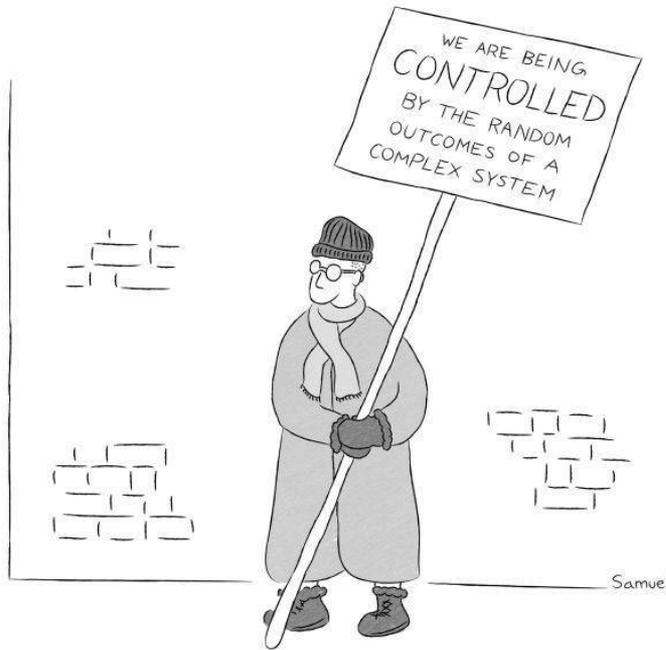


Theory building:
Theory is the bridge
between paradigms,
methods, and questions



If we treat mixed methods only as a methodological problem, then we leave a half of the answers to our questions behind.





Thank
you!

Carl May | Professor of Medical Sociology | Faculty of Public Health and Policy
| **London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine** | Skype CarlRMay | Twitter
@CarlRMay | email carl.may@lshtm.ac.uk

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