Dr. Ponterotto describes psychobiography as a time consuming methodology which is often a challenge to pursue in academic settings. He reflects on his own journey as a psychobiographer which started after being a tenured professor.

Another challenge in psychobiography relates to ethics. Dr. Ponterotto notes that psychobiography researchers must consider the implications of their writings on public perceptions.

According to Dr. Ponterotto, psychobiography which is an in-depth psychological study of an individual, comes closest to the practice of psychotherapy. This approach takes into account a person's history, social context, ancestry, and time period.

As a research technique, psychobiography is interdisciplinary and involves collaborations with translators, historians, journalists, ethicists, legal advisors, sociologists. It requires proficiency in both quantitative and qualitative analyses.

Dr. Ponterotto highlights that South Africa is ahead of the U.S. in psychobiography research and has successfully used this method for social justice advocacy.

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Psychobiography

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Advice for Graduate Students

- Be open to research experiences and pursue collaborations outside of your personal research interests.
- Craft more interdisciplinary collaborations by joining teams outside of your department.
- Suggest interdisciplinary faculty members to your advisors if you wish to form a collaboration.
- Don't lose sight of family and self care.
- Use your skillset in ways that offer you a desired work balance.

Dr. Ponterotto reflects on his early life growing up in Bronx, NY as Italian American and then living abroad in Rome, Italy at the age of 8 as being crucial in the solidification of his bicultural identity. Having to fight to be accepted as an Italian American in Italy at the age of 8 increased his empathy about the impact of stereotypes and prejudice.

Pursuing PhD at UC Santa Barbara under the mentorship of Dr. J Manuel Casas was another experience that Dr. Ponterotto states as being influential in shaping his research interests.

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