Appendix A

Qualitative Research

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CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

1. Differentiate between the three primary methods used by communication researchers—quantitative, critical, and qualitative.

2. Understand the purpose of grounded theory in communication research.

3. Be able to explain the purposes of open-ended questions, focus groups, participation observation, and unobtrusive measures; when researchers should use these qualitative methods; and what kinds of results are generated.

4. Be able to explain the purposes of triangulation or multiple class measurements, when researchers should use this qualitative method, and what kinds of results are generated.

5. Explain the four ethical issues commonly discussed in qualitative research—informed consent, deception, privacy and confidentiality, and accuracy.

What meanings do college students give to the programs they watch on television or the lyrics they listen to in defining who they are as individuals? Why are over 2.1 billion people registered members of Facebook? How do working parents experience their companies' personnel policies on fulfilling their dual roles as professionals and parents? What sense do members of different races, cultures, and classes make of how they are treated in the public and private lives they lead? Although numerous research methods are available to get at these questions, this supplemental chapter considers an approach to research that focuses primarily on how humans construct, understand, and convey their lived experiences.

Before we examine this approach, it is important to distinguish it within three predominant threads of inquiry: quantitative, critical, and qualitative.

A wide variety of approaches are used to examine and systematically study human communication. Some researchers prefer to observe what people do and the conditions under which they act as they do. Within this context, using employing surveys and questionnaires, some communication scholars emphasize what people report they have done when communicating. Seeking to provide broad generalizations or theories about human communication over diverse situations, this behavioral orientation is typically identified as a scientific, social scientific, or quantitative approach to communication. Still another group focuses on the values and value judgments that always permeate and undergird all communicative experiences. Frequently, these scholars challenge our assumptions, and they even propose alternative ways of communicating. They goad and encourage us to aspire to more humane and responsible ends as communicators. This approach to the study of communication is predominantly identified as a critical approach. In this appendix, however, we examine yet another way in which to study human communication. Here, we focus on how people communicate in their own natural environments, when they are guided by their own personal objectives, and how they give meaning to their communication, especially when they are using communication for those pragmatic objectives that determine and control day-to-day existence. This approach has had a host of different labels, but its central and most unifying label is qualitative research.

We develop this qualitative approach in six ways. First, we begin by recognizing the diverse ways in which qualitative research has been defined. Second, we isolate five common characteristics that ultimately constitute a unifying definition of qualitative research. Third, we identify some important kinds of questions and issues that define the concerns of qualitative researchers. Fourth, we examine the contributions of qualitative research to the study of human communication. Fifth, we identify five major methods that we think are particularly useful when conducting qualitative research. Finally, ethical issues involved in the use of qualitative research are identified.

MULTIPLE LABELS FOR ONE RESEARCH METHOD

Qualitative research has been identified in a host of ways. We would like to dismiss these differences by merely claiming that different people in different situations simply identified and began to employ different labels for a common experience. Yet in some ways, the labels reflect important differences in how qualitative research is perceived, studied, and ultimately even understood. In some cases, diverse labels have emerged because a variety of different disciplines—for example, sociology, anthropology, linguistics, and psychology—are involved, and over time, each discipline has selected and employed a different label to reflect its particular emphasis and spin on what is being observed. In other cases, different researchers have legitimately perceived and

understood different things when they have been in the natural environments of human beings as they communicate. Or, they believe that different motives and even theoretical orientations must be recognized, and identified in alternative ways, to account for why and how people communicate in their own environments.

Six different labels have been used to deal with different dimensions and characteristics of qualitative research: naturalistic, qualitative, interpretive/interpretivist, ethnographic, field, and action/applied. Each of these labels deserves attention, and each begins to reveal an important feature of what we mean by qualitative research.

Naturalistic Research

Two dimensions have traditionally been used to define **naturalistic research**.[1] First, the researcher seeks to make the research experience as much a part of the subjects' everyday environment as possible. A question of degree, the more a research project blends into and is a part of the daily experiences of subjects, the more the research findings are viewed as "naturalistic." Second, research is viewed as more "naturalistic" if the behavior studied is restricted as little as possible by the researcher or by the design of the research project. In this regard, if a researcher asks you to complete a questionnaire in the classroom and the questionnaire provides you with only a limited number of responses to each question or statement it contains, the environment and the nature of the questionnaire itself would suggest the research project is extremely artificial rather than natural. By contrast, if a researcher is one of your friends and you are unaware that he is observing your behaviors for a research project, you might believe that your friend has been acting unethically and in a deceptive fashion, but the research project itself would be classified as "naturalistic" because the study was conducted in your everyday environment and the behaviors you displayed were not restricted in any way by the researcher or the design of the research project.

Qualitative Research

Fundamentally, qualitative researchers seek to preserve and analyze the situated form, content, and experience of social action, rather than subject it to mathematical or other formal transformations. . . . Unlike naturalistic inquiry, qualitative research is not always carried out in the habitat of cultural members. . . . Unlike ethnography, qualitative research does not always immerse the researcher in the scene for a prolonged period, adopt a holistic view of social practices, or broadly consider their cultural and historical contexts. . . . Most communication scholars, for example, consider *qualitative research* to be the broadest and most inclusive term for these phenomena.[2]

Others have argued that "[q]ualitative data take the form of words rather than numbers. Qualitative data are analyzed and presented in the form of case studies, critiques, and sometimes verbal reports. . . . Qualitative data are analyzed most often by rhetorical critics and ethnographers."[3]

Interpretative Research or Interpretivist Epistemology

Hafren has provided a set of terms for characterizing **interpretative or interpretivist research** in contrast to terms used to characterize positivist/empirical research (Figure A.1).[4]

Ethnographic Research

Ethnographic research "is used to study people's behavior in specific, natural settings. Ethnographers try to capture as fully as possible, and from the research participant's perspective, the ways that people use symbols within specific contexts."[5]

Field Research

Academic/Scholarly Definition: "As the name implies, [**field research** is] like [an experiment] in terms of researcher control over the manipulation of independent variables and random assignment of participants. However, the research environment is

FIGURE A.1

Interpretative/ Phenomenological and Positivist/Empirical Research Revision Checklist

	Interpretative	Positivist/Empirical
Key Terms	Phenomenology	Data
	Quality	Statistics
	Meaning	Positivist
	Process	Empirical
Thrust of Research	Feelings	Numbers
Methods	Unstructured interview	Questionnaire
	Observations	Measurements
Readability	Great fun	With a calculator
Scale of Work	Small scale	Lots of people
Ease of Research	One person	Team, big computer or secondary data
Fashionability	High among sociologists	Lower generally among experts
Validity	So-so, depends on your topic, but supplements positivist work.	Overestimated.
Reliability	Easy to cheat and select data.	Overestimated if you believe the nature of society is to change.
Perspective	Interactional.	Post-Durkheim and in the British tradition.
Problems to Consider	• Time factor. • Making notes. • Ethics. • Ease with which subjects can manipulate the image they project. • Possibility of becoming involved in criminal or deviant acts.	• Cost of research. • Time factor. • Possibility of creating 'leading' questions. • Reliability of responses. • Have the correct questions been asked? • Interpreting statistics is a specialized field. • People can read too much into results.

realistic and natural. Participants are not asked to come to a laboratory environment that is used exclusively for experimentation. Rather, the research is conducted in environments with which participants already are familiar."[6] As Frey, Botan, Friedman, and Kreps have aptly noted, "A *field experiment* is an experiment conducted in a natural setting."[7]

Vernacular Definition: In everyday use (not literary, cultured, or foreign uses), as reflected in dictionary definitions, the word "field" is not associated with experiments, manipulations of independent variables, or laboratory environments. For example, a "field test" is conducted "in a natural environment" to determine utility and acceptability. "Field work" involves "firsthand observation" and interviewing "subjects in the field."[8] Indeed, the notion of a "field trip" suggests a "visit made by students and usually a teacher" out of the academic or scholarly environment and into a situation that allows "firsthand observations" of events as they naturally occur.[9] Within this context, several academic and scholarly publications view field studies as "artistic," an "artistic challenge" to "preserve, convey, and celebrate" the "complexity" of the field "even to the point of messing science up the way humans seem capable of doing."[10]

Field Research as Both Participant and Nonparticipant: Douglas[11] has argued that there are two types of field research, one very consistent with the academic/scholarly definition and one with the vernacular definition. At the same time, Douglas argues that each type employs different data-gathering techniques. The participant field research approach employs depth-probe field research, investigative reporting, detective work, covert field research, overt journalism and police work, and overt field research. The nonparticipant field research approach employs discussion (free-flowing), in-depth interviews, and in-depth interviews with flexible checklists of questions.

Action or Applied Research

Action or applied research is "conducted for the purpose of solving a particular 'real-world,' socially relevant problem." Action or applied researchers "start with a perceived problem and conduct a study to solve it."[12]

FIVE COMMONLY SHARED CHARACTERISTICS OF ALL FORMS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The forms of qualitative research discussed in the previous section employ distinct approaches. However, they all share certain commonalities—natural settings, researcher as participant, subject-based communication, subject intentionality, and pragmatism.

Natural Setting

Investigation and data collection are conducted in a geographic location, at a time, and with a set of rituals determined, if not controlled, by the subjects. The environment is

not, and was never intended, for the investigation and data collection. Some argue that a simulation of a natural setting can be equivalent to and control symbol-using in the same way that a natural setting does.

Researcher as Participant

The researcher is perceived by the subjects as a participant in some significant way. While the investigator may be known as a researcher, his or her verbal and nonverbal actions are not perceived as stemming from the role of researcher.

Subject-Based Communication

The subjects are allowed to identify and determine topics of communication, provide transitions from one topic to another, and supply any qualifiers they see fit. The researcher's objectives and research questions do not generate and guide the communication topics, transitions, and qualifiers of the subjects.

Subject Intentionality

The researcher seeks to capture and preserve the communication and symbol-using of subjects as the subjects understand and intend them.

Pragmatism

The specific results obtained have immediate utility and/or produce direct and instant insight into ongoing social processes and outcomes. In other words, the research analysis resolves an existing social problem. However, it may or may not contribute to theory development.

SIGNIFICANT AND UNIQUE RESEARCH GOALS, QUESTIONS, AND ISSUES GUIDING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

In their work on human communication theory and research, Robert Heath and Jennings Bryant argue that "[t]he word *theory* refers to the process of observing and speculating."[13] They further explain that "[a] theory is a systematic and plausible set of generalizations that explain some observable phenomena by linking concepts (constructs and variables) in terms of an organizing principle that is internally consistent."[14]

Heath and Bryant's notion of theory has important implications for the area of qualitative research. The initial part of their definition includes "process" and appears at first glance to be open to interpretation. The second portion of their definition, however, makes certain assumptions regarding what this process ought to yield. First, it presupposes that full "explanation" is possible. Second, it presupposes that "internal consistency" inheres in all instances of the phenomena being observed. Third, "observable" suggests distance, or being apart, from that which is being observed.

Theory-building has been the abiding sine qua non (without which it could not be) of research. How we get at developing and generating theory, however, has been questioned and transformed, and this transformation is the focus of this section. Within the field of communication as well as other disciplines, quantitative research has been long regarded as the predominant methodology to test and to generate theories. Qualitative research has been viewed more as a precursor to rigorous (read quantitative) measures; it was seen as providing primarily impressionistic and unsystematic descriptions that produced mostly case studies with limited value. With the 1967 publication of their path-breaking *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, however, sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss challenged these assumptions about qualitative research and provided an approach to field research that effectively unseeded the quantitative paradigm as the only legitimate approach.[15] In the process, they situated field research as an "endeavor in its own right."[16]

What is grounded theory? Essentially, **grounded theory** suggests that theory emerges inductively from the data—that is, "from the ground up." This contrasts with the traditional inquiry characteristic of quantitative research, which posits a deductive approach (one begins with a theory and then tests or examines it). However, even grounded research theorists hold divergent views regarding the process and goal this type of research ought to produce.

In her chapter on grounded theory, Kathy Charmaz explains how qualitative researchers (including Glaser and Strauss as well as subsequent adherents) came to embrace different approaches regarding the researcher's role and the goal of grounded theory research.[17] The traditional view follows the "objectivist" perspective (also identified as a "positivist" lens). The more recent perspective has been called the "constructivist" perspective (also identified as an "interpretive" lens). Figure A.2, "Objectivist and Constructivist Approaches to Qualitative Research," summarizes some of these differences.

The nuances reflected in Figure A.2 are profound. However, both approaches share the following six key aspects that guide grounded theory inquiry.[18]

Grounded Theory Must Be Applicable and Work

By "applicable," we mean that any findings generated from the study must connect to the actual data collected and should not be forced or superimposed by the researcher. By "work," we mean that the data collected should be both relevant and connected to the behaviors being studied. If, for example, a researcher is exploring how couples talk about dividing tasks in the home, the researcher should not assume that these couples talk or approach spending money in the same way.

Grounded Theory Is Localized

Because qualitative research focuses on how individuals communicate in their own natural environment, the researcher must be able to develop a cohesive representation

FIGURE A.2
Objectivist and Constructivist Approaches to Qualitative Research

Distinguishing Characteristics	Objectivist/Positivist Approach	Constructivist/Interpretative Approach
Conception of and Approach to *Real* World	The real world and the truths it holds are waiting to be discovered.	The world is made real through people's actions and thoughts—it emerges and does not exist in some external and readily discovered form.
Method for Analysis	The approach assumes a systematic set of methods that can lead ultimately to discovering truths about reality that will yield testable theories. *Truth*, in this context, is with a small letter t.	The approach assumes methods that are open to refinement that can illuminate how subjects construct reality; it does not presume a generalizable truth about reality. The aim is to identify the meaning people construct as they interact.
Role of Researcher	The researcher's stance is as observer, recorder, analyst of the data. The researcher stands apart from the research.	The researcher's interactions with subjects contribute to the emerging concepts and categories. The researcher functions as a participant as well as an observer. The data collected are co-constructed by the researchers and subjects studied.
Nature of Data	Rich data yields categories, ultimately categories that are privileged over experience.	Data includes the feelings and interpretations of what subjects reveal both explicitly as well as tacitly. Ultimately, it is possible that the data may remain at a more intuitive and impressionistic level.
Trustworthiness of the Findings	Reliability and validity can be achieved, allowing for the study to be replicated.	Hypotheses and concepts can be generated which other researchers can apply to similar research problems.

and explanation of the data that have emerged within a particular context at a particular moment in time. For example, a researcher talking with students of a particular ethnic group about how they experience academic support at their institution needs to consider the particular institution (location, size, reputation, etc.) as well as the political and social events within the larger society.

Grounded Theory Is Patterned

The corpus of qualitative research emerges primarily through interaction in natural environments (or field situations). The researcher therefore needs to identify the patterns that emerge from the data collected. This process is inductive because the researcher

is not conducting an experiment that controls or regulates behaviors and responses. A researcher looking at how stress is experienced in organizations, for example, might engage with a group of managers who are working for a particular company. Through a series of interviews, it may emerge that "stress" is experienced differently by different age groups, may be affected by marital status, may be experienced differently by women and men, and may be informed by ethnicity, culture, or sexual orientation. The researcher must "connect the dots," so to speak.

The Process of Grounded Theory Is Connected to Emergent Design

The naturalistic paradigm occurs in divergent settings with distinct subjects who hold multiple views on reality. Moreover, the process itself is affected by the relationship of the researcher to those in the study. The unique and idiosyncratic nature of both the context and the individuals involved therefore suggests that no single research design will be appropriate for all naturalistic inquiry.

Whereas conventional inquiry is based on the assumption that the investigator "knows what he or she doesn't know" and thus can use a defined methodology to approach the study deductively (e.g., formulate a hypothesis to be tested), naturalistic inquiry, in contrast, is rooted in the assumption that the investigator "does *not* know what he or she doesn't know." Under the latter conditions, a fully developed initial design would be suspect. Lincoln and Guba therefore suggest that in this type of research, the design must "unfold, cascade, roll, [and] emerge."[19]

Grounded Theory Design Is Refined and Negotiated

How then does a design "unfold" and "emerge"? Charmaz suggests that the power of grounded theory lies in methods that are "flexible," "heuristic," and ongoing, as opposed to formulaic.[20] Lincoln and Guba suggest the following aspects that comprise this ongoing process.[21] According to those authors, the researcher needs to engage in:

1. Continuous data analysis to review what has emerged through interviews or observations (the researcher interacts with the data rather than mapping concepts onto the data).
2. Ongoing inductive data analysis so that any questions, insights, or gaps can be identified and pursued (constant comparison between the data collected and emergent themes).
3. Checking with interviewees/subjects (e.g., through debriefing interviews) to assure an accurate representation of their thoughts, ideas, and intentions and to prevent possible misinterpretation on the part of the researcher.
4. Maintaining adequate and scrupulous records of the project (an "audit-trail").

5. Maintaining a personal journal whereby he or she can record personal insights, thoughts, and questions related to the data gathered.

6. Being open to the potentiality for "milestones"—that is, key moments that may occur unpredictably.

These aspects illustrate the process dimension of grounded theory research. Moreover, they suggest that, "indeed, tolerance of ambiguity may well be the most important personal characteristic the naturalistic investigator must possess."[22]

Grounded Theory Has Prescribed Applications

As the previously discussed aspects of grounded theory that guide qualitative research suggest, inquiry into particular individuals at a moment in time in a discrete context can provide enormous insight and understanding. It can illuminate powerfully how individuals or groups see themselves and others, make meaning of their experiences, and identify problems or issues that affect them deeply. This information, which can emerge only from the thick description obtained in the data-gathering process, can make a significant contribution in ways that are not the purview of quantitative research.

Yet it is precisely the specificity of naturalistic inquiry that gives rise to its limitation. No single study can be duplicated exactly. The people are different; the setting is not the same; changes in societal norms and values occur over time. Thus, we cannot assume that findings from a particular study can necessarily be replicated precisely with identical findings in a later study. And yet similar studies do occur. Researchers may take up anew earlier studies in different contexts and with different individuals. The experiences, problems, concerns, and feelings of individuals often do recur across time and across contexts. There are resonances of themes, patterns, expressions, and so on that suggest consistency, relevance, and understanding. And it is at these intersections of recurrence that the potential power and relevance of grounded theory in naturalistic research is revealed. When we begin to explore more formally the limits of research designs and to minimize explicitly the influence of a research design so that only the subjects' personal reactions can emerge, then we are turning our attention to the concept of reactivism as a standard for conducting research.

REACTIVISM: A RATIONALE FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

In the late 1950s, four psychologists—Sellitiz, Jahoda, Deutsch, and Cook—recognized that the act of measuring, the measurement instruments used, who is examined, and how samples are selected can influence, if not determine, the results obtained during experiments and in surveys.[23] These factors—identified as reactive effects—can raise questions about the validity and reliability of the data collected, suggesting that the results obtained stem not from the phenomena being investigated but from how the phenomena were examined.

A variety of reactive effects exist.[24] The 10 effects listed here are only illustrative; a host of additional reactive effects can be identified and demonstrated to affect experimental and survey research.

Guinea Pig Effect

If people feel they are "guinea pigs" being experimented with or that they are being "tested" and must make a good impression, or if the method of data collection suggests or stimulates an interest the subject did not previously feel, then the measurement process may be distorting the results.

Role Selection

Another way in which the respondent's awareness of the research process produces differential reaction involves not so much inaccuracy, defense, or dishonesty but rather a specialized selection from among the many "true" selves or "proper" behaviors available to any respondent.

Measurement as Change Agent

The initial measured activity introduces real changes in what is being measured. The "preamble effect" was studied by Jack Orr, who demonstrated that survey attribution affects responses to the questions asked on a survey.

Response Sets

A wide range of predetermined responses have been demonstrated, including the fact that respondents will endorse a statement more frequently than disagree with it, a response that may be personality specific. Additionally, subjects have a preference for extreme rather than moderate statements. Moreover, if allowed, subjects will start to consistently select one answer (all true) unless their pattern of response is somehow disrupted.

Interviewer Effects

The interview can contribute a substantial amount of variance to a set of findings. An interviewer who is just beginning to ask subjects questions will possess an eagerness or freshness that someone who has already been conducting interviews for hours may not. The eagerness or exhaustion of the interviewer affects how subjects respond. Likewise, for example, the degree of attractiveness of an interviewer affects subject responses.

Change in the Research Instrument

The measuring (data-gathering) instrument is frequently an interviewer who may conduct the interview in different ways at different times. For example, an interviewer may become more competent later in the interview process compared with the early stages.

Population Restrictions

Public opinion polling organizations seldom claim they have a random sample of an entire population. Many groups of people within a population are simply not available to pollsters, such as those in mental institutions, people and military forces overseas, those working unusual shifts, and so on. In addition, the time of day when a survey is conducted, the use of the telephone (unlisted numbers, the time when people are at home, etc.), and the economic level of the neighborhood (e.g., extremely poor or extremely rich neighborhoods are avoided by door-to-door interviewers) are factors.

Population Stability Over Time

The population available varies dramatically in terms of a host of factors, such as the weather (e.g., rain or snow days), seasonal layoffs, and summer or winter vacations.

Dross Rate

Investigators avoid data-collection systems that generate a high rate of irrelevant-to-relevant information.

Ability to Replicate

Although one might feel confident that the interview style and questionnaire are reproduced in a replication, several factors can restrict the ability to conduct replications. Archives and physical evidence may be restricted or destroyed.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

As you might have anticipated by this point, studying people in their natural environment may require devising a set of procedures that are particularly sensitive and appropriate to the unique kind of communication you are observing. At the same time, there are some more "standardized" methods you may wish to consider. These methods may provide some procedures that are especially useful for the task you encounter when seeking to describe and interpret, and perhaps even evaluate, the communication in natural human environments.

In this section, we examine five specific **qualitative research methods**—open-ended questions, focus groups, participant observation, unobtrusive measures, and triangulation or multiple class measurements. We believe these methods can be particularly useful in your formal research studies of human communication as well as in your everyday encounters with others.

Open-Ended Questions

As a student about to embark on a full-time career, it might be useful to explore an aspect of the interview process—specifically, what criteria, including aspects of communication, are valued for entry-level positions in those organizations to which you may apply?

Beyond visiting company websites, one way to get at these criteria—including the centrality of communication—would be to conduct interviews with actual individuals who are directly involved in the interview and hiring process at several companies.

Employing open-ended questions during the actual interview can provide you with some specific, accurate, and extremely useful information. There are a host of appropriate questions you can ask. Examples might include the following: Over the course of the year, approximately how many applicants do you interview? What criteria are used to assess the suitability of applicants? How important is each of these criteria—for example, grades, prior experience, analytic skills, oral and written skills, the ability to work in teams, to work independently, etc.)? What are some typical questions that you ask that help you get at the abilities not reflected in the resume? What behaviors, in particular, contribute to a positive assessment of an applicant? To a negative assessment?

This experience can be significant on many levels. You are able to engage in a natural setting with others. You are able to amass important information that connects with the literature on the interviewing process from firsthand interactions with those who are in the trenches making decisions on new hires. You are also able to gain important insights into what is truly valued in your career, and those qualities will facilitate acclimating to organizational life.

In these ways, we begin here with the recognition that the wording of a question can influence how a question is answered. Indeed, this brings us back to the idea of reactivism, a concept introduced earlier when we noted that how a researcher asks a question can dramatically influence the responses to that question. We also noted that when interviewing subjects, reactivism can exist in a host of ways, and efforts need to be made to reduce reactivism. For example, the wording of a question appears to make not just a difference, but a profound difference, in how subjects respond to a question. The Gallup Organization repeatedly devotes attention to issues regarding the wording of questions as an explanation for why people respond to surveys.[25] Accordingly, in face-to-face interviews, it is extremely likely that how questions are worded influences how subjects respond to questions.

DEFINITION OF AN OPEN-ENDED QUESTION

An **open-ended question** is an interrogative sentence asked of subjects in a natural setting that is designed to permit spontaneous and unguided responses and that allows subjects to offer any qualifiers, contingencies, or situational variables they see fit to provide when answering the question.

FOCAL POINTS OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

1. *Natural setting.* Especially in field research contexts, part of the context that defines an "open-ended question" is that subjects are interrogated in a personal environment. A personal environment is a situation or context of one's own creation or choice.

2. *Parasocial relationship.* The relationship between the interrogator or researcher and the subjects should permit the most open and honest of responses. Hence, the researcher should establish a parasocial relationship with the subjects before beginning the formal interrogation process. In a parasocial relationship, the subjects feel that the researcher is a "friend" who is a part of the "circle of one's peers." In this regard, the researcher seeks to "achieve an intimacy" with those who are "literally a crowd of strangers," and the subjects feel as if they know the researcher in the "same way they know their chosen friends."[26]

3. *No time and space restrictions built into the question.* In its formulation, the interrogative sentence specifies a topic area, but it should not contain any specific time or space context. Accordingly, interviewees, in order to answer the question, must provide a time and space definition when doing so. For example, when interviewing a married couple, an open-ended question might be "Of all of the millions of couples in the world, how did you two meet?"[27] Nonverbally, so that the interviewer does not direct the question to one member of the couple rather than the other, eye contact with either person should be avoided at the moment the question is asked.

4. *Subjects Feel They Can Qualify Their Answers as They Wish*: If open-ended questions are asked, subjects should feel and even report later that they were able to qualify any and all of their answers in any way they thought appropriate. In other words, the subjects should feel they are completely spontaneous and unguided when answering questions. Ignoring interruptions is one measure of spontaneous answers. In this regard, one intriguing measure of this standard is whether or not subjects ignore interrogative questions that interrupt answers they have already begun.

USES OR FUNCTIONS OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

1. Subjects say what they are thinking—they offer content they wish to provide. Focused questions elicit information that may or may not be relevant to the subjects.

2. Subjects reveal how they interact—they reveal interaction strategies as well as content. An effective use of the open-ended question should allow subjects to interact in any way they wish to when answering. They should use their own way or method for answering the question. Therefore, the researcher can focus not only on what is said, but also on how it is said. When interviewing a husband and wife couple, for example, it frequently is extremely important to note that the husband is always the first to answer an open-ended question.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

1. Dross rate is high if the researcher is interested in a particular hypothesis. In this context, dross can be understood as "wasted information," as "excessive information," or as "more information than you needed to know." Open-ended interviews allow

subjects to say whatever the subjects want to say, which will not always be relevant to what the researcher wants to know. A high dross rate means that the researcher may be wasting time and energy in terms of answering a specific hypothesis.

2. Open-ended questions allow researchers to find out what participants think as they think it. In this sense, open-ended questions reduce reactivism.

Focus Groups

During the past several decades, many academic institutions have made a concerted effort to enhance their image and reputation at the international level—that is, to establish a global presence. One way to achieve this recognition is by enhancing the visibility of international students on their campus.

Once students from other cultures arrive, academic institutions typically provide an array of orientations and events to help these students acclimate to academic and social life in the United States, particularly on campus. The goal is to facilitate their success while the students are studying here.

If you are taking a class on cross-cultural or intercultural communication, for example, you might pose the following questions: How easily do international students adapt to the education experience in the United States (particularly on your campus)? To what extent did their initial experiences and/or expectations on campus coincide with their actual experiences?

The use of **focus groups** can provide a productive approach to get at these questions. Participants can be asked to talk about how they are currently experiencing their lives as students. What are some of their positive experiences? What challenges have they faced? Do they feel that they are welcome? Do they feel that they belong? If they could suggest strategies that might have helped them along the way or that might enhance the experiences of future students from their (or other countries), what would they recommend?

Although first discussed in mass communication research in 1946 by Merton, Fiske, and Curtis, focus groups became more widely used in the 1970s and early 1980s.[28] Lunt and Livingstone explain the increasing importance of the focus group for both media and communication research:

> The resurgence of interest in the focus group interview in social science research, including media and communications, is part of the move toward qualitative methods. Researchers increasingly prefer insightful findings and ecologically valid, interpretative techniques to the more experimental, quantitative, or supposedly scientific methods and their perceived limitations. . . . The focus group has been used, variously, to discover consumer attitudes and motivations and to reveal public discourses and interpretative communities. It has also been used in a variety of theoretical contexts and with a range of methodological assumptions, providing both a source of ideas for quantitative testing and an instrument of discovery.[29]

Whereas Lunt and Livingstone's observation applies more directly to consumer attitudes and behaviors, by 1999 Berke had argued that focus groups have become increasingly important in virtually all practical settings, and particularly to determine voters' attitudes and reactions to all potential issues in political campaigns.[30]

DEFINITION OF A FOCUS GROUP

Although we might wish it otherwise, because they have been so widely used for so many different purposes, focus groups vary in conception, form, and how they are conducted. In this context, Lunt and Livingstone provide a useful initial definition of a focus group as well as note the variance that can occur when a focus group is employed:

> Briefly, the focus group method involves bringing together a group, or, more often, a series of groups, of subjects to discuss an issue in the presence of a moderator. A moderator ensures that the discussion remains on the issue at hand, while eliciting a wide range of opinions on that issue. The usual considerations for conducting open-ended interviews apply; one of the commonly expressed advantages of the method is that of speeding up sampling for one-to-one interviews. Many parameters of the group discussion can be varied, and the decisions taken by the researcher may affect significantly the resulting discussion and have implications for sampling, setting, control, validity, and reliability.[31]

At the same time, it is helpful to establish some basic guidelines for thinking about what a focus group can be. Some of these key operational features can deal with the range, specificity, depth, and personal context,[32] which can take the following forms:

1. Traditionally, a group of people is selected to determine reactions to a service and/or product. But it is important to recognize that any kind of grouping can be selected to provide precision to what is to be understood and learned. Multiple criteria (e.g., age, gender, and ethnicity) can be used to secure certain kinds of results about certain types of groups.
2. The group is aware of the advertising and marketing motives of the researchers. Paying them may increase their willingness to divulge.
3. Focus is on the group's interpretation of reality, not their judgment about the effects or influence of the service and/or product.
4. Typically, the researcher seeks the unstructured ideas (open-ended questions are employed) of group members as much as possible to find out how and why people feel as they do.
5. The conversation and dialogue of the group are also important information. In this sense, you would be asking how people arrive at conclusions and when they think they have reached agreement.

SIGNIFICANCE AND UNIQUENESS OF FOCUS GROUPS

The significance and uniqueness of focus groups emerges most clearly when compared to other research techniques such as survey questionnaires, participant observation, and content analysis.

Survey Questionnaires: The topic of a questionnaire and the prepared questions created by a researcher presume that he or she already knows what an audience thinks is relevant and significant as well as how the audience wants to respond to these questions. However, the issues that a researcher has about a given topic may not reflect the concerns that a specific audience has or cares about when it comes to the topic the researcher is exploring. While the audience may respond to the specific items on a questionnaire, the items may not reflect the specific concerns and situations the audience faces in everyday life.

Participant Observation: While participant observation may be a technique that encourages a researcher to enter the everyday environments of audience members and detect what they are reacting to, the method is time-consuming, labor is intensive, and requires access to private environments. If the researcher is to preserve the natural environment of the audience members, ethical issues may also emerge regarding full disclosure and honesty.

Content Analysis: While content may be extracted from an audience's natural environment, the analysis of such content does not explain the ideas isolated and identified, nor does a content analysis reveal how and why the frequency of ideas occur as they do.

While the significance and uniqueness of focus groups might be readily recognized, we nonetheless must also recognize that the quality of focus groups can vary dramatically. Some focus groups are far more useful than others. What makes the difference? What are some of the most decisive factors for successfully employing focus groups as a research technique?

To assure full and open participation, consider the following variables:

1. All members should feel encouraged to interact evenly and equally. The focus group should not be the platform for a few. The facilitator should let the group know "that it is acceptable—and in fact desirable—for them to disagree on issues."[33]
2. Minimize interviewer effects. The role of the interviewer is to facilitate, not control, the group. Training sessions are typically required, and at times, mock sessions are desirable. Depending on the group composition and the nature of the topic, in some instances a "facilitator of the same racial or ethnic background contributes to participants' feelings that the facilitator shares with them common experiences."[34]
3. Minimize the guinea pig effect so that participants don't feel their responses and contributions will be a reflection on them. There are no right or wrong answers.
4. Group size affects group interaction and participation. Typical focus groups include four to eight members.

5. The typical duration of focus group sessions is one to three hours.
6. The interview setting and location should be appropriate (formal/informal, on-site/off-site) to the purpose of the group. For example, a focus group with college students on alcohol abuse would not likely be productive if it were held in the dean's office.
7. Sequencing of topics and questions can facilitate the flow of interaction and responses. Generally, focus groups start with introductory remarks and move from general to specific questions.
8. Data recording (live recorders to capture the sense and meaning of the group ideas, interactions, and even the nonverbal reactions of members) is critical for the analysis and evaluation phase.
9. The focus group typically provides one dimension of several databases prior to reaching conclusions. Multiple measurements are employed.

LIMITATIONS OF FOCUS GROUPS

It is equally useful to be aware of what focus groups cannot do as a research technique. No single research technique can accomplish everything that we might want to know about human communication. Although the focus group is now one of the most frequently used and economic techniques to understand human preferences, choices and ultimately future human behavior, its limits are appropriate to identify and to anticipate when conducting such research. These limitations include:

1. The qualitative findings obtained about a specific form or type of human communication behavior may not be reflected in the quantitative results obtained through focus groups. In one sense, it is frequently difficult to get from the qualitative to the quantitative. Accordingly, a researcher may be left with the question "How significant is a group interpretation?"
2. Focus group data do not easily generate cause-to-effect relationships.
3. It is difficult to get from interpretation to policy. There is no automatic link between a focus group's interpretation and appropriate policy.
4. For the researcher, there are real and significant costs in terms of subjects' time and payment, the interviewer's time and payment, and the recorder's time and payment. Additionally, subjects can get upset at the time and energy involved in the process.
5. The profit motive and politically oriented nature of focus groups frequently preclude theoretically rich data. The data that are derived frequently serve administrative and atheoretical ends rather than research objectives.
6. As the issues involved become increasingly complex, it becomes more difficult to derive clear findings from the focus group interactions.
7 The group is the context for focus group interviews, and the issue is whether or not the service and/or product involved will subsequently exist within such a context. Are the data constrained by the context in which they were collected?

8. Focus groups are unlikely to generate reliable data. Verification may be secured if "broad interpretations" are made, but a strict sense of reliability is unlikely to be provided.

In all, while focus groups cannot do it all, they are now one of the most frequently employed and most powerful research techniques used by human communication researchers, especially for those conducting consumer preference and behavior research, those carrying out political campaigns, and those in the advertising and public relations industries. Understanding focus groups as a research technique, as well as having experience conducting focus groups, could easily become one of the most valuable skill sets you could possess.

Participant Observation

Many undergraduate students are encouraged to engage in internships, which provide immersive experiences. These internships provide students with intensive, work-related experiences in terms of the day-to-day workings of the careers they plan to enter. These field internships can also provide a learning opportunity about how communication is enacted, what is expected, and what is valued. Indeed, these experiences often provide a valuable glimpse into the students' futures.

During these internships, students may be able to observe dimensions of communication that connect directly to courses on organizational communication, interpersonal communication, conflict management, intercultural communication, gender and communication, and nonverbal communication. By maintaining a journal or log, insight into the intersections of communication with one's role, with channels of interaction, and with the overall tone or climate of the unit can be in part ascertained. Who talks to whom? What topics are discussed, both informally and formally? How is space used? How are tasks assigned? What type of work is addressed in groups? What type of work is addressed individually? What types of conflicts typically occur, and how are these conflicts addressed and/or resolved?

Examining the office environment through the lens of one of the aforementioned courses can provide an important learning experience. Students have the opportunity to connect the theories they are studying with their firsthand observations. Moreover, in the process, they can learn a great deal about themselves: their aspirations, their own values, and how they can contribute to create a product and a positive professional life in the future.

Participant observation is a frequently used method in qualitative research. And significant transformations have occurred in how this method has been conceptualized and utilized since its emergence in the nineteenth century. To get at these transformations, we first discuss this method's history and then discuss its use as a research technique.

A HISTORY OF THE METHODOLOGY OF PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Participant observation as a methodology has a long legacy. It first emerged as a technique in 1855, in a field study by anthropologist Frederick Leplay.[35] Nearly 45 years later (1918–1920), researchers William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki were the first to apply this technique in a qualitative study of social values.[36] But it was not until 1924 that the first definition of participant observers actually appeared in a publication by Edward C. Lindeman:

> For experimental purposes the cooperating observers have been called "participant observers." The term [does not imply] that the observers are participating in the activities of the group being observed. . . . There are few such persons available and those who are must be trained. Such training involves its own difficulties. Shall the participant observer be trained to look for exactly the same factors which are sought by the observer from the outside? This method would inevitably lead to error for the participant observer should be free to see many things which the outsider can never see.[37]

Lindeman's definition reveals a powerful benefit to this process—namely, that participant observation researchers are able to obtain *more* data in their dual role as participant and observer than would be possible by observation alone.

At the same time, however, we need to recognize some of the limitations that this research technique possesses. Three of these limitations are particularly noteworthy, especially when considered in their historical context:

1. Because verification of the results of participant observation studies would be more difficult to accomplish than in empirical studies, it was initially regarded as an incomplete and less rigorous approach than traditional empirical methods.
2. Because participant observation was regarded as less rigorous, it was assumed that the findings from these studies would not likely produce enduring, representative, and significant statements about motives or values.
3. Participant observation, consequently, was initially perceived predominantly as an approach capable of producing only exploratory studies. This perception continues to exist among some researchers today, and these researchers are likely to perceive participant observation itself as capable of generating only pretheoretical or speculative understandings. In this context, the results of participant observation analyses may be viewed as inherently incomplete. We reject such views, but we recognize that every research technique can possess an image or credibility based upon its earlier uses rather than how it has evolved into a more mature and competent research strategy. Accordingly, the evolution of participant observation as a research technique is particularly important to note.

Additional studies over the next several decades helped to situate participant observation as a legitimate and powerful method of research.[38] By 1940, Florence Kluckhohn provided what is considered "the original and now somewhat classic statement" on participant observation. She defined the process as follows:

> Participant observation is conscious and systematic sharing, in so far as circumstances permit, in the life-activities and, on occasion, in the interests and affects of a group of persons. Its purpose is to obtain data about behavior through direct contact and in terms of specific situations in which the distortion that results from the investigator's being an outside agent is reduced to a minimum.[39]

Importantly, Kluckhohn contended that less distortion is likely to occur when the researcher acts in the dual role of observer and participant. This addressed the concern of incompleteness mentioned earlier, especially as other studies began to emerge and illustrate the dual role of the researcher as both participant and observer throughout the 1940s and 1950s.[40]

In 1955, Morris S. Schwartz and Charlotte Green Schwartz addressed methodology of participant observation studies and included registering, interpreting, and recording of the data as part of the process.[41] Howard Becker, in 1958, argued for sufficiency— that is, if the participant observer can vary the number and length of situations that he or she is in, then that observer can begin to assert that the data collected are enduring, are representative, and can provide significant insight.[42] These contributions speak to the previously mentioned concerns about rigor and significance.

The importance of participant observation as a complete method was achieved, finally, in the 1960s. Berreman suggested that varying the number of kinds of situations the researcher is in can produce sufficient data to address concerns of validity and replication.[43] Gans focused on ethical questions and the process of note-taking.[44] But most significantly, Herbert Blumer's work on symbolic interactionism provided a new definition of participant observation based on its purpose, not its unique characteristics—that is, to capture the frame of reference of the people being examined in order to understand their meanings, values, and communicate those motives to outsiders.[45] Blumer shifted the lens slightly, but this shift is significant. It moves the lens of participant observation away from what the researcher can achieve and how the researcher can function in this dual role, and it places the spotlight and emphasis on the meaning-making process of the individuals (the subjects) themselves. In 1966, Bruyn offered a complete analysis of participant observation as a complete method for studying human action.[46]

USE OF PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION AS A RESEARCH TECHNIQUE

By the 1960s, participant observation had come to be regarded as a complete method. With that in mind, we turn now to its application as a research technique in "natural" or everyday communication environments.

"NATURAL" OR EVERYDAY COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENTS Several research methods are available whenever we wish to understand how people communicate and with what effects. Traditionally, social scientists have maintained that the most reliable and valid way of studying communication is in a controlled environment, ideally a laboratory specifically designed to hold all variables equal except the one variable being studied. The variable being studied, it has been maintained, could be altered in different ways, and any audience responses and changes in an audience response should then be due to the way in which the variable was manipulated. Such studies are designed to tell us, as clearly as possible, how a particular variable functions under different conditions. The laboratory design is also intended to allow a researcher to isolate a specific cause for a particular outcome. In all, this approach has been employed to study multiple variables in the communication process.

The controlled environment approach has been lauded in several ways. Some have maintained that the approach is "objective" in the sense that the systematic nature of the experimental conditions precludes personal intuitive inferences. Indeed, some have maintained that the experimental and behavioral emphasis of the laboratory may preclude personal and intuitive inferences.

Others, however, have questioned whether we really understand the communication process if we ignore our personal and intuitive impulses as researchers or if it is even possible to exclude such impulses in the design and execution of a laboratory study. Such questioning is not intended to deny the significance of laboratory studies, for such experiments have introduced a sense of logical rigor, predictiveness, provocativeness, manageability, and comprehensiveness into the study of communication. Yet those who have questioned the use of laboratory experiments have asked whether or not a second approach cannot also be used to study human communication.

"NATURALISTIC" AS AN ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH STRATEGY The second approach might complement the kind of reasoning that controls the experimental-behavioral approach to the study of communication. This alternative approach suggests that it might also be valuable to study human communication in the "natural" or everyday environments where most human communication occurs. Indeed, some evidence indicates that the research environment employed to study communication makes a difference in what kinds of results are obtained.

An extended example is instructive. In 1955, researchers Gump and Sutton-Smith investigated the reactions of poorly skilled players when they were put in more or less difficult game positions or roles.[47] For example, in the game of tag, the "It" position is more demanding than other roles. As children played the game experimentally, an It in the center of a rectangular playing field attempts to tag opponents who run to and from "safe" areas at each end of the rectangle. One variant of the game gives high power to the It position by permitting the child in that position to "call the turn" when runners may

attempt to cross from one safe position to another. Another variant gives low power to the It by permitting players to run whenever they choose. Slow runners were assigned to high-power It positions during one phase of the experiment and to low-power It positions during another. The hypothesis—that poorly skilled boys would be more successful in high-power than in low-power It positions, and that scapegoating of these inept boys would be less frequent in the high- than in the lower-power positions—were unequivocally confirmed.

In contrast, some five years later, in 1961, researchers Gump and Kounin also observed boys in natural rather than experimental situations (gyms, playgrounds, and campuses) and obtained the following impressions: "(a) Poorly skilled boys do not often get involved in games they cannot manage; (b) if they do get involved, they often manage to avoid difficult roles by not trying to win such a position or by quitting if they cannot avoid it; and (c) if they occupy the role and are having trouble, the game often gets so boring to opponents that these opponents let themselves get caught in order to put the game back on a more zestful level."[48]

These two studies provide us with very different conceptions of the ways in which adolescent boys interact and what we can expect from boys of different skill levels. The 1955 study could certainly lead us to believe that poorly skilled boys can be successful in high-power positions and will not be scapegoated for their lack of skills if the proper conditions are created. Such a study might then encourage some to create high status expectations for boys with poor skills in a given area, and any failure that results would be attributed to environmental conditions. In this case, a realistic assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the boys is likely to be slighted. In the 1960 study, however, we are more likely to recognize that human dynamics will encourage highly skilled boys to participate in those activities in which they might also be successful. We may not find the philosophy implied in either study especially desirable, but the overall point being made here is that experimental studies may suggest a perspective quite different from that created by a study of communication in natural or everyday settings.

DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF EVERYDAY COMMUNICATION A central key to one way of understanding participant observation is to examine the unique object of study that focuses and directs the attention of researchers who function as participant observers. That unique object of study is what we call everyday communication.[49] The study of natural or everyday communication typically involves: (1) an attempt to capture or identify the central symbols of a community as they are conceived, used, and intended by the members of that community; (2) the collection of data in settings created and maintained by the community being studied; (3) a researcher functioning as both a participant in and observer of the ongoing activities of the community being studied; and (4) the attempt to minimize reactivism.[50]

THE DUAL ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER Everyday communication can be studied in any number of ways. As the term suggests, a researcher who employs participant observation as a method for studying everyday communication adopts two roles simultaneously in order to obtain data regarding a particular community of subjects. The researcher enters the community to be studied, assumes roles specified by members of the community, and in this sense is a participant in the community. However, the researcher also adopts a second role of observer and systematically records interactions in a community, the concepts employed in a community, and the rules and norms used by members of the community. In most studies, the researcher adopts the role of participant only to obtain data regarding the community. Also in most studies, the researcher does not tell members of the community that he or she is functioning as an observer and is engaged in the study of communication. Although there are certainly ethical issues that should be considered, the impression members of the community are to be left with is that the researcher is only a participant in their community.

COMPARING PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION AND EXPERIMENTAL OBSERVATIONS

The early conceptions and modifications of participant observation—examined previously—provide a foundation for attempting to clarify the role and function of the researcher who employs participant observation as a research method. One way of specifying the role and function of the participant observer is to emphasize the ways in which these researchers observe the object of their study compared to the observational concerns of the experimental behavioralist in a laboratory setting. Figure A.3 lists some of these differences.[51]

FIGURE A.3
Observational Concerns of the Participant Observer and the Laboratory Experimentalist

Observational Concerns of the Participant Observer	Observational Concerns of the Laboratory Experimentalist
1. Investigate particular phenomena without definitive preconceptions of their nature.	1. Investigate particular phenomena with definitive preconceptions of their nature.
2. Observe in phenomena that which appears immediately to consciousness.	2. Observe in phenomena that which immediately appears to the senses.
3. Look for similarities in phenomena as given to consciousness; distinguish their essences and essential relations intuitively.	3. Look for similarities and differences between what is observed and what is operationally defined; distinguish their correlations statistically.
4. Explore how the phenomena constitute themselves in consciousness while continuing to suspend prior conceptions of their nature.	4. Explore how the phenomena constitute themselves in reason relative to social typologies.
5. Examine what concealed meanings may be discovered through the application of ontological conceptions [or socially created understandings] of reality.	5. Examine what concealed meanings may be discovered through the application of theoretical conceptions of social action.

Criteria for Judging the Data of the Participant Observer	Criteria for Judging the Data of the Laboratory Experimentalist
1. TIME: How long has the observer participated in the setting?	1. Does the observer relate his or her interpretations to empirical fact and structural theory?
2. PLACE: Where has the observer participated in the physical setting?	2. Does the observer relate his or her study to other culturally associated contexts?
3. CIRCUMSTANCES: In what social groups and social roles has he participated?	3. Does the observer manifest a lack of definition in his or her reporting and sufficient distance from his or her subjects?
4. LANGUAGE: How well does the observer know the language?	4. Does the observer manifest illustrativeness and an objective style in his or her description?
5. INTIMACY: In what private social arrangements does the observer participate?	
6. CONSENSUS: How does the observer confirm what meanings he or she finds existing in the culture?	

FIGURE A.4
Criteria for Judging the Data of the Participant Observer and Laboratory Experimentalist

These observational concerns of the participant observer and the laboratory experimentalist also generate a set of criteria that can be used to determine how meaningful the reported data are. Again, we can contrast the criteria that are of concern to the participant observer and those that are of concern to the experimental behavioralist in order to highlight the nature of participant observation. Figure A.4 provides a summary of this comparison.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION DATA

These criteria for judging the data of the participant observer suggest several directions and guidelines for how a participant observation study should be carried out.

1. *Time.* Record the different temporal phases of data gathering that the observer experiences in becoming a natural part of the culture studied. We assume that the longer the participant observer remains in the social setting, the more knowledgeable he or she becomes about the people. We might even anticipate that as the observer studies a culture, the role occupied by the researcher may change from (a) newcomer, to (b) provisional member, to (c) categorical member, to (d) personalized member (rapport), and finally to (e) imminent migrant. Each of these roles carries its own perspective of what a cultural reality is, and correspondingly, by examining and reporting these time differentials carefully, the researcher may avoid gathering data that can easily be misinterpreted.

2. *Place.* Record the experience that people have with their physical environment. The personal relationships that people acquire in the context of their environment is a basic part of the record of the participant observer. In this regard, the

researcher should appropriately recognize that at least three different levels of "experience-environment" conditions may exist: (a) the cultural experience of the subjects with their environments, (b) the experience of the observer with the environment, and (c) the conceptualization the observer makes of the cultural interpretation of the subject's contacts with the physical world.

3. *Social circumstance.* Record the experiences of people under contrasting social circumstances. Inaccurate interpretations have been avoided and excellent insights added by researchers who have observed their subjects in contrasting social circumstances and environments. Therefore, it is crucial for the observer to record what social position he or she occupies in the culture studied and what images others develop of him or her as he or she functions in this position. In most cases, a team approach becomes the best way to deal with the subtle problems of securing data on a large, complex social system; the observer cannot assume all roles significant to the study simultaneously. However, it is possible in some cases to develop a generalized role that allows equal access to different portions of the population studied.

4. *Language.* Record the experience of learning the symbolic forms of language that bear upon the social meanings under study. The term *language* is considered here in its broadest sense: as representing all those forms of communication that enter significantly into the lives of the people studied. The observer is interested in the part that language plays in forming the meanings under investigation. As the participant observer becomes personally involved in the language of the culture studied, his or her own behavior changes accordingly. It then becomes very important to record these changes because they influence understanding of the culture. The observer should make a list of specific kinds of language/linguistic forms and factors that bear upon the interpretation of the subjects. The researcher may need to examine such matters as the length of sentences, the average number of syllables in words expressed, the words most often repeated, the concepts or ideas that do and do not dominate conversations, the degree to which unique or insider interpretations are used, favorite slang expression, and so forth.

5. *Intimacy.* Record how the observer experiences and encounters social openings and barriers in seeking accurate interpretations of privately held social meanings. Every formal structure has both a private and a public aspect. Erving Goffman described some of the sociological features of formal structures as constituting "back regions" to which access is difficult for outsiders.[52] Officials (who may not have formal titles at all) in such situations are preoccupied with what Goffman called "impression management,"[53] and consequently, any invasion into what lies behind the scenes could be hazardous. It becomes important then for the observer to record the objective barriers that he or she finds between group communication in the settings studied and the different ways that he or she was able or unable to overcome them.

6. *Consensus.* Record how social meanings are confirmed in the context of the culture studied. Interpretations are often offered by researchers from a theoretical orientation rather than being a serious effort at confirming the original meaning in a culture. Confirmation of general social meanings is achieved when the researcher can observe repeated instances of expressed meanings over a period of time in different settings. The researcher may achieve a direct confirmation of specific meanings through consultation with those studied. In all cases, the researcher should (a) document the specific circumstances under which the meanings were confirmed, (b) indicate the number of people who confirm them, (c) describe the way in which they were confirmed, and (d) record the period of time in which the observations were made.

VERIFYING PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION DATA

After the criteria for collecting and judging data collected through participant observation are satisfied, the researcher may also wish to employ some standards for assessing and evaluating the quality of the data that have been collected. Figure A.5 summarizes six guidelines that can be employed for this purpose.[54]

| Dimensions of Data | *Categories of Data Collected* | | |
	Cognition (How is the meaning made intelligible?)	Cathexis (What quality of feeling is associated with the meaning?)	Conduct (What kind of social action accompanies the meaning? How many people are involved?)
Time	How long has the meaning been intelligible?	How long has the sentiment been associated and does time change it?	How long have how many people participated?
Place	Is it cognitively associated with the environs? How?	Is the sentiment associated with the environs? How?	In what place do how many people act accordingly?
Circumstances	Is it associated with social roles and groups? How?	Is it felt differently in different roles and events?	How do people act in different groups?
Language	How is the meaning communicated?	How is the sentiment communicated?	How is it conveyed in action? (In sound or ritual?)
Intimacy	Is it expressed in private? How is it conveyed intelligibly?	How is it experienced privately?	How do people behave behind the scenes?
Consensus	How is it confirmed?	How is the sentiment confirmed?	How do people show agreement in action?

FIGURE A.5
Categories for Verifying Participant Observation Data

OVERVIEW OF THE MAJOR FEATURES OF PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

In the briefest fashion, Figure A.6 illustrates and summarizes some of the major phases of participant observation.[55]

Unobtrusive Measures[57]

Beyond participant observation, an entire group or class of far less popular research strategies and measures have been created that are intended to allow a researcher to collect data in the natural settings of people without disrupting everyday communication. No one of these research techniques can be used in isolation to generate data that can be independently relied upon as a complete or valid conception of human communication. Yet these techniques possess tremendous heuristic value. They can encourage researchers to think about the study of human communication in more subtle and intriguing ways, ways that may reveal how people communicate when they are being studied. For our purposes, **unobtrusive measures** include physical trace analysis, running archive analysis, episodic and private record archives, simple observation, and contrived observations. Figure A.7 provides a convenient summary for each of these techniques.

At the same time, each of these unobtrusive measures can vary from one research situation to another. Additionally, a researcher might profitably presume that every unobtrusive measure is capable of undergoing a major transformation. For example, some of these measures, such as contrived observation, are particularly susceptible to changes in technological development. In this context, it may be especially useful to know what people look at when they watch a television or computer screen. One can easily imagine, for example, that advertisers want to know if viewers are actually looking at their product or service's brand name when they watch television or computer ads. In this regard, eye-tracking devices have been employed to make such a determination, for the movement of the eyeball itself can be tracked. While these eye-tracking mechanisms were for years extremely awkward for subjects to wear, they have become increasingly unobtrusive. Indeed, eye-tracking systems today can even be employed without subjects even knowing that the systems are being used.[58] In all, developments—of all kinds—in any of these unobtrusive measures can change if and how these measures might be employed in a research endeavor.

Overall, from our perspective, we think an examination of these techniques might encourage you to consider unusual and novel ways of examining human beings as they communicate in their natural environments.

Triangulation or Multiple Class Measurements

In the earlier section on participant observation, the internship was examined as a vehicle for connecting communication research to one's field experience. Recording one's experiences and observations through a journal or log produces one kind of

I. *Aim*: To discover, describe, and explain the culture of the people encountered in the study

II. *Method*: A. Discovery—
- To experience events that are important to the participants and realize how they interpret them.
- To imaginatively take the role of participants in the process of experiencing events through social action.

B. Description—
- To record the way events are interpreted by participants.
- To record the interpretations (meanings) of participants in eventful social action.

C. Explanation—
- To reveal how these events and meanings exhibit a cultural character as in themes and values.
- To reveal how this cultural character exhibits a configuration in action.
- To reveal how this configuration exhibits analytical character (having reference to other cases) in categories and theories of people in society.

III. *Procedures*: A. Journal Record—
1. Describe the way (process) in which events are interpreted by participants.
2. Describe the interpretations (meanings) themselves. Include intersubjective interpretations (collective meanings).
3. Describe how the interpretations of participants and the observer compare within the context of time, place, circumstance, language, intimacy, and consensus.

B. Analysis (examples are drawn from the study of the culture of a mental hospital)[56]—
1. List categories representing significant areas of interpretations (meanings):
   a. Patient subculture.
   b. Professional subculture.
   c. Employees' subculture.
      (1) Patient-doctor contacts.
      (2) Controlling patient behavior.
      (3) Defining circumstances requiring punishment.
      (4) Carrying on ward routine with minimum effort.
2. Describe how interpretations exhibit a cultural character:
   a. *Hierarchy of values* in "patient subculture":
      (1) Going home.
      (2) Residence in certain wards.
      (3) Attention of doctors.
      (4) Preference for certain jobs in hospital:
         (a) Kitchen and dining jobs in hospital.
         (b) Jobs contributing toward discharge, etc.
   b. *Themes* in "professional subculture":
      (1) "All patients must be classified in two weeks."
      (2) "All patients must work inside the institution."
3. Describe the total configuration in action:
   a. The *formal* design of how the subculture and the organizations expressing them are an interrelated network of life-works and activities.
   b. The *dynamics* of the design as in professional and employee cultures conflicting in their separate orientations toward the patient; the professional orientation involves diagnostic treatment and release while the employees' orientation involves punishment and control of patients.
4. Describe the relationship of the design to analytical categories and theory:
   a. An appropriate analytical category having reference to the configuration would be *bureaucracy*; another analytical category having reference to the data would be *norms*.
   b. A general theory would be structural-functionalism; some of the explanatory elements of this theory would include the functional requirements for the survival of bureaucratic organizations in general (with specific reference in this case to psychiatric hospitals) and the general processes of institutionalization in society.

FIGURE A.6
Overview of the Major Features of Participant Observation: Aims, Methods, and Procedures

Type of Unobtrusive Measure	Definition	Example
Physical Trace Analysis: Erosion and Accretion	Physical trace analysis involves the observation and assessment of "the degree of selective wear on some material yields the measure" (erosion) or "deposit of materials" (accretion) are measures of "past social behavior" (pp. 35–36). Because physical traces can be "a patently weak source of data" when used as a single measure, "physical evidence has greatest utility in consort with other methodological approaches" (p. 36).	* Vinyl tile replacements around different exhibits in a museum as a measure of the popularity of each exhibit (pp. 36–37). * Popularity of books by the number of times each is checked out in a library. * Wear and tear on specific pages of a book as a measure of the popularity of the sections or portions of a book.
Archive Analysis: The Running Archive	Running archive analysis involves the "examination and evaluation of some uses of data periodically produced for other than scholarly purposes, but which can be exploited by social scientists" (p. 53). In this sense, the records collected and maintained in virtually all literate cultures could provide a measure of how social practices and preferences vary from one community or society to another. Webb and his colleagues reasoned that, "Besides the low cost of acquiring a massive amount of pertinent data, one common advantage of archival material is its nonreactivity" (p. 53).	* Birth, marriage, and death records each constitute an example of a running archive. * Middleton (p. 58) proposed that the increase or decline of the number of children portrayed in families in magazine advertisements reflects preferred family sizes. * Reasoning that people might readily lie about it, Christensen (p. 59) suggested that a comparison of the dates of all marriages and the dates of all firstborn children could provide a measure of premarital sex within different communities.
Archive Analysis: Episodic and Private Archives	Episodic and private archive analysis involves the use and assessment of "discontinuous" materials preserved over time which are normally not part of the "public record" (p. 88). For example, the military maintains long-term archives that are normally not available to the public. Similar kinds of episodic and private records can exist in various sales records, particularly of items that people may not wish to discuss (e.g., drugs and alcohol). Correspondingly, vending machine sales might be examined and various measures employed to isolate a host of different social reactions to different kinds of stimuli (e.g., stress, package appeal, etc.).	* Using Air Force records, Lodge determined that pilots over 6 feet tall had more accidents. The finding encouraged the Air Force to reconsider cockpit designs and visual angles of the instrument panel (p. 89). * Brown suggested that liquid soap usage in restrooms could be a measure of cleanliness in different restaurants (p. 89). * Hillebrandt argued that the sale of alcoholic drinks at Chicago airports could be used as a measure of "passenger anxiety produced by air crashes" (p. 90). * Chesebro systematically measured graffiti markings differences throughout the city of Philadelphia as a measure of racial and poverty disengagement and discrimination.[59]
Simple Observation	As a research technique, simple observation involves the examination in "situations in which the observer has no control over the behavior or sign in question, and plays an unobserved, passive, and nonintrusive role in the research situation" (p. 112). A host of factors are involved in designing simple observation studies, and controversies certainly exist in these studies. For example, regarding the issue of whether or not observers should be obvious or not, Arsenian has argued that "patently visible observers can produce changes in behavior that diminish the validity of comparisons," although Polansky has disagreed, while Deutsch has argued that the effect of observers "may erode over time" (p. 113).	* In one sense, all participant observation studies might be considered as examples of research involving the use of simple observation (p. 114). * Maintaining that it is a measure of anxiety, Conrad has argued that the length of a bullfighter's beard is longer on the day of the fight than any other day, although—as you might anticipate—the validity of that measure has been contested (pp. 115–116). * Reflecting how societies change, Burma reported in 1959 that tattoos were an indication of juvenile delinquency (p. 116). By contrast, tattoos today might be viewed as a measure of modest social protests for some, but a form of body art, beauty, and expression for others.

FIGURE A.7
Unobtrusive Measures[60]

FIGURE A.7 *Continued*

Contrived Observation	Contrived observation involves the study of human reactions when investigators intentionally intervene into the "observational setting." Recasting the "observational setting" into more of a laboratory condition, depending on the nature of the intervention, the observations following the intervention are best viewed as contrived observations. Various recording hardware or conspicuous observers can be employed as the stimuli for contrived observation.	* Marking a shift from private to public behavior, virtually all people shift and adapt their behaviors when they are asked to "speak clearly into the microphone, please" (p. 142). * Different ethnic groups might be compared by examining the degree to which they use slang within intracultural settings compared to language use in cross-cultural settings (p. 143). * At news stands, men are less likely to examine "sexy" magazines if women (research confederates) are present. * People are more likely to sign a petition if the person (research confederates who are systematically changed) collecting signatures is perceived as more attractive or handsome (pp. 155–164).

information. However, these recordings are decidedly one-sided—that is, they are viewed through the lens of the intern who is doing the observing. By introducing an additional dimension into the data-gathering process, initial observations may be confirmed, deepened, or challenged; additional aspects of the work–life experience may be generated as well.

On one level, we are only recognizing and drawing attention to what virtually everyone comes to know in everyday life and especially in an employment environment—namely, you need to consider the inputs and understandings of others if you are to be successful. Accordingly, in an employment environment, selected interviews with other employees in a unit can augment the data gathered during the observation stage. Open-ended questions as well as some specifically focused questions can be used: How long has the person been with the company? How long has the person been in the specific field? What changes has he or she observed in how business is conducted? What has influenced this change? What aspects of the person's work does he or she find especially rewarding or engaging? Has the person encountered challenges, and if so, how does he or she deal with them? What metaphors would the person use to describe the work and the organizational climate (e.g., family, balanced, pressure-cooker, or 24/7), and what specifically contributes to this view?

By supplementing the initial observations with detailed responses of organizational members, the opportunity to gain invaluable insight can occur. Importantly, points of confirmation (of initial observations) may be supported. Points where observations are not supported (i.e., the observer reads some interactions as disruptive, whereas the interactants view the disruptions as a welcome respite from the job pressures) can also emerge in the process.

One final qualitative research method we consider here may well be the most important, but it must be considered last in our survey. We consider triangulation or the use of multiple class measurements as a research technique because we are convinced that new insights and new understandings about human communication can be generated by their use.

DEFINING TRIANGULATION OR MULTIPLE CLASS MEASUREMENTS

As concepts, the terms **triangulation** or **multiple class measurements** underscore an important objective for researchers: they suggest that a researcher will attempt to combine extremely different findings or results to provide new and more coherent understandings of a human communication experience or event. In particular, triangulation or the use of multiple measurement classes means that a researcher generates new descriptions, interpretations, explanations, and even predictions about human communication from several different kinds of research findings. These different kinds of data-collection procedures are employed to generate different kinds of data about human communication that ultimately reflect different perspectives. More precisely, Frey, Botan, Friedman, and Kreps have aptly defined triangulation as the "use of multiple methodologies and/or techniques to study a phenomenon."[61]

RATIONALE FOR TRIANGULATION OR MULTIPLE CLASS MEASUREMENTS

Arguing for the use of multiple measurement classes or different kinds of research findings, Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, and Sechrest begin with the proposition that "no single measurement class is perfect" and "neither is any scientifically useful." They specifically argue that a hypothesis should be a question that is answered only with a "series of complementary methods of testing," which provides a "degree of validity unattainable by one tested within the more constricted framework of a single method."

Needless to say, those who are "method bound" may find such analyses problematic, but we are convinced that virtually every communication situation can be more comprehensively and coherently understood by employing, as Webb et al. put it, "multiple operationalism." In this regard, Webb et al. aptly conclude: "It is through triangulation of data procured from different measurement classes that the investigator can most effectively strip of plausibility rival explanations." Accordingly, rather than ask "Which of the several available data-collection methods will be best for my research problem?" the researcher should ask "Which set of methods will be best?"[62]

MULTITASKING, MULTIFUNCTIONALISM, AND CONCURRENT MEDIA EXPOSURE

Beyond the research issues involved in the study of human communication, triangulation or the use of multiple class measurements now appears appropriate, if not essential, because of several transformations that are occurring in human communication. In

particular, when people communicate, our new media and technology now simultan-eously employ a diverse set of different communication channels that allows—if not encourages—people to communicate simultaneously with different people in differ-ent contexts. Identified as multitasking or multifunctionalism, this kind of communi-cation behavior is actually different in kind than other forms of multitasking, simply because of the frequency and range of technologies and tasks involved. For example, rather than being unusual behavior, it is now common for a person to be chatting on a telephone with a client while simultaneously searching for relevant information on a computer while referring to notes from a previous meeting with colleagues about this client. Even when we are relaxing at home, we may read a newspaper or magazine while simultaneously watching a television program. Or, if you are captivated by a TV program when your cell phone rings, you may continue watching television while also answering the call.

Other studies are emerging that underscore the importance of multitasking in human communication. In an intriguing field study conducted from March through early June of 2005, Holmes, Papper, Popovich, and Bloxham[63] had 150 observers follow and record the communication behavior of over 400 people all day long, "starting as soon after someone got up in the morning and would allow us . . . and continuing until as close to bedtime as the person would allow us to stay." Observers employed a "Media Collector program run on a smart keyboard" (i.e., a small, laptop-like computer running the Palm OS). This device allowed observ-ers to record the start and end times for all media activity. Their findings suggest that people routinely employ multiple media technologies simultaneously. As the authors of the report put it, "[c]onsumers may choose to combine two or more media to gratify a particular need or accomplish a task." Additionally, people are also "sub-jected to 'environmental' media content in public places." And more generally, "[i]f a medium is used frequently throughout the day, even in short episodes, it is more likely to be paired with other media," and "that medium's use will overlap with use of other media." In all, Holmes et al. coined the expression "concurrent media ex-posure" to describe this communication experience. The ambiguity of the word "exposure" seems particularly apt, for it is unclear if an individual's attention and comprehension of stimuli shift back and forth from one medium to another, if some individuals are capable of employing dual channels and processing diverse forms of different media stimuli simultaneously, or if some combination of stimuli merge to create yet another kind of apprehension, comprehension, and understanding. In this regard, after completing its survey of over 2,200 adults, the Pew Internet & Amer-ican Life Project concluded that Internet users are now "media multiplexers," and that both the number and the length of time of all of their interactions are longer and more significant than non-Internet users.[64] Similarly, Gloria Mark observed the

behavior of employees in West Coast high-tech firms for over 1,000 hours. In summarizing this study, Thompson reported:

> Each employee spends only 11 minutes on any given project before being interrupted and whisked off to do something else. What's more, each 11-minute project was itself fragmented into even shorter three-minute tasks, like answering e-mail messages, reading a webpage or working on a spreadsheet. And each time a worker was distracted from a task, it would take, on average, 25 minutes to return to that task. To perform an office job today, it seems, your attention must skip like a stone across water all day long, touching down only periodically.
>
> Yet while interruptions are annoying, Mark's study also revealed their flip side: they are often crucial to office work. Sure, the high-tech workers grumbled and moaned about disruptions, and they all claimed that they preferred to work in long, luxurious stretches. But they grudgingly admitted that many of their daily distractions were essential to their jobs. When someone forwards you an urgent e-mail message, it's often something you really do need to see; if a cell phone call breaks through while you're desperately trying to solve a problem, it might be the call that saves your hide. In the language of computer sociology, our jobs are "interrupt driven." Distractions are not just a plague on our work—sometimes they *are* our work. To be cut off from other workers is to be cut off from everything.[65]

In our view, the existence of concurrent media exposures and the emergence of multitasking suggests that triangulation and the use of multiple class measurements will increase in the 21st century. We fully expect that communication interactions will become more complex and interrelated, that human communication will increasingly become mediated by an ever-increasing number of technologies, and that the only way to handle this emerging scenario will be to combine the results of a host of different research strategies and findings.

PROMOTING TRIANGULATION OR MULTIPLE CLASS MEASUREMENTS

Specifically, as research strategies, designs, and methods evolve—as they continually do—we think it would be useful to consider the following six propositions as generative and formative in how questions of research method should be considered:

1. In entertainment, business, and even interpersonal and private arenas, human communication is becoming increasingly complex, mediated, multidimensional, multitasking, and multicontextual. Hypotheses about human communication are likely to reflect these complexities.
2. It is unlikely that a single method or type of method can respond comprehensively to all of the questions and dimensions affecting complex human communication systems.

3. Insofar as research methods seek to be isomorphic or "similar to the form or structure" of human communication in real environments,[66] different kinds of research methods will be required to deal with all of the different kinds of questions, qualities, and dimensions shaping and controlling the human communication process.

4. Qualitative research methods are becoming increasingly important when human communication processes are described by communication researchers. We think this increase is occurring in part because some of the particular research techniques associated with qualitative research—for example, simple observation[67]— are perceived by communication researchers as increasingly important.

5. One of the most important gaps to overcome is how quantitative and qualitative research methods, designs, collected data, and interpretations can be made complementary. Several existing research methodologists have already identified techniques such as collaboration as one of the most important forms of triangulation.[68]

6. Communication researchers must go beyond reliability and validity standards when finding common ground in diverse research methods. They also need to recognize that other forms of triangulation must be identified as goals for the discipline of communication. We certainly agree with Frey, Botan, Friedman, and Kreps when they argue that triangulation can provide an important means for "checking the validity of preliminary research with other findings to assess their consistency."[69]

At the same time, we think it may also be necessary to begin to attribute far more functions to triangulation. We are particularly impressed by Keyton when she recommends that multiple forms of triangulation be recognized, including data triangulation, or the use of a variety of data sources in one study; investigator triangulation, or when several different researchers or evaluators participate in the research; theory triangulation, which occurs when a research project uses multiple perspectives or multiple theories to interpret a single set of data; methodological triangulation, when the researcher uses multiple methods (quantitative and qualitative) to study a single problem; and interdisciplinary triangulation, when researchers from a variety of disciplines work together on a research project.[70]

In all, communication research and the methods employed to generate communication data constitute a dynamic and ever-changing area. We can each shape and influence that development. We would encourage you not only to employ the methods provided by qualitative researchers, but also to ask how these methods and the findings generated by them can be linked to the perspectives, theories, methods, data, and procedures of both quantitative as well as critical scholars of communication. Communication is now so complex, and increasingly growing so multidimensional and intricate, that we now require the insights, capabilities, understandings, and procedures of all people involved in the study of human communication.

ETHICAL ISSUES

As we have shown in this appendix, there are multiple paths for conducting qualitative research. Many of these paths bring the researcher and his or her subjects in close proximity for intense periods of time to talk about topics, opinions, and feelings that are highly personal and are often felt intensely. This process can engender a close bond, albeit for a limited duration and within a proscribed setting. Moreover, qualitative research can yield deep insights and unveil significant information about how subjects make meaning about their experiences, their relationships, their behaviors, and their places in the world.

Regardless of the approach used, however, it is expected that researchers will adhere to a code of ethics in conducting their work. This section presents ethical standards that have been widely adopted to guide empirical research and examines how each of these standards raises particular challenges for qualitative researchers.

In the chapter "Ethics and Politics in Qualitative Research," Clifford Christians traces transformations from the Enlightenment to today that have contributed to how empirical social science research in particular came to embrace as its goals the establishment of empirical facts and be both value-free and morally neutral.[71]

In pursuit of empirical facts, some studies used procedures that resulted in psychological or physical harm to the subjects involved. Yale psychologist Stanley Milgram's studies on obedience to authority in the late 1960s and early 1970s provide a notable example.[72] In response to these occurrences, by the 1980s professional and academic associations developed and adopted their own codes of ethics by which researchers were expected to abide. In general, four overarching guidelines are included in these ethical codes: informed consent, deception, privacy and confidentiality, and accuracy.[73]

Informed Consent

Subjects have the right to be informed about the nature and potential consequences of any study prior to agreeing to participate. Moreover, agreeing to participate must be voluntary. That is, researchers are not permitted to use any forms of coercion to secure participation. Implicit in this guideline is that researchers make themselves known to the subjects. However, as Punch observes, often the very nature of fieldwork would be compromised and undermined by informed consent: "divulging one's identity and research purpose to all and sundry—will kill many a project."[74] Thus, the degree to which adherence to the informed consent guideline would be practical and/or detrimental to both the study and the subjects needs to be assessed carefully prior to engaging in research.

Suppose you wanted to study under what conditions a person who has found cash on the sidewalk will "hand it over" to its supposed owner. There is no way that this research can be successful if the people who approach the "finder" to request the money

back have to announce they are conducting research on the return of found money. To conduct this research, the fact that research is being conducted has to be withheld.

Deception

Deliberately deceiving subjects is considered to be especially egregious. Clearly, the previously mentioned Milgram experiments had powerful consequences for many of the subjects who were persuaded by presumed legitimate authorities to administer what they thought were electric shocks to others. The resultant harm to numerous subjects in the study gave rise to this code. And yet, again, nuance is important. In many medical studies, for example, understanding the efficacy of certain medications often requires the use of placebos for comparison. The severity of potential harm caused to the subject by the deception then is both nuanced and measured against the ultimate consequences of the study.

Similarly, in qualitative studies that rely on fieldwork, observation, or in-depth cases, the extent to which the research would be compromised must be measured against the potential harm to the subjects. Two recently published works relied on changing the authors' identities in order to gain firsthand experience and insight into the topics. In sociologist Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*, the author worked a series of low-paying jobs to understand more fully how class and income impact significant members of the US culture.[75] In Norah Vincent's *Self-Made Man: One Woman's Journey into Manhood and Back Again*, the journalist–author took on the persona of a male for 18 months to understand how men think and act and to dispel long-held assumptions about the male experience.[76] Neither of these projects could have been undertaken without deception, yet in both, the value of their work was thought to outweigh the potential harm to the people who were deceived for the duration of the role-playings.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Although researchers may sometimes choose to "make themselves known" after the research data have been collected, the identities of the research subjects are always sacrosanct. According to Christians, to safeguard exposing people's identities, personal data should be concealed "and made public only behind a shield of anonymity."[77] The danger of disseminating studies despite efforts to maintain confidentiality, Christians continues, is that "[p]seudonyms and disguised locations are often recognized by insiders. What researchers consider innocent is perceived by participants as misleading or even betrayal. What appears neutral on paper is often conflictual in practice."[78]

The implications for qualitative research are especially salient. In-depth interviews conducted with students at a college, with managers at a corporation, or with patients at a clinic can produce rich and meaningful data. But while the names of the participants and the sites studied can be altered, the authors' names and affiliations are not. How such

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works will be disseminated then is critical. The majority of such studies are published within the disciplinary academic journals and are not likely to directly affect the participants. Others, however, are cross-over works intended for public consumption. Arlie Hochschild's *The Time Bind: Where Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work*, for example, situated the author in a fictitious company, Americo.[79] Her in-depth interviews with employees of a real company yielded compelling insights into how organizational life and policies are experienced across positions, how these policies are administered unevenly, and how changes in the family and home have produced a disconnect for many employees with their own families. The extent to which the participants recognize themselves and their colleagues in the book, and the potential repercussions such recognitions might have, remain unknowable to those outside the organization.

Accuracy

It is expected that the data reported should accurately reflect the findings and not be altered. "Data that are internally and externally valid are the coin of the realm, experimentally and morally" according to Christians.[80] In their work on naturalistic inquiry, Lincoln and Guba suggest that an additional major step in qualitative research includes the decision process on the part of the researcher regarding what portions and/or details of the data are included and what portions are omitted in the reporting process.[81] Such decisions reflect active choices on the part of the researcher. Consequently, the challenge is to report responsibly information that maintains the integrity of the project and omit that which—no matter how fascinating in its own right—is beyond the purview of the study.

Positionality and Meaning-Making

The four aspects of ethical codes we have discussed initially were connected to empirical studies whose foci were presumably value-free and morally neutral. By the nature of the studies, the researchers remained apart—separate from—those they were studying. Although we have suggested how aspects of qualitative research relate to these codes, the final point we raise has to do with notions of positionality and what constitutes meaning-making.

During the past few decades, there has been a growing recognition of contributions by interpretive researchers and an inclusion of the ethic of care, nurturance, empathy, and collaboration as significant (see Gilligan,[82] Steiner,[83] Wood[84]). There has been, under the rubric of "feminist communitarianism," the recognition that human identity is constituted through intersections between our places in society, by our interactions with others, by constructions of power, and by the lenses through which we see and are seen by others. These lenses are powerful, and they are informed by gender, race, culture, class, and sexual orientation as well as other influences.

Transforming the human condition is important, but acceptable transformation can occur only when multiple perspectives are given voice—that is, when those participating in studies are afforded agency in the research process. This agency is made possible by situating the researcher in a reciprocal relationship with the subject. In so doing, participants are given a powerful voice and share in identifying and articulating issues and problems that matter to them. In this way, interpretative discourse from a feminist communitarian view demands and encourages multiplicity (not precision), moral awareness (not neutrality), and transformation (not replication).

Ethics is an abiding issue in the research process. As what we understand and define as research has been transformed over time, there has been a simultaneous shift in how such inquiry comes to be proscribed and evaluated. As we have suggested in this appendix, qualitative research has assumed a key position in communication and other disciplinary research, and as it has done so, it has affected the whole question of research ethics.

CONCLUSION

In this appendix, we have focused on how people communicate in their own natural environments when they are guided by their personal objectives and when they are using communication for those pragmatic objectives that determine and control day-to-day existence. This approach has had a host of different labels, but its central and most unifying label is qualitative research. Regardless of its specific label, however, we have suggested that qualitative research examines human communication in natural settings where the researcher functions as both an observer and a participant. Within such contexts and in the role of participant observer, the researcher examines subject-based communication and is guided by the intentions and pragmatic ends of those being observed and studied. This kind of research endeavor is guided by significant and unique research goals, questions, and issues, ultimately suggesting that grounded theory can be a powerful conceptual approach to the study of human communication. In all, we are convinced that qualitative research can avoid a host of reactive issues found in more formal social scientific research methods. Toward these ends, we have suggested that any one or more of five research techniques can be employed to complete qualitative research: open-ended questions, focus groups, participant observation, unobtrusive methods, and triangulation or multiple class measurements.

Although multiple paths for conducting qualitative research exist, many of these approaches bring the researcher and his or her subjects in close proximity for intense periods of time to talk about topics, opinions, and feelings that are highly personal and are often intensely felt. Because these researcher–subject relationships

can engender an extremely close bond—albeit for limited duration and within a proscribed setting—qualitative research can yield deep insights and unveil significant information about how subjects make meaning about their experiences, their relationships, their behaviors, and their places in the world. Such relationships require that ethics guide the entire process from start to finish.

At a minimum, ethical guidelines in qualitative research should involve informed consent, avoid the use of any kind of deception, maintain the privacy and confidentiality of every individual within the study, and in particular, maintain an overwhelming commitment to accuracy when reporting all results. In all, while both social scientific and critical approaches to human communication are important, from our perspective qualitative research provides equally important and powerful ways of understanding human communication.

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GLOSSARY

Action/Applied Research: Problem solving research conducted to propose solutions for a real, socially relevant problem.

Critical Research Methods: Research where scholars challenge our assumptions and propose alternative ways of communicating while goading and encouraging us to aspire to more humane and responsible ends as communicators.

Ethnographic Research: Form of research studying people's behavior in specific, naturalistic settings, examining cultural phenomena from the point of view of a participant within the study; derived from Greek words *ethnos* (folk, people, nation, etc.) and *grapho* (I write).

Field Research: The collection of qualitative data outside a laboratory, library, or other research setting.

Focus Groups: Qualitative research method where a group of people are brought together to discuss their attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, issues, and so on with the aid of a moderator who ensures that the group remains on task while encouraging and eliciting a range of viewpoints and ideas.

Grounded Theory: Research perspective that theory emerges inductively from the data—that is, "from the ground up"—which contrasts with the traditional inquiry characteristic of quantitative research that posits a deductive approach (one begins with a theory and then tests or examines it).

Interpretive/Interpretivist Research: Research framework and practice focused on analyzing and disclosing the social construction of meaning-making practices by human actors.

Naturalistic Research: When a researcher seeks to make the research experience as much a part of the subjects' everyday environment as possible while restricting the participants' behavior has little as possible because of the researcher him- or herself or the design of the research project.

Open-Ended Question: An interrogative sentence asked of subjects in a natural setting that is designed to permit spontaneous and unguided responses and that allows subjects to offer any qualifiers, contingencies, or situational variables they see fit to provide when answering the question.

Participant Observation: A qualitative research technique that encourages a researcher to enter the everyday environments of audience members and detect what audiences are reacting to; the method is time-consuming, labor intensive, and requires access to private environments.

Qualitative Research Methods: Research that seeks to preserve and analyze the situated form, content, and experience of social action while gaining understanding of how people make sense of their own experiences and the world where they exist (often seen as the other end of the continuum of research from quantitative research).

Triangulation/Multiple Class Measurements: The use of multiple classes to underscore an important objective for researchers; a researcher will attempt to combine extremely different findings or results to provide new and more coherent understandings of a human communication experience or event.

Unobtrusive Measures: Research method where data are collected without intruding in the research context or interacting with the people the researcher is studying.

NOTES

1. Edwin P. Willems, "Planning a Rationale for Naturalistic Research" (pp. 44–71), in E. P. Willems and H. L. Raush (Eds.), *Naturalistic Viewpoints in Psychological Research* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969), p. 46.

2. Thomas R. Lindlof and Bryan C. Taylor, *Qualitative Communication Research Methods* (2nd ed.) (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002), p. 18. For an analysis of the rationale for and issues involved in qualitative research, see also Yvonna S. Lincoln and Norman K. Denzin, *Turning Points in Qualitative Research: Tying Knots in a Handkerchief* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press/A Division of Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003).

3. Lawrence R. Frey, Carl H. Botan, Paul G. Friedman, and Gary L. Kreps, *Interpreting Communication Research: A Case Study Approach* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992), p. 7.

4. See Bryn Hafren, "Empirical and Interpretative Research," at http://www.barrycomp.com/bhs/a_research.htm. We have made some adjustments to reduce the complexity of the analysis in the table and to reflect the background of the readers of this chapter.

5. Lawrence R. Frey, Carl H. Botan, Paul G. Friedman, and Gary L. Kreps, *Interpreting Communication Research: A Case Study Approach* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992), p. 7. See also Robin Patric Clair (Ed.), *Expressions of Ethnography: Novel Approaches to Qualitative Methods* (Albany: State University of New York, 2005); Arthur P. Bochner and Carolyn Ellis (Eds.), *Ethnographically Speaking: Autoethnography, Literature, and Aesthetics* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press/A Division of Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002). Often viewed as art-based research, ethnodrama is often treated as an area of analysis related to ethnographic research; see Johnny Saldana (Ed.), *Ethnodrama: An Anthology of Reality Theatre* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc., 2005).

6. Joann Keyton, *Communication Research: Asking Questions, Finding Answers* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2001), p. 161.

7. Lawrence R. Frey, Carl H. Botan, Paul G. Friedman, and Gary L. Kreps, *Interpreting Communication Research: A Case Study Approach* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992), p. 55.

8. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1981), p. 423.

9. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary Unabridged and Seven Language Dictionary* (Vol. 1) (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1986), p. 846.

10. Harry F. Wolcott, *The Art of Fieldwork* (2nd ed.) (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press/A Division of Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005). See also John VanMaanen, *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

11. Jack D. Douglas, *Investigative Social Research: Individual and Team Field Research* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1976), p. 15, provides a convenient overview of this analysis.

12. Lawrence R. Frey, Carl H. Botan, Paul G. Friedman, and Gary L. Kreps, *Interpreting Communication Research: A Case Study Approach* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992), pp. 4–5.

13. Robert L. Heath and Jennings Bryant, *Human Communication Theory and Research: Concepts, Contexts, and Challenges* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2000), p. 10.

14. Robert L. Heath and Jennings Bryant, *Human Communication Theory and Research: Concepts, Contexts, and Challenges* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2000), p. 10.

15. Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Chicago: Aldine, 1967).

16. Kathy Charmaz, "Grounded Theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods" (pp. 509–535), in Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000), esp. p. 511.

17. Kathy Charmaz, "Grounded Theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods" (pp. 509–535), in Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000), esp. p. 511.

18. For a more complete discussion of grounded theory, see Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1985).

19. Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1985), p. 209.

20. Kathy Charmaz, "Grounded Theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods" (pp. 509–535), in Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000), esp. p. 510.

21. Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1985), pp. 209–211.

22. Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1985), p. 211.

23. Claire Selltiz, Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart W. Cook, *Research Methods in Social Relations* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1959) (published for the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues). See also Donald T. Campbell, "Factors Relevant to the Validity of Experiments in Social Settings," *Psychological Bulletin, 54* (1957), pp. 297–312; Donald T. Campbell and J. C. Stanley, "Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Deigns for Research on Teaching" (pp. 171–246), in N. L. Gage (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teaching* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1963).

24. At this juncture, we are summarizing the analysis of reactivism provided in Eugene J. Webb, Donald T. Campbell, Richard D. Schwartz, and Lee Sechrest, *Unobtrusive*

Measures: Nonreactive Research in the Social Sciences (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company, 1966), pp. 12–34.

25. For example, see David W. Moore, "Issue Framing in Polls," The Gallup Organization, July 12, 2005, http://www.gallup.com/poll/content/print.aspx?ci=17296.

26. For details regarding the parasocial relationship, see Donald Horton and R. Richard Wohl, "Mass Communication and Para-Social Interactions: Observations on Intimacy at a Distance," *Psychiatry, 19* (August 1956), pp. 215–229.

27. For details on the use of this question when interviewing couples, see Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin, and Don D. Jackson, *Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies, and Paradoxes* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1967).

28. Robert King Merton, Marjorie Fiske, and Alberta Curtis, *Mass Persuasion: The Social Psychology of a War Bond Drive* (New York: Harper, 1946). In 1956, these same authors provided the first comprehensive analysis in a book entitled *The Focused Interview: A Manual of Problems and Procedures*; see Robert King Merton, Marjorie Fiske, and Patricia L. Kendall, *The Focused Interview: A Manual of Problems and Procedures* (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1956).

29. Peter Lunt and Sonia Livingstone, "Rethinking the Focus Group in Media and Communications Research," *Journal of Communication, 46* (Spring 1996), pp. 79–80.

30. Richard L. Berke, "Focus Groups Sometimes Emphasize the Trivial," *New York Times*, November 21, 1999, Section 4, page WK3.

31. Peter Lunt and Sonia Livingstone, "Rethinking the Focus Group in Media and Communications Research," *Journal of Communication, 46* (Spring 1996), p. 80.

32. For example, see R. K. Merton, M. Fiske, and A. Curtis. *The Focused Interview* (New York: Free Press, 1956). See also D. L. Morgan, *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988).

33. Esther Madriz, "Focus Groups in Feminist Research," in Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003), p. 381.

34. Esther Madriz, "Focus Groups in Feminist Research," in Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003), p. 380.

35. [Pierre Guillaume] Frederick LePlay, *Les Ouvriers des deux mondes* (Paris: Société d'économie et de science socials, 1855).

36. William Isaac Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927).

37. Edward C. Lindeman, *Social Discovery: An Approach to the Study of Functional Groups* (New York: Republic Publishing Co., 1924), p. 191.

38. See Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books, Inc., 1934); Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown in Transition* (New York: Harcourt,

Brace & World, Inc., 1937); Robert Redfield, *Tepoztlan: A Mexican Village* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930); Hans Reimer, "Socialization in the Prison Community," *American Prison Association Proceedings* (1937), pp. 151–155.

39. Florence R. Kluckhohn, "The Participant-Observer Technique in Small Communities," *American Journal of Sociology, 46* (November 1940), p. 331.

40. In the context of the dual role of the researcher we are discussing here, for example, see George C. Homan, *The Human Group* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1950) [one section, on pp. 53–54, is of particular interest in terms of participant observation]; John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1949), esp. p. 33; S. M. Miller, "The Participant Observer and Over-Rapport," *American Sociological Review, 17* (February 1952), esp. p. 98; Arthur J. Vidich, "Participant Observation and the Collection and Interpretation of Data," *American Journal of Sociology, 60* (January 1955), esp. p. 354.

41. Morris S. Schwartz and Charlotte Green Schwartz, "Problems in Participant Observation," *American Journal of Sociology, 60* (January 1955), p. 343.

42. In 1958, Becker argued that if the participant observer can vary the number and length of situations that he or she is in, then she or he can begin to argue that the data collected is enduring, is representative, and provides significant statements about a subculture. Becker's study provided the basis for a major analysis of verification in the method to be developed by Bruyn in 1966. For a specific discussion of Becker's contributions, see Howard S. Becker, Blance Gerr, Everett C. Hughes, and Anselm L. Strauss, *Boys in White* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); Howard S. Becker, *Outsiders* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1963); Howard S. Becker, "Problems of Inference and Proof in Participant Observation," *American Sociological Review, 23* (December 1958); Howard S. Becker and Blanche Geer, "Participant Observation: The Analysis of Qualitative Field Data," in Richard Adams and Jack. J. Preiss (Eds.), *Human Organization Research* (Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1960).

43. Gerald D. Berreman, *Behind Many Masks,* Monograph No. 4 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Society for Applied Anthropology, 1962), p. 8.

44. Herbert J. Gans, *Urban Villagers* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1962), pp. 344–345.

45. Herbert Blumer, "Society as Symbolic Interaction," in Arnold Rose (Ed.), *Human Behavior and Social Processes: An Interactionist Approach* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962), p. 188.

46. Severyn T. Bruyn, *The Human Perspective in Sociology: The Methodology of Participant Observation* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1966).

47. Paul Gump and Brian Sutton-Smith, "Activity-Setting and Social Interaction: A Field Study," in "Therapeutic Play Techniques; Symposium," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 4* (October 1955), pp. 755–760.

48. Paul V. Gump and Jacob S. Kounin, "Milieu Influences in Children's Concepts of Misconduct," *Child Development, 32* (December 1961), pp. 711–720.

49. In another context, Chesebro has defined everyday communication in these terms: "While the concept of everyday communication is seldom treated as a critical concept, we have conceived of the study of everyday communication to be the examination of: (1) particular intentions rather than intentionality as an epistemological issue; (2) settings in which agents assume that a single reality exists independent of perception; (3) agents who believe that imperative actions are required rather than dialectic exchanges; (4) imminent actions and face-to-face interactions possessing the full scope of all verbal and nonverbal stimuli in which immediate, flexible, continuous, and pre-reflective symbolic exchanges occur; (5) exchanges in which members of a communication system assume there is a correspondence among their meanings; and, (6) agents engaged in continuity in their interactions in terms of geography, time, and social relations. Thus, everyday communication is the study of autobiographical meanings or the pragmatics and self-serving understandings of an inner circle or symbolic enclave in which there is a high degree of dependency, interest, and intimacy. We would not therefore perceive formal speeches, academic debates, most written essays, or highly ceremonial occasions typically to be 'everyday communication.'" See James W. Chesebro and Kenneth L. Klenk, "Gay Masculinity in the Gay Disco," in James W. Chesebro (Ed.), *Gayspeak: Gay Male and Lesbian Communication* (New York: The Pilgrim Press of the United Church, 1981), pp. 327–328.

50. We defined reactivism in detail earlier in this appendix. At this point, we are suggesting that researchers seek to reduce or eliminate reactivism. In this context, reactivism can be the knowledge on the part of the members of the community that they are being studied. When researchers seek to reduce reactivism, more generally they seek to prevent any feature of the research design from influencing the results obtained.

51. Although we have made some adjustments in these materials, Figures A.3 through A.6 are provided in Severyn T. Bruyn, *The Human Perspective in Sociology: The Methodology of Participant Observation* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966).

52. For example, see Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Books/Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959); Erving Goffman, *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books/Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967).

53. For an extension and development of Goffman's concept, see Barry R. Schlenker, *Impression Management: The Self-Concept, Social Identity, and Interpersonal Relations* (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company/A Division of Wadsworth, Inc., 1980).

54. Figure A.5 is provided in Severyn T. Bruyn, *The Human Perspective in Sociology: The Methodology of Participant Observation* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1966), p. 261.

55. Figure A.6 is provided in Severyn T. Bruyn, *The Human Perspective in Sociology: The Methodology of Participant Observation* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1966), pp. 268–270.

56. S. Kirson Weinberg and H. Warren Dunham, *The Culture of a Mental Hospital* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1960).

57. At this juncture, we are summarizing the analysis provided in Eugene J. Webb, Donald T. Campbell, Richard D. Schwartz, and Lee Sechrest, *Unobtrusive Measures: Nonreactive Research in the Social Sciences* (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company, 1966).

58. For example, see Andrew T. Duchowski, *Eye Tracking Methodology: Theory and Practice* (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2003).

59. James W. Chesebro, "Graffiti as Communication in the Popular Culture," paper presented at the meeting of the Central States Speech Association, April 1975, Kansas City, Kansas.

60. All of the concepts, definitions, and examples provided in this table are drawn from Eugene J. Webb, Donald T. Campbell, Richard D. Schwartz, and Lee Sechrest, *Unobtrusive Measures: Nonreactive Research in the Social Sciences* (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company, 1966), pp. 35–170.

61. Lawrence R. Frey, Carl H. Botan, Paul G. Friedman, and Gary L. Kreps, *Interpreting Communication Research: A Case Study Approach* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992), p. 323.

62. For a more complete discussion of the rationale for multiple class measurement, see Eugene J. Webb, Donald T. Campbell, Richard D. Schwartz, and Lee Sechrest, *Unobtrusive Measures: Nonreactive Research in the Social Sciences* (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company, 1966), Chapter 7, "A Final Note," pp. 171–183. Our quotations here are drawn from pp. 174 and 175.

63. Michael E. Holmes, Robert A. Papper, Mark N. Popovich, and Michael Bloxham, *Middletown Media Studies: Observing Consumers and Their Interactions with Media, Concurrent Media Exposure* (Muncie, IN: Center for Media Design of Ball State University, Fall 2005), pp. 12–15. In the context of the tradition of qualitative research, it should be noted that this research team focused on subjects in the Muncie and Indianapolis area, and the use of "Middletown" reflects their awareness of the studies completed in the 1930s in Muncie, Indiana, which was then identified as "Middletown" by the Lynds; for example, see Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middle-town in Transition* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1937).

64. Jeffrey Boase, John B. Horrigan, Barry Wellman, and Lee Rainie, *The Strength of Internet Ties: The Internet and Email Aid Users in Maintaining Their Social Networks and Provide Pathways to Help When People Face Big Decisions* (Washington, D.C.: Pew Internet & American Life Project, January 25, 2006), esp. p. v, although the entire report is relevant to our discussion here. See www.pewinternet.org.

65. Clive Thompson, "Meet the Life Hackers," *New York Times Magazine*, October 16, 2005, pp. 40–46, esp. pp. 40 and 42.

66. Roger D. Wimmer and Joseph R. Dominick, *Mass Media Research: An Introduction* (8th ed.) (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth/Part of Thomson Corporation, 2006), p. 51.

67. Wimmer and Dominick report that "field observation was rarely used in mass media research before 1980. Cooper, Potter, and Dupagne (1994) found that about 2% of all published studies from 1965 to 1989 relied on observation. Recently, however, field observations have become common in the research literature (Anderson 1987; Lindlof 1987, 1991, 1995)"; see Roger D. Wimmer and Joseph R. Dominick, *Mass Media Research: An Introduction* (7th ed.) (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth/Part of Thomson Corporation, 2003), p. 115. See also J. A. Anderson, *Communication Research: Issues and Methods* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1987); R. Cooper, W. Potter, and M. Dupagne, "A Status Report on Methods Used in Mass Communication Research," *Journalism Educator, 48* (1994), 54–61; T. R. Lindlof, *Natural Audiences: Qualitative Research of Media Uses and Effects* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1987); T. R. Lindlof, "The Qualitative Study of Media Audiences," *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, 35* (1991), pp. 23–42; and T. R. Lindlof, *Qualitative Communication Research Methods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995).

68. For example, see Roger D. Wimmer and Joseph R. Dominick, *Mass Media Research: An Introduction* (8th ed.) (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth/Part of Thomson Corporation, 2006), p. 50; Joann Keyton, *Communication Research: Asking Questions, Finding Answers* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2001), p. 77.

69. Lawrence R. Frey, Carl H. Botan, Paul G. Friedman, and Gary L. Kreps, *Interpreting Communication Research: A Case Study Approach* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992), p. 323.

70. Joann Keyton, *Communication Research: Asking Questions, Finding Answers* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2001), pp. 77–78.

71. Clifford Christians, "Ethics and Politics in Qualitative Research" (pp. 133–155), in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000).

72. Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974).

73. For a deeper discussion of how these codes developed over time, see Clifford Christians, "Ethics and Politics in Qualitative Research," in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000), pp. 138–140.

74. M. Punch, "Politics and Ethics in Qualitative Research" in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994), p. 90.

75. Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company, 2001),

76. Norah Vincent, *Self-Made Man: One Woman's Journey into Manhood and Back Again* (New York: Viking, 2006).

77. Clifford Christians, "Ethics and Politics in Qualitative Research," in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000), p. 139.

78. Clifford Christians, "Ethics and Politics in Qualitative Research," in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000), p. 139.

79. Arlie Hochschild, *The Time Bind: Where Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997).

80. Clifford Christians, "Ethics and Politics in Qualitative Research," in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000), p. 140.

81. Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage 1985).

82. Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

83. Linda Steiner, "Feminist Theorizing and Communication Ethics," *Communication, 12*, 3 (1991), pp. 157–174.

84. Julia T. Wood, *Who Cares? Women, Care and Culture* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1994).