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The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research

Norman K. Denzin
Yvonna S. Lincoln
Editors

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Fifth Edition

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• Preface •

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

—T. S. Eliot, No. 4 of *Four Quartets*, 1943

The fifth edition of *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research,* like the fourth edition, is virtually a new volume. Nearly two thirds of the authors from the fourth edition have been replaced by new contributors. Indeed, there are 57 new chapter authors and/or coauthors. There are 16 totally new chapter topics, including contributions on feminist qualitative research in the millennium's second decade, critical social science, critical pedagogy and the bricolage, new science studies, the marketization of qualitative inquiry, data and its problematics, triangulation, observation in a surveilled world, thinking with theory, collaborative writing, rigor, the global audit culture, transformative research for social justice, human rights, indigenous inquiry, evidence, politics, science and government, criteria for assessing interpretive validity, models of representation, varieties of validity, qualitative research and technology, queer theory, performance ethnography, narrative inquiry, arts-based inquiry, the politics and ethics of online ethnography, analytic methodologies, writing strategies, policy and qualitative evaluation, the future of qualitative inquiry, teaching qualitative research, talk and text, focus groups in figured worlds, and postqualitative methodologies. All returning authors have substantially revised their original contributions, in many cases producing a totally new and different chapter; some added new authors, new voices.

There were and continue to be multiple social science and humanities audiences for the *Handbook:* graduate students who want to learn how to do qualitative research; interested faculty hoping to become better informed about the field; persons in policy settings, who understand the value of qualitative research methodologies and want to learn about the latest developments in the field; and faculty who are experts in one of more areas of the *Handbook* but who also want to be informed about the most recent developments in the field. We never imagined this audience would be so large. Nor did we imagine that the *Handbook* would become a text used in undergraduate and graduate research methods courses, but it did. In 2013, we created three new paperback volumes for classroom use: *The Landscape of Qualitative Research, Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry,* and *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials.*

The fifth edition of *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* continues where the fourth edition ended. Sometime during the past two decades, critical qualitative inquiry came of age or, more accurately, moved through another historical phase.[1] Out of the qualitative-quantitative paradigm wars of the 1980s, there appeared, seemingly overnight, journals,[2] handbooks,[3] textbooks,[4] dissertation awards,[5] annual distinguished lectures,[6] and scholarly associations.[7] All of these formations were dedicated to some version of qualitative inquiry (see Erickson, Chapter 2, this volume). Scholars were in the midst of a social movement of sorts, a new field of inquiry; a new discourse had arrived, or so it seemed, and it flourished.

Qualitative researchers proudly took their place at the table. Students flocked to graduate programs for study and mentoring. Instruction in qualitative and mixed-methods models became commonplace. Now there were QUAN and QUAL programs. Paradigm proliferation prevailed, a rainbow coalition of racialized and queered post-isms, from feminism to structuralism, postmodernism, postcolonialism, poststructuralism, postpostivism, postscientism, Marxism, and postconstructivism (see Erickson, Chapter 2, this volume).

All of this took place within and against a complex historical field, a global war on terror, a third methodological movement (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011), the resurgence of a managerial and audit-based economy in the academy, the quieting of new voices, global challenges to narrow-minded ethics review boards, the beginning or end of the eighth moment (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3).[8] In the *methodologically contested recent past,* qualitative researchers confronted and then went beyond the scientific backlash associated with the evidence-based social movement connected in North American education with the No Child Left Behind legislation (see Hatch, 2006). At the same time, many resisted what others embraced—namely, the multiple and mixed-methods research (MMR) approach to inquiry (see Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011; also Morse, Chapter 35, in this volume). For too many, MMR was another version of the paradigm war, with quantitative researchers once again creating spaces for the uses of qualitative inquiry.

So near the end of the second decade of the 21st century, it is once again time to move forward into an uncertain, open-ended utopian future. It time to open up new spaces, time to decolonize the academy, time to create new spaces for indigenous voices, time to explore new discourses, new politics of identity, new concepts of equity and social justice, new forms of critical ethnography, new performance stages. We need to find new ways of connecting persons and their personal troubles with social justice methodologies. We need to become better accomplished in linking these interventions to those institutional sites where troubles are turned into public issues and public issues transformed into social policy. We must be relentless in pushing back against the structures of neoliberalism in these dangerous times. At the same time, we must revisit the recent past—namely, this generation's version of the 1980s paradigm wars. What have we learned from the feminist, indigenous, decolonizing, critical race, social justice, structural, poststructural, postqualitative, institutional review board (IRB), MMR battles?

A critical framework is central to this project. It privileges practice, politics, action, consequences, performances, discourses, methodologies of the heart, and pedagogies of hope, love, care, forgiveness, and healing. It speaks for and with those who are on the margins. As a liberationist philosophy, it is committed to examining the consequences of racism, poverty, and sexism on the lives of interacting individuals.

Moving forward, it is necessary to confront and work through the criticisms that continue to be directed to qualitative inquiry. Each generation must draw its line in the sand and take a stance toward the past. Each generation must articulate its epistemological, methodological, and ethical stance toward critical inquiry. Each generation must offer its responses to current and past criticisms. In the spirit of inclusion, let us listen to our critics. But in doing so, we must renew our efforts to honor the voices of those who have been silenced by dominant paradigms. Let us do this in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration and mutual self-respect.

There is a pressing need to show how the practices of qualitative research can help change the world in positive ways. It is necessary to continue to engage the pedagogical, theoretical, and practical promise of qualitative research as a form of radical democratic practice.

In our invitation letter to authors and editorial board members, we stated the following:

> As with the fourth edition, which was published by SAGE in 2011, we regard the *Handbook* as a major benchmark for future work in this field. One measure of a benchmark work is its status in

graduate education. We want the fifth edition to be a work that all doctoral students in your field will continue to want to study as they prepare for their exams and their dissertations. We have also been gratified to discover that many faculty use the *Handbook* as a class textbook; we hope that the fifth edition fulfills the same teaching needs. The new edition should advance a democratic project committed to social justice in an age of uncertainty. We are working with authors who can write chapters that will address practical, concrete issues of implementation while critiquing the field and mapping key current and emergent themes, debates, and developments.

This is the three-sided agenda of the fifth edition, to show how the discourses of qualitative research, inside and outside the classroom, in public and civic spaces, can be used to help create and imagine a free democratic society. Each of the chapters that follow is defined by these commitments, in one way or another.

We ask of a handbook that it do many things. A handbook should ideally represent the distillation of knowledge of a field; it should be a benchmark volume that synthesizes an existing literature, helping to define and shape the present and future of that discipline. A handbook charts the past, the present, and the future of the discourses at hand. It represents the very best thinking of the very best scholars in the world. It is reflexive, comprehensive, dialogical, accessible. It is authoritative and definitive. Its subject matter is clearly defined. Its authors work within a shared framework. Its authors and editors seek to impose an order on a field and a discipline. Yet they respect and attempt to honor diversity across disciplinary and paradigmatic perspectives.

A handbook is more than a review of the literature. It speaks to graduate students, to established scholars, and to scholars who wish to learn about the field. It has hands-on information. It shows persons how to move from ideas to inquiry, from inquiry to interpretation, from interpretation to praxis to action in the world. It locates its project within larger disciplinary and historical formations. It takes a stand on social justice issues; it is not just about pure scholarship. It is humble. It is indispensable.

These understandings organized the first four editions of this *Handbook*. In metaphorical terms, if you were to take one book on qualitative research with you to a desert island (or for a comprehensive graduate examination), a handbook would be the book.

A critical social science seeks its external grounding not in science, in any of its revisionist postpositivist forms, but rather in a commitment to critical pedagogy and communitarian feminism with hope but no guarantees. It seeks to understand how power and ideology operate through and across systems of discourse, cultural commodities, and cultural texts. It asks how words and texts and their meanings play a pivotal part in the culture's "decisive performances of race, class [and] gender" (Downing 1987, p. 80).

We no longer just write culture. We perform culture. We have many different forms of qualitative inquiry today. We have multiple criteria for evaluating our work. It is a new day for a new generation. We have drawn our line in the sand, and we may redraw it. But we stand firmly behind the belief that critical qualitative inquiry inspired by the sociological imagination can make the world a better place.

Organization of This Volume

The organization of the *Handbook* moves from the general to the specific, the past to the present. Part I locates the field, starting first with the history of qualitative inquiry in social and educational research, then taking up ethics, politics, and critical social science traditions. Part II isolates what we regard as the major historical and contemporary paradigms now structuring and influencing qualitative research in the human disciplines. The chapters move

from competing paradigms (positivist, postpositivist, constructivist, critical theory) to specific interpretive perspectives (feminist, critical race theory, indigenous theory, critical pedagogy, cultural studies, queer/quare theory).

Part III isolates the major strategies of inquiry—historically, the research methods—a researcher can use in a concrete study. Framed by Cheek's scathing critique of the marketization of qualitative inquiry, the contributors in this section embed their discussions of specific strategies of inquiry (case study, performance ethnography, ethnodrama, interpretive practice, grounded theory, triangulation, the new materialisms, *testimonio,* critical participatory action research) in social justice topics. The history and uses of these strategies are extensively explored in the 10 chapters in Part III.

Still, the question of methods begins with the design of the qualitative research project. This always begins with a socially situated researcher who moves from a research question, to a paradigm or perspective, to the empirical world. So located, the researcher then addresses the range of methods that can be employed in any study. In Chapter 13 of this volume, Julianne Cheek wisely observes that questions surrounding the practice and politics of funding qualitative research are often paramount at this point in any study. Globally, funding for qualitative research becomes more difficult as methodological conservatism gains momentum in neoliberal political regimes.

Part IV examines methods of collecting and analyzing empirical materials. It moves from observation in a surveilled world, to narrative inquiry, to chapters on arts-based inquiry, the interview, visual research, performative autoethnography, online ethnography in the digital era, analyzing talk and text, and then on to focus groups in figured worlds, thinking with theory, ending with how to create a space in between for collaborative inquiry.

Part V takes up the art and practices of interpretation, evaluation, and presentation, including criteria for judging the adequacy of qualitative materials in an age of relativism, the interpretive process, writing as a method of inquiry, the politics of evidence, strategies for composing place narratives, and qualitative evaluation and changing social policy with stakeholders. The two chapters in Part VI discuss qualitative research in the global audit culture and discuss the critical issues confronting qualitative research in an age of global uncertainty. We conclude with thoughts on qualitative research in the neoliberal era.

Preparation of the Revised *Handbook*

In preparation of a revised *Handbook,* it again became clear in our lengthy discussions that we needed input from perspectives other than our own. To accomplish this, we assembled a highly prestigious, international, and interdisciplinary editorial board (listed at the front of this volume), who assisted us in the selection of equally prestigious authors, the preparation of the Table of Contents, and the reading of (often multiple) drafts of each chapter. We used editorial board members as windows into their respective disciplines. We sought information on key topics, perspectives, and controversies that needed to be addressed. In our selection of editorial board members and chapter authors, we attempted to crosscut disciplinary, gender, race, paradigm, and national boundaries. Our hope was to use the authors' views to minimize our own disciplinary blinders.

Extensive feedback was received from the editorial board, including suggestions for new chapters, different slants to take on each of the chapters, and suggestions of authors for different chapters. In addition to considering social justice issues, each *Handbook* author—internationally recognized in his or her subject matter—was asked to treat such topics as history, epistemology, ontology, exemplary texts, key controversies, competing paradigms, and predictions about the future.

Responding to Critics

We were gratified by the tremendous response from the field; especially gratifying were the hundreds of professors from around the world who choose the *Handbook* (in one form or another) as an assigned reading for their students. We were also gratified by the critical responses to the work. The *Handbook* has helped open a space for dialogue. This dialogue was long overdue. Many found problems with our approach to the field, and these problems indicate places where more conversations need to take place.

Critics have united against the postmodern turn we endorse, claiming it has no place in the science-based research project. They charge that postmodernism has no findings, no evidence-based chains of reasoning, no experimental designs or professional norms of peer review. Conservative critics argue that the postmodern model is ill-conceived, based on false assumptions and speculation, not firm inquiry. It is detrimental to rigorous qualitative inquiry and should be abandoned (see Erickson, Chapter 2, this volume, for a review of these points).

Among the criticisms of the first four editions were the following topics needing more attention: neoliberalism, LGBTQ research, affect studies, social justice, ecoaesthetics, place-based methods, "how to" discussions, phenomenology, writing, indigeneity, portraiture, social media, and public ethnography. Others praised the handbook for its inclusiveness; its attention to new developments, controversies, and feminist research; and its sensitivity to ethics, social justice, politics, and history.

We cannot speak for the more than 250 chapter authors from the first, second, third, and fourth editions. Each person has taken a stance on these issues. As editors, we have attempted to represent a number of competing or at least contesting ideologies and frames of reference. This *Handbook* is not or intended to be the view from the bridge of Denzin or Lincoln. We are not saying that there is only one way to do research, or that our way is best, or that the so-called old ways are bad. We are just saying this is one way to conceptualize this field, and it is a way that we find useful.

Of course, the *Handbook* is not a single thing. It even transcends the sum of its parts, and there is enormous diversity within and between every chapter. It is our hope that readers find spaces within these spaces that work for them. It is our desire that new dialogue take place within these spaces. This will be a gentle, probing, neighborly, and critical conversation, a conversation that bridges the many diverse interpretive communities that today make up this field called qualitative research. We value passion, we invite criticism, and we seek to initiate a discourse of resistance. Internationally, qualitative researchers must struggle against neoliberal regimes of truth, science, and justice.

Defining the Field

The qualitative research community consists of groups of globally dispersed persons who are attempting to implement a critical interpretive approach that will help them (and others) make sense of the terrifying conditions that define daily life at the second decade of this new century. These individuals employ constructivist, critical theory, feminist, new materialist, queer, and critical race theory, as well as cultural studies models of interpretation. They locate themselves on the borders between postpositivism and poststructuralism, as well as the new materialisms. They use any and all of the research strategies (case study, ethnography, ethnodrama, phenomenology, grounded theory, biographical, historical, participatory) discussed in Part III of the *Handbook*. As interpretive *bricoleurs* (see Harper, 1987, pp. 9, 74; Kincheloe, 2008; Kincheloe, McLaren, Steinberg, & Monzo, Chapter 10, this volume), the members of this group are adept at using all of the methods of collecting and analyzing empirical materials discussed

by the authors of the chapters in Part IV of the *Handbook*. And, as writers and interpreters, these individuals wrestle with positivist, postpositivist, poststructural, postmodern, materialist, and postqualitative criteria for evaluating their written work.[9]

These scholars constitute a loosely defined international interpretive community. They are slowly coming to agreement on what constitutes a "good" and "bad," or banal, or an emancipatory, troubling analysis and interpretation. They are constantly challenging the distinction between the "real" and that which is constructed, understanding that all events and understandings are mediated and made real through interactional and material practices, through discourse, conversation, writing, narrative, scientific articles, and realist, postrealist, and posthumanist tales from the field.

This group works at both the centers and the margins of those emerging interdisciplinary, transnational formations that crisscross the borders between communications; race, ethnic, religious, and women's studies; sociology; history; anthropology; literary criticism; political science; economics; social work; health care; and education. This work is characterized by a quiet change in outlook, a transdisciplinary conversation, and a pragmatic change in practices, politics, and habits.

At this juncture—the uneasy, troubled crossroads between neoliberalism, audit cultures, pragmatism, and posthumanism—a quiet revolution is occurring. This revolution is defined by the politics of representation, the politics of presence, a politics that asks what is represented in a text and how should it be judged, a politics that critiques the very notion of critical inquiry itself. We have left the world of naive realism, knowing now that a text does not mirror the world; it creates the world. Furthermore, there is no external world or final arbiter—lived experience, for example—against which a text is judged.

Pragmatism is central to this conversation, for it is itself a theoretical and philosophical concern, firmly rooted in the postrealist tradition. As such, it is a theoretical position that privileges practice and method over reflection and deliberative action. Indeed, postmodernism itself has no predisposition to privilege discourse or text over observation. Instead, postmodernism (and poststructuralism) would simply have us attend to discourse and performance as seriously as we attend to observation (or any other fieldwork methods) and to recognize that our discourses are the vehicles for sharing our observations with those who were not in the field with us.

The angst attending our recognition of the hidden powers of discourses is precisely what leaves us now at the threshold of postmodernism and signals the advent of questions that will leave none of us untouched. It is true that contemporary qualitative, interpretive research exists within competing fields of discourse. Our present history of the field locates seven, eight moments—and a ninth—the future. These moments all circulate in the present, competing with and defining one another. This discourse is moving in several directions at the same time. This has the effect of simultaneously creating new spaces, new possibilities, and new formations for qualitative research methods while closing down others.

There are those who would marginalize and politicize the contemporary posthumanist, postmodern, poststructural versions of qualitative research, equating them with political correctness, with radical relativism, narratives of the self, and armchair theoretical commentary. Some would chastise this *Handbook* for not paying adequate homage to the hands-on, nuts-and-bolts approach to fieldwork, to texts that tell us how to study the "real" world. Still others would seek a preferred, canonical, but flexible version of this project, returning to the Chicago school or to more recent formal, analytic, realist versions. Some would criticize the formation from within, contending that the privileging of discourse over observation does not yield adequate criteria for evaluating interpretive work, wondering what to do when left with only voice and interpretation. Many ask for a normative framework for evaluating their

own work. None of these desires are likely to be satisfied anytime soon, however. Contestation, contradiction, and philosophical tensions make the achievement of consensus on any of these issues less than imminent.

We are not collating history here, although every chapter describes the history in a subfield. Our intention, which our contributors share, is to point to the future, where the field of qualitative research methods will be 10 years from now. Of course, much of the field still works within frameworks defined by earlier historical moments. This is how it should be. There is no one way to do critical interpretive, qualitative inquiry. We are all interpretive *bricoleurs* stuck in the present, working against the past, as we move into a politically charged and challenging future.

Competing Definitions of Qualitative Research Methods

The open-ended nature of the qualitative research project leads to a perpetual resistance against attempts to impose a single, umbrella-like paradigm over the entire project. There are multiple interpretive projects, including the decolonizing methodological project of indigenous scholars and theories of critical pedagogy; new materialisms and performance (auto)ethnographies; standpoint epistemologies and critical race theory; critical, public, poetic, queer, indigenous, psychoanalytic, materialist, feminist, and reflexive ethnographies; grounded theorists of several varieties; multiple strands of ethnomethodology; abelist; LGBTQ, African American, LatCrit, and science-technology studies; prophetic, postmodern, and neopragmatic Marxism; and transnational cultural studies projects.

The generic focus of each of these versions of qualitative research moves in five directions at the same time: (1) the "detour through interpretive theory" and a politics of the local, linked to (2) the analysis of the politics of representation and the textual analyses of literary and cultural forms, including their production, distribution, and consumption; (3) the (auto)ethnographic qualitative study and representation of these forms in everyday life; (4) the investigation of new pedagogical and interpretive practices that interactively engage critical cultural analysis in the classroom and the local community; and (5) a utopian politics of possibility (Madison, 1998) that redresses social injustices and imagines a radical democracy that is not yet (Weems, 2002, p. 3).

Whose Revolution?

To summarize, a single, several-part thesis organizes our reading of where the field of qualitative research methodology is today. First, this project has changed because the world that qualitative research confronts, within and outside the academy, has changed. It has also changed because of the increasing sophistication—both theoretical and methodological—of interpretivist researchers everywhere. Disjuncture and difference, violence and terror, define the global political economy. This is a post- or neocolonial world. It is necessary to think beyond the nation or the local group as the focus of inquiry.

Second, this is a world where ethnographic texts circulate like other commodities in an electronic world economy. It may be that ethnography is one of the major discourses of the neomodern world. But if this is so, it is no longer possible to take for granted what is meant by ethnography, even by traditional, realist qualitative research; indeed, the traditional ethnographic text may be dead (see Snow, 1999, p. 97; Erickson, Chapter 2, this volume). Global and local legal processes have erased the personal and institutional distance between the postethnographer and those he or she writes about. We do not "own" the field notes we make about those we study. We do not have an undisputed warrant to study anyone or anything.

Subjects now challenge how they have been written about, and more than one ethnographer has been taken to court.

We say postethnographer because, as Erickson (Chapter 2, this volume) reminds us,

> It does seem to me that the full-blown realist ethnographic monograph, with its omniscient narrator speaking to the reader with an apparent neutrality as if from nowhere and nowhen—a subject who stands apart from his or her description—is no longer a genre of reporting that can responsibly be practiced, given the duration and force of the critique that has been leveled against it. (p. 59)

We are in a postethnographic, postethnographer space.

Third, this is a gendered project. Feminist, postcolonial, and queer theorists question the traditional logic of the heterosexual, narrative ethnographic text, which reflexively positions the ethnographer's gender-neutral (or masculine) self within a realist story. Today, there is no solidified ethnographic identity. The ethnographer works within a hybrid reality. Experience, discourse, and self-understandings collide against larger cultural assumptions concerning race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, class, and age. A certain identity is never possible; the ethnographer must always ask, "Not *who* am I?" but "*When, where, how* am I?" (Trinh, 1992, p. 157).

Fourth, qualitative research is an inquiry project, but it is also a moral, allegorical, and therapeutic project. Ethnography is more than the record of human experience. The ethnographer writes tiny moral tales, tales that do more than celebrate cultural difference or bring another culture alive. The researcher's story is written as a prop, a pillar that, to paraphrase William Faulkner (1967, p. 724), will help men and women endure and prevail in the opening years of the 21st century.

Fifth, while the field of qualitative research is defined by constant breaks and ruptures, there is a shifting center to the project: the avowed humanistic and social justice commitment to study the social world from the perspective of the interacting individual. From this principle flow the liberal and radical politics of action that are held by feminist, clinical, ethnic, critical, queer, critical race theory, and cultural studies researchers. While multiple interpretive communities now circulate within the field of qualitative research, they are all united on this single point.

Sixth, qualitative research's seventh and eighth moments will be defined by the work that interpretive scholars do as they implement the above assumptions. These situations set the stage for qualitative research's transformations in the 21st century. Finally, we anticipate a continued performance turn in qualitative inquiry, with writers performing their texts for others.

Tales of the *Handbook*

Many of the difficulties in developing a volume such as this are common to any project of this magnitude. Others were set by the essential tensions and contradictions that operate in this field at this historical moment. As with the first, second, third, and fourth editions, the "right" chapter author was unavailable, too busy, or overcommitted. Consequently, we sought out others, who turned out to be more "right" than we imagined possible. Few overlapping networks cut across the many disciplines we were attempting to cover. We were fortunate, in more than one instance, when an editorial board member pointed us in a direction of which we were not even aware.

Although we knew the territory somewhat better this time around, there were still spaces we blundered into with little knowledge about who should be asked to do what. We confronted disciplinary and generational blinders—including our own—and discovered there were separate traditions surrounding each of our topics within distinct interpretive communities. It was often difficult to know how to bridge these differences, and our bridges were often makeshift constructions. We also had to cope with vastly different styles of thinking about a variety of different topics based on disciplinary, epistemological, gender, racial, ethnic, cultural, and national beliefs, boundaries, and ideologies.

In many instances, we unwittingly entered into political battles over who should write a chapter or over how a chapter should be written or evaluated. These disputes clearly pointed to the political nature of this project and to the fact that each chapter was a potential if not real site for multiple interpretations. Many times, the politics of meaning came into play, as we attempted to negotiate and navigate our way through areas fraught with high emotion. On more than one occasion, we disagreed with both an author and an editorial board member. We often found ourselves adjudicating between competing editorial reviews, working the hyphens between meaning making and diplomacy. Regrettably, in some cases, we hurt feelings and perhaps even damaged longstanding friendships. In such moments, we sought forgiveness. With the clarity of hindsight, there are many things we would do differently today, and we apologize for the damage we have done.

We, as well as our authors and advisers, struggled with the meanings we wanted to bring to such terms as *theory*, *paradigm*, *epistemology*, *interpretive framework*, *empirical materials versus data*, *research strategies*, and so on. We discovered that the very term *qualitative research* means different things to many different people.

We abandoned the goal of being comprehensive, even with 1,500 manuscript pages. We fought with authors over deadlines and the number of pages we would give them. We also fought with authors over how to conceptualize their chapters and found that what was clear to us was not necessarily clear to anyone else. We fought, too, over when a chapter was done and constantly sought the forbearance of our authors as we requested yet another revision.

Reading the *Handbook*

Were we to write our own critique of this book, we would point to the shortcomings we see in it, and in many senses, these are the same as those in previous editions. They include an overreliance on the perspectives of our respective disciplines (sociology, communications, and education), as well as a failure to involve more scholars from the international indigenous community. We do not have a detailed treatment of the intersection of critical and indigenous inquiry, nor do we devote sufficient attention to networks and the big data movement. We worked hard to avoid many of these problems. On the other hand, we have addressed some of the problems present in the fourth edition. We have made a greater effort to cover more areas of applied qualitative work. We have helped initiate dialogue between different chapter authors. We have created spaces for more voices from other disciplines, especially anthropology and communications, but we still have a shortfall of voices representing people of color and of the Third World. We would have liked to include more non-English speakers from outside Europe and North America. You, the reader, will certainly have your own response to this book, which may highlight other issues that we do not see.

This is all in the nature of the *Handbook* and in the nature of doing qualitative research. This handbook is a social construction, a complex theatrical performance, an ethnodrama, a socially enacted, co-created entity, and although it exists in a material form, it will no doubt be re-created in subsequent iterations as generations of scholars and graduate students use it,

adapt it, and launch from it additional methodological paradigmatic, theoretical, and practical work. It is not a final statement. It is a starting point, a springboard for new thought and new work, work that is fresh and sensitive and that blurs the boundaries of our disciplines but always sharpens our understandings of the larger human project.

With all its strengths and all its flaws, it is our hope that this project, in its fifth edition, will contribute to the growing maturity and global influence of qualitative research in the human disciplines. And, following our original intent, we hope this convinces you, the reader, that qualitative research now constitutes a field of study in its own right, allowing you to better anchor and locate your own work in the qualitative research tradition and its central place in a radical democratic project. If this happens, we will have succeeded in building a bridge that serves all of us well, to a new territory ahead.

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Notes

1. Qualitative inquiry in North America has passed through several historical moments or phases: the traditional (1900–1950), the modernist or golden age (1950–1970), blurred genres (1970–1980), the paradigm wars (1980–1985), the crisis of representation (1986–1990), the postmodern (1990–1995), postexperimental inquiry (1995–2000), the methodologically contested present (2000–2004), paradigm proliferation (2005–2010), and the fractured, posthumanist present that battles managerialism in the audit-driven academy (2010–2015), an uncertain, utopian future, where critical inquiry finds its voice in the public arena (2016–). These moments overlap and coexist in the present (see Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, pp. 2–3).
2. Today the list for the United States (and England) is very long; many of the journals are published by Sage, including *Qualitative Inquiry, Qualitative Health Research, Qualitative Research, Qualitative Social Work, Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies, Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Discourse Studies, Discourse and Society, Ethnography,* and *Field Methods.* Other important journals include the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, Anthropology and Education, Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies, Text and Performance Quarterly,* and *The International Review of Qualitative Research* (see Allen, 2016, p. 42, for a list of some major qualitative journals).
3. Again, from Sage—the *Handbooks of Qualitative Research, Grounded Theory, Ethnography, Interviewing, Narrative Inquiry, Performance Studies,* and *Critical and Indigenous Methodologies.*
4. Sage seemingly has dozens of these texts, including those focused on case study, interviewing, Internet inquiry, ethnography, focus groups, visual data, conversation analysis, observation, participatory action research, ethics, qualitative design and analysis, life history, and interpretive biography (see Staller, Block, & Horner, 2008, for a review of Sage's place in this discourse; also Allen, 2016, pp. 20–21).
5. Including the distinguished qualitative dissertation awards of the International Association of Qualitative Inquiry and the American Educational Research Association (AERA).
6. Including the Annual Egon Guba Distinguished Lecture for the QUALSIG of AERA.
7. On May 7, 2005, the last day of the First International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, the International Association of Qualitative Inquiry (IAQI) was founded in Urbana, Illinois. IAQI is the first international association solely dedicated to the scholarly promotion, representation, and global development of qualitative research. At present, IAQI has a listserv of over 20,000 delegates representing 75 nations worldwide. It has established professional affiliations with more than 200 collaborating sites in Oceana, Africa, North and South America, the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, Japan, Korea, and China (see icqi.org). The *IAQI Newsletter* appears quarterly, as does the congress journal, *The International Review of Qualitative Research,* which is published by the University of California Press.
8. Mixed-methods research is Teddlie and Tashakkori's third movement or moment. The first movement is quantitative research, and the second is qualitative inquiry. The third moment offers a middle ground that mediates quantitative and qualitative disputes (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011).
9. These criteria range from those endorsed by postpositivists (variations on validity and reliability, including credibility and trustworthiness) to poststructural feminist standpoint concerns emphasizing collaborative, evocative performance texts that create ethically responsible relations between researchers and those they study.

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Introduction

The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research

Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln

The global community of qualitative inquiry is midway between two extremes, searching for a new middle, moving in several different directions at the same time. How to create a new family of terms for a new critical inquiry, terms slip and slide, fall over one another. What do we mean by research, inquiry, critical, social justice, transformative, dialogic, reflexive, participatory, emancipatory, narrative, resistance love, loss, praxis, rigor, and writing as a way of being in the world (Cannella, 2015; Dimitriadis, 2016; Kamberelis, Dimitriadis, & Welker, Chapter 31, this volume; MacLure, 2015; Pillow, 2015)? Writing framed around acts of activism and resistance (Madison, 2010, 2012). How do we move forward? What is the place of a new edition of the *SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* in this project?

What is the role of critical qualitative research in a historical present when the need for social justice has never been greater? Should we even be using the word *research*? Would the word *inquiry* be better, but then what does inquiry refer to (Dimitriadis, 2016; MacLure, 2015, p. 103)? This is a historical present that cries out for emancipatory visions, for visions that inspire transformative inquiries, and for inquiries that can provide the moral authority to move people to struggle and resist oppression. The pursuit of social justice within a transformative paradigm challenges prevailing forms of inequality, poverty, human oppression, and injustice.

The fields of qualitative inquiry and qualitative research are in transition (Dimitriadis, 2016; Torrance, 2016). Postinterpretive paradigms are on the horizon (Kuntz, 2015).[1] Older paradigms are being reconfigured. Hybrid paradigms are emerging alongside new geographies of knowledge and new decolonizing epistemologies. The ontological turn in social theory leads to alternative ontologies of counting (Lather, 2016) and the inventive uses of statistics for strategic, indigenous interventions. Who has the right to observe and count whom, and what does counting mean? New global communities of interpretive practice span the globe, stretching from North to South, East to West (see Coburn, 2015; Steinmetz, 2005; Walter & Anderson, 2013; Wyly, 2009). The field of qualitative research is on the move and moving in several different directions at the same time.

The methodological struggles of the 1970s and 1980s, fights over the very existence of qualitative research while part of a distant past, are very much alive in the second decade of the new millennium. They are present in the tenure battles that are waged every year for junior faculty when their qualitative research is criticized for not being scientific. They are alive in the offices of granting agencies where only mixed-methods studies are funded. In the emerging new paradigm war, "every overtly social justice-oriented approach to research . . . is threatened with de-legitimization by the government-sanctioned, exclusivist assertion of positivism . . . as the 'gold standard' of educational research" (Wright, 2006, pp. 799–800). The reinvigorated evidence-based research movement, with its fixed standards and guidelines for conducting and evaluating qualitative inquiry, seeks total domination: One shoe fits all (Erickson, Chapter 2, this volume; Cannella & Lincoln, Chapter 4, this volume; Lincoln, 2010).

The heart of the matter turns on issues surrounding the politics and ethics of evidence. Evidence-based guidelines reinforce support for postpositivist discourse, leading some to even call for a strategic positivism. This recalls the use of quasi-statistics (frequencies, percentages) by an earlier generation of participant observers who counted and cross-tabulated observations, in an effort to make their work more palatable to positivist colleagues (see Clarke, Friese, & Washburn, 2015, p. 37; Lather, 2013).

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In this introductory chapter, we define the field of qualitative research, then navigate, chart, and review the recent history of qualitative research in the human disciplines. This will allow us to locate this handbook and its contents within their historical moments. These historical moments, as we noted in the Preface, are somewhat artificial. They are socially constructed, quasi-historical, and overlapping conventions. Nevertheless, they permit a "performance" of developing ideas.[2] They also facilitate an increasing sensitivity to and sophistication about the pitfalls and promises of ethnography and qualitative research. A conceptual framework for reading the qualitative research act as a multicultural, gendered process is presented.

We then provide a brief introduction to the chapters, concluding with a brief discussion of qualitative research. We also discuss the threats to qualitative human subject research from the methodological conservatism movement, which was noted in our Preface. We use the metaphor of the bridge to structure what follows. This volume provides a bridge between historical moments, politics, the decolonization project, research methods, paradigms, and communities of interpretive scholars.

Twenty-First-Century Interpretive Communities of Practice[3]

This new century is characterized by multiple discourses, by new ways of maneuvering between positivism, postpositivism, critical theory, constructionism, poststructuralism, participatory models of inquiry, and the new posts (see Guba, Lincoln, & Lynham, Chapter 5, this volume). While there has been a remarkable growth in different perspectives, there is unity under the "interpretive, performance paradigm," from autoethnography to postcolonial discourse analysis, from symbolic interactionism, to situational and constructionist versions of grounded theory, from ethnodrama, and ethnotheatre, to postphenomenology, to critical theory, to new versions of standpoint theory, to materialist, antiracist, indigenous, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) liberatory social justice discourses (Clark et al., 2015, pp. 38, 40, 47; Walter & Anderson, 2013). This unity represents the "globalizing acceptance of qualitative inquiry, in its many forms. Critical qualitative inquiry is now an integral part of an international, interpretive public social science discourse" (see Clark et al., 2015, p. 37; also Burawoy, 2005, p. 511; Knoblauch, 2014).

Five-Figured Spaces

Kamberelis et al. (Chapter 31, this volume) propose five basic figured worlds of qualitative inquiry. (Each figured world is dynamic and evolving. There is no great chain of being operating.) A figured world is an interpretive community of practice, with shared understandings. These five worlds involve assumptions concerning knowledge, research questions, relations between subjects and objects, reality, and language. They give them familiar labels: (1) positivist (objectivism), (2) interpretive (modernism), (3) skepticism, praxis (critical), (4) power-knowledge (poststructural), and (5) ontological (postqualitative, postmaterialism). These figured worlds map onto the Guba, Lincoln, and Lynham chapter (Chapter 5, this volume) five-paradigm model (positivism, postpositivism, critical theory, constructivism, participatory-postmodern), which combines ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions (pp. 98–102).

The Kamberelis et al. five-figured space model, like the Guba et al. paradigm framework, travels across and into uncharted spaces, a Figured World 6, a new post-post? The models mark the importance of using research tools to answer concrete questions (World 1), in specific ethnographic spaces (World 2), while critically engaging praxis and dialogue (World 3), language and discourse (World 4), and the effects of materiality, affect, and performance (World 5) and imagining new becomings, returns, new departures, and detours (World 6). This new world will be informed by postcolonial, indigenous, transnational, global, and the multiple realities made possible through new digital technologies (Markham, Chapter 29, this volume).

The Blurring of Discourses and Borders

The QUAN/QUAL divide is blurring; perhaps it is time to give up the war (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 313). Radical feminists are using biostatistics and pursuing biosocial studies. Poststructuralists and posthumanists are interrogating the underlying assumptions and practices that operate in the era of big data, digital technologies, the data sciences, software analytics, and the diverse practices of numeracy (de Freitas, Dixon-Roman, & Lather, 2016). Alternative ontologies of number and subversive uses of statistics question the kinds of computational practices that saturate everyday life (de Freitas et al., 2016). As lines blur, traditionalists dig in, eschewing the new, calling for a return to the Chicago school classics, a return to neopositivist or postpositivist traditional ethnographic methods (Clarke et al., 2015, p. 40).

There are new international associations: International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry,[4] Contemporary Ethnography Across the Disciplines (CEAD),[5] the Qualitative Health Research Conference, The Qualitative Methods (QM) conference, The Qualitative Analysis Conference, and Advances in Qualitative Methods (see *FQS,* 2005, 6(3)), to list but a few. There has been a wide-scale legitimatization of interpretive poststructural research across the curricula of the social sciences, humanities, professional education, health sciences, communications, education, computer and information science, military, science education, and applied linguistics. This has been accompanied by the development of sophisticated participatory, community, and cooperative action discourses, as well as critical indigenous decolonizing interventions (see Kovach, Chapter 9, this volume; Torre, Stout, Manoff, & Fine, Chapter 22, this volume).

Neoliberal discourses attempt to scientize qualitative approaches through evidence-based research efforts, which extend into graduate training and beyond (see below). A strong transnational critical Bourdieusian ethnographic tradition pushes back, through the journal *Ethnography*. This conversation has major centers in France, the United States, United Kingdom, and Germany (Clarke et al., 2015, p. 40). Keyan Tomaselli carries this transnational pushback to South Africa through his leadership in indigenous scholarship at the University of KwaZulu-Natal,

where he is director of the Centre for Communication, Media, and Society and editor of *Critical Arts: South-North Cultural and Media Studies*.

The International Association for Contemporary Ethnography Across the Disciplines (ACEAD) is a Southern Hemisphere conference informed by a Kaupapa Maōri worldview of "research." ACEAD offers a home for qualitative researchers "who draw upon indigenous forms of knowledge to enliven, enrich, and inform current dominant, experimental, and emerging forms of the ethnographic project" (see http://cead.org.nz/Site/Ethnography_conference/Association_for_CEAd/default.aspx).

The newly formed Forum of Critical Chinese Qualitative Research of the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry extends this global project to China, to include the indigenization of critical Chinese qualitative research, the establishment and advancement of curricula on critical Chinese qualitative research, and the presence of critical Chinese qualitative research in the global context. A more qualitative research focus is found in the Korean Association for Qualitative Research (http://www.aqr.org.uk/dir/view.cgi?ident=researchpacrok), as well as in the Japanese Society of Cultural Anthropology (http://www.jasca.org/onjasca-e/frame.html) and the Japanese Society of Ethnology (see also Liu, 2011). Alejandra Martinez and Aldo Merlino organized I Post Congreso Argentina in Cordoba, October 2 to 3. In total, 550 delegates from 13 countries of Latin America presented papers at the congress, which was organized by the National Council of Research and Technology of Argentina (CIES-CONICE-TyUNIC) and University of Siglo, 21 of Cordoba, Argentina. The congress celebrated the 10th anniversary of the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry.

The Global Science Tent

The social science tent has gotten bigger, or there are now many different versions of what is science. Eisenhart (2006) proposes a model of qualitative science that is interpretive (Geertz, 1973) and practical. After Flyvbjerg (2001, 2011), she wants a science that matters, a science based on common sense, focused on values and power, relevant to the needs of ordinary citizens and policy makers. There are related calls for local science and for new ontologies and epistemologies (critical realism), indigenous science, interpretive science, posthuman and postmaterialist science, de-colonizing sciences, science as a socially situated practice, and science based on feminist standpoint methodologies (Harding, 2005). Burawoy (2005, pp. 511–512) calls for a policy-oriented, nonelitist, organic public social science. Here the scholar collaborates with local communities of practice, neighborhood associations, and labor and social justice movements. These alternatives to traditional positivist science improve the status of qualitative inquiry in the current political environment. They offer strategic forms of resistance to the narrow, hegemonic science-based research (SBR) framework. It is no longer possible to talk about a monolithic model of science. The mantel of authority has been tarnished.

History, Politics, and Paradigms

To better understand where we are today and to better grasp current criticisms, it is useful to return to the so-called paradigm[6] wars of the 1980s, which resulted in the serious crippling of quantitative research in education. Critical pedagogy, critical theorists, and feminist analyses fostered struggles to acquire power and cultural capital for the poor, non-Whites, women, and gays (Gage, 1989). A legacy of the 1980s paradigm wars was a ready-made institutional apparatus that privileged a resurgent postpositivism, involving experimentalism, mixed methodologies, and the intrusion of the government into the spaces of research methods (Lather, 2004).[7]

These institutional structures converged when neoliberalism, postpositivism, and the audit-accountability culture took aim on education and schooling. The interrelationships between these structures are complex and by no means well understood. Clearly, the financial-auditing mechanism has been substantively and technically linked with the methodology of accountability (Skrla & Scheurich, 2004). Neoliberals added one more piece to their puzzle when they understood that with a knowledge-based economy, there was a need to produce better educated workers for the global economy. The watchwords: *audits, efficiency, high-stakes assessment, test-based accountability,* and *SBR* (see Spooner [Chapter 40] and Cheek [Chapter 13], this volume). It was only a matter of time before this apparatus would take aim at qualitative research and create protocols for evaluating qualitative research studies.

The Post-1980s Paradigm War Redux

Charles Teddlie and Abbas Tashakkori's (2003) history is helpful here. They expand the time frame of the 1980s war to embrace at least three paradigm wars, or periods of conflict: the postpositivist-constructivist war against positivism (1970–1990)[8]; the conflict between competing postpositivist, constructivist, and critical theory paradigms (1990–2005); and the recent conflict between evidence-based methodologists and the mixed-methods, interpretive, and critical theory schools (2005–present).[9]

According to Gage (1989), during the 1980s, the paradigm wars resulted in the demise of quantitative research in education, a victim of attacks from anti-naturalists, interpretivists, and critical theorists. Ethnographic studies flourished. The cultural appropriateness of schooling, critical pedagogy, and critical theorist and feminist analyses fostered struggles for power and cultural capital for the poor, non-Whites, women, and gays (Gage, 1989). (Gage imagined two alternative paradigms, pragmatism and Popper's piecemeal social engineering.)

Egon Guba's (1990) *The Paradigm Dialog* signaled an end to the 1980s wars. Postpositivists, constructivists, and critical theorists talked to one another, working through issues connected to ethics, field studies, praxis, criteria, knowledge accumulation, truth, significance, graduate training, values, and politics. By the early 1990s, there was an explosion of published work on qualitative research; handbooks and new journals appeared. Special interest groups committed to particular paradigms appeared, some with their own journals.[10]

The second paradigm conflict occurred within the mixed-methods community and involved disputes "between individuals convinced of the 'paradigm purity' of their own position" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003a, p. 7). Purists extended and repeated the argument that quantitative and qualitative methods and postpositivism and the other "isms" cannot be combined because of the differences between their underlying paradigm assumptions. On the methodological front, the incompatibility thesis was challenged by those who invoked triangulation as a way of combining multiple methods to study the same phenomenon (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003, p. 7; but see Flick, Chapter 19, this volume). This ushered in a new round of arguments and debates over paradigm superiority.

A soft, apolitical pragmatic paradigm emerged in the post-1990 period. Suddenly, quantitative and qualitative methods became compatible, and researchers could use both in their empirical inquiries (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). Proponents made appeals to a "what works" pragmatic argument, contending that "no incompatibility between quantitative and qualitative methods exists at either the level of practice or that of epistemology . . . there are thus no good reasons for educational researchers to fear forging ahead with 'what works'" (Howe, 1988, p. 16). Of course, what works is more than an empirical question. It involves the politics of evidence.

This is the space that evidence-based research (SBR) entered. It became the battleground of the third war, "the current upheaval and argument about 'scientific' research in the scholarly world of education" (C. Clark & Scheurich, 2008; Scheurich & Clark, 2006, p. 401). Enter

Teddlie and Tashakkori's third moment: Mixed methods and evidence-based inquiry meet one another in a soft center. C. Wright Mills (1959) would say this is a space for abstracted empiricism. Inquiry is cut off from politics. Biography and history recede into the background. Technological rationality prevails. The watchwords: *audits, efficiency, high-stakes assessment, test-based accountability,* and *SBR.*

The Third Moment and the New Paradigm Dialogues

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003, p. ix) use the term *third methodological moment* to describe an epistemological position that evolved out of the discussions and controversies associated with the 1980s paradigm wars. The third moment mediates quantitative and qualitative disputes by finding a third or middle ground. Extending Teddlie and Tashakkori, there are in fact two distinct versions of the third moment. There is the mixed-methods version of the moment, and there is a somewhat more radical position. This is the version that endorses paradigm proliferation, a version anchored in the critical interpretive social science traditions (Donmoyer, 2006).

Version One: In the first version of the third moment, incompatibility and incommensurability theses are rejected. Ironically, as this discourse evolved, the complementary strengths thesis emerged and is now accepted by many in the mixed-methods community. Here is where history starts to be rewritten. That is, multiple paradigms can be used in the same mixed-methods inquiry (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003, p. 23). At the same time, the mixed- or multiple-methods approach gained acceptance. This seemed to extend the triangulation arguments of the 1970s. Thus, the demise of the single theoretical and/or methodological paradigm was celebrated (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003, p. 24; but see Flick, Chapter 19, this volume).

For the mixed-methods advocates, the residues of the first paradigm war are positive and negative. The demise of the incompatibility thesis, as it applied to methods and paradigms, was "a major catalyst in the development of the mixed methods as a distinct third methodological moment" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). Regrettably, for the mixed-methods movement, a lingering negative legacy of the 1980s wars is the tendency of students and graduate programs to still consider themselves as QUALS or QUANS. The mixed-methods discourse also introduced complex discussions involving design typologies, logistics, validity, data, standards, inferences, and findings that can be generalized from studies that combine quantitative (QUAN) and qualitative (QUAL) methodologies. It was as if inquiry was disconnected from content, method prevailed, and issues of justice or of doing science that matters receded into the background.

Symonds and Gorard go so far as to call for the death of mixed methods, hoping that this death will lead to the rebirth of research as a craft (Symonds & Gorard, 2008, p. 17; 2010). Flick (Chapter 19, this volume) also questions the future of mixed-methods research:

> The fashion and attraction of mixed methods will come to an end once funders, researchers, publishers, and finally its protagonists realize that it is less a solution to all kinds of problems but just another methodological approach with limits and weaknesses. One reason for such an insight can be the overrating of such a concept—who is sitting in review committees in medical sciences, for example, is confronted with a growing number of proposals that include qualitative research as part of a mixed-methods approach, although the knowledge about this kind of research is very superficial. In the long run, this may lead to the insight that, if combinations of methods are necessary, this should be done on more solid ground such as a developed concept of triangulation could provide. That would require that the concept of triangulation is further developed more offensively and propagated. (p. 458)

Version Two: A third formation within the third moment. This is the space primarily filled by the many branches of the global interpretive community. Scholars in this space are working in three directions at the same time. On one hand, they are critically engaging and critiquing the SBR movement. They are emphasizing the political and moral consequences of the narrow views of science that are embedded in the movement (St. Pierre & Roulston, 2006). They are asking questions about the politics of evidence, about how work can be done for social justice purposes.

A second group of scholars celebrates paradigm proliferation (Donmoyer, 2006) and the profusion of interpretive communities. They do not necessarily endorse the incompatibility theses that are so important for the mixed-methods community. They understand that each community has differing interpretive criteria. This discourse functions as a firewall of sorts against the narrow view of nonpositivism held by SBR authors.

Still a third group of scholars is resisting the implementation of narrow views of ethics, human subject review boards, institutional review boards (IRBs), informed consent, and biomedical models of inquiry (see Christians, Chapter 3, this volume). Many campus-level IRBs attempt to manage qualitative research. This interferes with academic freedom; that is, IRB panels not only regulate who gives informed consent but also make stipulations concerning SBR research design and researcher-subject relationships.

Kvale (2008) and Brinkmann and Kvale (2008) observe that for the qualitative community, there is often a tendency to "portray qualitative inquiry as inherently ethical, or at least more ethical than quantitative research" (p. 10; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2008, p. 262). They call this qualitative ethicism—that is, the inclination to see research within ethical terms and to assert that it is more ethical. The dangers with qualitative ethicism are twofold. It can lead to an uncritical romanticizing of qualitative research. At the same time, it can direct attention away from the ways in which qualitative inquiry—focus groups, open-ended interviewing, ethnography—is used to sell products in the consumer marketplace.

Performance, Affect, and the New Materialisms

Within the interpretive tradition, there is a fourth formation. It represents a break from earlier traditions and moves from posthumanist to nonrepresentational theories (Vannini, 2015), to relational materialisms, to alternative ontologies of number and new regimes of counting and computation, multiple versions of the nonhuman turn (Clough, 2016–2017; de Freitas et al., 2016).

A rupture: Coole and Frost (2010) describe three themes that frame this discourse:

> First is an ontological reorientation that is posthumanist in the sense that it conceives of matter itself as exhibiting agency. Second are biopolitical, and bioethical issues concerning the status of life and of the human. Third, the new scholarship reengages political economy emphasizing the relationship between the material details of everyday life and broader geopolitical and socioeconomic structure. (pp. 6–7, paraphrase)

For the new materialists, terms such as *agency, voice, subject, experience, presence, self, narrative, subjectivity, meaning, mind, consciousness, data, analysis, interpretation,* and *science* are to be used carefully, if at all. They privilege discourse, mind, and culture over matter, body, and nature. They are the remnants of an outdated humanism; their continued use reproduces a postpositivist interpretive discourse (see MacLure, 2015). The materialist critique opens up new spaces, new terms, post-human bodies, new ontologies of being and inquiry, a move away from epistemology, new views of voice, presence and performance, the mangle of post-human bodies, new body-machine-material entanglements (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 123). The materialists

challenge traditional qualitative researchers who rely on neopositivist and postpositivist traditional ethnographic approaches to rethink their assumptions.

The ontological and epistemological assumptions of the new materialists and the traditional, classical ethnographers are vastly different, making the approaches incompatible (Clarke et al., 2015, p. 40). Kuntz (2015) reminds us that "the new materialism presents productive ontological, epistemological, methodological and ethical possibilities that cannot be ignored, most importantly are its implications for truth-telling with the aim of *intervening within normative practices if knowing and being*" (p. 82, paraphrase). The materialist turn opens up spaces for the "notion of post-method, the spaces of the post-qualitative, methodologies without boundaries, methodologies that may go anywhere, methodologies that create a sense of uncertainty, mourning and loss, methodologies doing social justice work, truth telling for social change" (pp. 12–13, 82, paraphrase).

A new paradigm is on the horizon, one that doubles back on itself and wanders in spaces that have not yet been named. It celebrates the implications for qualitative methodology of the recent (re)turn to materiality across the social sciences and humanities (MacLure, 2015, pp. 94–95). The "new materialisms" promise to go beyond the old antagonisms of nature and culture, science and the social, discourse and matter. While the turmoil now going on in the third (or fourth) moment seems to repeat 30-year-old arguments, some progress has been made. Moral and epistemological discourses now go on, side by side. This was not the case 30 years ago. Race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, the research rights of indigenous peoples, Whiteness, and queer studies are taken-for-granted topics today.

Resistances to Qualitative Studies

The academic and disciplinary resistances to qualitative research illustrate the politics embedded in this field of discourse. The challenges to qualitative research are many. To better understand these criticisms, it is necessary to "distinguish analytically the political (or external) role of [qualitative] methodology from the procedural (or internal) one" (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2004, p. 7). Politics situate methodology within and outside the academy. Procedural issues define how qualitative methodology is used to produce knowledge about the world (Seale et al., 2004, p. 7). Often, the political and the procedural intersect. Politicians and hard scientists call qualitative researchers *journalists* or "soft" scientists. Their work is termed unscientific, only exploratory, or subjective. It is called criticism and not theory, or it is interpreted politically, as a disguised version of Marxism or secular humanism.

These political and procedural resistances reflect an uneasy awareness that the interpretive traditions of qualitative research commit one to a critique of the positivist or postpositivist project. But the positivist resistance to qualitative research goes beyond the "ever-present desire to maintain a distinction between hard science and soft scholarship" (Carey, 1989, p. 99). The experimental (positivist) sciences (e.g., physics, chemistry, economics, and psychology) are often seen as the crowning achievements of Western civilization, and in their practices, it is assumed that "truth" can transcend opinion and personal bias (Carey, 1989, p. 99; Schwandt, 1997, p. 309). Qualitative research is seen as an assault on this tradition, whose adherents often retreat into a "value-free objectivist science" (Carey, 1989, p. 104) model to defend their position. The positivists seldom attempt to make explicit and critique the "moral and political commitments in their own contingent work" (Carey, 1989, p. 104; Guba et al., Chapter 5, this volume).

Positivists and postpositivists further allege that the so-called new experimental qualitative researchers write fiction, not science, and have no way of verifying their truth statements. Ethnographic poetry and fiction signal the death of empirical science, and there is little to be gained by attempting to engage in moral criticism. These critics presume a stable, unchanging

reality that can be studied with the empirical methods of objective social science (see Huber, 1995). The province of qualitative research, accordingly, is the world of lived experience, for this is where individual belief and action intersect with culture. Under this model, there is no preoccupation with discourse and method as material interpretive practices that constitute representation and description. This is the textual, narrative turn rejected by the positivists. The opposition to positive science by the poststructuralists is seen, then, as an attack on reason and truth. At the same time, the positivist science attack on qualitative research is regarded as an attempt to legislate one version of truth over another.

The Legacies of Scientific Research

Writing about scientific research, including qualitative research, from the vantage point of the colonized, a position that she chooses to privilege, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) states that "the term 'research' is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism." She continues, "The word itself is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary. . . . It is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism" (p. 1), with the ways in which "knowledge about indigenous peoples was collected, classified, and then represented back to the West" (p. 1). This dirty word stirs up anger, silence, distrust. "It is so powerful that indigenous people even write poetry about research" (Smith, 1999, p. 1). It is one of colonialism's most sordid legacies, she says.

Frederick Erickson's Chapter 2 of this volume charts many key features of this painful history. He notes with some irony that qualitative research in sociology and anthropology was born out of concern to understand the exotic, often dark-skinned "other." Of course, there were colonialists long before there were anthropologists and ethnographers. Nonetheless, there would be no colonial—and now no neocolonial—history were it not for this investigative mentality that turned the dark-skinned other into the object of the ethnographer's gaze. From the very beginning, qualitative research was implicated in a racist project.

Historical Moments

Qualitative research is a field of inquiry in its own right. It crosscuts disciplines, fields, and subject matter. A complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts, and assumptions surrounds the term. These include the traditions associated with foundationalism, positivism, postfoundationalism, postpositivism, poststructuralism, postmodernism, posthumanism, and the many qualitative research perspectives and methods connected to cultural and interpretive studies (the chapters in Part II of this volume take up these paradigms). There are separate and detailed literatures on the many methods and approaches that fall under the category of qualitative research, such as case study, politics and ethics, participatory inquiry, interviewing, participant observation, visual methods, and interpretive analysis.

In North America, qualitative inquiry operates in a complex historical field that crosscuts eight to nine historical moments. We define them as the traditional (1900–1950), the modernist or golden age (1950–1970), blurred genres (1970–1980), the paradigm wars (1980–1985), the crisis of representation (1986–1990), the postmodern (1990–1995), postexperimental inquiry (1995–2000), the methodologically contested present (2000–2004), paradigm proliferation (2005–2010), and the fractured, posthumanist present that battles managerialism in the audit-driven academy (2010–2015), an uncertain, utopian future, where critical inquiry finds its voice in the public arena (2016–). These moments overlap in the present (see Clarke et al., 2015, pp. 21–43, for an expanded treatment of this history).

This historical model has been termed a progress narrative by Alasuutari (2004, pp. 599–600) and Seale et al. (2004, p. 2). The critics assert that we believe that the most recent moment is

the most up-to-date, the avant-garde, the cutting edge (Alasuutari, 2004, p. 601). Naturally, we dispute this reading. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003) have modified our historical periods to fit their historical analysis of the major moments in the emergence of mixed methods in the past century.

Successive waves of epistemological theorizing move across these moments. The traditional period is associated with the positivist, foundational paradigm. The modernist or golden age and blurred genres moments are connected to the appearance of postpositivist arguments. At the same time, a variety of new interpretive, qualitative perspectives were taken up, including hermeneutics, structuralism, semiotics, phenomenology, cultural studies, and feminism. In the blurred genre phase, the humanities became central resources for critical, interpretive theory and the qualitative research project broadly conceived. The researcher became a bricoleur (as discussed later), learning how to borrow from many different disciplines.

The blurred genres phase produced the next stage, the crisis of representation. Here researchers struggled with how to locate themselves and their subjects in reflexive texts. A kind of methodological diaspora took place, a two-way exodus. Humanists migrated to the social sciences, searching for new social theory and new ways to study popular culture and its local ethnographic contexts. Social scientists turned to the humanities, hoping to learn how to do complex structural and poststructural readings of social texts. From the humanities, social scientists also learned how to produce texts that refused to be read in simplistic, linear, incontrovertible terms. The line between a text and a context blurred. In the postmodern experimental moment, researchers continued to move away from foundational and quasifoundational criteria. Alternative evaluative criteria were sought, ones that might prove evocative, moral, critical, and rooted in local understandings.

Definitional Issues: Research Versus Inquiry

Any definition of qualitative research must work within this complex historical field. Qualitative research means different things in each of these moments. Nonetheless, an initial, generic definition can be offered. *Qualitative research* is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials—case study, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, artifacts, and cultural texts and productions, along with observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. Accordingly, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand. It is understood, however, that each practice makes the world visible in a different way. Hence, there is frequently a commitment to using more than one interpretive practice in any study.

Following the ontological turn in materialist discourse, Dimitriadis (2016) makes an important distinction between inquiry and research. Throughout the paradigm wars, qualitative researchers fought for a place at the table, resisting positivist domination from the SBR machine. They worked from a long and distinguished humanist, interpretive tradition, a tradition that extended from Max Weber and George Herbert Mead to Clifford Geertz and Victor Turner. It becomes fully robust in the recent present moment, with tangled up versions of race

theory, feminist theories, class theories, critical theory, and empowerment discourses, all the way to autoethnography. We got messy texts, texts with multiple voices, and interrogations of terms like *truth, validity, voice,* and *data*. Suddenly qualitative research is carrying the weight of the interpretive tradition on its shoulders.

Dimitriadis (2016) wonders if it would be better to retire the word *research* altogether and entertain for the moment the use of the word *inquiry. Inquiry* does not carry the trappings of the word *research,* which is tainted by a lingering positivism. *Inquiry* implies an open-endedness, uncertainty, ambiguity, praxis, pedagogies of liberation, freedom, resistance.

We could go one step further and make the performance turn, the human-being-as performer, not as researcher or inquirer. A performative project, informed by research and inquiry, involves acting in the world so as to make it visible for social transformations. This is a postqualitative, postresearch-inquiry-world. It is a world defined by risk taking by textual experimentation, by ontologies of transformation, a world defined by acts of love, struggles, and resistance, a world shaped by dramatic radical acts of activism (Madison, 2010). Saldaña (2005) describes ethnodrama as

> a word joining ethnography and drama. It is a written play script consisting of dramatized, significant selections of narrative collected from interview transcripts, participant observation field notes, journal entries, personal memories/experiences, print and media artifacts, and . . . historical documents. Simply put, this is dramatizing the data (Saldaña, 2011, p. 13; 2005, pp. 1–2). *Ethnotheatre* joins ethnography and theatre, using the traditional craft and artistic techniques of theatre production to mount for an audience a live or mediated performance event of research participants' experiences and/or the researcher's interpretations of them. (p. 1)

Madison (2012) reminds us,

> If we accept the notion of human beings as *homo performans* and therefore as a performing species, performance becomes necessary for our survival. That is we recognize and create ourselves as Others through performance . . . in this process culture and performance become inextricably interconnected and performance is a constant presence in our daily lives. (p. 166, paraphrase)

This is why one community of postqualitative researchers/inquirers has turned to a performance-based vocabulary.

The Qualitative Researcher-as-Bricoleur

Multiple gendered images may be brought to the qualitative researcher: scientist, naturalist, fieldworker, journalist, social critic, artist, performer, jazz musician, filmmaker, quilt maker, essayist. The many methodological practices of qualitative research may be viewed as soft science, journalism, ethnography, ethnotheatre, ethnodrama, bricolage, quilt making, or montage. The researcher, in turn, may be seen as a *bricoleur.* There are many kinds of bricoleurs—interpretive, narrative, theoretical, political. The interpretive bricoleur produces a bricolage, that is, a pieced-together set of representations that are fitted to the specifics of a complex situation. "The solution (bricolage) which is the result of the bricoleur's method is an [emergent] construction" (Weinstein & Weinstein, 1991, p. 161), which changes and takes new forms as different tools, methods, and techniques of representation and interpretation are added to the puzzle. Nelson, Treichler, and Grossberg (1992) describe the methodology of cultural studies "as a bricolage. Its choice of practice, that is, is pragmatic, strategic, and self-reflexive" (p. 2).

The methodological bricoleur is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks, ranging from interviewing to intensive self-reflection and introspection. The theoretical bricoleur reads widely and is knowledgeable about the many interpretive paradigms (feminism, Marxism, cultural studies, constructivism, queer theory) that can be brought to any particular problem. He or she may not, however, feel that paradigms can be mingled or synthesized. If paradigms are overarching philosophical systems denoting particular ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies, one cannot move easily from one to the other. Paradigms represent belief systems that attach the user to a particular worldview. Perspectives, in contrast, are less well-developed systems, and it can be easier to move between them. The researcher-as-bricoleur-theorist works between and within competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms.

The interpretive bricoleur understands that research is an interactive process shaped by one's personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity and those of the people in the setting. Critical bricoleurs stress the dialectical and hermeneutic nature of interdisciplinary inquiry, knowing that the boundaries between traditional disciplines no longer hold (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 683). The political bricoleur knows that science is power, for all research findings have political implications. There is no value-free science. A civic social science based on a politics of hope is sought (Lincoln, 1999). The gendered, narrative bricoleur also knows that researchers all tell stories about the worlds they have studied. Thus, the narratives or stories scientists tell are accounts couched and framed within specific storytelling traditions, often defined as paradigms (e.g., positivism, postpositivism, constructivism). The product of the interpretive bricoleur's labor is a complex, quilt-like bricolage, a reflexive collage or montage; a set of fluid, interconnected images and representations. This interpretive structure is like a quilt, a performance text, or a sequence of representations connecting the parts to the whole.

Qualitative Research as a Site of Multiple Interpretive Practices

Qualitative research, as a set of interpretive activities, privileges no single methodological practice over another. As a site of discussion or discourse, qualitative research is difficult to define clearly. It has no theory or paradigm that is distinctly its own. As Part II of this volume reveals, multiple theoretical paradigms claim use of qualitative research methods and strategies, from constructivism to cultural studies, feminism, Marxism, and ethnic models of study. Qualitative research is used in many separate disciplines, as we will discuss below. It does not belong to a single discipline.

Nor does qualitative research have a distinct set of methods or practices that are entirely its own. Qualitative researchers use semiotics, narrative, content, discourse, archival, and phonemic analysis—even statistics, tables, graphs, and numbers. They also draw on and use the approaches, methods, and techniques of ethnomethodology, phenomenology, hermeneutics, feminism, rhizomatics, deconstructionism, ethnographies, interviews, psychoanalysis, cultural studies, survey research, and participant observation, among others. No specific method or practice can be privileged over another. Each method bears the traces of its own disciplinary history.

The many histories that surround each method or research strategy reveal how multiple uses and meanings are brought to each practice. Textual analyses in literary studies, for example, often treat texts as self-contained systems. On the other hand, a cultural studies or feminist perspective reads a text in terms of its location within a historical moment marked by a particular gender, race, or class ideology. A cultural studies use of ethnography would bring a set of understandings from feminism, postmodernism, and postructuralism to the project. These understandings would not be shared by mainstream postpositivist sociologists. Similarly,

postpositivist and poststructural historians bring different understandings and uses to the methods and findings of historical research. These tensions and contradictions are evident in many of the chapters in this handbook.

These separate and multiple uses and meanings of the methods of qualitative research make it difficult to agree on any essential definition of the field, for it is never just one thing. Still, a definition must be offered. We borrow from and paraphrase Nelson et al.'s (1992) attempt to define cultural studies:

> Qualitative research/inquiry is an interdisciplinary, transdiciplinary, and sometimes counterdisciplinary field. It crosscuts the humanities, as well as the social and the physical sciences. Qualitative research is many things at the same time. It is multiparadigmatic in focus. Its practitioners are sensitive to the value of the multimethod approach. They are committed to the naturalistic perspective and to the interpretive understanding of human experience. At the same time, the field is inherently political and shaped by multiple ethical and political positions.
>
> Qualitative research/inquiry embraces two tensions at the same time. On the one hand, it is drawn to a broad, interpretive, postexperimental, postmodern, feminist, and critical sensibility. On the other hand, it is drawn to more narrowly defined positivist, postpositivist, humanistic, and naturalistic conceptions of human experience and its analysis. Furthermore, these tensions can be combined in the same project, bringing both postmodern and naturalistic, or both critical and humanistic, perspectives to bear, often in conflict with one another. (p. 4)

This rather awkward statement means that qualitative research is a set of complex interpretive practices. As a constantly shifting historical formation, it embraces tensions and contradictions, including disputes over its methods and the forms its findings and interpretations take. The field sprawls between and crosscuts all of the human disciplines, even including, in some cases, the physical sciences. Its practitioners are variously committed to modern, postmodern, and postexperimental sensibilities and the approaches to social research that these sensibilities imply.

Politics and Reemergent Scientism

In the first decade of this new century, the scientifically based research movement (SBR) initiated by the National Research Council (NRC) created a new and hostile political environment for qualitative research (Howe, 2009). Connected to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), SBR embodied a reemergent scientism (Maxwell, 2004), a positivist evidence-based epistemology. Researchers were encouraged to employ "rigorous, systematic, and objective methodology to obtain reliable and valid knowledge" (Ryan & Hood, 2004, p. 80). The preferred methodology has well-defined causal models using independent and dependent variables. Causal models are examined in the context of randomized controlled experiments, which allow replication and generalization (Ryan & Hood, 2004, p. 81).

Under this framework, qualitative research becomes suspect. There are no well-defined variables or causal models. Observations and measurements are not based on random assignment to experimental groups. Hard evidence is not generated by these methods. At best, case study, interview, and ethnographic methods offer descriptive materials that can be tested with experimental methods. The epistemologies of critical race, queer, postcolonial, feminist, and postmodern theories are rendered useless, relegated at best to the category of scholarship, not science (Ryan & Hood, 2004, p. 81; St. Pierre & Roulston, 2006).

Critics of the SBR movement argued that the movement endorsed a narrow view of science, celebrated a "neoclassical experimentalism that is a throwback to the Campbell-Stanley era and its dogmatic adherence to an exclusive reliance on quantitative methods" (Howe, 2004, p. 42).

Neoclassical experimentalists extoled evidence-based "medical research as the model for educational research, particularly the random clinical trial" (Howe, 2004, p. 48). But the random clinical trial—dispensing a pill—is quite unlike "dispensing a curriculum" (Howe, 2004, p. 48), nor can the "effects" of the educational experiment be easily measured, unlike a "10-point reduction in diastolic blood pressure" (Howe, 2004, p. 48).

The SBR movement created a second-class place for qualitative methods in mixed-methods experimental designs (Howe, 2004, p. 49). V. L. P. Clark, Creswell, Green, and Shope (2008) define mixed-methods research "as a design for collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a study in order to understand a research problem" (p. 364). The call for mixed methods presumes a methodological hierarchy, with quantitative methods at the top, relegating qualitative methods to "a largely auxiliary role in pursuit of the *technocratic* aim of accumulating knowledge of 'what works'" (Howe, 2004, pp. 53–54). The traditional mixed-methods movement takes qualitative methods out of their natural home, which is within the critical interpretive framework (Howe, 2004, p. 54). It divides inquiry into dichotomous categories, exploration versus confirmation. Qualitative work is assigned to the first category, quantitative research to the second (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003, p. 15). Like the classic experimental model, this movement excludes stakeholders from dialogue and active participation in the research process. Doing so weakens its democratic and dialogical dimensions and decreases the likelihood that previously silenced voices will be heard (Howe, 2004, pp. 56–57).

The Pragmatic Criticisms of Anti-Foundationalism

Clive Seale et al. (2004) contest what they regard as the excesses of an anti-methodological, "anything goes," romantic postmodernism that is associated the poststructural, interpretive project. They assert that too often, the approach produces "low quality qualitative research and research results that are quite stereotypical and close to common sense" (p. 2). In contrast, they propose a practice-based, pragmatic approach that places research practice at the center. Research involves an engagement "with a variety of things and people: research materials . . . social theories, philosophical debates, values, methods, tests . . . research participants" (p. 2). (Actually, this approach is quite close to our own, especially our view of the bricoleur and bricolage.)

Their situated methodology rejects the anti-foundational claim that there are only partial truths, that the dividing line between fact and fiction has broken down (Seale et al., 2004, p. 3; for parallel criticism, see Adler & Adler, 2008; Atkinson & Delamont, 2006; Hammersly, 2008). They believe that this dividing line has not collapsed and that we should not accept stories if they do not accord with the best available facts. Oddly, these pragmatic procedural arguments reproduce a variant of the evidence-based model and its criticisms of poststructural performative sensibilities. They can be used to provide political support for the methodological marginalization of many of the positions advanced in this handbook.

This complex political terrain defines the many traditions and strands of qualitative research: the British and its presence in other national contexts; the American pragmatic, naturalistic, and interpretive traditions in sociology, anthropology, communications, and education; the German and French phenomenological, hermeneutic, semiotic, Marxist, structural, and poststructural perspectives; feminist, queer, African American, Latino, and critical disability studies; and studies of indigenous and aboriginal cultures. The politics of qualitative research create a tension that informs each of the above traditions. This tension itself is constantly being reexamined and interrogated, as qualitative research confronts a changing historical world, new intellectual positions, and its own institutional and academic conditions.

In the meantime, battles between the SBR (quantitative) and anti-SBR (qualitative) camps continue. Uwe Flick (2002) summarizes,

> The quantitative approach has been used for purposes of isolating "causes and effects . . . operationalizing theoretical relations . . . [and] measuring and . . . quantifying phenomena . . . allowing the generalization of findings" (p. 3). But today, doubt is cast on such projects. Rapid social change and the resulting diversification of life worlds are increasingly confronting social researchers with new social contexts and perspectives . . . traditional deductive methodologies . . . are failing . . . thus research is increasingly forced to make use of inductive strategies instead of starting from theories and testing them . . . knowledge and practice are studied as local knowledge and practice. (p. 2; see also the discussion of numeracy and the ontology of numbers above)

Tensions Within Qualitative Research

Positivist, postpositivist, poststructural, and postqualitative differences define and shape the discourses of qualitative research. Realists and postpositivists within the interpretive, qualitative research tradition criticize poststructuralists for taking the textual, narrative turn. These critics contend that such work is navel-gazing. It produces the conditions "for a dialogue of the deaf between itself and the community" (Silverman, 1997, p. 240). Those who attempt to capture the point of view of the interacting subject in the world are accused of naive humanism, of reproducing a Romantic impulse that elevates the experiential to the level of the authentic (Silverman, 1997, p. 248). Martyn Hammersley (2008, p. 1) goes so far as to argue that qualitative research is facing a crisis symbolized by an ill-conceived postmodernist image of qualitative research, which is dismissive of traditional forms of inquiry. He feels that "unless this dynamic can be interrupted the future of qualitative research is endangered" (p. 11). Still others argue that lived experience is ignored by those who take the textual, performance turn. David Snow and Calvin Morrill (1995) argue that "this performance turn, like the preoccupation with discourse and storytelling, will take us further from the field of social action and the real dramas of everyday life and thus signal the death knell of ethnography as an empirically grounded enterprise" (p. 361). Of course, we disagree.

Paul Atkinson and Sara Delamont (2006), two qualitative scholars in the traditional, classic Chicago school tradition, offer a corrective. They remain committed to qualitative (and quantitative) research "*provided that they are conducted rigorously and contribute to robustly useful knowledge*" (p. 749). Of course, these scholars are committed to social policy initiatives at some level. But, for them, the postmodern image of qualitative inquiry threatens and undermines the value of traditional qualitative inquiry. Atkinson and Delamont exhort qualitative researchers to "think hard about whether their investigations are the best social science they could be" (p. 749). Patricia Adler and Peter Adler (2008) implore the radical postmodernists to "give up the project for the good of the discipline and for the good of society" (p. 23).

Hammersley (2008, pp. 134–136, 144) extends the traditional critique, finding little value in the work of ethnographic postmodernists and literary ethnographers. This new tradition, he asserts, legitimates speculative theorizing, celebrates obscurity, and abandons the primary task of inquiry, which is to produce truthful knowledge about the world (p. 144). Poststructural inquirers get it from all sides. The criticisms, Carolyn Ellis (2009, p. 231) observes, fall into three overlapping categories. Our work (1) is too aesthetic and not sufficiently realistic and does not provide hard data, (2) is too realistic and not mindful of poststructural criticisms concerning the "real" self and its place in the text, and (3) is not sufficiently aesthetic, or literary; that is, we are second-rate writers and poets (p. 232).

The Politics of Evidence

The critics' model of science is anchored in the belief that there is an empirical world that is obdurate and talks back to investigators. This is an empirical science based on evidence that corroborates interpretations. This is a science that returns to and is lodged in the real, a science that stands outside nearly all of the turns listed above; this is Chicago school neo-postpositivism.

Contrast this certain science to the position of those who are preoccupied with the politics of evidence. Jan Morse (2006; also Morse, Chapter 35, this volume), for example, reminds us that evidence is not just something that is out there. Evidence has to be produced, constructed, represented. Furthermore, the politics of evidence cannot be separated from the ethics of evidence). Under the Jan Morse model, representations of empirical reality become problematic. Objective representation of reality is impossible. Each representation calls into place a different set of ethical questions regarding evidence, including how it is obtained and what it means. But surely a middle ground can be found. If there is a return to the spirit of the paradigm dialogues of the 1980s, then multiple representations of a situation should be encouraged, perhaps placed alongside one another.

Indeed, the interpretive camp is not antiscience per se. We do something different. We believe in multiple forms of science: soft, hard, strong, feminist, interpretive, critical, realist, postrealist, and posthumanist. In a sense, the traditional and postmodern projects are incommensurate. We interpret, we perform, we interrupt, we challenge, and we believe nothing is ever certain. We want performance texts that quote history back to itself, texts that focus on epiphanies; on the intersection of biography, history, culture, and politics; on turning-point moments in people's lives. The critics are correct on this point. We have a political orientation that is radical, democratic, and interventionist. Many postpositivists share these politics.

Qualitative Research as Process

Three interconnected, generic activities define the qualitative research process. They go by a variety of different labels, including theory, method, and analysis or ontology, epistemology, and methodology. Behind these terms stands the personal biography of the researcher, who speaks from a particular class, gendered, racial, cultural, and ethnic community perspective. The gendered, multiculturally situated researcher approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology), which are then examined (methodology, analysis) in specific ways. That is, empirical materials bearing on the question are collected and then analyzed and written about. Every researcher speaks from within a distinct interpretive community, which configures, in its special way, the multicultural, gendered components of the research act.

In this volume, we treat these generic activities under five headings or phases: the researcher and the researched as multicultural subjects, major paradigms and interpretive perspectives, research strategies, methods of collecting and analyzing empirical materials, and the art of interpretation. Behind and within each of these phases stands the biographically situated researcher. This individual enters the research process from inside an interpretive community. This community has its own historical research traditions, which constitute a distinct point of view. This perspective leads the researcher to adopt particular views of the "other" who is studied. At the same time, the politics and the ethics of research must also be considered, for these concerns permeate every phase of the research process.

The Other as Research Subject

From its turn-of-the-century birth in modern, interpretive form, qualitative research has been haunted by a double-faced ghost. On one hand, qualitative researchers have assumed that qualified, competent observers could, with objectivity, clarity, and precision, report on their own observations of the social world, including the experiences of others. Second, researchers have held to the belief in a real subject or real individual who is present in the world and able, in some form, to report on his or her experiences. So armed, researchers could blend their own observations with the self-reports provided by subjects through interviews, life story, personal experience, and case study documents.

These two beliefs have led qualitative researchers across disciplines to seek a method that would allow them to record accurately their own observations while also uncovering the meanings their subjects brought to their life experiences. This method would rely on the subjective verbal and written expressions of meaning given by the individuals, which are studied as windows into the inner life of the person. Since Wilhelm Dilthey (1900/1976), this search for a method has led to a perennial focus in the human disciplines on qualitative, interpretive methods.

Recently, as noted above, this position and its beliefs have come under assault. Poststructuralists and postmodernists have contributed to the understanding that there is no clear window into the inner life of an individual. Any gaze is always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity. There are no objective observations, only observations socially situated in the worlds of—and between—the observer and the observed. Subjects, or individuals, are seldom able to give full explanations of their actions or intentions; all they can offer are accounts or stories about what they did and why. No single method can grasp the subtle variations in ongoing human experience. Consequently, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive methods, always seeking better ways to make more understandable the worlds of experience that have been studied.

Table 1.1 depicts the relationships we see among the five phases that define the research process (the researcher, major paradigms, research strategies, methods of collecting and analyzing empirical materials, and the art, practices, and politics of interpretation). Behind all but one of these phases stands the biographically situated researcher. These five levels of activity, or practice, work their way through the biography of the researcher. We take them up in brief order here, for each phase is more fully discussed in the transition sections between the various parts of this volume.

Phase 1: The Researcher

Our remarks above indicate the depth and complexity of the traditional and applied qualitative research perspectives into which a socially situated researcher enters. These traditions locate the researcher in history, simultaneously guiding and constraining work that will be done in any specific study. This field has been constantly characterized by diversity and conflict, and these are its most enduring traditions. As a carrier of this complex and contradictory history, the researcher must also confront the ethics and politics of research (Christians, Chapter 3, this volume). It is no longer possible for the human disciplines to research the native, the indigenous other, in a spirit of value-free inquiry. Today, researchers struggle to develop situational and transsituational ethics that apply to all forms of the research act and its human-to-human relationships. We no longer have the option of deferring the decolonization project.

TABLE 1.1 The Research Process

Phase 1: The Researcher as a Multicultural Subject
History and research traditions
Conceptions of self and the other
The ethics and politics of research
Phase 2: Theoretical Paradigms and Perspectives
Positivism, postpositivism
Interpretivism, constructivism, hermeneutics
Feminism(s)
Racialized discourses
Critical theory, participatory and Marxist models
Cultural studies models
Queer theory
Postcolonialism
Postmaterialist
Phase 3: Research Strategies
Design
Case study
Performance ethnography
Ethnodrama/ethnotheatre
Constructionist analytics
Grounded theory, social justice inquiry
Triangulation
Life history, *testimonio*
Data and their problematics
Critical participatory action research
Phase 4: Methods of Collection and Analysis
Narrative inquiry
Observing in a surveilled world
Arts-based inquiry
The interview
Visual methods
Autoethnography
Ethnography in the digital Internet era
Analyzing talk and text
Focus group research
Thinking with theory
Collaborative inquiry

Phase 5: The Art, Practices, and Politics of Interpretation and Evaluation
Evidence, criteria, policy, politics
Rigor
Writing as a method of inquiry
The politics of evidence and emancipatory discourses
Qualitative evaluation
Qualitative research and global audit culture

Phase 2: Interpretive Paradigms

All qualitative researchers are philosophers in that "universal sense in which all human beings . . . are guided by highly abstract principles" (Bateson, 1972, p. 320). These principles combine beliefs about *ontology* (What kind of being is the human being? What is the nature of reality?), *epistemology* (What is the relationship between the inquirer and the known?), and *methodology* (How do we know the world or gain knowledge of it?) (see Guba, 1990, p. 18; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 14–15; Guba et al., Chapter 5, this volume). These beliefs shape how the qualitative researcher sees the world and acts in it. The researcher is "bound within a net of epistemological and ontological premises which—regardless of ultimate truth or falsity—become partially self-validating" (Bateson, 1972, p. 314).

The net that contains the researcher's epistemological, ontological, and methodological premises may be termed a *paradigm* (Guba, 1990, p. 17) or interpretive framework, a "basic set of beliefs that guides action" (Guba, 1990, p. 17). All research is interpretive: guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied. Some beliefs may be taken for granted, invisible, or only assumed, whereas others are highly problematic and controversial. Each interpretive paradigm makes particular demands on the researcher, including the questions that are asked and the interpretations that are brought to them.

At the most general level, five major interpretive paradigms structure qualitative research: positivist and postpositivist, critical, feminist, constructivist-interpretivist, and participatory-postmodern-poststructural. These five abstract paradigms (or figured worlds) become more complicated at the level of concrete specific interpretive communities. At this level, it is possible to identify not only the constructivist but also multiple versions of feminism (Afrocentric and poststructural), as well as specific ethnic, feminist, endarkened, social justice, Marxist, cultural studies, disability, and non-Western-Asian paradigms. These perspectives or paradigms are examined in Part II of this volume.

The paradigms examined in Part II work against or alongside (and some within) the positivist and postpositivist models. They all work within relativist ontologies (multiple constructed realities), interpretive epistemologies (the knower and known interact and shape one another), and interpretive, naturalistic methods.

Table 1.2 presents these paradigms and their assumptions, including their criteria for evaluating research, and the typical form that an interpretive or theoretical statement assumes in the paradigm.

Each paradigm is explored in considerable detail in Chapters 5 through 12. The positivist and postpositivist paradigms were discussed above. They work from within a realist and critical realist ontology and objective epistemologies, and they rely on experimental, quasi-experimental, survey, and rigorously defined qualitative methodologies.

TABLE 1.2 Interpretive Paradigms

Paradigm/Theory	Criteria	Form of Theory	Type of Narration
Positivist/ postpositivist	Internal, external validity	Logical-deductive, grounded	Scientific report
Constructivist	Trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, confirmability	Substantive-formal, standpoint	Interpretive case studies, ethnographic fiction
Feminist	Afrocentric, lived experience, dialogue, caring, accountability, race, class, gender, reflexivity, praxis, emotion, concrete grounding, embodied	Critical, standpoint	Essays, stories, experimental writing
Ethnic	Afrocentric, lived experience, dialogue, caring, accountability, race, class, gender	Standpoint, critical, historical	Essays, fables, dramas
Marxist	Emancipatory theory, falsifiability, dialogical, race, class, gender	Critical, historical, economic	Historical, economic, sociocultural analyses
Cultural studies	Cultural practices, praxis, social texts, subjectivities	Social criticism	Cultural theory-as-criticism, performance
Queer theory	Reflexivity, deconstruction	Social criticism, historical analysis	Theory-as-criticism, autobiography

The *constructivist paradigm* assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understandings), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures. Terms like *credibility, transferability, dependability,* and *confirmability* replace the usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity.

Feminist, ethnic, Marxist, cultural studies, queer theory, Asian, and disability models privilege a materialist-realist ontology; that is, the real world makes a material difference in terms of race, class, and gender. Subjectivist epistemologies and naturalistic methodologies (usually ethnographies) are also employed. Empirical materials and theoretical arguments are evaluated in terms of their emancipatory implications. Criteria from gender and racial communities (e.g., African American) may be applied (emotionality and feeling, caring, personal accountability, dialogue).

Poststructural feminist theories emphasize problems with the social text, its logic, and its inability to ever represent the world of lived experience fully (Olesen, Chapter 6, this volume; DeVault, Chapter 7, this volume). Positivist and postpositivist criteria of evaluation are replaced by other terms, including the reflexive, multivoiced text, which is grounded in the experiences of oppressed people. The cultural studies and queer theory paradigms are multifocused, with many different strands drawing from Marxism, feminism, and the postmodern sensibility (Saukko, Chapter 11, this volume; Alexander, Chapter 12, this volume). There is a tension between a humanistic cultural studies, which stresses lived experiences (meaning), and a more structural cultural studies project, which stresses the structural and material determinants and effects (race, class, gender) of experience. Of course, there are two sides to every coin; both sides are needed and are indeed critical. The cultural studies and queer theory paradigms use methods strategically, that is, as resources for understanding and producing resistances to local

structures of domination. Such scholars may do close textual readings and discourse analysis of cultural texts (Chase, Chapter 24, this volume; Finley, Chapter 25, this volume), as well as local, online, reflexive, and critical ethnographies (Markham, Chapter 29, this volume); open-ended interviewing; and participant observation. The focus is on how race, class, and gender are produced and enacted in historically specific situations.

Paradigm and personal history in hand, focused on a concrete empirical problem to examine, the researcher now moves to the next stage of the research process—namely, working with a specific strategy of inquiry.

Phase 3: Strategies of Inquiry and Interpretive Paradigms

Table 1.1 presents some of the major strategies of inquiry a researcher may use. Phase 3 begins with research design, which broadly conceived involves a clear focus on the research question, the purposes of the study, "what information most appropriately will answer specific research questions, and which strategies are most effective for obtaining it." A research design describes a flexible set of guidelines that connect theoretical paradigms, first, to strategies of inquiry and, second, to methods for collecting empirical material. A research design situates researchers in the empirical world and connects them to specific sites, people, groups, institutions, and bodies of relevant interpretive material, including documents and archives. A research design also specifies how the investigator will address the two critical issues of representation and legitimation.

A strategy of inquiry refers to a bundle of skills, assumptions, and practices that researchers employ as they move from their paradigm to the empirical world. Strategies of inquiry put paradigms of interpretation into motion. At the same time, strategies of inquiry also connect the researcher to specific methods of collecting and analyzing empirical materials. For example, the case study relies on interviewing, observing, and document analysis. Research strategies implement and anchor paradigms in specific empirical sites or in specific methodological practices, for example, making a case an object of study. These strategies include the case study, phenomenological and ethnomethodological techniques, the use of grounded theory, and biographical, autoethnographic, historical, action, and clinical methods. Each of these strategies is connected to a complex literature; each has a separate history, exemplary works, and preferred ways for putting the strategy into motion.

Phase 4: Methods of Collecting and Analyzing Empirical Materials

The researcher has several methods for representing empirical materials. These topics are taken up in Part IV. They include observation, narrative inquiry, arts-based inquiry, the interview, visual research, autoethnography, online ethnography, analyzing talk and text, focus groups, thinking with theory, and collaborative inquiry. The chapters in this volume by Bratich (Chapter 23), Chase (Chapter 24), Finley (Chapter 25), Brinkmann (Chapter 26), Margolis and Zunjarwad (Chapter 27), Spry (Chapter 28), Markham (Chapter 29), Perkäylä and Ruusuvuori (Chapter 30), Kamberelis et al. (Chapter 31), Jackson and Mazzei (Chapter 32), and Wyatt, Gale, Gannon, and Davies (Chapter 33) analyze these topics.

Phase 5: The Art and Politics of Interpretation, Evaluation, and Presentation

As Torrance (Chapter 34) and Morse (Chapter 35) (after Denzin, Cheek, and Spooner) demonstrate, considerable controversy surrounds the issues of evidence, criteria, quality, and utility in educational and social research. Torrance asks important questions: Who has the right to decide these matters? With Morse and Spooner, he asks who has the right to decide what counts as evidence. How are funding decisions made in the global audit culture? What is

the political economy of critical social inquiry? Peter Dahler-Larsen (Chapter 39, this volume) shows how qualitative evaluation puts critical inquiry methods to practical use through the use of a variety of evaluation models.

Qualitative research/inquiry is endlessly creative and interpretive. The researcher does not just leave the field with mountains of empirical materials and easily write up his or her findings. The writer creates narratives, braided compositions woven into and through field experiences. Qualitative interpretations are constructed. The researcher often creates a field text consisting of field notes and documents from the field, what Roger Sanjek (1992, p. 386) calls "indexing" and David Plath (1990, p. 374) "filework." The writer-as-interpreter moves from this text to an ethno-text, a research text—notes, stories, and interpretations based on the field text. This text is then re-created as a working interpretive document. Finally, the writer produces the public text that comes to the reader. This final tale from the field may assume several forms: confessional, realist, impressionistic, critical, formal, literary, analytic, grounded theory, and so on (see Van Maanen, 1988). In the world of performance autoethnography, this is called moving from body to paper to stage (Spry, Chapter 28, this volume).

The interpretive practice of making sense of one's findings is both artistic and political. Multiple criteria for evaluating qualitative research now exist, and those we emphasize stress the situated, relational, and textual structures of the ethnographic experience. There is no single interpretive truth. As argued earlier, there are multiple interpretive communities, each having its own criteria for evaluating an interpretation.

Program evaluation is a major site of qualitative research, and qualitative evaluators can influence social policy in important ways. Applied, qualitative research in the social sciences has a rich history. This is the critical site where theory, method, praxis, action, and policy all come together. Qualitative researchers can isolate target populations, show the immediate effects of certain programs on such groups, and isolate the constraints that operate against policy changes in such settings. Action-oriented qualitative researchers can also create spaces for those who are studied (the other) to speak. The evaluator becomes the conduit for making such voices heard.

Part 6: Into the Future: Bridging the Historical Moments: What Comes Next?

St. Pierre (2004) argues that we are already in the post "post" period—post-poststructuralism, post-postmodernism, postexperimental, postqualitative. What this means for interpretive, ethnographic practices is still not clear. But it is certain that things will never again be the same. We are in a new age where messy, uncertain multivoiced texts, cultural criticism, and new experimental works will become more common, as will more reflexive forms of fieldwork, analysis, and intertextual representation. In a complex space like this, pedagogy becomes critical—that is, how do we teach qualitative methods in an age of ontological, epistemological, and methodological uncertainty? Where do we go after we have taken the ontological turn? What does this turn mean for public scholarship, for public engagement? It is true, as the poet said, the center no longer holds. We can reflect on what should be in this new center.

Marc Spooner (Chapter 40, this volume) suggests that we academics are trapped by the audit culture: "In this moment, we, as academics, are depersonalized, quantified, and constrained in our scholarship via a suffocating array of metrics and technologies of governance" (p. 895). David Westbrook (Chapter 41, this volume) takes the long view and suggests that "the material conditions under which qualitative research has been conducted since the 19th century may

no longer obtain. There may be no reason for a society to devote time, energy, and resources to the institutionalization of qualitative research" (p. 916).

On this depressing note we come full circle. And returning to our bridge metaphor, the chapters that follow take the researcher back and forth through every phase of the research act. Like a good bridge, the chapters provide for two-way traffic, coming and going between moments, formations, and interpretive communities. Each chapter examines the relevant histories, controversies, and current practices that are associated with each paradigm, strategy, and method. Each chapter also offers projections for the future, where a specific paradigm, strategy, or method will be 10 years from now, deep into the third decade of this now not so new century.

In reading this volume, it is important to remember that the field of qualitative research is defined by a series of tensions, contradictions, and hesitations. This tension works back and forth between and among (1) the broad, doubting, postmodern sensibility; (2) the more certain, more traditional positivist, postpositivist, and naturalistic conceptions of this project; and (3) an increasingly conservative, neoliberal global environment. All of the chapters that follow are caught in and articulate these tensions.

Notes

1. See also in this volume chapters by Koro-Ljungberg, MacLure, and Ulmer (Chapter 20); Jackson and Mazzei (Chapter 32); and Wyatt, Gale, Gannon, and Davis (Chapter 33).
2. What William Faulkner said of the past in the South, "The *past* is not dead! Actually, it's not even *past,*" can also be said of the wars and methodological history we write; it is not dead yet, and it is not even past. This is why we are going to such lengths to discuss these historical moments and their complexities.
3. This section steals from Clarke, Friese, and Washburn (2015, pp. 37–43).
4. Lubomir Popov maintains a website for the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry listing an annual 12-month calendar of international qualitative research conferences (icqi.org; conferences under http://www.iiqi.org/).
5. Association for Contemporary Ethnography Across the Disciplines (ACEAD) is a New Zealand–based international association.
6. A paradigm is a basic set of beliefs that guide action (Guba, 1990, p. 17). A paradigm encompasses four terms: *ethics, epistemology, ontology,* and *methodology.*
7. The Mixed Methods International Research Association was formed in 2014. Its official journal is the *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. The association has a quarterly newsletter.
8. Two theses structured the paradigm argument between qualitative and quantitative methods. The incompatibility thesis argued that the methods could not be combined because of fundamental differences in their paradigm assumptions (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003, pp. 14–15). The incommensurability thesis said the two paradigms were in fundamental contradiction with one another.
9. They contend that our second moment, the golden age (1950–1970), was marked by the debunking of positivism, the emergence of postpositivism, and the development of designs that used mixed quantitative and qualitative methods. Full-scale conflict developed throughout the 1970–1990 period, the time of the first "paradigm war." Jameson (1991, pp. 3–4) reminds us that any periodization hypothesis is always suspect, even ones that reject linear, stage-like models. It is never clear what reality a stage refers to. What divides one stage from another is always debatable. Our moments are meant to mark discernible shifts in style, genre, epistemology, ethics politics, and aesthetics.
10. Conflict broke out between the many different empowerment pedagogies: feminist, antiracist, radical, Freirean, liberation theology, postmodernists, poststructuralists, cultural studies, and so on (see Erickson, Chapter 2, this volume; Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative research has separate and distinguished histories in education, social work, communications, psychology, history, organizational studies, medical science, anthropology, and sociology, and these disciplines have had their own paradigm battles.

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PART I

Locating the Field

Part I of the *Handbook* begins by briefly locating qualitative research within the neoliberal, corporate academy. It then turns to the history of qualitative inquiry in social and educational research. The last two chapters take up the ethics, politics, and moral responsibilities of the qualitative researcher.

The Neoliberal Academy

In their 2011 *Handbook* chapter "Revitalizing Universities by Reinventing the Social Sciences: *Bildung* and Action Research," Morten Levin and Davydd Greenwood call for a reinvention of the social sciences in the corporate spaces of the neoliberal university. Their chapter reveals the depth and complexity of the traditional and applied qualitative research perspectives that are consciously and unconsciously inherited by the researcher-as-interpretive-*bricoleur.*[1] These traditions locate the investigator in academic systems of historical (and organizational) discourse. The academy is in a state of crisis. Traditional funding connections to stakeholders no longer hold. Evidence-based research rules the day. Radical change is required, and action research can help lead the way.

Levin and Greenwood (2011) argue that action researchers have a responsibility to do work that is socially meaningful and socially responsible. The relationship between researchers, universities, and society must change. Politically informed action research, inquiry committed to praxis and social change, is the vehicle for accomplishing this transformation.

Action researchers are committed to a set of disciplined, material practices that produce radical, democratizing transformations in the civic sphere. These practices involve collaborative dialogue, participatory decision making, inclusive democratic deliberation, and the maximal participation and representation of all relevant parties. Action researchers literally help transform inquiry into praxis or action. Research subjects become co-participants and stakeholders in the process of inquiry. Research becomes praxis—practical, reflective, pragmatic action—directed to solving problems in the world.

These problems originate in the lives of the research co-participants; they do not come down from on high by way of grand theory. Together, stakeholders and action researchers co-create knowledge that is pragmatically useful and grounded in local knowledge. In the process, they jointly define research objectives and political goals, co-construct research questions, pool knowledge, hone shared research skills, fashion interpretations and performance texts that implement specific strategies for social change, and measure validity and credibility by the willingness of local stakeholders to act on the basis of the results of the action research.

The academy has a history of not being able to consistently accomplish goals such as these. Levin and Greenwood (2011) offer several reasons for this failure, including the inability of a so-called positivistic, value-free social science to produce useful social research; the increasing tendency of outside corporations to define the needs and values of the university; the loss of research funds to entrepreneurial and private-sector research organizations; and bloated, inefficient internal administrative infrastructures.

Levin and Greenwood (2011) are not renouncing the practices of science; rather, they are calling for a reformulation of what science and the academy are all about. Their model of pragmatically grounded action research is not a retreat from disciplined scientific inquiry.[2] This form of inquiry reconceptualizes science as a multiperspective, methodologically diverse, collaborative, communicative, communitarian, context-centered, moral project. Levin and Greenwood want to locate action research at the center of the contemporary university. Their chapter is a clarion call for a civic social science, a pragmatic science that will lead to the radical reconstruction of the university's relationships with society, state, and community in this new century.

History

In their monumental chapter ("Qualitative Methods: Their History in Sociology and Anthropology"), reprinted in the second edition of the *Handbook,* Arthur Vidich and Stanford Lyman (2000) revealed how the ethnographic tradition extends from the Greeks through the 15th- and 16th-century interests of Westerners in the origins of primitive cultures; to colonial ethnology connected to the empires of Spain, England, France, and Holland; and to several 20th-century transformations in the United States and Europe. Throughout this history, the users of qualitative research have displayed commitments to a small set of beliefs, including objectivism, the desire to contextualize experience, and a willingness to interpret theoretically what has been observed.

In Chapter 3 of this volume, Frederick Erickson shows that these beliefs supplement the positivist tradition of complicity with colonialism, the commitments to monumentalism, and the production of timeless texts. The colonial model located qualitative inquiry in racial and sexual discourses that privileged White patriarchy. Of course, as indicated in our Introduction (Chapter 1), these beliefs have recently come under considerable attack.

Erickson, building on Vidich and Lyman (2000), documents the extent to which early as well as contemporary qualitative researchers were (and remain) implicated in these systems of oppression. His history extends Vidich and Lyman's, focusing on six foundational footings: (1) disciplinary perspectives in social science, particularly in sociology and anthropology; (2) the participant-observational fieldworker as an observer/author; (3) the people who are observed during the fieldwork; (4) the rhetorical and substantive content of the qualitative research report as a text; (5) the audiences to which such texts have been addressed; and (6) the underlying worldview of research—ontology, epistemology, and purposes. The character and legitimacy of each of these "footings" have been debated over the entire course of qualitative social inquiry's development, and these debates have increased in intensity in the recent past.

He offers a trenchant review of recent disciplinary efforts (by the American Educational Research Association [AERA]) to impose fixed criteria of evaluation on qualitative inquiry. He carefully reviews recent criticisms of the classic ethnographic text. He argues that the realist ethnographic text—the text with its omniscient narrator—is no longer a genre of reporting that can be responsibly practiced.

Erickson sees seven major streams of discourse in contemporary qualitative inquiry: a continuation of realist ethnographic case study, a continuation of "critical" ethnography, a continuation of collaborative action research, "indigenous" studies done by "insiders" (including practitioner research in education), autoethnography, performance ethnography, and further efforts along postmodern lines, including literary and other arts-based approaches. Erickson argues that the "postmodern" turn is influencing a call for "postqualitative" and "posthumanist" inquiry (see the chapters by Ljundberg, MacLure, and Ulmer [Chapter 20] and Jackson and Mazzei [Chapter 32] in this handbook). In arguing for succession beyond

what can be called "humanist qualitative inquiry," St. Pierre (2014, pp. 14–15) observes that an ontological implication of the deconstructive critiques of poststructuralists is that the foundational notion of the "humanist knowing subject" as an autonomous and constant individual self is an intellectual inheritance from the Enlightenment that can no longer be considered tenable. As noted, this is a point well taken, but an autonomous knowing subject is not something first questioned by such postmodernists as Foucault and Deleuze.

The Ethics of Inquiry

Clifford Christians (Chapter 3, this volume) locates the ethics and politics of qualitative inquiry within a broader historical and intellectual framework. He first examines the Enlightenment model of positivism, value-free inquiry, utilitarianism, and utilitarian ethics. In a value-free social science, codes of ethics for professional societies become the conventional format for moral principles. By the 1980s, each of the major social science associations (contemporaneous with passage of federal laws and promulgation of national guidelines) had developed its own ethical code with an emphasis on several guidelines: informed consent, nondeception, the absence of psychological or physical harm, privacy and confidentiality, and a commitment to collecting and presenting reliable and valid empirical materials. Institutional review boards (IRBs) implemented these guidelines, including ensuring that informed consent is always obtained in human subject research. However, Christians notes that in reality, IRBs protect institutions and not individuals.

Several events challenged the Enlightenment model, including the Nazi medical experiments, the Tuskegee syphilis study, Project Camelot in the 1960s, Stanley Milgram's deception of subjects in his psychology experiments, and Laud Humphrey's deceptive study of gay and bisexual males in public restrooms. Recent disgrace involves the complicity of social scientists with military initiatives in Vietnam and most recently the complicity of the American Psychological Association with the CIA and national security interrogations involving military and intelligence personnel (Hoffman, 2015). In addition, charges of fraud, plagiarism, data tampering, and misrepresentation continue to the present day.

Christians details the poverty of the Enlightenment model. It creates the conditions for deception, for the invasion of private spaces, for duping subjects, and for challenges to the subject's moral worth and dignity. Christians calls for its replacement with an ethics of being based on the values of a feminist communitarianism.

This is an evolving, emerging ethical framework that serves as a powerful antidote to the deception-based, utilitarian IRB system. The new framework presumes a community that is ontologically and axiologically prior to the person. This community has common moral values, and research is rooted in a concept of care, of shared governance, of neighborliness, or of love, kindness, and the moral good. Accounts of social life should display these values and be based on interpretive sufficiency. They should have sufficient depth to allow the reader to form a critical understanding about the world studied. These texts should exhibit an absence of racial, class, and gender stereotyping. These texts should generate social criticism and lead to resistance, empowerment, social action, restorative justice, and positive change in the social world. Social justice means giving everyone their appropriate due. The justified as the right and proper is a substantive common good. The concept of justice-as-intrinsic-worthiness that anchors the ethics of being is a radical alternative to the right-order justice of modernity that has dominated modernity, from Locke to Rawls's *Theory of Justice* (1971) and his *The Law of Peoples* (2001) and Habermas's (2001) *The Postnational Constellations.* Retributive and distributive justice is the framework of modernists' democratic liberalism. Justice as right order is typically procedural, with justice considered done when members of

a society receive from its institutions the goods to which they have a right. For the ethics of being, justice is restorative.

A sacred, existential epistemology places us in a noncompetitive, nonhierarchical relationship to the earth, to nature, and to the larger world (Bateson, 1972, p. 335). This sacred epistemology stresses the values of empowerment, shared governance, care, solidarity, love, community, covenant, morally involved observers, and civic transformation. As Christians observes, this ethical epistemology recovers the moral values that were excluded by the rational Enlightenment science project. This sacred epistemology is based on a philosophical anthropology that declares that "all humans are worthy of dignity and sacred status without exception for class or ethnicity" (Christians, 1995, p. 129). A universal human ethic, stressing the sacredness of life, human dignity, truth telling, and nonviolence, derives from this position (Christians, 1997, pp. 12–15). This ethic is based on locally experienced, culturally prescribed protonorms (Christians, 1995, p. 129). These primal norms provide a defensible "conception of good rooted in universal human solidarity" (Christians, 1995, p. 129; also Christians, 1997, 1998). This sacred epistemology recognizes and interrogates the ways in which race, class, and gender operate as important systems of oppression in the world today.

In this way, Christians outlines a radical ethical path for the future. He transcends the usual middle-of-the-road ethical models, which focus on the problems associated with betrayal, deception, and harm in qualitative research. Christians's call for a collaborative social science research model makes the researcher responsible, not to a removed discipline (or institution) but rather to those studied. This implements critical, action, and feminist traditions, which forcefully align the ethics of research with a politics of the oppressed. Christians's framework reorganizes existing discourses on ethics and the social sciences.[3]

Clearly, the Belmont and Common Rule definitions had little, if anything, to do with a human rights and social justice ethical agenda. Regrettably, these principles were informed by notions of value-free experimentation and utilitarian concepts of justice. They do not conceptualize research in participatory terms. In reality, these rules protect institutions and not people, although they were originally created to protect human subjects from unethical biomedical research. The application of these regulations is an instance of mission or ethics creep, or the overzealous extension of IRB regulations to interpretive forms of social science research. This has been criticized by many, including Cannella and Lincoln (Chapter 4) in this volume, as well as Kevin Haggerty (2004), C. K. Gunsalus et al. (2007), Leon Dash (2007), and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP, 2001, 2002, 2006a, 2006b).[4]

Oral historians have contested the narrow view of science and research contained in current reports (American Historical Association, 2008; Shopes & Ritchie, 2004). Anthropologists and archaeologists have challenged the concept of informed consent as it affects ethnographic inquiry (see Fluehr-Lobban, 2003a, 2003b; also Miller & Bell, 2002). Journalists argue that IRB insistence on anonymity reduces the credibility of journalistic reporting, which rests on naming the sources used in a news account. Dash (2007, p. 871) contends that IRB oversight interferes with the First Amendment rights of journalists and the public's right to know. Indigenous scholars Marie Battiste (2008) and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2005) assert that Western conceptions of ethical inquiry have "severely eroded and damaged indigenous knowledge" and indigenous communities (Battiste, 2008, p. 497).[5]

As currently deployed, these practices close down critical ethical dialogue. They create the impression that if proper IRB procedures are followed, then one's ethical house is in order. But this is ethics in a cul de sac.

Disciplining and Constraining Ethical Conduct

The consequence of these restrictions is a disciplining of qualitative inquiry that extends from granting agencies to qualitative research seminars and even the conduct of qualitative dissertations (Lincoln & Cannella, 2004a, 2004b). In some cases, lines of critical inquiry have not been funded and have not gone forward because of criticisms from local IRBs. Pressures from the right discredit critical interpretive inquiry. From the federal to the local levels, a trend seems to be emerging. In too many instances, there seems to be a move away from protecting human subjects to an increased monitoring, censuring, and policing of projects that are critical of the right and its politics.

Yvonna S. Lincoln and William G. Tierney (2004) observe that these policing activities have at least five important implications for critical social justice inquiry. First, the widespread rejection of alternative forms of research means that qualitative inquiry will be heard less and less in federal and state policy forums. Second, it appears that qualitative researchers are being deliberately excluded from this national dialogue. Consequently, third, young researchers trained in the critical tradition are not being heard. Fourth, the definition of research has not changed to fit newer models of inquiry. Fifth, in rejecting qualitative inquiry, traditional researchers are endorsing a more distanced form of research, one that is compatible with existing stereotypes concerning people of color.

These developments threaten academic freedom in four ways: (1) They lead to increased scrutiny of human subjects research and (2) new scrutiny of classroom research and training in qualitative research involving human subjects; (3) they connect to evidence-based discourses, which define qualitative research as unscientific; and (4) by endorsing methodological conservatism, they reinforce the status quo on many campuses. This conservatism produces new constraints on graduate training, leads to the improper review of faculty research, and creates conditions for politicizing the IRB review process, while protecting institutions and not individuals from risk and harm.

A Path Forward

Since 2004, many scholarly and professional societies have followed the Oral History and American Historical Associations in challenging the underlying assumptions in the standard campus IRB model. A transdisciplinary, global, counter-IRB discourse has emerged (Battiste, 2008; Christians, 2007; Ginsberg & Mertens, 2009; Lincoln, 2009). This discourse has called for the blanket exclusion of nonfederally funded research from IRB review. The AAUP (2006a, 2006b) recommended that

> exemptions based on methodology, namely research on autonomous adults whose methodology consists entirely of collecting data by surveys, conducting interviews, or observing behavior in public places should be exempt from the requirement of IRB review, with no provisos, and no requirement of IRB approval of the exemption. (AAUP, 2006a, p. 4)

The executive council of the Oral History Association endorsed the AAUP recommendations at its October 2006 annual meeting. They were quite clear: "Institutions consider as straightforwardly exempt from IRB review any 'research whose methodology consists entirely of collecting data by surveys, conducting interviews, or observing behavior in public places'" (Howard, 2006, p. 9). This recommendation can be extended: Neither the Office for Human

Resource Protection nor a campus IRB has the authority to define what constitutes legitimate research in any field, only what research is covered by federal regulations. Most recently, the National Research Council of the National Academies (2014) published *Proposed Revisions to the Common Rule for the Protection of Human Subjects in the Behavioral and Social Sciences.* This report significantly increases the number of research approaches and research data that are excused from IRB review (pp. 4–5).

Don Ritchie (2015) reports that in response to a call for a clarification on federal regulations,

> On September 8, 2015, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued a set of recommended revisions to the regulations concerning human subject research: Oral history, journalism, biography, and historical scholarship activities that focus directly on the specific individuals about whom the information is collected be explicitly excluded from review by IRBs. (See more at http://historynewsnetwork.org/article/160885#sthash.Om3fectQ.dpuf)

The proposed revisions defined human subject research as a systematic investigation designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge that involves direct interaction or intervention with a living individual or that involves obtaining identifiable private information about an individual. Only research that fits this definition should be subject to IRB procedures and the Common Rule. Human subjects research studies would be placed in one of three review categories—excused research, expedited review, or full review. A new "excused" category references research that does not require IRB review if it involves only informational risk that is no more than minimal. Examples of excused research could include use of preexisting data with private information or benign interventions or interactions that involve activities familiar to people in everyday life, such as educational tests, surveys, and focus groups. The report notes that because the primary risk in most social and behavioral research is informational, much of this research would qualify as excused under the new regulations. The committee recommended that excused research remain subject to some oversight; investigators should register their study with an IRB, describe consent procedures, and provide a data protection plan (read more at http://phys.org/news/2014-01-common.html#jCp).

With these recommendations, a nearly 30-year struggle involving federal regulations of social science research moves into a new phase. Ritchie notes that the federal government began issuing rules that required universities to review human subject research in 1980. At first, the regulations applied only to medical and behavioral research, but in 1991, the government broadened its requirements to include any interaction with living individuals.

We hope the days of IRB mission creep are over. We are not sanguine. As Cannella and Lincoln (2011) note, qualitative and critical qualitative researchers will continue to "take hold" of their academic spaces as they clash with legislated research regulation (especially, for example, as practiced by particular institutional review boards in the United States). This conflict will not end any time soon. This work has demonstrated not only that "legislated attempts to regulate research ethics are an illusion, but that regulation is culturally grounded and can even lead to ways of functioning that are damaging to research participants and collaborators" (Cannella & Lincoln, 2011, p. 87).

Ethics and Critical Social Science

In Chapter 4 (this volume), Gaile Cannella and Yvonna S. Lincoln, building on the work of Michel Foucault, argue that a critical social science requires a radical ethics, an "ethics that is always/already concerned about power and oppression even as it avoids constructing 'power' as a new truth" (p. 84). A critical ethical stance works outward from the core of the person.

A critical social science incorporates feminist, postcolonial, and even postmodern challenges to oppressive power. It is aligned with a critical pedagogy and a politics of resistance, hope, and freedom. A critical social science focuses on structures of power and systems of domination. It creates spaces for a decolonizing project. It opens the doors of the academy so that the voices of oppressed people can be heard and honored and so that others can learn from them. Aligned with the ethics of the traditionally marginalized, which could ultimately reconceptualize the questions and practices of research, a critical social science would no longer accept the notion that one group of people can "know" and define (or even represent) "others." This perspective would certainly change the research purposes and designs that are submitted for human subjects review, perhaps even eliminating the need for "human subjects" in many cases. Furthermore, focusing on the individual and the discovery of theories and universals has masked societal, institutional, and structural practices that perpetuate injustices. Finally, an ethics that would help others "be like us" has created power for "us." They argue that this ethics of good intentions has tended to support power for those who construct the research and the furthering of oppressive conditions for the subjects of that research. A critical social science requires a new ethical foundation, a new set of moral understandings. Each chapter in Part I points us in that direction.

Conclusion

Thus, the chapters in Part I of the *Handbook* come together over the topics of ethics, power, politics, social justice, and the academy. We endorse a radical, participatory ethic, one that is communitarian and feminist, an ethic that calls for trusting, collaborative nonoppressive relationships between researchers and those studied, an ethic that makes the world a more just place (Collins, 1990, p. 216).

Notes

1. Any distinction between applied and nonapplied qualitative research traditions is somewhat arbitrary. Both traditions are scholarly. Each has a long tradition and a long history, and each carries basic implications for theory and social change. Good theoretical research should also have applied relevance and implications. On occasion, it is argued that applied and action research are nontheoretical, but even this conclusion can be disputed.
2. We develop a notion of a sacred science below.
3. Given Christians's framework, there are primarily two ethical models: utilitarian and nonutilitarian. However, historically, and most recently, one of five ethical stances (absolutist, consequentialist, feminist, relativist, deceptive) has been followed, although often these stances merge with one another. The *absolutist* position argues that any method that contributes to a society's self-understanding is acceptable, but only conduct in the public sphere should be studied. The *deception* model says any method, including the use of lies and misrepresentation, is justified in the name of truth. The *relativist* stance says researchers have absolute freedom to study what they want; ethical standards are a matter of individual conscience. Christians's feminist-communitarian framework elaborates a *contextual-consequential framework,* which stresses mutual respect, noncoercion, nonmanipulation, and the support of democratic values.
4. Mission creep includes these issues and threats: rewarding wrong behaviors, focusing on procedures and not difficult ethical issues, enforcing unwieldy federal regulations, and involving threats to academic freedom and the First Amendment (Becker, 2004; Gunsalus et al., 2007; also Haggerty, 2004). Perhaps the most extreme form of IRB mission creep is the 2002 State of Maryland Code, Title 13—Miscellaneous Health Care Program, Subtitle 20—Human Subject Research § 13–2001, 13–2002: Compliance With Federal Regulations: A person may not conduct research using a human subject unless the person conducts the research in accordance with the federal regulations on the protection of human subjects (see Shamoo & Schwartz, 2007).

5. There is a large Canadian project on indigenous intellectual property rights—Intellectual Property Issues in Cultural Heritage. This project represents an international, interdisciplinary collaboration among more than 50 scholars and 25 partnering organizations embarking on an unprecedented and timely investigation of intellectual property (IP) issues in cultural heritage that represent emergent local and global interpretations of culture, rights, and knowledge. Their objectives are
   - to document the diversity of principles, interpretations, and actions arising in response to IP issues in cultural heritage worldwide;
   - to analyze the many implications of these situations;
   - to generate more robust theoretical understandings as well as exemplars of good practice; and
   - to make these findings available to stakeholders—from Aboriginal communities to professional organizations to government agencies—to develop and refine their own theories, principles, policies, and practices.

   Left Coast is their publisher. See their website: http://www.sfu.ca/ipinch/.

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