

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ETHNOGRAPHY:
PHILOSOPHY, PRACTICE, AND METHODOLOGY

A Paper

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Ethnographic research is an art and a science. As an art form, ethnographers paint a portrait of the world from which they have learned. As a science, ethnographers follow a systematic and organized approach in their study. Ethnographic data must be reliable and valid as with any other science, but ethnographic data is not cold, sterile, and uncompassionate because ethnographies are rich and descriptive pictures of real people and real phenomena.

This annotated bibliography focuses upon the philosophical, practical, and methodological issues in ethnography. Philosophically, this bibliography includes sources to assist researchers in understanding where ethnography fits into the broader social science field. Thus, several books and articles discuss qualitative and quantitative research in relation to the social sciences. Practically, this bibliography includes several sources useful in assisting ethnographers to understand how one designs and plans an ethnographic research project. All three methods are presented: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed. Methodologically, this bibliography includes several sources that explain ethnographic data collection and data analysis.

General

Books

Agar, M. H. *Speaking of Ethnography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1986.

Given the increasing use of ethnography in diverse fields, Agar's purpose is to provide researchers with a common set of descriptors with which to discuss the merits of ethnography and its methodology. He contended that some authors attempt to force ethnography to conform to the language of the "received view" of science that must test a hypothesis. He advocated for the development of a taxonomy of terms that is unique to the strengths of this method. Agar

argued that the goal of ethnography is to explain the social action of one culture to another culture. Agar argued that ethnography grows out of the dialogue and “frames of meaning” of the researcher and the informant. He did not, however, argue for a completely relativistic view of ethnography; “Ethnography is neither subjective nor objective. It is interpretive” (19). His terminology will provide beginners with a foundational understanding of key concepts.

_____. *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*. 2nd ed. New York: Academic Press, 1996.

Originally published in 1980, the second edition updated the original material and added chapters. While useful as a guidebook for novice ethnographers, Agar provided a powerful tool for considering the major theoretical issues in ethnography including design and methodological problems. This material will be helpful to those utilizing ethnographic methods as a major component of their research.

Atkinson, P., A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, and L. Lofland, eds. *Handbook of Ethnography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001.

The work is truly a “Handbook of Ethnography.” The editors have compiled several chapters from the leading thinkers in ethnographic research. Some of the chapters in this handbook are excerpts from books found within this bibliography (cf. Emerson). For this bibliography, the strength of this book is found in section one. This section presented the major philosophical schools of ethnography: British Social Anthropology, Grounded Theory in Ethnography, Ethnomethodology and Ethnography, and Chicago School of Ethnography to name a few.

Ferraro, G. *Cultural Anthropology: An Applied Perspective*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1992.

Ferraro has produced an excellent introductory textbook on cultural anthropology. Ferraro argued for a holistic emic approach to understanding cultures without sacrificing one’s ability to compare, contrast, evaluate, and judge each culture being studied. Ferraro did not provide a standard by which one carries out this evaluation. To his credit, he did not encourage or support ethnographic and ethnologic study that does not present the problems and seek for potential solutions for the people we study. The author provided insightful case studies to help students to prepare for cross-cultural encounters. This textbook provided a general overview of all major philosophical issues and major categories in cultural anthropology and the practical elements of ethnographic research.

Garfinkel, H. “The Origins of the Term ‘Ethnomethodology.’” In R. Turner, ed. *Ethnomethodology*. Baltimore: Penguin, 1974: 15-18.

Ethnomethodology: “‘Ethno’ seemed to refer, somehow or other, to the availability to a member of common-sense knowledge of his society as common-sense knowledge of the ‘whatever’. If it were ‘ethnobotany’, then it had to do somehow or other with his knowledge of and his grasp of what were for members adequate methods for dealing with botanical matters” (16-17). “That is what ethnomethodology is concerned with. It is an organizational study of a member’s knowledge of his ordinary affairs, of his own organized enterprises, where that knowledge is treated by us as part of the same setting that it also makes orderable” (18). This article provided a helpful introduction to the term and issues related to ethnomethodology.

When this article was written this field was an emerging area of study. Now, however, ethnomethodology is major component of most sociological studies.

Geertz, C. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books, 1973.

This book is a collection of Geertz's early articles. Geertz is well known for his explanation of the "interpretive" approach to ethnographic description.

Jessor, R., A. Colby, and R. A. Shweder, eds. *Ethnography and Human Development*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

The book displayed the use of ethnographic research in human development studies. Likewise, the chapters discussed several practical and epistemological questions regarding qualitative methods. Several authors (e.g., Becker, Shweder, and Weisner) discussed the epistemological and practical division between qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

Articles

Jeffrey, B. and G. Troman. "Time for ethnography." *British Educational Research Journal* 30 (2004): 535-548.

Fieldwork is essential to proper ethnographic research; however, fieldwork does not always imply full-time extended stays among informants. Jeffrey and Troman presented three modalities of ethnographic modes of time: compressed, selective intermittent, and recurrent. In compressed time, ethnographers focus upon gaining the whole picture of a community or institution by living among them for three to six months. Every detail is described and latter analyzed. When using selective intermittent time, the frequency of the ethnographic visits vary depending upon the foci of the research project. Selective time involves extended research period, but not necessarily prolonged contact. The ethnographer may have several sites in the project and the frequency of visits depends upon the validity of the data obtained in each visit. Last, in recurrent time, the ethnographer visits the sets at predetermined intervals to obtain comparative data. The authors discussed each time mode's weaknesses and strengths as related to three ethnographic principles: the necessity of fieldwork, site relations with social and political leaders, and theory development.

Whitaker, M. "Ethnography as Learning: A Wittgensteinian Approach to Writing Ethnographic Accounts." *Anthropological Quarterly* 69 (1996): 1-13.

Whitaker argued that while ethnography has been attacked philosophically since the mid-1970s, it is still a viable learning tool. Many have argued that the claim of ethnographers as being unbiased presenters of culture is false. Whitaker agreed that many anthropologists do not approach the work of ethnography correctly, but the failure of some does not negate that ethnographic research is a good tool for learning other cultures. The author concluded that ethnography is best understood as a learning tool rather than absolute representations of culture.

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography (formerly *Urban Life*). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

This journal is a quarterly publication that contains recent ethnographic studies and discusses new trends in ethnography. The publication serves a good source of information on and examples of how other researchers are conducting their own ethnographic studies.

Computers

Books

Bolton, R. *Computers in Ethnographic Research* (Technical Report NIE Grant G-78-0062). Claremont, CA: Pomona College, 1984.

This book is an early description for using computers in anthropology fieldwork. The focus of this work is upon using computers to write and manage field notes.

Weitzman, E. A. and M. Miles. *Computer Programs for Qualitative Data Analysis: A Software Sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995.

Weitzman and Miles review 23 software programs used in textual analysis. Their material provides a helpful introduction to text analysis, and to the various text analysis software programs available in 1995.

Articles

Bernard, H. R. "About Text Management and Computers." *Cultural Anthropology Methods Journal* 3 (1991): 1-12.

Bernard provided a clear description of several different types of text management, including issues associated with indexing, coding, and text retrieval. He provided the necessary background for those interested in thoroughly analyzing text produced by qualitative methods.

Gillespie, G. "Using Word Processor Macros for Computer-assisted Qualitative Analysis." *Qualitative Sociology*, 9 (1986): 283-292.

This early paper advocates using word processors to help with simple text analysis. The author discussed how to minimize the procedure of recording and analyzing field notes for qualitative research, saving time and reducing repetitive input. The author reduced repetitive input by using keyboard macros.

Research Design

Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods

Books.

Alasuutari, P. *Researching Culture: Qualitative Method and Cultural Studies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995.

The growth of interdisciplinary cultural studies has been tremendous in the past two decades. In *Researching Culture*, Pertti Alasuutari provided an excellent description of the process of cultural research. *Researching Culture* would be a welcome addition to those interested in qualitative research, the study of language, and the relevance of quantitative analysis of cultural research. Alasuutari contended that all anthropological research should seek to address social and political structures as a result of the research.

Brannen, J. "Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches: An Overview." In J. Brannen (Ed.), *Mixing Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Research*. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1992: 3-37.

Brannen began by discussing issues that result in a blurred distinction between classic qualitative and quantitative research. She noted that both methods involve inductive, as well as deductive principles. She argued against the misunderstanding that heavy description can only be obtained by qualitative work. Her discussion included issues of compatibility between quantitative and qualitative methods. Some scholars believe mixing methods increases validity through triangulation. Others contend that data is constructed differently by different methods, thus when both methods are used they simply complement each other rather than validate each other. Brannen explained ways qualitative and quantitative methods are combined. Her material will be useful for those thinking about a combined methodology.

Creswell, J. W. *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994.

The social sciences continue to pursue the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods and one author continues to develop as a leader in the field. John W. Creswell, a renowned author, lecturer, and instructor in the field of research design, has written an extremely helpful book for those involved in research design and methods. *Research Design* is an insightful book useful for students, instructors, and practitioners, alike. Creswell did not present a how-to manual, but rather a book that helps researchers to think about all the necessary research design questions.

_____. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998.

Creswell presented five of the major qualitative research methods in this book: Life History, Phenomenology, Grounded Theory, Ethnography, and Case Study. His discussion included an explanation of their philosophical and methodological differences. His purpose is to equip researchers with an understanding of how one builds a research method of each of the five types. Creswell's additional reading sections alone make the book worth owning.

Denzin, N. K. and Y. S. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000.

This indispensable resource contains forty-one chapters by noted researchers that have been grouped by the editors into six sections: "Locating the Field," "Paradigms and Perspectives in Transition," "Strategies of Inquiry," "Methods of Collecting and Analyzing Empirical Materials," "The Art and Practice of Interpretation, Evaluation, and Presentation," and "The Future of Qualitative Research." Several specific chapters in this book are listed separately in this bibliography. Denzin and Lincoln have provided a helpful tool for both novice and veteran researchers. The second edition included treatment of autoethnography and applied ethnography.

Greene, J. and V. Caracelli, eds. *Advances in Mixed-Method Evaluation: The Challenges and Benefits of Integrating Diverse Paradigms*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997.

This book is a useful collection of articles about mixing qualitative and quantitative methods. The first chapter described and critiqued the “purist,” “pragmatist,” and “dialectical” positions on mixing methods. The purist stance prevents mixing methods because the methods are epistemologically incompatible. The pragmatist position says that epistemologies should be understood descriptively not prescriptively. Methods can be mixed because research is driven by the practical demands of the questions being asked. The dialectical position maintains the importance of the underlying epistemologies and suggests that different research paradigms cannot be reconciled. The editors asked what the appropriate relationship between mixed methods should be in practice. The remainder of the book presented several case studies of the editors’ position on mixed methods. The editors’ position on mixed methods gives absolute authority to neither epistemological concerns nor the practicalities of research.

Kirk, J. and M. Miller. *Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1986.

Kirk and Miller presented how reliability and validity in qualitative research help to evaluate the objectivity of particular studies. The authors asserted that given the true meaning of validity many studies, including many “scientific” studies, are not truly valid. Validity refers to the notion of whether an observation and interpretation are correct or not. The observation may be apparent, instrumental, or theoretical. The authors also included guidelines to assist researchers in maintaining reliability in qualitative studies.

Lancy, D. F. *Qualitative Research in Education: An Introduction to the Major Traditions*. New York: Longman Publishing Group, 1993.

A good book that examined the different questions and methodologies that anthropological, sociological, and biological perspectives bring to education research. The book contained chapters on ethology, case studies, and cognitive studies. The author provided guidelines for setting up and working on qualitative research.

Patton, M. Q. *Qualitative Evaluation Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1980.

Although written to address issues about qualitative methods to evaluate programs, Patton provided a wide range of useful information about qualitative methods, their use, objectives, and applications. Of particular assistance is chapter five on designing qualitative evaluations. In this chapter, Patton provided instruction on how to put together a qualitative research program. On page 159 he provided a broad typology of research questions (basic, applied, summative, formative, and action research) and a chart presenting the generalizations of these different research questions. Additionally, he discussed several topics including units of analysis, trade-offs between breadth and depth, varieties of purposeful sampling, and case study strategies.

_____. *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1990.

Although under a different title, much of Patton’s material is repeated from *Qualitative Evaluation Methods* (1980). The most helpful chapter is again chapter five, “Designing Qualitative Studies.” Patton helps researchers to consider the necessary questions that will lead them to determine what form of research their project will follow.

Sechrest, L., M. Stewart, T. Stickle, and S. Sidani. *Effective and Persuasive Case Studies*. Cambridge, MA: Human Services Research Institute, 1997.

The authors provided a guide to the particular role that case studies may play in mixed-method research. They likewise provided a procedure for planning and conducting a case study.

Articles.

Hathaway, R. "Assumptions Underlying Quantitative and Qualitative Research: Implications for Institutional Research." *Research in Higher Education* 36 (1995): 535-562.

Hathaway explained that the choice between using qualitative or quantitative approaches is less about methodology and more about choosing a particular theoretical and academic tradition. He concluded that the two approaches address questions in very different ways, each one having its own advantages and drawbacks.

Helitzer-Allen, D. L. and C. Kendall. "Explaining Differences between Qualitative and Quantitative Data: A Study of Chemoprophylaxis during Pregnancy." *Health Education Quarterly* 19 (1992): 41-54.

The authors suggested a hybrid research design that allows for triangulation and greater validity in a situation where long-term fieldwork is not possible. They demonstrated the usefulness of hybrid research from an Malawi based project of their own.

Grounded Theory

Books.

Glaser, B. and A. Strauss. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine, 1967.

This groundbreaking material explained the importance of emergent theories from collected data. Strauss and Glaser focused on the emergence and revision of analytic categories from open-ended fieldwork or ethnography to allow the data to reveal theories that are grounded in the data itself.

Strauss, A. and J. Corbin. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998.

This book is perhaps the most readable and comprehensive introduction to grounded theory and its relationship to qualitative data. The authors clarified how to derive theory from textual, and qualitative data. Many reviewers consider their discussion of "theoretical sensitivity" as unparalleled. This book is an excellent resource for defending against the arguments that claim qualitative analysis lacks rigor.

_____, eds. *Grounded Theory in Practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997.

Strauss and Corbin provide a useful tool of recent qualitative projects that used grounded theory designs. Each chapter contains insightful comments by the editors that reveal helpful tips and suggestions for researchers considering the use of grounded theory.

Analysis

Books.

Edwards, J. A. and M. Lampert, eds. *Talking Data : Transcription and Coding in Discourse Research*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1993.

This book is an all-purpose primer in sociological conversational analysis. The authors presented the basic methods involved in transcribing and coding spoken conversation in several various settings. Readers will discover methods for uncovering interesting facts from written textual data for their cultural studies.

Holsti, Ole R. *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishers, 1969.

An excellent primer for social scientists interested in content analysis. Holsti suggested ways in which content analysis can benefit anthropologists, sociologists, and other behavioral scientists. He illustrated his work by discussing some of his own content analysis research. His own research tracked media coverage of international political crises. Holsti provided a good “how-to” guide for addressing the use of content analysis specifically in social research.

Krippendorff, K. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. London: Sage Publications, 1980.

Krippendorff’s volume provided a comprehensive survey of the theory and practice of content analysis. The first part of the book presented the historical, conceptual, and logical foundations of content analysis. Then, the author explained how to do content analysis with chapters on unitizing, sampling, recording and coding, analysis and constructs, using computers, and testing for reliability and validity. This book is an excellent introduction for those who are interested in a step-by-step procedure for doing a content analysis.

Markoff, J., S. Shapiro, and S. Weitman. “Toward the integration of content analysis and general methodology.” In Heise, David R., *Sociological Methodology*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1975.

The authors argued that social scientists should not treat content analysis as an end in itself, but should seek to integrate it with other traditional parts of the social science research. They feel that there has been insufficient collaboration between the various fields of social science research. The authors suggested that sociology can benefit from using content analysis, but they believe that the sociological method must integrate textual studies into its overlay theoretical foundation.

Miles, M. B. and A. M. Huberman. *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994.

This text helps researchers think about the variety of issues that arise throughout qualitative research. The authors focused on data analysis and presentation in addressing these various issues. This is a helpful guide to keeping research relevant and focused.

Moerman, M. and H. Sacks. *Talking Culture: Ethnography and Conversation Analysis*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988.

While Moerman's "conversation analysis," involves the transcribing of conversational data and appending notations to it, it could be considered a form of content analysis. This book presented his analysis of the conversational discourse of various actors involved in Thai criminal trials. His purpose was to understand their concepts of sequence, intentionality, and truth. He contended that his method is derived from the method "ethnography of speaking" of Harvey Sacks and John Gumperz.

Weber, R. P. *Basic Content Analysis*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1990.

Weber provided a good primer for content analysis, particularly the use of computers in coding themes in textual data. His discussion of computers is an expanded discussion of the first edition's appendix. The new edition also included more examples than the first edition. He explained the basic approaches of how to classify and interpret qualitative textual data and several techniques and procedures for both.

Weller, S. and A. Romney. *Systematic Data Collection*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1988.

Weller and Romney provide an introduction to systematic techniques for modeling cultural understandings and beliefs. They explained free listing, triad tests, pile sorts, and other types of analyses.

Articles.

Schnegg, M. and H. R. Bernard. "Words as Actors: A Method for Doing Semantic Network Analysis." *Cultural Anthropology Methods Journal* 8(1996): 7-10.

This short article describes a methodology for doing a kind of content analysis. The authors' theory utilizes repeated words in textual data produced by different informants to develop cultural categories like network analysis uses individual people who are found participating in different social situations to develop categories. The goal is to discover themes that emerge when you analyze words as nodes in a network analysis.

Truex, G. F. "Tagging and Tying: Notes on Codes in Anthropology." *Cultural Anthropology Methods Journal*, 5 (1993): 3-5.

Truex described coding conventions for marking blocks of text. His method allows the thematic coding of the textual data. The purpose of such coding is to allow themes present in the passages to be easily retrieved.

Werner, O. "Short Take 8: Hapax Legomenon: First Steps in Analyzing your Interviews." *Cultural Anthropology Methods Journal*, 4 (1992): 6-8.

Werner's short article demonstrated how word frequency counts of fieldnotes help identify "content words." Content words are repeated words in the textual data that may represent themes. The content words should be examined for themes, and may serve as an index.

General

Books.

Altheide, D. L. and J. M. Johnson. "Criteria for Assessing Interpretive Validity in Qualitative Research." In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994: 485-599.

In this article, the authors explained why qualitative research can produce valid results, with specific application to ethnographic research. The discussion included explanations for both the positivist and the postmodernist views.

Hamel, J. *Case Study Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1993.

Hamel has written a comprehensive text on how to use and manage case studies.

Hammersley, M. and P. Atkinson. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 1995.

The first edition of this book is a well-known and widely used textbook on ethnographic principles. The authors provided an excellent balance between intellectual science and intuitive art involved in observing and researching human lives. Hammersley and Atkinson defined ethnography as theory development and testing by systematic observation and verification from key informants without reliance on empiricism. After defining what is ethnography, the authors systematically discussed all the major elements of the research process: design, access, field relations, methods of data collection and analysis, writing, reporting, and ethical issues.

Handwerker, W. P. *Quick Ethnography*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2001.

Handwerker has performed extensive field research projects on four continents. His research projects have varied in length from a few days to nearly four years. From his experience, Handwerker wrote *Quick Ethnography* based on the premise that good ethnographic research does not have to take years. While *Quick Ethnography* is more of a step-by-step manual for performing and writing ethnographies, Handwerker did not present one-size fits all research methodology. Handwerker's purpose is to provide graduate students, social scientists and behavioral scientists a systematic procedure to collect large quantities of ethnographic data and subject the data to systematic analysis. Handwerker encouraged the use of both qualitative and quantitative analysis methods.

Leedy, P and J. E. Ormrod. *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. 8th ed. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 2005.

Practical Research should be required reading in senior project classes, for those writing theses, and graduate students drafting prospectuses. Leedy has written an excellent "how-to" research manual. *Practical Research* is not theoretical, but, as the title informs,

practical. The authors' goal in writing this book was to provide guidance for students, who are often left to their own resources in executing their research projects, from problem selection to the completion of a successful research project (3). Built upon the assumption that "the methodology of research transcends the limitations of academic disciplines," Leedy and Ormrod contended that this book could guide students from any academic discipline in their research projects (3).

Punch, M. "Politics and Ethics in Qualitative Research." In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln, eds., *Handbook of Qualitative Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994: 83-97.

Researchers implementing qualitative research must consider many ethical issues. Punch has written from his personal experience of encountering and dealing with ethical issues while doing qualitative fieldwork. The author argued for the importance of fieldwork, but desired that researchers be aware of the dangers that come with inquiries into people's lives.

Stake, R. E. "Case Studies." In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln, eds., *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994: 236-247.

This article focused on designing research that maximizes learning from a single case, rather than focusing on how to generalize from many case studies. The introduction discussed different ways case studies are used (intrinsic, instrumental, and collective studies) and provided several examples from current literature of each use. Researchers should find this article a helpful source for reflecting on what case studies can provide.

Van Maanen, J. *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Van Maanen is often cited for understanding ethnography as interpretive research. Ethnographers interpret, not only report, what they study. A traditional understanding of ethnographic work was to provide an objective reporting of the lives of a group of people. Van Maanen attempted to redefine ethnographic research as the interplay between researcher and those being researched. For Van Maanen, ethnography is more than simple description, it is interactive learning.

Weisner, T. S. "Why Ethnography Should Be the Most Important Method in the Study of Human Development." In R. Jessor, A. Colby, and R. A. Shweder, eds., *Ethnography and Human Development: Context and Meaning in Social Inquiry*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996: 305-324.

Weisner argued the most important factor for normal childhood development is not what most Americans think of first — parental bonding or safety. It is providing a child with a cultural identity from which to develop. From a different perspective cultural anthropologists have argued that same thing. Culture provided individuals with a cognitive framework from which they can develop. In relation to ethnographic research, the importance of this chapter is that the author suggested the traditional dichotomy between qualitative and quantitative research is false, and tends to degrade naturalistic, cultural, and qualitative inquiry. Qualitative research does not stand in opposition to quantitative research, but rather is different depending upon the measurements available or suitability of a study. All studies have an implicit comparative frame of reference. Every study provides understanding to meaning in the given context under study.

From this stance, all research contains some ethnographic component inherently, even when ethnographic methods are not intentionally utilized.

Williamson, J., D. Karp, and J. Dalphin with collaboration from R. Dorr, S. Barry, and V. H. Raveis. *The Research Craft: An Introduction to Social Science Methods*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1977.

Williamson, Karp, and Dalphin collaborated with Dorr, Barry, and Raveis to write an introductory textbook on social science methodology. The authors desired that this book be used as a classroom textbook. The book contains two sections. Section one discussed philosophical issues and several problems common to social science research. Section two discussed a variety of social science methods and each chapter can be used as stand-alone teaching point. The authors suggested that instructors have flexibility in the use these chapters. Thus, instructors may focus on a few methods in detail or overview several methods. As a basic introductory text on social science methods, the book is useful.

Whyte, W. F. *Learning from the Field: A Guide from Experience*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1984.

Whyte has written a comprehensive guide to planning and conducting field research. The author emphasized the necessity of combining quantitative and qualitative methods based on the goals of the research project. Qualitative anthropological methods are discussed alongside surveys and quantitative measures. The book contains many testimonial suggestions learned by a successful field researcher.

Articles.

Bernard, H. R., P. Killworth, D. Kronenfeld, and L. Sailer. "The Problem of Informant Accuracy: The Validity of Retrospective Data." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 13 (1984): 495-517.

Ethnographic research depends much on key informants. The authors addressed problems related to the accuracy of an informant. How accurate is the information provided by key informants? Some qualitative research elicits informants' accounts in which it is difficult or impossible to measure accuracy, such as opinion polls or the results of introspection thought. Conversely, other qualitative research depends on strict accuracy of an informant's cultural perspective. This article is the preliminary work toward a theory for measuring this accuracy.

Bernard, H. R., P. Pelto, O. Werner, J. Boster, A. Romney, A. Johnson, C. Ember, and A. Kasakoff. "The Construction of Primary Data in Cultural Anthropology." *Current Anthropology* 27 (1986): 382-396.

The authors discussed the reliability, validity, and accuracy of the qualitative materials collected by anthropologists. They focus on structured interviews, unstructured interviews, direct observation, and archival data. This article is a good resource for those interested in how to obtain dependable qualitative data.

Maxwell, J. A. "Understanding and Validity in Qualitative Research." *Harvard Educational Review* 62 (1992): 279-300.

Maxwell described five definitions of validity used in qualitative research: descriptive validity, interpretive validity, theoretical validity, generalizability, and evaluative validity. His purpose is to educate the reader about what constitutes validity in spite of multiple research topics. For Maxwell, validity is a common sense understanding of what is being studied, grounded in observations of how researchers actually justify the validity of their work.

Mitchell, S. K. "Interobserver Agreement, Reliability, and Generalizability of Data Collected in Observational Studies." *Psychological Bulletin* 86(1979): 376-390.

Mitchell provided a good overview of reliability measures. He notes that reliability in qualitative data analysis is really about validity. In the article, he argued that three factors influence the quality of data collected: the percentage of interobserver agreement, the reliability coefficient, and the generalizability coefficient. Mitchell argued that interobserver agreement is the most important aspect.

Werner, O. "Short Take 15: The Case for Verbatim Cases." *Cultural Anthropology Methods Journal*, 7 (1995): 6-8.

Werner showed the usefulness of short verbatim anecdotes. When coded and thematically analyzed these anecdotes may help to triangulate theories.

Ethnographic Methods

Participant Observation

Books.

Fine, G. A. and K. L. Sandstrom. *Knowing Children: Participant Observation with Minors*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1988.

Researchers should not assume that children view the world the same way they do. This book discussed a process for doing participant observation with children. The book is divided by age of the children being observed. The material is a useful orientation for those who have not worked in the role of observer among children. This book also provided very insightful information on the unique ethical dilemmas that researchers face while observing children.

Lofland, J. and L. Lofland. *Analyzing Social Settings*. 3rd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1995.

The Loflands provided practical guidance on conducting and interpreting participant observation research. This book will be very helpful to novice researchers in the field of qualitative research.

Spradley, J. P. *Participant Observation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980.

Participant observation has long been recognized as the hallmark of ethnographic methods. This book, written for students, provides step-by-step instructions for developing an ethnographic study built heavily upon learning by observing.

Articles.

Levine, H. G., R. Gallimore, T. S. Weisner, and J. L. Turner. "Teaching Participant-Observation Research Methods: A Skills-Building Approach." *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 11 (1980): 38-54.

In this article, the authors described how they teach a participant observation training course at UCLA. They encourage other instructors to consider teaching such a course. They explained several important skills necessary to do good observation: role management, ethics, observing, recording, interviewing, and data analysis.

Interviewing

Books.

Krueger, R. A. *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994.

A practical guide designed to help those planning and interviewing focus groups.

McCracken, G. *The Long Interview*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1988.

McCracken explained how long, qualitative interviews can be used to explore and explain how people understand their world. This method can be used "in such a way that neither the respondent nor the investigator must make extraordinary sacrifices in time or privacy" (65). Qualitative interviews are the most valuable source of information in most qualitative research and this book provided a comprehensive guide for formulating questions, conducting interviews, and analyzing the results.

Merton, R. K., M. Fiske, and P. L. Kendall. *The Focused Interview: A Manual of Problems and Procedures*. 2nd ed. New York: Free Press, 1990.

The authors explained that an important use of the focused interview is to collect data from the informants' responses and to conduct the interview in a manner that the informants' responses match their actual perceptions. The authors contended that focused interviews help to maintain reliability of data. The authors examined the concern for obtaining in-depth responses from informants. They suggest methods to encourage "affective" responses that help obtain deep descriptions in the interviews. The differences between group and individual interviews are discussed as well.

Morgan, D. L., ed. *Successful Focus Groups: Advancing the State of the Art*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997.

Morgan discussed the fact that the use of focus groups is a qualitative method, and instructs how to best use them. The chapters covered a variety of topics including principles for using focus groups, applicability of focus groups, general issues related to focus groups, problems with focus groups, and future developments with this method.

Morgan, D. L. and R. Krueger, eds. *Focus Group Kit*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997.

This six-volume set is a complete explanation of when, why, and how to use focus groups. The editors brought together some of the most recent thinking on focus groups and perhaps the best practices and applications for using focus groups in qualitative research.

Rubin, H. and I. Rubin. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005.

The authors contended for the use of semi-structured interviews in qualitative research because they allow the researcher the freedom to engage the interviewee with probing questions. Probing and other exploratory questions allow the researcher to seek clarification and detail from the participants. When structured interviews place too many restrictions upon the researcher, “responsive interviewing,” as the authors described, grants the researcher freedom to engage and converse with interviewees. This book is very helpful in learning interviewing methods like interview question design, probing, and follow-up questions.

Spradley, J. P. *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979.

Spradley’s materials are all classics in the field of ethnography and ethnographic methods. This book is a guide to conducting ethnographic interviews. After a brief introduction on ethnography, the main section of the book provides a step-by-step process from locating informants, asking questions, and analyzing interview material, to writing an ethnographic report. This book’s genius is its integrated approach that explains how each of the steps are interrelated and connected to the overall goal.

Steward, D. W. and P. Shamdasani. *Focus Groups: Theory and Practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1990.

The authors have provided another guide for research utilizing focus groups. This book will be useful for those with research designs strongly dependent upon focus groups.

Articles.

Agar, M. H. and J. MacDonald. “Focus Groups and Ethnography.” *Human Organization* 54 (1995): 78-86.

Anthropologists, Agar and MacDonald, presented the pros and cons of using focus groups. They also addressed the benefit of combining focus groups with other qualitative methods to increase their benefit. The authors stressed that the intent of focus groups is to elicit group conversation. When members of the group speak with each other, focus group methodology works the best. Group conversation provides more of the message while limiting interviewer intervention. Central to the article is the authors’ contention that focus groups, like interviews, experience constraints on data collection. The constraints are set by the dynamics of the group. The authors explained that some researchers hope to use groups as a substitute for observing everyday life. However, a problem occurs because a focus group is not everyday life. The authors stressed that American focus groups are more like meetings, because one person usually determines and leads the conversation. Focus group conversations are more like short comments than an in-depth running conversation. Agar and MacDonald concluded that focus groups produce more informative data when the researchers had already studied other aspects of the society before conducting focus group interviews.

Bauman, L. J. and E. Adair. "The Use of Ethnographic Interviewing to Inform Questionnaire Construction." *Health Education Quarterly* 19 (1992): 9-23.

The authors described the use of ethnographic interviews in the preparation of a quantitative interview questionnaire. By using ethnographic interviews to develop the categories for quantitative questionnaires, the authors stressed great research reliability is gained.

Hughes, D. and K. DuMont. "Using Focus Groups to Facilitate Culturally Anchored Research." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 21(1993): 775-806.

Focus groups are understood by the authors as a way of combining interviewing with observation to ground survey research in cultural study. They provide advice on the stages of preparing, carrying out, and analyzing focus groups. The authors explained an example of a project that used focus groups in tandem with structured interviews. The focus group information was used to analyze cultural background of participants. Additionally, the focus group data was used to revise survey instruments for the research project.

Jehn, K. A. and L. Doucet. "Developing Categories from Interview Data: Text Analysis and Multidimensional Scaling. Part 1." *Cultural Anthropology Methods Journal* 8 (1996): 15-16.

Jehn and Doucet described a series of steps for developing categories from text analysis of transcribed interviews.

_____. "Developing Categories for Interview Data: Consequences of Different Coding and Analysis Strategies in Understanding Text: Part 2." *Cultural Anthropology Methods Journal* 9 (1997): 1-7.

This article is the second part of an article that described a series of steps for developing categories from text analysis of transcribed interviews.

Werner, O. "Short Take 11: Constructed Folk Definitions from Interviews." *Cultural Anthropology Methods Journal*, 5 (1993): 4-7.

In this article, Werner contrasted "elicited folk definitions" – informants' statements about the meaning of words, with "constructed folk definitions" – definitions inherent because of how informants use a word. Werner illustrated his discussion with a simple but powerful computer analysis of some interview text that allows the construction of folk definitions from in-depth qualitative interviews.

Fieldnotes

Books.

Emerson, R. M., R. I. Fretz, and L. L. Shaw. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

This book is a recent addition to the paucity of literature on fieldnotes. The authors described taking fieldnotes in the field, analysis of fieldnotes, coding them, and using them in the writing stage. The authors stressed the importance of writing fieldnotes from a variety of perspectives: first-person and third-person. Their approach to analysis of fieldnotes does not

emphasize textual and content analysis, they focused upon emic word meanings and frequency as their key indicators and prefer the use of grounded theory coding. The authors discussed how to take notes in a variety of typical situations encountered in the field. Researchers will find this book a helpful resource for planning to take a variety of notes from participant observation.

Johnson, A. and O. R. Johnson. "From Quality to Quantity: On the Measurement Potential of Ethnographic Fieldnotes." In R. Sanjek, ed., *Fieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology*. Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990: 161-186.

First, the Johnsons argued for anthropological holism, that culture is a collective whole. A practice that the authors contended most anthropologists still respect, but rarely practice. All fieldnotes, they said, could benefit from being more holistic. In an appendix, they included an ethnographic checklist that they suggest field researchers look at frequently. Second, they argued that ethnographers need to be more intentional to count things observed. This chapter will be of interest to those planning to make short-term ethnography a part of future data collection.

General

Books.

Becker, H. S. *Sociological Work: Method and Substance*. Chicago: Aldine, 1970.

This material is useful for examining the tough questions about the reliability and validity of qualitative methods. In chapter three, "Field Work Evidence," Becker provided convincing reasons why fieldwork produces believable results. Fieldwork "gives us information on people acting under the very social constraints whose operation we are interested in, and because its numerous items of information and flexible procedures allow us to test our conclusions repeatedly . . . we need not fear that its unsystematic character will distort our findings" (62). In "The Life History and the Scientific Mosaic," the use of life histories in field research is explained. The final chapter of specific interest, "Social Observation and Social Case Studies," explained case studies similarly to life histories in practice.

Bernard, H. R. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994.

A clearly written array of data collection and analysis techniques. Many scholars consider this book the best methods book in anthropology. Bernard presented both qualitative and quantitative methods. He also described how one can mix these methods during anthropological fieldwork.

Crane, J. and M. V. Angrosino. *Field Projects in Anthropology: A Student Handbook*. 3rd ed. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 1992.

Ethnography can only be understood correctly by going forth and doing ethnographic fieldwork. This book provided the reader with fourteen ethnographic projects. The chapters provided a basic overview of the topics of the project, for example Proxemic and life histories, to name two chapter topics. Then, the authors gave the reader guidelines for going out and performing an research project focused upon the chapter topic. The projects increase in difficulty

with the final project challenging the reader to plan a community-wide study. In other words, the authors walked the reader progressively through several major data collection methods and then show them how to put all of them together for a future project. This book will be helpful for students who have never conducted field research. They can work through the book and develop their skills before setting out on a major research project.

Dabbs, J. M. J. "Making Things Visible." In J. Van Maanen, J. M. J. Dabbs, & R. R. Faulkner, eds., *Varieties of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1982: 31-63.

This chapter explained how to examine "individuals and groups from the outside, focusing upon the minutiae of daily life" (33). He advocated the use of nonreactive and unobtrusive measures (see also Webb, et al., 1981).

Fetterman, D. M. *Ethnography: Step by Step*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989.

As the title suggests, this is a how-to manual for conducting ethnographies and ethnographic research. Fetterman answered the question: what is ethnographic research and outlined a step-by-step approach for conducting this type of research. He included all the basic elements for ethnographic research including methods and techniques of ethnographic fieldwork, equipment needed for ethnographic research, how to analyze your findings, the writing process, and ethics in ethnographic research.

Fiedler, J. *Field Research: A Manual for Logistics and Management of Scientific Studies in Natural Settings*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978.

This management-oriented manual provided guidelines for running a field research project. The material focused on planning, site selection, communications, staffing, budgeting, money management, and supplies.

Johnson, J. C. *Selecting Ethnographic Informants*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1990.

Johnson presented a brief but helpful discussion of mixing qualitative and quantitative methods. Then he explained ethnographic sampling. Johnson's main point is that there are many options beyond strict probability sampling and that the selection of a sample should be research question driven. He further demonstrated how fieldwork and network analysis may produce information on one's existing sample that leads to greater understanding and new areas of research.

LeCompte, M. and J. Schensul, eds. *Ethnographer's Toolkit*. 7 vols. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 1999.

The editors and authors, LeCompte and Schensul, have compiled a complete one-set work that discussed all the major elements in ethnographic research. Each book is short, but comprehensive. The authors addressed philosophical, ethical, and practical issues related to ethnography. If a researcher could have only one source, this seven-volume set would be the one to buy.

Spradley, J. P. and D. McCurdy. *The Cultural Experience: Ethnography in Complex Society*. Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1972.

Spradley and McCurdy have provided a classic text on ethnography. The book serves as a primer for ethnographic methods and a source of ethnographic samples. The ethnographies included come from various settings in the US.

Webb, E.J., D. Campbell, R. Schwartz, and L. Sechrist. *Unobtrusive Measures: Nonreactive Research in the Social Sciences*. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1966.

The authors described a number of “unobtrusive measures,” which they define as sociological techniques that take place outside the awareness of the research subjects. The authors argued that sociologists need not assume all unobtrusive measures involve some sort of covert surveillance, eavesdropping, or spying. Using the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle, they explained how the subjects’ awareness of being studied alters their behavior. Likewise, they explained how such techniques may be called for in “sensitive” sociological situations. Content analysis is one of the main and important unobtrusive techniques.

Webb, E. J., D. Campbell, R. Schwartz, L. Sechrest, and J. Grove. *Nonreactive Measures in the Social Sciences*. 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981.

The second edition of a book originally titled *Unobtrusive Measures* discussed observational and data collection methods. The methods all share a characteristic that, unlike survey questionnaires, they “do not require the cooperation of a respondent and . . . do not themselves contaminate the response” (2). The authors noted that survey questionnaires have become the dominant and perhaps too exclusive sociological method. Their point is not that researchers should not use questionnaires, but to suggest and encourage the usage of a wider range of methods in conjunction with the popular methods.

Werner, O. and G. Schoepfle. *Systematic Fieldwork*. 2 Vol. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1987.

This two-volume set is driven by a presupposition argument that assumed the importance of the emic perspective, the insider’s view of culture. The authors exhorted anthropologists to be more systematic and organized in their fieldwork. They advocate organization by using semantic taxonomies. The authors emphasized the ethnoscience perspective in field research, to speak authoritatively from social science research requires the researcher to understand the internal view of the participants. Volume one, “Foundations of Ethnography and Interviewing,” addressed issues common to ethnography, including participant observation, interviewing, questionnaires, and other more philosophical issues including epistemology, rapport, and the use of technology. Volume two, “Ethnographic Analysis and Data Management,” explained the practical topics related to data analysis and presentation of data, including indexing fieldnotes, semantic analysis, decision modeling, textual analysis, data presentation and writing ethnographic reports. The authors’ data analysis style relied heavily on the field of semantic analysis, using decision trees and semantic domain analysis.

Articles.

Boster, J. “The Successive Pile Sort.” *Cultural Anthropology Methods Journal* 6 (1994): 11-12.

Pile sorts can be used in a variety of different ways to collect data about how people perceive the world around them. Boster argued that the successive pile sort method allows for cross informant comparison, one informant’s sorts can be compared to another informant’s sorts.

Stone, L. and J. G. Campbell. "The Use and Misuse of Surveys in International Development: An Experiment from Nepal." *Human Organization* 43 (1984): 27-37.

The authors discussed how the setting of survey research, the identity of the researchers, how questions are asked, and how questions are interpreted by respondents affect survey research. The article focused upon the result of these factors in an international setting. The authors contend that these factors explain part of the disparity between what people report and what they do. This article demonstrated the need for mixed method research. By using qualitative methods with survey research this disparity can be reduced.

Werner, O. "Short Take 18: Notation for Transcribing Conversation and Interviews". *Cultural Anthropology Methods Journal* 8(1996): 3.

Werner discussed several common conventions for transcribing interviews and other verbally collected data. A very helpful article on the how-to's of ethnography.

Werner, O. and H. R. Bernard. "Short Take 13: Ethnographic Sampling." *Cultural Anthropology Methods Journal*, 6 (1994): 7-9.

This short article compared random sampling and ethnographic sampling and suggests helpful insights that can be learned from both methods. Bernard and Werner included helpful graphics to illustrate their comparison.

Internet Sources

The Anthropological Index Online

<http://aio.anthropology.org.uk/aio/AIO.html>

The Anthropological Index Online is based on the journal holdings of The Anthropology Library at The British Museum (formerly Museum of Mankind) which receives periodicals in all branches of anthropology, from academic institutions and publishers around the world. The index provides both a quick search and full search feature of over 140,000 records dating from 1957 to present.

AnthroSource

<http://www.anthrosource.net/>

AnthroSource is an excellent online resource serving the research, teaching, and professional needs of anthropologists. AnthroSource was developed by the American Anthropological Association (AAA) and includes:

1. Current issues for 15 of AAA's publications through the end of 2006.
2. An electronic archive of all AAA journals.

AnthroSource is a fully integrated information resource. Its powerful search engine makes precision research quick and easy. Citations in article PDF files are dynamically linked through CrossRef to other publications, both within and beyond AnthroSource.

New Journals and Newsletters on the Internet

<http://gort.ucsd.edu/newjour/>

NewJour, the New Journal and Newsletter Announcement List is an electronic listing of journals that may be accessed electronically. NewJour has two purposes. First, NewJour is an announcement source. NewJour will announce newly planned, newly issued, or revised electronic journals or newsletters. It also announces the availability of paper journals and newsletters as they move to electronic format. Second, NewJour represents an identification and road-mapping project for electronic journals and newsletters. Archives of the last four editions of the online directory are available at <http://www.arl.org/scomm/edir/archive.html>

Sociological Research Online

<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/home.html>

Sociological Research Online is a quarterly publication that focuses on theoretical, empirical and methodological discussions that engage with current political, cultural and intellectual topics and debates.