

Introduction to Ethics in Qualitative Research Methods of Qualitative Analysis II

Outline prepared and written by:

Dr. Jason J. Campbell:

www.jasonjcampbell.org

Youtube Playlist Link:

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2B170AF27425C888&feature=viewall>

Melanie Mauthner, Maxine Birch, Julie Jessop and Tina Miller, ed. 2002. *Ethics in Qualitative Research* Los Angeles: Sage. [Buy on Amazon](#).

§1.0:

Brief History and Ethics of Human Subjects Research:

Timeline can be accessed from the original [here](#).

1932-1972

The Tuskegee Syphilis Study, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health. Studied the effects of untreated syphilis in 400 African American men. Researchers withheld treatment even when penicillin became widely available. Researchers did not tell the subjects that they were in an experiment. Most subjects who attended the Tuskegee clinic thought they were getting treatment for "bad blood."

[**Additional Comment**]: From 1932 to 1972 -- 400 black men with syphilis were purposely left untreated by the U.S. government to test the disease's long-term effects, including dementia, blindness and disfigurement.¹

1939-45

German scientists conduct research on concentration camp prisoners.

1947

The Nuremberg Code for research on human subjects is adopted. The Allies use the document in the Nuremberg Trials to convict Nazi scientists of war crimes.

The **voluntary consent** of the human subject is **absolutely essential**. This means that the person involved should have legal capacity to give consent; should be so situated as to be able to **exercise free power of choice**, without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, over-reaching, or other ulterior form of constraint or coercion; and should have sufficient knowledge and comprehension of the elements of the subject matter involved as to enable him to make an understanding and enlightened decision. This latter element requires that

¹ Stephen, Magagnini, and smagagnini@sacbee.com. 2011. Medical review panel protects human subjects - COMMITTEE FORMED AFTER TUSKEGEE STUDY EXPOSED. *Sacramento Bee, The (CA)*, A3.

before the acceptance of an affirmative decision by the experimental subject there should be made known to him the nature, duration, and purpose of the experiment; the method and means by which it is to be conducted; all inconveniences and hazards reasonable to be expected; and the effects upon his health or person which may possibly come from his participation in the experiment.²

Essential Elements for Ethical Consideration:

Participant:

1. Knowledge of generalizability
2. Autonomy
3. Anonymity
4. Consent
5. Ability to terminate participation at any time.

Researcher:

1. Possess sufficient training to conduct the experiment/survey
2. Cognizant of perceived power relations/imbalance b/ self and participant.³
3. Inform participant of any dangers and receive consent.

1953

James Watson and Francis Crick discover the structure of DNA, for which they eventually would share the Nobel Prize in 1962. They secretly obtained key x-ray diffraction data from **Rosalind Franklin** without her permission. She was not awarded a Nobel Prize because she died in 1953 from ovarian cancer (at age 37), and the prize is not awarded posthumously.

1964 [ref]

Declaration of Helsinki. In 1964, the World Medical Association established recommendations guiding medical doctors in biomedical research involving human subjects. The Declaration governs international research ethics and defines rules for "research combined with clinical care" and "non-therapeutic research." The Declaration of Helsinki was revised in 1975, 1983, 1989 and 1996 and is the basis for Good Clinical Practices used today.

Issues addressed in the Declaration of Helsinki include:

- Research with humans should be based on the results from laboratory and animal experimentation
- Research protocols should be reviewed by an independent committee prior to initiation
- Informed consent from research participants is necessary
- Research should be conducted by medically/scientifically qualified individuals
- Risks should not exceed benefits

² <http://ohsr.od.nih.gov/guidelines/nuremberg.html>

³ <http://cnr.berkeley.edu/ucce50/ag-labor/7article/article35.htm>

1974: On July 12, 1974, the National Research Act (Pub. L. 93-348) was signed into law, thereby creating the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research.⁴ Congress passes the **National Research Act**, which authorizes federal agencies to develop human research regulations, e.g. 45 CFR 46, 21 CFR 50,54,56.

§1.1:

Ethics: concerns the morality of human conduct.

Three Ethical Considerations for Social Scientists:

1. Moral Deliberation
2. Choice
3. Accountability

Ethical Decisions and the Research Process: ["Ethical decisions arise throughout the entire research process"].⁵ (p.19).

1. Conceptualization
2. Design
3. Data Collection
4. Analysis
5. Reporting

Influence on a Researcher's Definition of 'Social Reality':

1. Epistemological Perspective: [explain]
 - a. serve to frame researcher's theoretical orientation.
2. **Cognitive/Epistemic Authority** [Patrick Wilson]
 - a. "Cognitive authorities are authorities *on* something-e.g., insects or Buddhist logic." **[ethical implications]**.
 - b. **Contingent on social perception:**
 - i. "It is not what you "really" know but what others think you know that gives you authority; you get cognitive authority by getting others to think you know things." **[ref]** **[ethical implications]**.
 - ii. Scope of your Authority can be Wide or Narrow.
 - iii. The Degree of your authority can be slight or great.

⁴ <http://ohsr.od.nih.gov/guidelines/belmont.html>

⁵ Rosalind Edwards and Melanie Mauthner "Ethics and Feminist Research: Theory and Practice" pg. 14-31.

- iv. Authority can be assessed by *performance*: performance is a persuasive means of demonstrating one's authority. [Explain].

Three Ethical Models of Social Research:

Universalist Models:

1. **Duty Ethics of Principles:**

This is a deontological ethical model [duty based model].

"Research is driven by universal principles such as honesty, justice and respect. Actions are governed by principles that should not be broken, and judged by intent rather than consequences." p. 20.

2. **Utilitarian Ethics of Consequences:**

"The 'utilitarian ethics of consequences' model prioritizes the 'goodness' of outcomes of research such as increased knowledge. Thus the rightness or wrongness of actions are judged by their consequences rather than their intent. This model is underlain by a Universalist cost-benefit result pragmatism." p.20.

Contextual/Situational Model:

3. **Virtue Ethics of Skills:**

"in contrast to the two Universalist models above, a 'virtue ethics of skills' model questions the possibility of laying down abstract principles. Rather, it stresses a contextual or situational ethical position, with an emphasis on the researchers moral values and ethical skills in reflectively negotiating ethical dilemmas: 'ethical behavior is seen unless as the application of general principles and rules, than as the researchers internalizing moral values'" p.20

Shifting Importance to Virtue Based Ethic in Qualitative Research:

"A contingent of virtue and/or value, rather than Universalist approach has become predominantly advocated in text discussing ethics and social research." p. 21. [Q: Why?][A: Explain].

Reader Assumptions of 'Victim'/'Perpetrator' Ethics:

[victim/perpetrator ethics] "are based on the assumption that both the researcher and reader (often presented as a unified 'we') will be hostile to history as recounted by the oppressors, **and will automatically identify with their victims**, both emotionally and politically. In other words, the advocacy or witnessing model of

oral history presupposes the ethically sound and politically progressive stance **of the researcher.**"⁶ [**Example:** Child Soldier Dissertation]

§1.2:

Basic Assumptions of Qualitative Data Gathered from 'Victims' and 'Perpetrators'

Victim	Perpetrator
Historically Accurate	Historically Inaccurate
Meaningful/Relevant	Meaningless/Irrelevant
Truthful	Lies
Solicits Sympathy	Solicits Disgust
Powerless	Powerful

5 Influences of these Assumptions:

1. These assumptions will influence how a researcher prepares research questions. [Question Bias]
2. These assumptions will influence how a researcher prepares interview questions.
3. These assumptions will influence how a researcher interprets the participant's story. [Interpretive Bias].
4. These assumptions will influence how a researcher presents the participant's story.
5. These assumptions will influence the level of sympathy/empathy a reader will have for both the participant and the participant's story.

Two Approaches to Ethics in Qualitative Research:

1. A Virtue Skills Approach:
 - a. Skills attained by researcher are impartial and neutral.
 2. A Value Based Approach:
 - a. "Advocates a 'partial' stance based on analysis of power relations between those involved in the research and society more broadly."
- p.21.

⁶ Hamilton, Carrie. 2008. On Being a 'Good' Interviewer: Empathy, Ethics and the Politics of Oral History. *Oral History* 36 (2):35-43.

Distinctions b/ a Justice-Based Ethical Model and an Ethics of Care

Care	Justice
Self as self-in-relation	Autonomous self
Characteristic of Informal Context	Characteristic of formal context
Emphasis on Contextual Reasoning	Emphasis on Rights and Equality
Weaknesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sacrifice or Loss of Self • Failure to recognize the autonomy of the other • Over identification with the other 	Weaknesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to be merciful • Over-reliance on impersonal institutions • Overly rule bound

taken from pg. 23 in text.

Considerations for an Ethics of Care and Qualitative Research:

1. Concerning a weakness in an Ethics of Care
 - a. **Participant:** E.g., participant that has assumed the role of a caregiver. Research might allow the participant to express his/her difficulties in assuming the role of a caregiver.
Example interview question: "In assuming your new responsibilities, do you feel that you've lost a part of yourself?"
 - b. **Researcher:** As researchers we can become very attached to our work. You must be sure, as a researcher, to take great care in preserving your identity outside academia. [friends, family, spirituality, religion] to avoid burnout.

Maslach Burnout Inventory: (MBI)

"Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals *who work with people in some capacity*. A key aspect of the burnout syndrome is increased feelings of **emotional exhaustion** -- as emotional resources are depleted, workers feel they are no longer able to give of themselves at a psychological level. Another aspect of the burnout syndrome is the development of depersonalization, that is, negative, cynical attitudes and feelings about one's clients. This callous or even dehumanized perception of others can lead staff members to view their clients as somehow deserving of their troubles. [*sacrifice or loss of self and failure to recognize the autonomy of the other: discussed above*] ... A third aspect of the burnout syndrome, reduced personal accomplishment, refers to the tendency to evaluate oneself negatively, particularly with

regard to one's work with clients. Workers may feel unhappy about themselves and dissatisfied with their accomplishments on the job" (emphasis added).⁷

"**Emotional exhaustion** has been associated with situations where excessive stimulation and insufficient means to regulate such stimulation exist (Hobfoll and Freedy, 1993), and is linked to the physical exhaustion associated with stress."⁸

§1.3:

2. Concerning a Weakness in Justice-Based Ethical Approach:

- a. **Participant**: E.g.: Rehabilitated former 'perpetrator'. The inability or the difficulty of the researcher to be merciful/understanding of the participants narrative w/o biasing the research. [Researcher has an ethical responsibility to "bracket" his/her biases **BEFORE** the findings.
- b. **Researcher**: Over-reliance on formal, rule-based, discourse. E.g., "Well if you said X, then shouldn't you have done Y?" There is a fine line between conducting qualitative research and conducting an interrogation. [One that can easily be crossed by an ill-trained or novice researcher]. [Explain further].

Ethics in Qualitative Research and Coping with Conflict:

1. **Dealing with Conflict**: "Ethics is about *how to deal with conflict*, [explain] disagreement and ambivalence rather than attempting to eliminate it. A feminist ethics of care can help researchers think about how they do this by 'illuminating more fully *the source of moral dilemmas* in formulating meaningful epistemological strategies in order to deal with these dilemmas, even if only on a temporary basis"⁹
2. **Strategic Approaches**: [Summary]: epistemological strategies are a means for dealing with ethical dilemmas.

⁷ <http://www.mindgarden.com/products/mbi.htm>. Christina Maslach, Susan E. Jackson, Michael P. Leiter, Wilmar B. Schaufeli, & Richard L. Schwab.

⁸ Densten, Iain L. 2001. Re-Thinking Burnout. *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 22 (8):833-847.

⁹ Sevenhuijsen, S. (1998) *Citizenship and ethics of care: feminist considerations of justice, morality and politics*. London: Routledge.

3. **Oppositional Relations**: E.g.: "What if one research group's empowerment is another's disempowerment, especially where both are considered oppressed groups?" p.26. [Rival gang members, as an example]. [**Explain**].
 - a. The "proper course of action" i.e., what one *should* do, isn't a universal constant in this case. A researcher attuned to an ethics of care would take note of the source of this potential conflict in assessing data from respective participants.

The Focus of Research Ethics:

"Research ethics have therefore focused on how well participants are treated, but has not been extended to encompass broader questions about the ethics of knowledge itself..."¹⁰ pg.32

Participant: Ensuring the ethical treatment of participants is at the core of ethical consideration for qualitative researchers.

Research Findings: The application of research findings, the intent and the political implications of qualitative research must all be considered in assessing the ethical nature of the study.

Third Parties in Human Subjects Research: Your research should not "create additional risks to third parties"¹¹

Identifying Third Parties in Human Subjects Research:

1. **Principal Parties**: include the "researchers, research staff, and human subjects"¹²
2. **Third Party**: "a third party is an individual (or organization or institution) who is not a researcher or a subject, but who is affected by the relationship between those persons"¹³
 - a. **Directly Affected 3rd Parties**: " identifiable individuals or organizations whose rights or welfare may be adversely affected by research procedures"
 - b. **Indirectly Affected 3rd Parties**: "individuals or organizations that may be adversely affected by the research, but cannot be identified beforehand."

¹⁰ The Ethics of Intention: Research as a Political Tool" Val Gillies and Pam Alldred.

¹¹ Resnik, David B., and Richard R. Sharp. 2006. Protecting Third Parties in Human Subjects Research. *IRB: Ethics and Human Research* 28 (4):1-7.

¹² *ibid*, pg. 2.

¹³ *ibid*, pg. 2.

§1.4:

Understanding Informed Consent:

"Gaining 'informed' consent is problematic **if it is not clear** what the participant is **consenting to** and where **'participation' begins and ends**... 'Consent' should be **ongoing** and **renegotiated**¹⁴ between researcher and researched throughout the research process."¹⁵

- A. Researcher should fully inform participant with pertinent information necessary to make a well informed decision.
- B. Participant must understand that consent does not require completion of the research.
- C. Participant must understand the specific role(s) played in the research and informed of the potential hazards of participation.
- D. Researcher has the responsibility to ensure the continued consent of the participant.
- E. The terms of a participant's consent, if any, must always be open to renegotiation.
- F. **Member Checking**: The process of confirming/validating qualitative data attained from the participant.

Member Checking/ Respondent Validation:

"Member checking, also known as respondent validation, is frequently acclaimed in the social sciences as a key tool for establishing credibility in qualitative analyses. By returning research products to participants and using such internal authentication to appraise the integrity of findings, this method is argued to function as a qualitative proxy for traditionally quantitative evaluations of rigor."¹⁶

"While informing participants about the research aims at the outset of the project is of vital, final research findings **may not resonate with those aims**. The precise nature of 'consent' for the participants met only become clear eventually, at the end of the study, when the researchers impact on shaping the study is visible... Might we tacitly expect interviewees also to be interested in reading their own interview transcripts, or to contribute in other ways to the analysis of the final written product?" p. 53.

¹⁴ renegotiation is especially important when considering longitudinal research projects.

¹⁵ "Consenting to What? Issues of Access, Gate-Keeping and 'Informed' Consent" Tina Miller and Linda Bell.

¹⁶ Turner, Sarah, and Stephanie E. Coen. "Member checking in human geography: interpreting divergent understandings of performativity in a student space." *Area (London, England: 1969)* 40.2 (2008): 184-93. *Social Sciences Full Text*. Web. 30 Dec. 2011.

Pros: Divergence and divergent outcomes can strengthen the research. [Explain and example].

Cons: "it [member checking] can result in conflicting opinions regarding research interpretations."¹⁷

§1.5:

The Ethics of Gate-Keeping: Gate-Keepers are individuals in "positions to permit access to others for the purpose of interviewing." p.55.

- The notion of consent also applies to gate-keeper/potential participant relations.
- Researchers should recognize the relation of power b/ themselves and gate-keepers and b/ gate-keepers and participants.
- Gate-keepers function as a means of accessing potential participants. The notion of access and accessibility will factor into our analysis of ethics in qualitative research.

Example of Gate-Keeper Ethical Violations:

[My Example]: **Scenario**

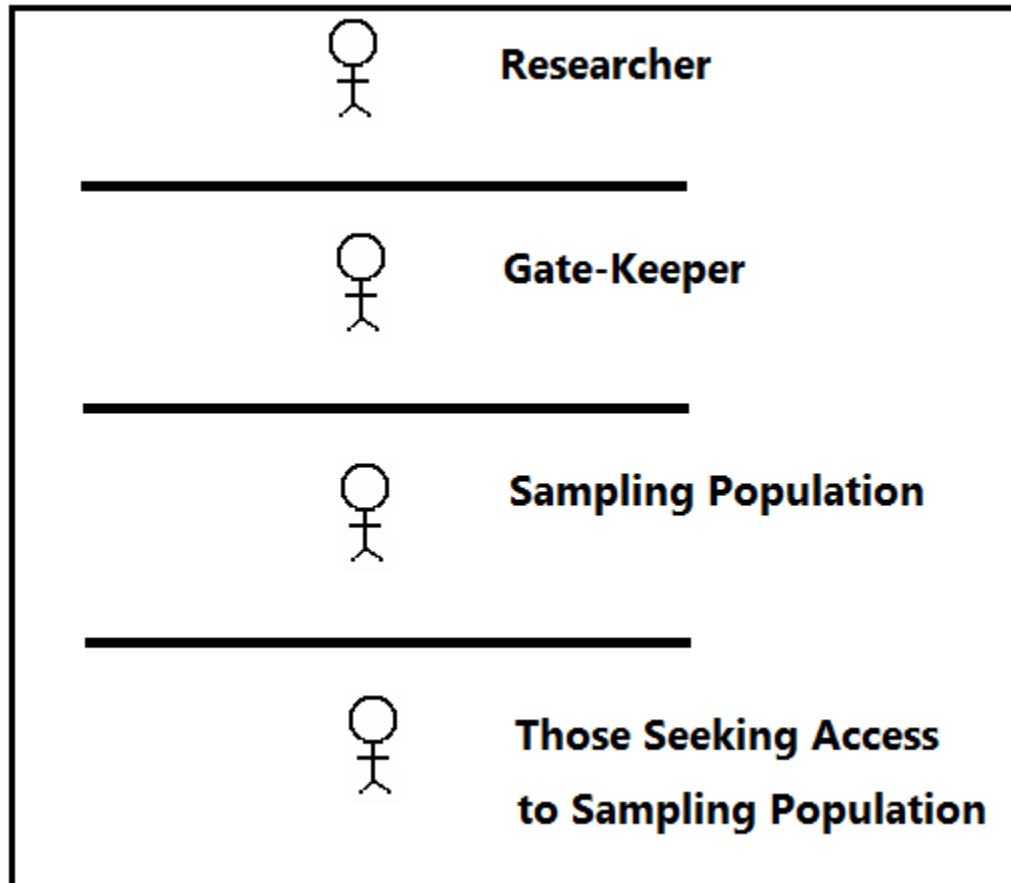
Assume that you [the researcher] want access to a population of elderly war veterans [potential participants] for a research project you are contemplating. To gain access to this population, you have to work through the Director of Veteran Affairs, Vickie [the gate-keeper] at the local VA.

1. Vickie requires financial or other "compensation" as "payment" for access. [see example in footnote¹⁸]
2. You and/or Vickie use coercive tactics to gain "consent" from the participants.

¹⁷ Turner, Sarah, and Stephanie E. Coen. "Member checking in human geography: interpreting divergent understandings of performativity in a student space." *Area (London, England: 1969)* 40.2 (2008): 184-93. *Social Sciences Full Text*. Web. 30 Dec. 2011.

¹⁸ "A report released by the World Health Organisation (WHO) this year detailed "concerns" over clinical trials in India and, according to WEMOS, doctors in India have earned up to 1,500 dollars per patient for enrolling subjects in clinical trials." Amanda, Wilson. 2011. GREATER OVERSIGHT URGED FOR HUMAN RESEARCH IN WAKE OF SCANDAL. *Inter Press Service*.

- a. Potential Participants are threatened to be "kicked-out" of the program if they don't "agree" to participate in the research project.
- b. Those seeking access to the "sample population" are informed that that access is contingent on consenting to the research project.



[Explain in detail combinations of ethical dilemmas]

****Important:** As part of a researcher's fieldwork, the researcher must account for possible ethical infractions in obtaining and analyzing qualitative data.

---Implication for **Quantitative/Biological** Researcher---

The Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues:

[\[site\]](#)

I will be further developing a complete series on Biomedical Ethics.

1. The growing need to regulate off-shore clinical trials.

2. "The Coordinated Framework" is an attempt to regulate, "the research and development of biotechnology products."¹⁹
 - a. "Products presenting higher risks or greater uncertainty are subject to higher degrees of oversight."²⁰
3. [Implications]: The emphasis placed on the regulation of biological research, must equally be applied in regulating qualitative research.

Vulnerable and Protected Populations:

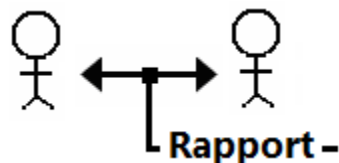
"Special considerations apply to protecting the welfare of particularly vulnerable populations such as 1. fetuses, 2. children, 3. prisoners, 4. pregnant women, 5. mentally disabled or cognitively impaired persons, 6. terminally ill patients, 7. the elderly, 8. students and employees, 9. survey research that involves AIDS²¹ information either with the general public or with vulnerable populations, or 10. economically or educationally disadvantaged persons."²²

§1.6:

Establishing Rapport and Identifying it Nonverbally²³

Identification of Behavioral Correlates:

1. Handshake, Hug, Kiss.
2. A sense of ease and comfort.



"...rapport exists **only** as interaction between individuals. It is **not** a personality trait... Individuals **experience rapport** as the result of a combination of **qualities that emerge** from each individual during interaction. This experience is expressed clearly when people say they

¹⁹ <http://bioethics.gov/documents/synthetic-biology/PCSBI-Synthetic-Biology-Report-12.16.10.pdf>

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ See: Hutchison, Ruth Reagan, and Emma Giordano Quartaro. 1995. High-Risk Vulnerable Populations and Volunteers: A Model of Education and Service Collaboration. *Journal of Community Health Nursing* 12 (2):111-119, for a discussion on High Risk Vulnerable Populations (HRVP).

²² <http://minerva.stkate.edu/IRB.nsf/pages/specialpopulations>

²³ Tickle-Degnen, Linda, and Robert Rosenthal. 1990. The Nature of Rapport and Its Nonverbal Correlates. *Psychological Inquiry* 1 (4):285-293.

"clicked" with each other, or felt the good interaction to be due to "chemistry."²⁴

The Dynamic Structure of Rapport:

1. **Mutual attentiveness**: (1) serves as an essential **condition for interaction**.

a. Mutual attentiveness may not unfold positively. E.g., "when teenage boys con-front one another in verbal combat."

[Explain]

2. **Positivity**: **present within/during** the interaction.

3. **Coordination**: the ability to "synch" [explain].

"As we elaborate in a later section, the feeling of mutual interest and focus during interaction is related to mutual attention behavior, the feeling of friendliness and warmth is related to positive behavior, and the feeling of balance and harmony is related to coordinated interaction" (p.286).

Identifying Nonverbal Indicators During and Interview:

"Participants would have a keen awareness of the evaluative climate surrounding the interaction"(p.288).

- Researchers must recognize that the participant is aware of the process of evaluation. This awareness can detract from the goals of the research. E.g. "Jersey Shore".
- Reality TV actors become desensitized to the omnipresence of the cameras and their personalities emerge as the sense of evaluative awareness dissipates.

"Assessing the nonverbal correlates of rapport is not easy. Nonverbal behavior is **a continuous stream of action** with movements and expressions occurring simultaneously and in fluid temporal succession to one another. In it, there is an **interplay of movement** among the limbs of the body, shifts in posture, fluctuations in facial expressions, and so on. Out of this continuous stream of action, the human observer perceives **socially meaningful discrete events**, as revealed by

²⁴ Tickle-Degnen, Linda, and Robert Rosenthal. 1990. The Nature of Rapport and Its Nonverbal Correlates. *Psychological Inquiry* 1 (4):286.

words used to describe these events, for example, "she smiled," or "he nodded."

Field notes and interview notes should be rich with event descriptors, accounting for perceptions of comfort and body language.

- Though it is a verbal cue, in "interaction, such as the turn-taking cues involved in the coordination of speaking and listening roles" (p.289), which serves as an audible indicator of the coordination of a thought process. layman: finishing each other ideas or sentences. [this is an indicator that rapport is being established]
- [Tip: Since the interview will be recorded. (this takes practice) try to block-out what the participant is saying and simply watch their body language. Record what you see.]
- **Postural mirroring** is a nonverbal indicator that there is an established rapport.
- Examples: smiling, directed gazing, head nod-ding, forward trunk lean, direct body orientation, posture mirroring, uncrossed arms, and uncrossed legs.
- Imagine watching yourself and the participant while you are conducting the interview. What message would your body language convey?

Summary:

- During interview create a sense of comfort with your body language [as researcher]
- Via, gesticulation and physical cues, encourage the participant to mirror your body language without addressing the fact.
- Convey a sense of comfort and ease with the participant, both with your voice and your posture.
- Take comfort in your audio recorder and focus on those visual indicators that strike you as important.
- Be considerate and recognize levels of comfort and discomfort during the interview.

End of Lecture Series.