DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 270 459 TM 860 308

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TITLE	The Development of Intrinsic Criteria for Authenticity: A Model for Trust in Naturalistic Researches.
PUB DATE	Apr 86
NOTE	25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (70th, San Francisco, CA, April 16-20, 1986).
PUB TYPE	Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Credibility; Data Collection; Educational Research; Epistemology; Ethics; *Evaluation Criteria; *Evaluation Methods; Inquiry; Models; *Naturalistic Observation; *Research Methodology; Research Needs; Research Problems; Validity; Value Judgment
IDENTIFIERS	Authenticity; Fairness

ABSTRACT

This paper presents criteria for establishing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries, and specific techniques to facilitate their achievement or determine the degree of their achievement. The following criteria are briefly described: fairness; and ontological, educative, catalytic and tactical authenticity. Explored in greater detail, fairness is achieved: (1) as a balance between harm and good; (2) when harm is minimized and/or gain is maximized; (3) when circumstances allow for mutual advantage; (4) when all parties are equally free to act in self-deemed appropriate ways; and (5) when established rules are heeded. Four criteria for achieving fairness include: fair negotiations; appellate mechanism availability; informed consent regarding inquiry procedures; and assiduous use of member-checks. The fairness criterion may be violated through deception; withholding information; collusion; arbitrariness in exercise of power; abrogation of rules or defaults; misconstruction of the definition of fairness; and breakdown in the apellate system. To achieve fairness in an inquiry, the inquirer must assume an impartial posture; provide relevant data collection; assess all parties at risk to be certain the inquiry deals with all relevant factors; refuse to withold information; be an educative agent; deliver a negotiation agenda; and act as convener and chief mediator of negotiations. (PN)

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTRINSIC CRITERIA FOR AUTHENTICITY: A MODEL FOR TRUST IN NATURALISTIC RESEARCHES

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Paper prepared for the Symposium "Issues of Trustworthiness and Authenticity in New-Paradigm Research," American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, April, 1986.

The Development of Intrinsic Criteria for Authenticity: A
Model for Trust in Naturalistic Researches

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The question of whether or not the naturalistic, or emergent, paradigm will ever "catch on" is moot. It is moot because there are increasing calls for criteria by which the trustworthiness of inquiries carried out under this paradigm may be judged. Indeed, articles have begun to appear in the literature proposing various criteria (Guba, 1981; Guba and Lincoln, 198 ; Lincoln and Guba, 1986, forthcoming;), and the Academy of Management's Research Methods Interest Group (Smircicn, 1986) is "in the process of establishing a task force to create standards for non-quantitative research." These calls signal not only an interest in, but indeed, an acceptance of, non-quantitative methods couched in a paradigmatic alternative to conventional inquiry. The proposals have asked for, and received, criteria for establishing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries, and specific techniques to facilitate their achievement or determine the degree of their achievement.

Early attempts at devising criteria were aimed at paralleling accepted and well-known positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity. My colleague, Egon Guba, has just discussed those for you. But those criteria seem to have arisen at least in part as a defensive posture, by claiming trustworthiness in terms that on their face are relatively acceptable to positivists. Thus, while the terminology has changed slightly, the objectives are similar, and the criteria address concerns which are paradigm-based, but congruent with those concerns derived from positivist epistemology.

But it is the case, as Gareth Morgan (1983) has shown, that the criteria defined as appropriate to a study done within a given paradigm have their roots in the self-same assumptions that give rise to the paradigm itself, which for the case of the conventional, rationalistic paradigm are a realist ontology and an objective, value-free epistemology. And if this is the case, then two problems become evident immediately:

1. The parallel criteria (credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability), as useful as they are, cannot possibly be thought of as a complete set, because they deal only with those matters which are thought to be important from a positivist perspective; and
2. There must be other criteria (which we shall call criteria of authenticity) that can be generated <u>directly</u> from the naturalistic assumptions, to wit, a relativist ontology and an interactive, value-bound epistemology. These are the criteria that might be generated in response to the following challenge: Supposing that one had never heard of positivism and the conventional paradigm of inquiry, but worked only and directly from naturalistic assumptions, what would be the nature of the criteria to emerge from that paradigm?

Of course this challenge cannot be met directly; we are far too immersed in the socialization processes of our profession and cannot rid ourselves entirely of its influence on our thinking. Nevertheless, by engaging in a creative inductive enterprise, we can generate -- by suspending one belief system for short periods of time -- a tentative response. The response is tentative because we cannot know whether the response is representative of a universe of concerns which might be raised, nor can we specify what techniques might be used, either to insure that authenticity criteria will be met, or to make judgments about whether and how much they have been met.

Given those caveats, however, some criteria nevertheless come to mind. Among those might be included the following:

1. Fairness. If inquiry is, as naturalistic inquiry asserts, value-bound, and if we confront a situation of value-pluralism (wherever we might take our research), it must be the case that different constructions (of reality) must emerge from persons with different (or differing) value and belief systems. One task (and perhaps the most important) of the inquirer is to lay bare these multiple constructions -- to expose them to public scrutiny, and to depict the value systems which undergird the several constructions. And of course, the inquirer also operates from some value framework.

Given all these value and belief interactions (and the conflicts which are almost certainly present and almost certainly to be exacerbated), what can a researcher do to assure that these several (or multiple) constructions are presented and honored in a balanced, even-handed way, a way in which the several belief system parties or groups would agree is balanced and even-handed? How ca --or should--the inquirer go about his or her tasks in ways which, while not guaranteeing balance (since nothing can provide such certainty), can at least enhance the probability that balance will emerge? If every inquiry serves a social or political agenda (as it must if inquiry is value-mediated), how can a persor conduct the inquiry to avoid (at least probabilistically), the possibility that certain values will be diminished, and their holders exploited, while other values will be enhanced, and their holders advantaged?

We shall return to fairness after a brief discussion of other criteria.

2. Ontological authenticity. If each person's reality is constructed and reconstructed as that person gains experience, interacts with others, and deals with the consequences of various personal actions and beliefs (the relativist ontology), an appropriate criterion to apply is that of improvement in the conscious experiencing of the world.[1] What have sometimes been termed "false consciousness" (by the Marxists) and "divided consciousness" (by the feminists) are part of this concept. Jonathan Kozol's commentary on adult illiteracy is illustrative of the latter problem: "I appreciate the plight of adult illiterates but I can't work with them directly; that's not what a University does!" A given inquiry (whether it is research, evaluation, or policy analysis) ought to have as one of its objectives consciousness-raising or the "uniting of divided consciousness". This probably ought to be accomplished via some dialectical process, so that a given actor (and not excluding the inquirer) can achieve a more sophisticated construction.

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1 This criterion has also been called by the fanciful name of "existential illuminatingness", although no one can remember by whom.

(The reader ought to note that the author does not mean to imply, in her use of the term <u>improvement</u>, that life will be sweeter, that one or more persons will be less poor, that social conditions which are degrading and inhumane will be ameliorated. The author merely means that a given individual's conscious experiencing of the world will be sharper, more fully informed, richer, and more street savvy. In fact, this conscious experiencing of the world may temporarily lead to greater unhappiness or sadness. But the <u>individual construction</u> will be both richer and broader. The power of richer and fuller constructions to ultimately bring unhappiness and discontent is well recognized: "... where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise" (Thomas Gray, 1742). I would argue, however, that in spite of increased discontent or unhappiness, the price of ignorance -- and the price of violating the ontological authenticity criterion -- is disenfranchisement and disempowerment.)

3. <u>Educative authenticity</u>. It is not enough that the individual actors (or groups) in some inquiry situation achieve, individually, more sophisticated constructions of their world. It is also essential that they come to appreciate (acknowledge, recognize, credit), although not necessarily like or agree with, the constructions which are created by others, and to understand how those constructions are rooted in the differing value systems of those others. By this, it is meant that individuals (or groups) come to understand and appreciate the particular value and belief systems of others, and how those value systems give rise to particular social strategies for ameliorating problems (or for failing to ameliorate them).

In this process, it is not inconceivable that accommodations, even if only pragmatic ones, can be forged. (Indeed, pragmatic ones may be the best, in that they allow for action in spite of ideological differences.) But whether that happens or not is not the point here; what the criterion of educative authenticity implies is <u>increased understanding</u> of the whats and whys of various possible constructions. Everyone in the situation should have the opportunity to become educated about others of different persuasions (different values, belief structures and constructions), and hence to appreciate how different opinions, judgments, and actions are formed and demanded. Needless to say, that "everyone" includes the inquirer, not only in the sense that he or she will emerge with "findings" which are professionally interesting, but also that she or he will develop a more sophisticated construction (an emic/etic blending) of both personal and professional (or disciplinary and substantive) kinds.

4. <u>Catalytic authenticity</u>. Reaching new constructions and achieving increased understandings is still not enough. Inquiry --whether research, evaluation or policy analyses--must also make possible a different form of action than before. Inquiry must also <u>facilitate and stimulate action</u>. This form of authenticity, sometimes called in the literature feedback/action validity, might well be applied to conventional inquiry as well. But if it were, virtually all traditional and conventional inquiries would fail on it (even those which researchers have designation as "action research", or research undertaken specifically to encourage action and change). The call for getting "theory into action", the preoccupation in recent decades with "dissemination", the non-utilization of evaluations that is virtually a national scandal, all indicate that catalytic authenticity has been noticeably lacking.

The naturalistic posture is an unconventional one. It seeks to involve all respondents from the start, to actively search out and present multiple constructions, to honor the inputs of those from whom it has sought information, and to provide them with decision-making power in guiding the inquiry. The end result is a joint and collaborative effort between researcher and respondents. Such forms of collaboration hold some promise for eliminating such outmoded distinctions as basic and applied and theory and practice.

5. Tactical authenticity. Stimulating to action via catalytic authenticity is in itself no assurance that the action taken will be effective. The inquiry will need other attributes to serve this latter goal. Chief among them is the matter of whether the inquiry is empowering. The first step toward empowerment is taken by providing all persons at risk (or with something at stake) in the inquiry with the opportunity to control it as well (collaborative, or joint, inquiry), and provides practice of that power through the negotiation of constructions (joint emic/etic elaborations). It goes without saying that if respondents are seen simply as "subjects" who must be "manipulated" (or even deceived) in the interest of some higher good or objective truth, an inquiry cannot possibly have tactical authenticity. Of course, one could justify such a posture only from the bedrock of a realist ontology and an objective/value-free epistemology (Lincoln and Guba, 1986, forthcoming).

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All five of these criteria require more detailed explication, and strategies--methodological and procedural--for meeting them remain to be devised, in the main. That task is both beyond the scope of this paper and beyond its author at the moment. However. one of the criteria--fairness--can be explored in greater detail. One of the reasons that fairness can be explored more at length than the other four criteria is that fairness as a concept has been treated in other literatures, particularly the scholarly and managerial literatures regarding bargaining, negotiation and labor relations.

What is fairness? Fairness is not a concept that has been completely disregarded within the positivist tradition; thus conventional advice has been given urging inquirers to make certain of the "scientific defensibility" of what they do. The sense of this argument is that if you must be unfair to someone make sure the harm you do is compensated for by the knowledge gained. "Knowledge" and the search for truth can, and have been, invoked to justify a great many unethical practices, as attested to in such book as those by Diener and Crandall (19) and Bok (1979). Inquirers in the prevailing paradigm are also adjured to be objective and unbiased, as if they could, by an act of will, force themselves into these modes. But these admonishments do not seem to have much weight in the emergent paradigm; they just do not fit a relativist ontology, since where there is no absolute knowledge or truth, it is well-nigh impossible to claim scientific defensibility.

Fairness is a term which seems to have its roots in a social context. It is the case that Nature is some reified, so that acts of God are seen to be fair or unfair. For example, a recent Time magazine article in reporting on the recent devastating earthquake in Chile, noted that

> ...for many Chileans, who are still suffering from the effects of a severe economic slump two years ago, the tragedy was overwhelming. Asked Manuel Rubilar, a janitor who earns $25. a month: "Why us? My God, why us?" (March 18, 1985, p. 37)

Most discussions of unfairness or fairness seem to devolve into a "them-us" dichotomization. Unfairness is having "them" advantaged or "us" disadvantaged; fairness is often assessed by assessing "their" condition in relation to "ours".

It may well be the case that this dochotomization is at bottom the major reason why discussions of fairness seem to revolve on considerations of <u>equity</u>--equity between "them" and "us". Following are a number of formulations which seem to fit this characterization:

1. Fairness is achieved (or perceived) as a balance between harm and good. This simplistic formulation suggests that one party's gains can be achieved only by increasing the other party's (or parties') harm. Such a definition could in fact be used in defense of the proposition that some harm is "scientifically defensible". But of course this approach begs the ethical question of whether one could even defend producing harm, or greater harm, to some persons in order to benefit others. It also overlooks the fact that such a balance could be achieved only in zero-sum games. But social contexts rarely take that form; they almost always represent non-zero sum games. And in such situations, assuming more than single party protagonists and antagonists, there is the possibility of cooperation between several of the

parties to secure their gain at the expense of other, possibly less powerful, parties, by abrigating the rules or rearranging the power structure (consider, for example, the trust-busting which had to be undertaken at the turn of the century in order to break the monopolistic stranglehold of a few large and pwerful companies on the railroads, oil, and other major industries).

2. Fairness is achieved by hewing to a "mini-max" criterion, that is, when harm (to all?) is minimized and/or gain is maximized, The concepts of minimum and maximum are relative; even when harm is minimized and/or good is maximized, there may still be a great deal of harm or very little good. Fairness is predicated on the assumption that after adjustments are made, there will be less harm and more good than might otherwise be the case. Again, one can pick fault with this formulation. For example, when blacks in South Africa are told to "go slow" and to follow the principles of Apartheid on the grounds that in the long haul, this will mean less harm and more good, do the blacks regard that as fair? One could, of course, ask the same question about blacks in this country over the past threescore years.

3. Fairness is achieved when circumstances allow for <u>mutual</u> advantage (or disadvantage?). This formulation is different from (2) above in that all parties must enjoy some advantage; there is no trade-off of advantage for disadvantage. It is thereby a more difficult criterion to achieve. But note that there is no requirement for equal gain in advantage; disadvantaged minorities, for example, would find this only slightly more tolerable than (2) above.

4. Fairness is achieved when all parties are equally free

to act in ways that seem appropriate to them. The problem with this formulation is that it covers too many acts which most people would find repugnant: unlawful behavior such as murder, rape or robbery. Laws are made precisely to avoid that contingency. But laws can also be used to perpetuate inequity. When Scrooge was approached by his fellow entrepreneurs to make a donation to the poor at Christmas, his reply was, "Have we no jails? Have we no poorhouses?" Is it fairy for example, to sentence to jail a man for stealing a loaf of bread wherewith to feed his hungry children, when others are permitted the freedom to be profligate, perhaps with the very resources that accrued because the first man's family was kept in a state of poverty? The actions are themselves subject to the judgment of their fairness; hence this criterion is no criterion at all, but simply puts the inquiry back one level.

5. Fairness is achieved when all play according to the rules. But of course we must ask who is empowered to make rules -- or to change them--and who is to judge whether the play is rule-bounded. But on balance this seems to be the best formulation extant. Rules can be established by mutual negotiation and agreement, and a judging (and also an appellate) mechanism can be established by similar processes to make necessary "calls".

Relevant aspects of such a negotiation process follow below.

How is Fairness Achieved?

Following the fairness criterion in (5) above, fairness is achieved by entering into a negotiation which has the following characteristics:

a. It must be open, that is, carried out in full view of the parties (or their representatives) with no closed sessions, secret codicils, or the like, permitted.

b. It must be carried out by equally skilled bargainers. In the real world it will almost always be the case that one or the other group of bargainers will be the more skillful, but at least each side must have access to bargainers of equal skill, whether they choose them or not.

c. It must be carried out from equal positions of power. The power must be equal not only "in principle" but also practically: the power to sue a large corporation in principle is very different from the power to sue it practically, given the great disparity in resources, risk and other factors, including of course more skillful bargainers.

d. It must be carried out under circumstances which allow each side to possess complete (or equally complete) information. Further, not only must they have access to the information, but they must also be given assistance as needed to be able to come to an equal understanding of it. Low levels of understanding and sophistication are tantamount to lack of information.

e. It must focus on all matters known to be relevant.

f. It must be carried out in accordance with rules which are themselves the product of negotiation

Second, fairness is achieved by the availability of appellate mechanisms should one or another party believe that the rules are not being observed by some. These mechanisms are one of the products of the negotiation process above.

Third, fairness is achieved by the use of fully informed consent with respect to any inquiry procedures (see Lincoln and Guba, Naturalistic Inquiry, 1985, for lengthier guidelines on how this criterion may be achieved). This consent is obtained not only prior to an inquiry, but is reaffirmed from time to time as the design unfolds and new contingencies are faced in the inquiry. Furthermore, but under law and morally, respondents have the right to withdraw information about themselves (abrogate their consent) at any point in the inquiry.

Fourth, fairness is achieved by the use of the member-check process which calls for comments on fairness, both during and after the inquiry process itself. Member-checking is the process by which facts and individual constructions are checked, during the data collection, and then again, upon the production of a draft case study, with members who provided data in the first instance. Assiduous use of member-checks should lead to a common judgment about the extent of fairness that exists.

Clearly, these four criteria for achieving fairness have the potential for so doing in any given inquiry. There are, however, ways in which the fairness criterion itself may be violated. Among the contingencies which may threaten the fairness or authenticity of an inquiry are the following:

1. deception (a sin of commission), including lies, cover-ups, false fronts, and the provision of disinformation;

2. withholding information (a sin of omission), including information about the relevance of factors in the situation which may not be known to all;

3. collusion, or unfair cooperation among some of the parties to the disadvantage of others;

4. arbitrariness in the exercise of power -- if parties who possess greater power (resources?) fail to cede some of it to the less powerful, the situation is inherently unfair. The great likelihood, of course, is that precisely this situation will obtain. In that event, it may be the responsibility of the inquirer to help redress the imbalance by seeking a powerful advocate for the less powerful -- one who can bring pressure to bear on behalf of the powerless, or who can enforce cooperation and

negotiation;

5. abrogation of rules, or defaults-- this may be but one variation of (4) above. Having an appellate mechanism in place is one guarantee that such abrogations or defaults cannot spread very far--unless of course, the power distribution has become very uneven, in which case, recourse to the move above is recommended;

6. misconstruction of the definition of fairness: fairness is of cours an arbitrary criterion; what the term means depends on the value system from which it springs. Scrooge thought he was being eminently fair to the poor by providing poorhouses. The poor certainly did not think so. Even thought the "rules of the game" have been negotiated, daily acts are more likely to following the tradition (dominant-group) ruts; misunderstandings may easily arise because of this recidivism. Think, for example, of the daily inequities faced in the workplace although Federal law prohibits more obvious forms of sex discrimination.

7. breakdown in the appellate system. The appellate system is itself the product of a negotiation process and is intended to adjudicate situations in which one or another party feels unfairly dealt with. If the system is itslef coopted unfairness is virtually guaranteed. It was in fear of such a breakdown that the court system of the U.S. was separated so thoroughly from both the executive and legislative branches, and that federal judges at least received lifetime appointments. But to bring the situation closer to hand, please note the establishment of the National Labor Relations Board, which provides mediators and arbitrators (and fact-finders) to businesses, corporations and school systems in dispute over the negotiation process.

What is the Role of the Inquirer in Achieving Fairness?

There are several activities which the inquirer might (and occasionally, must) undertake in order to facilitate the achieving of fairness in an inquiry. Please note that the term "facilitate" is used, since no guarantees are possible.

First and foremost, the inquirer must assume and impartial posture. By this, we do not mean objective or unbiased, since that is impossible. What is meant is that the inquirer must elicit and honor all available constructions, dealing with them in open and public ways.

Second the inquirer must provide for the collection of as much information as time and resources will permit about those relevant factors. This provision implies 1) a prioritization of the relevant factors (research questions, concerns and issues or policy options) by some open process, since time and resources will never permit dealing with all factors, and 2) allocation of time and resources among the retained (prioritized) factors in a way that is itself fair.

Third, the inquirer must assess all parties at risk to be certain that they inquiry touches on those things which they consider to be relevant.

Fourth, the inquirer must steadfastly refuse to be a party to any proposal or process that withholds information, remembering that withholding information is tantamount to disenfranchisement (of some interested party or parties).

Fifth, the inquirer must work to be a teacher (educative agent) to accomplish two ends: 1) build awareness and appreciaciation in all parties of the constructions (and their underlying value structures) formulated by all other parties; and 2) help to interpret information about which some of the parties may be unsophisticated or uninformed (for example, statistical data, political implications, and the like).

Sixth, the inquirer's role is to deliver an agenda for negotiation rather than a conventional "scientific" report with pre-determined conclusions, predetermined categories of findings, or predetermined recommendations.

Seventh and finally, the inquirer has as his or her responsibility to act as convener and chief mediator of a negotiation process involving all parties (or their representatives) to consider the findings, their implications, and any attendant actions.

To reiterate, at this point in time, it is not known what strategies might enable an inquirer to meet the emergent criteria of ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, or tactical authenticity--either what procedural strategies to pursue, or what criteria might indicate when the authenticity criteria themselves were approached or met. Nevertheless, the specification of some criteria, however incomplete, is a heuristic beginning for emergent paradigm inquiry. Such specification, however, does lead one to ask where are the parallel criteria for the conventional paradigm? The situation might be best represented in the following Table (1):

Table 1

A COMPARISON OF TRUSTWORTHINESS CRITERIA
FOR THE CONVENTIONAL AND EMERGENT PARADIGMS

Conventional Paradigm (Etic/Exogenous Cell)	Emergent Paradigm (Joint/Collaborative Cell)
Single Study Criteria	
	Parallel Criteria:*
Internal Validity (empirical correspondence or isomorphism with objective reality)	Credibility (coherence, consensus)
External validity (predictive validity)	Transferability
Reliability	Dependability
Objectivity	Confirmability
	Emergent Criteria:
WHAT GOES IN HERE?	Fairness
	Ontological authenticity
	Educative authenticity
	Catalytic authenticity
	Tactical authenticity
Criteria Across Related Studies	
Aggregatability	Stability in fairness
Pragmatic criterion: increasingly successful prediction and control.	Increa Increase in ontological authenticity
	Increase in educative auth.
	Increase in catalytic authen.
	Increase in tactical authen.

* Lincoln and Guba, 1985

At present, there do not appear to be criteria parallel to what are now called "emergent criteria" of the naturalistic paradigm (criteria of equity/fairness and authenticity). There are several powerful implications of this "missing link" in conventional inquiry. First and foremost, naturalistic inquiry has built-in incentives for action. The necessity to provide an arena of fairness (as opposed to throwing the Christians to the lions as much of social science has inadvertently done) wherein open agendas are negotiated to determine subsequent action, and where inquiry demands that respondents as well as investigators become more sophisticated and empowered throws the weight of the inquiry toward action (rather than toward simply publications of "interesting" findings). The incentives for action are largely external to inquiry in the conventional paradigm, but in order to meet authenticity criteria in the emergent or naturalistic paradigm, action is demanded as an intrinsic process with the inquiry. The plaintive plea of "Knowledge for the sake of knowledge!" may gradually be replaced with "Knowledge for the sake of power, action and amelioration!"

Second, the authenticity criteria for emergent-paradigm inquiry have the (dangerous) ability to empower, to enfranchise, and to contribute to the social re-distribution of power (and concomitantly, resources). The educative, catalytic and tactical criteria, particularly, awaken respondents to the extent to which their futures may rest in their own hands, with the constructions and reconstructions which they are able to participate in building. For this reason, efforts to meet the equity and authenticity criteria will often be labelled "infeasible" and "not cost-effective" by those who wish to retain power for their own interests (or in the interests of their clients).

Third, one suspects that the missing link would be asserted to be statements of ethics which guide the various helping professions, and Federal laws which provide for the protection of privacy and the rights of "subjects" in social and other research. This is an interesting assertion on several counts.

On the first count, it is probably the case that statements regarding the ethical treatment of subjects do indeed go into the table. But consider that notion for a moment. Statements of professional ethics, and their concomitant--Federal laws on ethics, privacy and the protection of human subjects--exist <u>outside the paradigm's criteria for rigor and trustworthiness.</u> Such statements therefore reside alongside and external to demands on researchers for care and caution in reporting results.

Just the opposite is the case for naturalistic inquiry, where demands for ethical behavior are built into the paradigm as a way of judging the results of such studies. <u>In positivism, ethics must be enforced, while in naturalism, ethics reinforce the quality of the inquiry</u>. In positivism, procedural and methodological criteria alone determine the rigor, whereas ethical and authenticity criteria enter into determining the trustworthiness of the inquiry. Positivism, in a way which will be explained in a moment, detracts from ethicality and hence makes it necessary that we continue to police ourselves on the ethicality dimension of our inquiries. Naturalism supports ethicality and hence greatly diminishes the need for external policing.

The reason for the immediately preceding assertion grows from an analysis of the ontologies of the two paradigms. In a realist ontology asserts of course that there is a "reality" out there, and that it is the mission of inquiry to converge upon that reality. Thus, human subjects are relegated to second-place in the search for "truth". This search for truth provides the warrant, as it were, to deceive subjects (in this case, precisely the correct term). This reinforcement to deceive in the interests of "truth" legitimates lying, fake experiments, and other inhumanities to human subjects, which then necessitates external safeguards in order to protect those same subjects from experiments designed by the totally unscrupulous, and beyond the pale. In justifying the deceit upon which we embark, we make such statements as "Sometimes it is necessary to deceive subjects in order to provide a real test (for example, of polio vaccine) or to preclude reactivity on the part of our subjects."

A relativist ontology, on the other hand, asserts that there is no single "reality" out "there" onto which inquiry must converge. There is rather a collection of socially-enacted realities, multiple and different for each individual. Given no universal "truth" for which to search, the inquirer finds it in her or his best interests to be forthcoming and to eschew deceptions, since they foreclose the ability to gather multiple realities. This relativist ontology demands scrupulous honesty, since without integrity, the naturalist is unable to find and faithfully reproduce the multiple constructions of his or her respondents. If the object of naturalistic inquiry is to arrive at what is, for everyone, a more informed and sophisticated construction, that consensus (or carefully defined dissensus) can be arrived at only jointly, cooperatively, and hermeneutically. The hermeneutic process exposes everyone's construction, including that of the inquirer (and concomitantly, that which exists in the literature, in previous research, and from other sources), to criticism by all respondents. If the inquirer were to publish a case report that differed from the consuasual construction, it would be immediately evident to all respondents, who we may presume, would take action to brand the report as deceitful and dishonest.

Of course, both paradigms are subject to abuse by persons who deliberately choose to be unethical. We are speaking here of inquirers who operate from a position of integrity. Thus, some positivists at least <u>really believe</u> that deceit is a necessary tool in at least some research, if the truth is to be found. Naturalists believe just the opposite. And by the same token, naturalists ought to be concerned with the possibility of conspiratorial activity on the part of respondents (e.g., organizational myths and sagas as exemplars of group deceptions, deliberate fronts as examples of managerial conspiracies, and lies and misinformation as examples of individual treachery). It is still not clear how one works as a naturalist under those conditions. This ought not to stop us from trying, however, since positivism and the conventional paradigm face the exact same difficulties.

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The foregoing discussion is intended as provocative more than certain, but it is clear that the "missing link" in conventional inquiry raises questions which are not easily dismissed by the paradigm's defenders. Ontological and epistemological questions aside, <u>the license to inaction</u> and <u>the warrant to deceit</u> leave some uneasy with such a model for inquiry with human beings.

On the grounds of straitened fiscal resources and simple human justice alone, the conventional paradigm provides a weak model for social inquiry. Other options probably ought to be sought; naturalistic inquiry provides one of the more thoroughly developed --even without strategies for achieving all authenticity criteria.

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