Qualitative Family Research: Enduring Themes and Contemporary Variations

5

Jane F. Gilgun

Contemporary qualitative family research stands on traditions that extend to the beginnings of social science research in the nineteenth century. Many themes have endured until today, molded and shaped by historical forces ascendant in each successive era. The purposes of this chapter are to show the intellectual heritage on which contemporary qualitative family research stands and to examine today's research through a framework based upon enduring themes. In this framework, my focus is on methodologies and methods, or the principles on which research is based (methodologies) and the approaches researchers use to carry out these principles (methods). Through these efforts, I hope to showcase an intellectual heritage and demonstrate continuities and changes over time.

Contemporary qualitative family researchers build upon distinguished traditions. An example of an enduring theme is immersion, where researchers spend extended time with families in order to develop in-depth understandings of meanings, interactions, and contexts over time. Another enduring theme is whether and how qualitative family researchers take critical perspectives and contribute to social change. Critical perspectives include the examination of power relations in families and society along the lines of

gender, age, ethnicity, race, and social class and how social forces and social structures shape governmental policies, cultural practices and beliefs, and individual, family, group, and institutional behaviors. Discussions of methods and methodologies also are enduring themes.

I begin with an overview of the history of qualitative family research. This section shows that today's research builds upon a rich heritage that extends to the origins of social science research. This heritage is a source of enduring principles, methodologies, and methods, as well as a rich vocabulary that qualitative family researchers can use as they explain their work to others. From this overview, I construct an analytic framework that I use to examine contemporary qualitative family research. I show how this heritage has endured, as well as how it has changed over time. I end with a discussion of the implications of the analysis for the future of qualitative family research.

Some History of the Influence of the Chicago School of Sociology

The roots of social research in general and research on families in particular are deep and wide, extending to the origins of social research in the mid-nineteenth century and spanning three continents (Gilgun, 1999, 2012). From its onset, this research focused on poor and working class families, studied families within their social contexts, presented detailed pictures of families

J.F. Gilgun, PhD, LICSW (✉)
School of Social Work, University of Minnesota,
Twin Cities, 105 Peters Hall, 1404 Gortner Avenue,
St. Paul, MN 55108, USA
e-mail: jgilgun@umn.edu

in their multiple contexts, and used multiple methods. This research also was emancipatory, meaning that its purpose was to bring about social reform and improve lives. Some researchers became advocates, while others believed that their results would mobilize public opinion and bring about changes they believed to be just and caring.

Researchers sought deep understanding and multiple, subjective points of view that captured the meanings individuals gave to their experiences. They believed that researchers have first-hand experience of the daily lives of informants, a principle related to immersion. Some researchers, such as Jane Addams, Edith Abbott, and Sophinisba Breckenridge of Hull House in Chicago, made their homes in the communities where they did their research, advocacy, and social intervention projects.

To develop these meanings and to place them in their social contexts, researchers took open-ended approaches that allowed for the development of the broad and detailed information that they sought. Various combinations of case studies of neighborhoods, towns, cities, individuals, and families; as well as surveys; document analysis including examination of archival data; and life histories of individuals were typical methods.

When writing up results, researchers did multi-layered descriptions followed by analysis, with wide variations on the breadth and depth of the analysis. Descriptions usually combined statistical tables and narratives. Typically, the narratives had an immediacy that drew audiences in. The analysis covered researchers' interpretations of the meanings of individual lives within social contexts of interest and the implications of these meanings for social reform in terms of policies, practices, and theories. They paid attention to processes and patterns, clear that human experience varies across individuals, groups, situations, and time.

Some researchers developed theory after detailed examinations of particular data. The theory they developed attempted to account for variations in human experience (cf., Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918–1920/1927). Although they sought the ideal of universal laws, few believed that their findings were universally applicable. Instead, results and theories had to be adapted to particular situations. Researchers realized results and theories might not fit new situations at all. They believed that each new situation has the potential to lead to the modification of existing theory.

Examples of early qualitative research include the work of LePlay (1855), a French metallurgist and social scientist who did research on families and their economic status in several European countries in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Other illustrations include the research of Booth (1889, 1903) and Rowntree (1901/1902) in England as well as the work of Jane Addams (1895) and her colleagues in the city of Chicago whose work extended from the end of the nineteenth century into the first two decades of the twentieth Deegan, (1990), finally, much of the research at the University of Chicago during the first third of the twentieth century and often later in the century, too (Bulmer, 1984; Gilgun, 1999). Examples of other early studies were the Pittsburgh survey (Kellogg, 1914b) and the Unemployment Study of 1928 (Calkins, 1930; National Federation of Settlements, 1931).

The earliest of this research was not discipline specific because academic disciplines as we know them today did not exist. Later into the twentieth century, members of various disciplines such as philosophy, sociology, social work, social psychology, education, and anthropology undertook research on families. This was the case in the formation of the Chicago School of Sociology, a term that is a misnomer because its origins are multi-disciplinary.

Methods of social research during much of this history were rarely written down in specialized textbooks. Individuals learned research methods through doing research with more experienced individuals and through reading published studies. Two methods texts of the era were Palmer's (1928) *Field Studies in Sociology: A Students' Manual* and Beatrice and Sidney Webb's (1932) *Methods of Social Study*. Palmer's text pulled together the research methods that Robert Park and Ernest Burgess taught graduate

students at the University of Chicago and that were the principles she followed as she supervised the dissertation research of Chicago Ph.D. students (Bulmer, 1984). The Webbs developed their text out of their work with Booth in London and research they conducted subsequently. The philosophies of science that guided the research were, in general, pragmatism, early symbolic interactionism, and phenomenological approaches that led to the principle of immersion and the significance of the subjective experiences of research participants and researchers and the meanings that they attributed to their experiences.

The master's and doctoral theses that the University of Chicago published as part of the Sociological Series were widely read examples of how Chicago students did their research. These publications included Anderson's (1925) *The Hobo.* Anderson, because of poverty, lived among homeless men, and it was there he gathered his data (Faris, 1967). He had first-hand experience. His work is a classic example of researcher immersion. Frazier (1932, 1939) based his studies of Negro families in Chicago (1932) and the United States (1939) on the methods Thomas and Znaniecki (1918–1920/1927) used in *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America.* Frazier's studies used personal documents such as written life histories, agency case records, interviews, and demographic data. In the editor's preface, Burgess (1932) called this work "the most valuable contribution to the literature on the family" (p. ix) since the publication more than 20 years earlier of *The Polish Peasant.*

In conducting their studies, these early researchers met regularly to discuss the material they had gathered and to make sense of it. In this way, they did group interpretations of what they heard, observed, and gleaned from documents. They valued multiple points of view that resulted in findings that showed multiple patterns and interpretations. They routinely used several different methods: interviews, participant observations, document analysis, surveys, and social mapping. In addition, group analysis had the effect of socializing beginning researchers into research processes often without, as mentioned

earlier, the guidance of textbooks and articles. Teaching, therefore, took place primarily in field settings and not in classrooms.

For decades, beginning around the 1930s, quantitative research, often single method research such as surveys and experiments that placed little emphasis on contexts, meanings, theory development, and researcher reflexivity, dominated social sciences in general and family research in particular. Yet, the tradition of multi-method, context-sensitive, emancipatory research, brought to life through the subjective accounts of research informants and researcher immersion in the field, continued, showing up mainly in now classic studies such as Warner and Lunt's (1941) *The Social Life of a Modern Community*, Bott's *Family and Social Network* (1957/1971), Rainwater, Coleman, and Handel's (1959), *Working Man's Wife*, Rainwater's (1970) *Behind Ghetto Walls*, Komarovsky's *The Unemployed Man and His Family* (1940) and *Blue Collar Marriage* (1962), Stack's (1974) *All Our Kin*, among others. The work of Strauss and colleagues (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser, 1978, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Strauss, 1987) did a great deal to keep traditions of qualitative research alive, although they de-emphasized phenomenological and descriptive aspects of the research traditions on which they built. They focused on theory-building, mixed in with instructions about generic qualitative research. Pockets of qualitative researchers continued the tradition, most being graduates of the University of Chicago or researchers who emulated their research methods and methodologies.

With the advent of postmodernism, starting perhaps in the 1980s or so, themes prominent in early research gained attention and have a larger place in contemporary research than in the recent past (Gilgun, 1999). Many more institutions of higher learning provide training in qualitative methods. Some funders, such as the federal government, at times prefer research that they and others call mixed methods, which is a combination of surveys or experiments with qualitative interviewing and sometimes qualitative case studies. For the most part, today's funders do not

seek a variety of types of qualitative research, but prefer research that follows the principles associated with the research that become prominent in the 1930s. Preference was given to such quantitative issues as reliability and validity, rather than ideas associated with qualitative traditions, such as researcher immersion, the authenticity of representations given to the informants' experiences, and clear connections between concepts and empirical data on which concepts are based (Gilgun, 2002).

Much of today's qualitative research can be linked to the origins of social science research. Before examining contemporary work, I will discuss in some detail the heritage of qualitative research on families. Notably, the term *qualitative* entered the research lexicon up to 70 years after researchers began to conduct interviews, do participant observation, and examine documents of various types. Strauss (1991) who was a graduate student in sociology at the University of Chicago between 1939 and 1944, said

> there was a well-entrenched tradition of doing what is now called qualitative research. It's wasn't called by this name then, and there was no self-consciousness about quantitative versus qualitative studies (p. 1).

The name researchers used was fieldwork, a term associated with anthropology, which is a testament to the interdisciplinary nature of early research. Early researchers borrowed methods and ideas from any discipline that offered approaches they viewed as relevant to their purposes. Strauss also attested to the interdisciplinarity and multiple methods approaches characteristic of research done at the University of Chicago.

> Chicago theses and monographs might use one or both, or one or the other methods. They also used a variety of data sources: interviews, field observations, archival materials, diaries, government reports and statistics. This department also had close relations with anthropology, and I took a minor in social anthropology. The data for my doctoral thesis were part questionnaire and part in-depth interview (p. 1).

Strauss studied at the University of Chicago in the 1950s. His words attest to the continuity of the traditions of the first third of the twentieth century into the middle of the century and beyond.

Today, many qualitative family researchers conduct their work without knowing the intellectual history of their disciplines. For the most part, these researchers learn by doing, often because there are few and sometimes no courses of study and instruction under knowledgeable mentors. They may work alone, without the support and challenge of colleagues with similar disciplinary and methodological interests. They often struggle to find the words and concepts to explain what they are doing. This slows them down in terms of writing articles for publication, finding funding for research, and building teams of researchers who can put together proposals to governmental agencies that will sponsor research projects.

Working under these conditions, today's researchers feel challenged—and uneasy. Their experience of the work itself keeps them going. They know what they are doing is important. Their research has meaning to them, to informants, and to segments of the larger society. A schooling in the intellectual history of qualitative family research may provide a sense of continuity and a stronger sense of researcher identity as well as legitimate the foundations of qualitative research for those who are unaware of them.

Emancipatory Research

Ideals and values of social justice as well as concern for the distress they saw in poor families and unemployed parents led many early researchers to engage in work that later became known as qualitative research. As mentioned earlier, some rejected their class privilege and lived among the poor, gaining first-hand experience of what it means to live under conditions of poverty and exclusion from the advantages of membership in privileged social classes. The ideals of democracy, such as the principle of human equality, were uppermost in the minds of many of these researchers.

Concern for human suffering drove LePlay (1855), which is illustrated in an autobiographical chapter published in the first volume of the second edition of *Les ouvrierseuropeen*. LePlay (1879) explained that his ideas for research

sprang from personal experience that led to the development of his guiding ideas, primary among which was the relief of human suffering. He described that economic depressions, social upheavals, and revolutions that characterized France in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had a great effect on his life work, which involved conducting research on working European families.

Booth (1889, 1903), too, did his research with the purpose being to foster social reform. He took frankly moral perspectives, labeling social conditions in London "evil." The following illustrates his viewpoints: "In considering this subject [housing] I shall first enumerate the evils and try to allocate responsibility, and then indicate the efforts that are being made to improve matters, and their results" (p. 158). A wealthy manufacturer and steamship company owner, Booth's ideals of fairness and social justice appeared to have driven him. For example, in a letter about landlords who charge high rents for farmland and housing, he said the practice is "robbery" and "plunder" that "cutthroats" brought about. The cutthroats then "combined together to create laws to perpetuate their plunder." He concluded, "rent for land is wrong" (Charles Booth Archive Library of the London School of Economics and Political Science, Ms797/II/24/1 49).

The origins of Booth's moral stance is likely his Unitarian beliefs, among them adherence to the ideals of democracy and opposition to social injustice. He believed that industrialists like himself were the heirs of religious persons who took on tasks of social reform (Charles Booth Archive Library of the London School of Economics and Political Science, Ms797/II/24/1 49). Like LePlay (1879) and other reform-minded researchers, Booth took up lodging in the poor communities that he wanted to understand.

Researchers who emulated Booth's work also took emancipatory stances. Stating in his concluding chapter that he had been searching for facts and not remedies, Rowntree (1901/1902) nonetheless made an impassioned statement about the "need for a greater concentration of thought by the nation upon the well-being of its own people"

(p. 305). His concluding paragraph was a comment on social philosophy:

> The dark shadow of the Malthusian philosophy has passed away, and no view of the ultimate scheme of things would now be accepted under which multitudes of men and women are doomed by inevitable law to a struggle for existence so severe as necessarily to cripple or destroy the higher parts of their nature (p. 305).

The research of Addams and her colleagues at Hull House in Chicago—Edith Abbott, Sophinisba Breckenridge, and Florence Kelley—were influenced by Booth's studies of the London poor through their connections with Toynbee Hall in London, which was a settlement house and the setting of major reform efforts. Booth and his research team were in regular contact with residents and advocates at Toynbee Hall. Hull House was modeled after the values of Toynbee Hall. Booth's religion-based approaches were compatible with the values of the women of Hull House. Jane Addams, for instance, grew up in a family with strong values related to care and social economic justice, and she based her life's work on these values.

Like those who came before, the Hull House group sought facts and scientific evidence that in the words of Deegan (1990) "could persuade all fair-minded people…to formulate the 'right way' for action" (p. 39). They lived in the neighborhoods where they did their research, constructed their social programs and lobbied for changes in social policies. Hull House, therefore, as Deegan documented, "became a center for empirical analysis, study, and debate" (p. 39), as well as social reform, similar to the work done at Tonybee Hall. Addams and her colleagues applied democratic principles to empower the disenfranchised and to change unequal structural arrangements in the United States.

Some of the founding members of the Chicago School of Sociology had emancipatory purposes, but they rejected social reform efforts that involved advocacy for change. Instead, they believed that if the research they produced was compelling enough, they could influence public opinion so that change would come about (Bulmer, 1984). Under the guidance of faculty

members such as Robert Park and Ernest Burgess, students at the University of Chicago produced works that directly addressed the social issues of the day, such as Johnson's (1922) study of Chicago race riots and E. Franklin Frasier's studies of Negro families in Chicago (1932) and the United States (1939).

Other researchers of the time did value-driven research to bring about social reform. Kellogg (1914a) wrote of the Pittsburgh Survey that its purpose was to gather information on underlying needs in Pittsburgh to form a "basis for local action" and "for civic advance in other American cities" (p. 497). The purpose of the Unemployment Study of 1928 (Calkins, 1930; National Federation of Settlements, 1931) was to put a human face on the issue and to mobilize legislative and business support for unemployment insurance. These studies are examples of early research that was done for the purposes of emancipation, or social transformation to make things better for individuals, families, and children.

Multiple Methods and Multiple Viewpoints

These researchers used a multi-methods approach that included social surveys, in-depth interviews, participant observation, document analysis including agency case records, analysis of demographic data, and social mapping to depict locations of interest, such as churches, pubs, and housing. Participant observation was a typical method, which allows researchers to grasp the social ecologies of the persons who were the subjects of the studies. Usual in these studies were descriptions of the physical environments and the range of viewpoints on the issues of interest. The subjective experiences of informants were sought. For example, Booth (1903) described a participant observation: his researchers took "long walks in all parts of London day after day with picked police officers who were permitted to assist us during the revision of our maps" (p. 61). Interviewing went hand-in-hand with observation. Booth said he sought "diversities of opinion affected by the point of view of the observer, as well as by the class observed." He, therefore, presented his

findings as "a patchwork of quotations…drawn from the clergy, ministers of religion, and missionaries, from schoolmasters and others" (p. 60).

Choosing an "extensive" method over an "intensive" method, Rowntree (1901/1902) sought to create a detailed portrait of poverty. He decided against research based on the analysis of statistics and instead sought to follow Booth's methods and to create a "picture" of life in a community, which is in Rowntree's research was York, an English town in Yorkshire in the north of England. He and his team of researchers did observations and interviews with the wage-earning population of York and with clergy and others familiar with working people. They also used government documents and statistics. They compiled massive amounts of data organized into tables, wrote case studies, and constructed a complex picture of working class life which often were lives of poverty.

The purpose of the Pittsburgh survey, too, was to present a portrait of working class life in a city using a range of methods and viewpoints. Methods included observations, interviews, photographs, and use of written documents. Kellogg (1914b) described an effort to engage multiple viewpoints in the Pittsburgh Survey. He wrote:

> Our field work was done in railroad yards and mill towns, sweatshops, and great manufacturing plants; in courts, hospitals, and settlements. The investigators talked with priests and labor leaders, superintendents, claim agents and labor bosses, landlords, housewives, butchers and bakers—the workers themselves and those who live close to them (quote taken from Zimbalist, 1977, p. 144).

Following Booth, mapping became a mainstay of Addams' research at Hull House (*Hull-House Maps and Papers*, 1895) and the research of the Chicago School of Sociology (Deegan, 1990). Multiple methods that sought a range of views on social problems and highlighted both lived experience and social environments were typical of this research.

Subjectivity and Meanings

Recognition of the importance of engaging researchers' subjectivity and purposefully engaging

audiences are prevalent in early work. Building upon Kant's subjectivist, relativist, and perspectivalist thinking, Dilthey (1976) developed the notion of *erlebnis*, translated as "lived experience," which he saw as the subject of scientific investigations. For Dilthey, human experience—composed of such intangibles as hopes, emotions, and thoughts—was subject to empirical investigations. He believed that experiences and interactions of individuals compose human social and cultural life that can be understood only in context. Dilthey emphasized a rigorous empirical basis for research (Palmer, 1969; Polkinghorne, 1983).

The ideas of Kant and Dilthey also centered research efforts on *verstehen*, or understanding, an understanding situated in social, cultural, and historical contexts. Bulmer (1984) speculated that Thomas and Znaniecki's (1918–1920/1927) emphases on life histories and personal meanings in their studies of Polish immigrants to the United States had a "theoretical origin" related to Dilthey, whom he quoted: "Autobiography is the highest and most instructive form in which the understanding of life comes before us" (p. 53, citing Hodges, 1994, p. 29). These ideas led to an often-quoted statement of Thomas and Thomas (1929) who said, "If men [sic] define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (p. 572). This is a foundational principle of much of Chicago research and symbolic interactionism, with its emphasis on process, interactions, social context, meanings, and interpretations.

Consistent with nineteenth century German philosophy within a human sciences tradition, Park and Burgess (1921) encouraged the development of findings that incorporated the experience of researchers and the points of view of informants, leading their students toward understanding and not toward axiomatic explanatory frameworks. In their textbook, *The Science of Sociology*, they stated that they wanted the text to "appeal to the experience of the student" (p. v), and they advised students to use "their own experience" in recording their observations and in the reading they did for their research (p. vi).

Park, in particular, was articulate about the centrality of understanding "the meaning of other people's lives" (quoted by Bulmer, 1984, p. 93).

This is done, not solely through intellectual processes, but through imaginative participation in the lives of others. According to Matthews (1977), Park frequently quoted William James: "the most real thing is a thing that is most keenly felt rather than the thing that is most clearly conceived" (p. 33).

Park applied these ideas to his work with students. Consistent with his view of the importance of researchers' experiences, he had a place in his methodological approaches for imagination. For example, Faris (1967) reported that Park advised Pauline Young to "think and feel" like the residents of Russian Town, the subject of her dissertation (Young, 1932). At the same time, both Burgess and Park emphasized the science and objectivity of the styles of research they were shaping. For many today, emphasizing personal experience and meanings of other persons' lives while considering them part and parcel of an objective science appears to be contradictory. Yet for Park and his colleagues, subjective accounts are proper subjects of scientific research. Researchers become objective insofar as they do not distort findings to serve a reformist agenda. For Park, the disinterested researcher who assembled subjective findings without distortion was displaying objectivity and doing science.

Waller (1934), like Park, saw a role for imagination in scientific methods and processes, and he compared processes of science to artistic processes:

> The application of insight as the touchstone of method enables us to evaluate properly the role of imagination in scientific method. The scientific process is akin to the artistic process; it is a process of selecting out those elements of experience which fit together and recombining them in the mind. Much of this kind of research is simply ceaseless mulling over, and even the physical scientist has considerable need of an armchair (p. 290).

For Waller, armchair theorizing was a form of reflection on experience in order to make sense of it. Today, many people would call this kind of thinking *creativity*.

These ideas are consistent with Cooley's (1930) when he observed that "our knowledge of human beings is internally as well as externally derived" (p. 294), and he called "imagining what

it would be like to be somebody else" a form of "the scientific method" (p. 295). This, of course, is akin to what Blumer (1954/1986) called taking "each other's roles" (p. 9) and is an elaboration of Park's views. Sympathetic understanding as part of the scientific method is difficult to reconcile with the idea of scientific detachment, except when researchers allow others to challenge their understandings and discuss their own.

Reflection upon field experiences not only is a hallmark of early social research, but it is a precursor to today's emphasis on reflexivity, which is a complex idea centered around researchers' contributions to interpretations of research material. Reflexivity includes how researchers' social locations influence research processes, research participants, and interpretations of data. Dollard (1937), who received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1930, gave a first-person account in his *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* that demonstrates reflexivity in research as an issue generations ago. Dollard described the awkwardness of being white in a southern town whose mores forbade treating "Negroes" as equals. Fearing that other white persons were watching as he talked to "Negroes" on his front porch, when he knew in the south at the time their "proper" place was at the back door, he wrote:

> My Negro friend brought still another Negro up on the porch to meet me. Should we shake hands? Would he be insulted if I did not, or would he accept the situation? I kept my hands in pockets and did not do it, a device that was often useful in resolving such a situation (p. 7).

This description is a poignant verbal picture of a pivotal moment in Dollard's fieldwork. It shows racist practices of the time.

This excerpt from Dollard illustrates a methodological point important to Small (1916), founder of the sociology department at the University of Chicago and the academic who recruited the faculty members who developed the styles of research under discussion in this chapter. Small, in an essay on the first 50 years of sociological research in the United States, emphasized the importance of going beyond "technical treatises" and providing first-person "frank judgments" that can help future generations interpret

sociology. Without such contexts, "the historical significance of treatises will be misunderstood" (p. 722). Throughout his essay, Small used the first-person and provided his views—or frank judgments—on the events he narrated.

Dollard undoubtedly built on Small's ideas that others, such as Thomas, Znaniecki, Park, and Burgess, also espoused. In a footnote, Dollard (1937), commented on his use of "I," which he said he used reluctantly, but did so because "it will show the researcher as separate from his data… and it will give the reader a more vivid sense of the research experience" (p. 2). Contemporary methodological discussions of the role of reflexivity in research echo these principles. (See Riach, 2009, for a recent discussion that brings in contemporary thought such as the ideas of Bourdieu, who shares human science traditions with early social researchers, especially the Chicago School.) Reflexivity in its multiple aspects is a way of approaching "objectivity" that may be elided when researchers hold simplistic ideas about objectivity.

Concern about bias, an issue then and now, also appeared in Dollard's writing. He wrote a chapter on his own biases regarding his study, including a detailed analysis of how an informant, who was a well-known white southern writer, angered him but ultimately helped him become aware of his biases toward white southerners.

Other early sociologists have been concerned with bias as well. Waller (1934), for instance, pointed out that prior concepts can help researchers see things they might not have seen but can also blind them to what else could be operating. Webb and Webb (1932) developed procedures for dealing with researchers' bias, including writing down all of one's ideas, preconceptions, and favorite theories prior to designing the research. They assured researchers that if they put aside even their favorite questions and hypotheses, they would find that the processes of direct involvement in the field may result in new insights, answers to significant questions, and to testing and modification of hypotheses.

These procedures are in use today. For instance, setting aside one's one views and biases, to the extent possible, is a well-established methodological principle in many different types of qualitative

research. In addition, stating researchers' social location and even personal experiences as they relate to research is another well-established principle. Harding (1991), among many others, argued that situating researchers as part of research processes creates a "stronger" and more objective science. Rather than presenting the research through an anonymous narrator whose standpoint is not known, researchers tell much more about their findings when the context the researcher provides is included in research reports, echoing Small's (1916) point made many years ago.

In addition to attributing significance to researchers' subjectivities, many of these early researchers sought to engage the emotions of their audiences by presenting the subjective experiences of informants. LePlay, however, did not do so, taking a more detached perspective on his findings. Other early researchers, such as Booth, quoted above, brought lived experience to the forefront. Rowntree (1901/1902) did as well. He quoted many of his informants, including a woman who said, "If there's anythink [sic] extra to buy, such as a pair of boots for one of the children, me and the children goes without dinner...." (p. 55). The subjective accounts were meant to influence public opinion and social policy. As Kellogg (1914a, 1914b) wrote of his studies of Pittsburgh, PA, USA where he presented his material in a variety of formats including photographs, diagrams, personal narratives, and charts

> We wanted to make the town real—to itself; not in goody-goody preachment of what it ought to be; not in sensational discoloration; not merely in a formidable array of rigid facts. There was the census at one pole, and yellow journalism at the other; and we were on the high seas between with the chartings of such dauntless explorers as Jacob Riis and Lincoln Steffens before us.
>
> This is why we tried to tell our findings through the eye as well as through the written word. This is why we collected industrial biographies as well as wage schedules; why we got the group picture of child life in a glass town, as well as analyzed the provisions of labor legislation and compulsory education laws; why we were concerned with the margins of leisure, and culture, and home life which are possible when a man works on a twelve-hour shift, as well as the free surplus which high wages may leave over a high cost of living (cited by Zimbalist, 1977, p. 158).

The Unemployment Study of 1928 (Calkins, 1930; National Federation of Settlements, 1931) was modeled after earlier research, being emancipatory in intent and using case studies that drew on both interviews and observations. Settlement workers from 20 states and the District of Columbia collected 300 case studies of families where an able-bodied male breadwinner was unable to find employment. According to Morrissey (1996) the planners of the study sought to document a social problem and "to put a human face on the statistical data commonly used to describe labor force participation" (p. 3).

Helen Hall, a prime mover in the study, recognized the role of emotions in emancipatory research. She wrote

> No one who reads any number of the case-records can feel happy in his mind that we should leave it to people so disadvantaged to combat, single-handed, the industrial changes and dislocations which tear at the structure of their homes (Hall, 1931, p. 1, cited by Morrissey, 1996).

The reports of the study made ample use of case material that engaged audiences in the experience of informants and that also, in the words of Morrissey (1996) challenged "those who claimed work was plentiful for those who wanted" it (Morrissey, 1996 p. 22). The words of an informant, Mr. Hendel of Pittsburgh, show the dilemmas experienced by families where the main breadwinner was not employed:

> I figgered with a thirteen-year work record behind me there'd be no trouble in *me* getting' a job in a big city like Pittsburgh....I remember one night when I'd been out of work a whole month and the rent was four months due, one of my friends told me he heard they was hiring men over to Spang-Chalfants—six miles away. I didn't even have the price of a car-check and I'd borrowed all I had the nerve to—and more—from my relatives. So I got up the next morning before five o'clock and walked all the way over there across the river without any breakfast—only to be told at the mill that they hadn't taken on a man in three months. I pretty near jumped off the bridge on my way home that day. If it hadn't been for the wife and kid, I guess I would have (Calkins, 1930, pp. 68–69).

Emphasis on lived experience, multiple methods, immersion, and social reform, then, were the hallmarks of early social welfare research.

Open-Ended Approaches

Emphasis on understanding informants in their environments led to quasi-inductive rather than deductive approaches. By quasi-induction, I mean that researchers began their research with questions and hypotheses that brought focus to the inquiries, but they continually generated new questions and hypotheses as they learned more about the phenomena of interest. In addition, they analyzed and classified their data during and after data collection. They also did group analysis of data, where two or more researchers read and studied fieldnotes, results of interviews, demographics, data collected by municipalities and townships, social maps, and social policies, among many other sources of data, all of which continue to be used by researchers today. Through extensive study and discussion, they generated categories, concepts, and theories that helped them to organize findings and to make sense of them. For example, Rowntree (1901/1902) used these methods, although he did not label his approach as induction. He began his research with questions he developed, classified a great many facts, and finished his research with additional questions constructed from immersion in the field.

LePlay (1879) articulate a rationale for a kind of inductive approach that is based on detailed observation and in-depth analysis. He wrote, "In scientific matters, only direct observation of facts can lead to rigorous conclusions and to their acceptance" (LePlay, 1879, Vol. 6, translated by Silver, 1982, p. 179). A metallurgist and engineer by training, LePlay spent 6 months of every year for 25 years on paid leave from his professorship at the *Ecole des Mines* in Paris to study European working families. LePlay wrote that this "method is as old as the human species and practiced by eminent men [sic] long before Descartes, Bacon, and Aristotle, recommended it to philosophers" (LePlay, 1866, p. 3).

LePlay did in-depth studies of families in many countries before he came to any conclusions. With the assistance of 100 interviewers, his research involved 300 case studies of families, which he called monographs. He and other researchers lived with families for up to a month at a time. They also interviewed family members and a range of public officials familiar with family members.

For LePlay, observations must be verified repeatedly. Though he had completed almost 20 years of research, he returned to the field for several additional years to test and revise his findings before he published them in *Les ouvrier-seuropeens* (Silver, 1982). Using observation, classification, and quasi-inductive approaches, he sought "the principles of social science" (Zimmerman & Frampton, 1935, p. 567); in other words, theory.

Webb and Webb (1932) described a similar attention to detail and continual rechecking of findings in Booth's London work. Through interviews and "individual personal observations," Booth and other researchers amassed data on London society that they categorized into eight social classes. In their own research on the workings of local governments, the Webbs described years of research where the disparate pieces of data they had gathered made little sense. Finally, through close observation of the "facts," there eventually "emerged a series of types, to one of the other of which all additional instances seemed to approximate" (p. 59). They described and recommended processes of quasi-induction. They advised researchers to begin their studies with as many hypotheses as they can generate, and then to be prepared to revise them, discard them, and to develop new ones based on the evidence.

Today, researchers would say that these early researchers were "naïve realists" or "naïve empiricists" who believed that findings emerge from facts, seemingly independent of researchers' own perspectives. Replacing this older viewpoint is constructivism, where researchers believe that understanding of social phenomena are constructions, based upon researchers' perspectives. Ironically, however, constructivist researchers use the same methods earlier researchers used to analyze "social facts." The only difference is they explicitly state their results are constructions, but they also state, as did the earlier researchers, that others may interpret findings in different ways, arguably an implicit kind of constructivism.

Some Methodological Issues and Dilemmas

Many early researchers were eloquent about methodological dilemmas and issues that are widely discussed today (Gilgun, 2007). Mowrer, Anderson, and Dollard provide examples. Mowrer was interested in the relationships between observations and theory, a theme he addressed repeatedly. In *The Family*, Mowrer (1932) observed

> But facts are not born full bloom to be plucked by anyone. In every perceptive experience there is an infinite number of observations which might be made but which are not. What the individual sees is determined in part, at least, by what he [sic] is trained to observe.... Abstraction thus takes the form of replacing of the actual experiences of the individual by symbols which serve as carriers of what he [sic] considers to be the essential elements of his [sic] experience. Events and objects are grouped by observed regularities or similarities in them. In this third step in scientific method there is always a certain amount of arbitrariness in the selection of what is considered essential, growing out of the training and experience of the researcher (pp. 281–286).

These early formulations of issues related to interpretation, induction, and deduction have been themes in symbolic interactionism and the social sciences in general for generations (Becker, 1988; Blumer, 1939/1969; Hammersley, 1989; Wolcott, 1994). Mowrer (1932) prepared the way for Blumer's (1954/1986) notion of sensitizing concepts, which are ideas that help researchers notice what they might not otherwise have noticed and Glaser's (1978) thinking on theoretical sensitivity, that is based upon understandings that researchers have familiarity with a range of theories that may or may not help them to understand and interpret their data. The roles of theory in data analysis and interpretation are enduring issues.

Chicago-trained sociologists made other cogent methodological points. Concerns about methods training and the place of previous research and theory in the conduct of fieldwork plagued Anderson (1925) who presented himself as knowing nothing about method. He kept away from other graduate students because of his felt ignorance. Even after his master's thesis became the first of many in The University of Chicago Press's Sociological Series, he characterized himself as a poor researcher, and tongue-in-cheek perhaps, noted that "the book contained not a single sociological concept" (p. 403). His book is full of concepts, of course, but not highly abstract concepts and hypotheses; rather, his ideas were embedded in the meanings of the words in his text. Anderson appeared to be making fun of sociologists who may have made a bigger deal over concepts than Anderson thought was necessary for field research. He took up the more phenomenological side of Chicago research, leaving explicit theorizing to others.

Dollard (1937) also had concerns about the place of concepts and previous research in his field research. He reported that he did not review pertinent literature until after he finished his study. He deemed it "advisable to try for the advantage which lies in naiveté and a freshened perception of the local scene," rather than risk "repeating the well-documented findings of others" (p. 31). In addition, he preferred "to give the reader as deep a sense of participation as may be in what I have heard, seen, and sensed" (pp. 31–32), a theme I discussed earlier and one characteristic of Chicago sociology. Unlike Anderson, then, he found research and theory useful, but only after he completed his research, and, like Waller, he was concerned that his openness to data might be affected by knowledge of the literature. How and when to involve previous research and theory in qualitative studies are of interest in contemporary discussions of qualitative research in general and qualitative family research in particular.

Relationships Between Theory and Empirical Data

As the previous discussion shows, concerns about the empirical bases of theory have been part of social research from the beginning. Thomas and Znaniecki (1918–1920/1927) and Znaniecki (1934) discussed these issues in depth. They believed that the foundation of social theory is empirical data and that theory must be linked to empirical data, not a new idea, as the discussion of LePlay's (1879) thought has shown.

They criticized both abstract theory that did not have these discernable links and theorists who sought an "all-embracing synthesis," but never tested the "truth" of their theories (Znaniecki, 1934, p. 27). Their commitment to the notion of variation and standpoints—they used that word—rules out grand synthesizing that assumes there is a single point of view on any human phenomenon. They also expressed wariness of research that appeared to have pasted a bit of theory after the fact on endeavors that were empirical, meaning they have no explicit links to theory. The writing of Strauss and colleagues (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser, 1978, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1997, 1998; Strauss, 1987) contain many of these themes.

Znaniecki's (1934) thinking about theory-building is particularly relevant to today's discussions of theory construction. He argued that sociology "can be nothing but a strictly *inductive* science, meaning that its foundation is 'empirical data.' He reserved a major place for deduction as well: 'no science can live without deduction,' and he stated that 'the method of phenomenological analysis' is also part of sociology" (p. 218). He recognized the interplay between induction and deduction. He noted that knowledge development is characterized by a "ceaseless pulsation" that involves "movement from concrete reality to abstract concepts and from abstract concepts back to concrete reality" (p. 25). He had no name that I know of for this over-arching set of processes.

Znaniecki (1934), like Mowrer (1932) and Park, also gave a role to intuition. He said, "scientific induction in its best form may be said to combine deduction and intuition into a higher dynamic unity" (pp. 220–221). He appears not to take a stand on whether induction follows deduction or that deduction comes first. Znaniecki may have discussed what he meant by intuition but I could not find it. By intuition, he could have meant hunches, insights, and what researchers learn from their education and from their professional and personal experiences, as well as the influences of personal and professional values. Sometimes what individuals know is so deeply embedded that some forms of knowledge become intuitive. This kind of intuition may be informed and educated, modifiable through experience.

Intuition is a piece of how I and many other people do research, just as intuition is part of what makes any professional practice possible (cf., Schön, 1983).

Znaniecki (1934) also advocated for the inclusion of variations and patterns in theory, and the creation of theories that are bold, simple, and comprehensive and that classify, organize, and systematize "a large mass of reliable empirical knowledge" (p. 257). To arrive at classifications, sociologists abstract "essential" features from data and then organize them into categories.

Znaniecki (1934) did not address what guides researchers in the processes of abstraction. Logically, to be able to abstract concepts from "concrete instances" requires some sort of prior conceptualization, which suggests that induction is not "pure," but requires prior knowledge. Perhaps this is the role that Znaniecki gave both to deduction and to intuition.

Znaniecki (1934) had a name for research based on induction, deduction, and intuition. The name is analytic induction. He wrote that the challenge in analytic induction is to find general principles that will guide the analysis and help identify the central features of cases. Centrality is not dependent upon how often it appears. Out of comparisons and general principles, researchers formulate hypotheses. Znaniecki saw contradictory evidence as reason to develop competing hypotheses and to continue the analysis out of which "emerges new hypotheses and new problems" (p. 282). Later methodologists have names for two of these processes: constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) which was foreshadowed by Bott's use of the term in her research on social networks and negative case analysis (Cressey, 1953, among others). Negative case analysis is a deliberative seeking out of cases that will lead to modifications of the emerging theory. I will discuss these issues in more detail later.

Znaniecki (1934) also believed that, in the doing of science, hypotheses, or "relative truths," must be substituted for "absolute truths" (p. 221). This last statement is yet another iteration of the principle that theoretical formulations are not absolute but open to modifications.

Chicago researchers, both early and later researchers, gave a name to procedures that pay

attention to and seek "contradictory instances." This is negative case analysis, which, as stated earlier, involves the search for data that add additional dimensions or even contradict researchers' emerging understandings (Becker, 1953; Becker, Geer, Hughes, & Strauss, 1961; Cressey, 1953; Gilgun, 1995, 2005; Palmer, 1928; Znaniecki, 1934). Palmer's (1928) discussions of negative cases have authority because she supervised much of the dissertation research students undertook at the University of Chicago in the 1920s. She also worked closely with Park and Burgess who gave overall direction to the research of the early Chicago School (Bulmer, 1984).

According to Palmer, once researchers complete a case, the findings must be compared with another case. The next case might turn out to be similar to the case or cases already analyzed, but it also could be a "negative case," which she said is valuable because it "usually results in a more accurate definition of a concept or a statement of some scientific law" (p. 22). The term *scientific law* had a different meaning than it does now, especially within the Chicago School. Scientific laws are roughly equivalent to what we would call theory today, and the theory, as discussed previously, was the kind that is always provisional, subject to revision when evidence suggests a basis for revision.

Many of the ideas that Palmer discussed are present in other writings of the time and are foundational to grounded theory, a form of analysis that has roots in early Chicago research. Strauss and colleagues (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser, 1992, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Strauss, 1987), who are the originators of grounded theory, for example, emphasize comparisons within and across cases in language that is similar to Palmer's and others who wrote at that time.

Summary

As in the past, today's researchers enlarge their perspectives through immersion in the field, seek informants' subjective experiences, see a major role for researchers' subjective experiences, use multiple methods, do group analysis of data, and do research for the purpose of understanding human experiences. Their products, broadly, are descriptions of human experience, often categorized by themes and typologies and the development of theory. Many want to contribute to the social good, a type of emancipatory research. Today's methods and the principles behind them (methodologies) are vintage wines in new bottles.

Many contemporary qualitative researchers do their work without knowing the richness of their own heritage. The roots of qualitative family research go deep, to the origins of social science research. This review of the early history of qualitative family research helps to establish for qualitative family researchers that they have a rich heritage on which to base their work. This heritage is a solid foundation and provides not only enduring principle and methods, but also a rich vocabulary that we can use as we explain our work to others.

The Change

Ironically, the openness of early researchers to multiple methods and perspectives appears to have been a factor in the decline of the styles of research they conducted. Seeking to be ever more pluralistic in their approaches to research, Chicago faculty voted unanimously to invite William Ogburn, a leading quantitative sociologist, to join the faculty (Bulmer, 1984). In the late 1920s, there was a flurry of controversy within the faculty that pitted statistics against case study methods, but within a few years, after many colloquia, journal articles, and long discussions, Chicago professors and students came to view the two approaches as complementary (Faris, 1967). Burgess (1927) and Blumer (1928) made major contributions to this rapprochement. In a 1927 paper on statistics and the case study, for instance, Burgess wrote that statistics and case studies are complementary. Statistics provide correlations and indices, while case studies can reveal social processes and the meanings persons attribute to processes and events that will help "build more adequate statistical indices" (p. 120).

The tradition of methodological pluralism most likely created an openness to the new discipline of statistics, and subsequent Chicago-style research made ample use of them.

While many faculty maintained methodological pluralism, Ogburn apparently did not. He was a prime figure in moving social science away from emancipatory, phenomenological research and toward detached objectivity and quantitative methodologies (Laslett, 1991). According to Laslett, Ogburn was part of a chorus of distinct new voices in the social sciences that arose during and after World War I and that encouraged quantification, explicit descriptions of methodology, and a distanced objectivity. This approach to studying society discouraged ethical judgments, emancipatory research, and researcher immersion in settings of interest. To quote Laslett on Ogburn

> Throughout his career, he advocated the position that sociology had to become more scientific, by which he meant empirical, objective, and quantitative. For him, to become scientific, sociology needed to distance itself from the moral and political reform interests and activities that had been characteristic of its earlier history. Social problems were of interest to the scientific sociologist as a subject for detached study, not involvement (p. 512).

Although Ogburn called his approach "scientific," there is disagreement over what the word means. Many researchers, for example, believe that subjectivity, reflexivity, and values are part of science. In this view, researchers can seek to bring about social reform, but they have to ensure that the research is of the highest quality and that reform agendas do not distort research processes and interpretations. In other words, researchers have to do quality research, and then they can take up the role of advocates. In light of the difficulties with the word "scientific," I will use the word "empiricist" to characterize social scientists who advocate for their version of objectivity, universal laws, and distance from values and reform.

Ogburn and other social scientists carried out empiricist principles that emphasized explanation, objectivity, and quantification and paid little or no attention to principles associated with the human sciences. Empiricist approaches include distanced methods of research such as surveys, emotional distance from social problems, paying insufficient attention to interactions between persons and their environments, and emphasis on quantified theory testing rather than theory development. A basic idea in the thinking of some empiricists is that there is one way to do science—their way. Within human science traditions, these perspectives lead to "context-stripping" and to paring away variegated human experience as the proper focus of social science.

The well-entrenched Chicago traditions that viewed science as arising from immersion and that sought to understand social problems for the sake of social change went out of fashion in many sectors of academia. For these academics, no longer could researchers get "the seat of their pants dirty" in pursuit of understanding issues of interest from multiple points of view using multiple methods. Academics seized upon the ideas that science is explanation and not description of lived experiences and not theories grounded in human experiences and that there is one *true* way to do research, which, as stated earlier, is their way. While they appeared to recognize variations across persons, contexts, and time, their methods and perspectives did not allow the depth and breadth that is part of human sciences traditions and they actively discouraged value-based research and social reform efforts for the sake of their versions of objectivity.

Empiricist ideas about science eclipsed other views for years, to the point where generations of students had no idea that research could involve immersion, theory development, descriptions of human situations, and emotions and experiences of researchers and of those whom they research. Almost lost was the idea that research could be conducted for the purposes of advocacy and social change. Quantification and distance from "objects" of study became the definition of science for most social scientists. The "social" seemed to have disappeared from the social and human sciences for the sake of what appears to have been an unreflective "objectivity" and definitions of science that not everyone shared.

The Traditions Carried On

The Chicago style of research carried on and even spread to other institutions, but it was as if these researchers were on the outside, raising their hands, and saying, "Hey, you guys, there's another way of doing research. Sometimes it's even fun. People like to read our research because it makes sense to them."

Many researchers carried on the traditions, of course, mostly composed of "descendents" of the early Chicago scholars. For instance, the writings of Glaser, Strauss, and Corbin (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Strauss, 1987) are replete with statements about the importance of multiple methods and about the self-evident nature of researchers' subjective engagements with informants and the meanings of their data. Glaser (1978) talked about methodological pluralism:

> Our perspective is but a piece of a myriad of action in Sociology, not the only right action.... The division of labor in sociology needs *all* perspectives on styles of both theoretical and empirical renderings of research data (p. 3, emphasis in original text).

Glaser (1978) stressed the centrality of the "social psychology of the analyst" and noted that "Generating theory is done by a human being who is at times intimately involved with and other times quite distant from the data—and who is surely plagued by other conditions in his [sic] life" (p. 2). This is a statement on the role of reflexivity in research. Glaser and Strauss, whose primary work was medical sociology, assume that the results of their research would be applied and used to ameliorate personal and social ills.

Case Studies of Chicago Graduates in the Middle Years

During the years from the late 1930s to the mid-1980s, the University of Chicago continued to have an interdisciplinary faculty and graduate students who were drawn to Chicago's traditional styles of research. A sense of the continuities and transformations of Chicago traditions is part of

the life history accounts of Lopata (1992), who was a student at Chicago from 1945 to 1954, and Gerald Handel (Gilgun, 1992), who received his Ph.D. in human development in 1962. Rosalie Wax, an anthropologist, also shared these traditions, particularly in her emphasis on shared meanings, the centrality of interactionism, and her efforts on behalf of social reform. Elizabeth Bott, also an anthropologist, built her research around the development of both theoretical and descriptive understandings of families and social networks. Such goals are also linked to the Chicago School tradition.

Lopata emphasized theoretical issues such as role theory and sensitizing concepts and appeared less focused on method, as if the rationale for her methods were self-evident. This self-evident quality was undoubtedly true for her and the traditions in which she learned and practiced research. From her Chicago sociology professors, she received the same directives that Park gave his students decades earlier. An immigrant from Poland, she wanted to study Polish immigrant family life in the United States. She said her professors

> told [me] to go to Polonia—and actually talk with the people, attend meetings, and even collect questionnaires? I went (Lopata, 1992, p. 1).

Lopata was open about her "reformist" attitude—that is, her interests in social change, aroused while she at the University of Chicago. She had concerns about the response to Nazism in the midwestern United States.

> Speeches given around the midwest about Nazim and the crucial need for clothing and money for medicine to send back to Europe met with total indifference and ignorance. I ended up doing a master's thesis on "International Cooperation in Medicine," probably to convince myself that cooperation is possible in the world (Lopata, 1992, p. 1).

She showed no trace of self-consciousness about the personal meanings of this and subsequent research projects. Lopata had no courses on research methods, but learned methods of procedure through course lectures, reading theory and research reports, and through her field experience, guided by members of her master's and Ph.D. committees.

Gerald Handel and Creative, Independent Thinking

When Handel was a student at Chicago, he, too, had no formal training in research methods, but was enchanted by the Chicago emphasis on interpretation. Like Lopata, he found that students were expected to be independent scholars in close contact with informants and the worlds in which they lived. Handel's work is embedded in interactionism and his interest is in the meanings that informants attribute to their situations. Handel's publications include the study of whole families (Handel 1965, 1996; Hess & Handel, 1959), the psychosocial interior of the family (Handel, 1967; Handel & Whitchurch, 1993), childhood socialization (Handel, 1988), and case studies (Handel, 1991). He co-edited a volume of examples of qualitative family research (Gilgun, Daly, & Handel, 1992).

Handel studied with Carl Rogers, Bruno Bettleheim, Lloyd Warner, and Elizabeth Bott in an exemplary interdisciplinary program in human development. He regrets not taking Everett Hughes' research course in which each student was assigned a census tract and had to find out everything possible about that tract: qualitative and quantitative data, the subcultures, the institutions, demographics. This, of course, is part of the Chicago methodological tradition of social mapping. For Handel, the environment at Chicago was demanding and creative. Students were surrounded by faculty who were at the height of their careers, creating new insights through interpretive activities. He was immersed in exciting new ideas that inspired him in his own research. As he said:

> Each of us had to come to our own interpretation of the material. No one would do it for us. Bettleheim was developing his own ideas, Carl Rogers was doing his thing, and Warner was developing his ideas about American communities. Individuals, as rooted in society, was a core idea at Chicago.... The act of interpretation was a central activity. Interpreting symbols—that's what Freud did. That's what G. H. Mead said was important. Warner's course based on his studies of Yankee City was subtitled *The Symbolic Life of America*. He had an analysis of the symbolic organization of a Memorial Day parade in Yankee City—what kind of floats people produced and who was allowed to do what.

He interpreted the symbolic meaning of the floats. This was an extraordinary analysis.

> Another was on the social organization of the cemetery—who's buried where and how. It was amazing stuff to us. These ideas were very, very innovative. One way or another, among the work we studied, the intellectual activity was interpreting human behavior: Freud, Erikson, G. H. Mead, Piaget, and Warner (Gilgun, 1992, p. 5).

Handel struggled with the notion that the ideas being presented in class and through reading often did not match up with what was called research. "Here I was reading [and studying with] those magnificent, insightful thinkers," Handel said, "and then there was this other kind of [quantitative] literature which was smaller in scale." Handel said, "Students who did quantitative work puzzled me. My question was, "Why were they doing that?" Excited by ideas and deductive/inductive processes of working with ideas, Handel could not connect with the thinking behind quantitative studies (Gilgun, 1992, p. 5).

Handel did not take courses on qualitative interviewing, which was his main method of data collection. "I was not explicitly trained," he said. "It's a mystery how I absorbed it. Somehow I absorbed it, probably through the notion of whose ideas were important to me—G. H. Mead, Freud, M. Mead, Erikson, Piaget" (Gilgun, 1992, p. 5).

Students together in human development, Hess and Handel cowrote a proposal to the National Institute of Mental Health, which was funded. That research was written up as *Family Worlds*, based on in-depth qualitative interviews with each member of 33 families. They also used the projective Thematic Apperception Test. This work blended Burgess's (1926) notion of family interaction with Chicago's emphasis on multiple methods and personal meanings in interpretations of situations. Through primarily inductive analysis, they formulated five processes of family interaction and functioning: patterns of separation and connectedness; notions of individual and family images; family themes; family boundaries; and the meanings of age and gender to each family member. These ideas have been applied in a wide range of theoretical and applied settings (Handel, 1996; LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993; Rosenblatt & Fischer, 1993).

The Work of Rosalie Wax

The writing of Rosalie Wax a Chicago graduate with a Ph.D. in anthropology, demonstrates how researchers continued to use methodological ideas espoused by Park, Thomas, and others of the Chicago school from earlier in the twentieth century. Wax continued Chicago's tradition of reflecting on methodological issues related to subjectivity, particularly in her classic fieldwork text (Wax). Her openness to the processes of research transformed her. She became an advocate for the persons on whom she did research.

In her preface, she thanked, among others, the Chicago sociologist Everett Hughes who had carried on the earlier traditions. In her presentation of fieldwork, she incorporated her biography, which was a tradition in early research. Like Albion Small and John Dollard, her stated purpose was pedagogical: to train "future generations of fieldworkers" (p. x). She also spoke in the first person, which is in the Chicago tradition, in order to provide historical contexts that aid in interpretation. She shared her "pre-college life experiences," such as how she earned a living during the Depression, how she managed her life as a junior college student, and how she learned about cultural variations as a child. These and other autobiographical details situated Wax within her text and helped in its interpretation.

Wax was concerned with "shared meanings" (p. 11), which she saw as preconditions for understanding social phenomena, her view of the purpose of fieldwork. This, of course, is within the human sciences tradition and fits well with Chicago traditions. For Wax, researchers attain understanding through personal experience; that is, a resocialization into the culture under consideration, a stance Park imparted to his students and probably based on his training in German philosophy. Wax gave many examples of resocialization but noted that researchers remain outsiders.

Wax recognized that resocialization may entail personal transformations, an insight Wax (1971) attributed to Malinowski. In other words, participation in research processes can change researchers. In some cases, researchers become social reformists, a theme in the early qualitative family

research of such persons as LePlay and Booth. She noted that as a result of their field work, she and her anthropologist husband Murray "became moral protagonists of Indian communities" (p. 41). Moreover, Alfred Lindesmith became an opponent of harsh narcotic laws after his research on opium addicts and that many other social researchers found that fieldwork "undermined" the "pretence of moral neutrality" (p. 41). She acknowledged that these transformations met with approval by some but "antagonized" those who "defined science as pure" (p. 41), another reference to an empiricist form of social science research. Wax built upon themes within the Chicago tradition, including her commitment to advocacy as an outcome of research.

Elizabeth Bott and Theorizing

The work of English anthropologist Bott (1957/1971) on couples' social networks was within the Chicago tradition, and, as mentioned earlier, she later became a faculty member at Chicago. While Wax emphasized descriptions of shared meanings, Bott's focus was on theory development. In her work, she illustrated the interplay between induction and deduction in the conduct of qualitative family research. Her work anticipates many of today's research methods, particularly grounded theory (see, Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Terming her research *exploratory*, Bott did not begin her study with "well-formed hypotheses" but had the general goal of "psychological understanding of some ordinary urban families" (Bott, 1957/1971, p. 8). She said she and her team "succumbed to the confusion" of open-ended research "in the hope that constant careful comparisons would eventually lead to a formulation of specific problems" (p. 9). Bott not only anticipated the methods of grounded theory, but she even used the term *constant comparison*, a term Glaser and Strauss later used. She also followed procedures that were part of Chicago traditions.

Having no hypotheses does not mean that the research was a atheoretical and unguided by concepts. Bott's theoretical framework was

Lewin's field theory (1935, 1936), which holds that behavior is a function of person and environment. This, of course, is a variation of ecological theory and consistent with the interactionist perspectives that characterized the Chicago School of Sociology from its inception. Lewin's concepts undoubtedly were sensitizing (Blumer, 1954/1986), helping Bott and her team to identify and name processes they might never have noticed otherwise. For Blumer, who received his Ph.D. from Chicago in 1928, sensitizing concepts give researchers "a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances" (p. 148). In other words, sensitizing concepts orient researchers to the analysis and interpretation of data, ideas that Mowrer (1932) discussed many years earlier and that was routine for most researchers within Chicago traditions (Lopata, 1992).

Doing her research during a time when empiricist styles of research were in ascendance, Bott (1957/1971) made methodological points about the generalizability of her findings and the nature of the hypotheses that result from studies such as hers. Her sample of 20 urban families, Bott noted, was neither representative nor random. Whether any facts that such research uncovers were typical was not her concern. What was of concern were hypotheses, which she saw as possibly "generalizable to other families but require further testing" (p. 10), not only on English families but on families in other societies. In short, she saw the kind of research she did as a way of developing viable, testable theory. She pointed out that such hypotheses are written in general terms so as to permit testing. Thomas and Znaniecki (1918–1920/1927), Lindesmith (1947), Znaniecki (1934), among others, articulated similar views on generalizability, the nature of formulated theory, and qualitative methods.

Bott's results were well received and set off a series of studies and papers that Bott (1957/1971) chronicled in a long chapter at the end of the second edition of *Family and Social Network*. Her work continues to be quoted in contemporary research on social networks. Empiricist principles had become so strong that Bott was aware of how different her research was and conceded that some may find it difficult to accept.

When Bott presented her preliminary analyses to Max Gluckman's seminar on social anthropology at the University of Manchester, England and asked the seminar participants what to do with her material, Gluckman and one participant said simultaneously "Write a novel about it" (Gluckman, 1971, p. xiv). Gluckman later admitted he was wrong and called her work "one of the most illuminating analyses ever to emerge from social anthropology" (p. xiv). Empiricist thinking appears to have influenced Gluckman's first impressions of Bott's work, but he was open-minded enough to carefully read what she had written. He was able to see the depth and breadth of her theorizing and the importance of what she had found.

Pockets of Chicago-Style Research

Chicago graduates and former Chicago faculty fanned out across the United States to create small pockets of graduate students and professors who sustained the tradition. For instance, Anselm Strauss went to the University of California-San Francisco in 1968 to form the department of social and behavioral sciences. There he recruited like-minded faculty, such as Barney Glaser, Leonard Schatzman, Fred Davis, and Virginia Olesen. This faculty trained generations of nursing and sociology students, with Strauss, Glaser, and Schatzman having decades-long responsibility for training in research methods and methodologies (Strauss, 1991).

Chicago graduates Howard Becker spent most of his career at Northwestern, Blanche Geer had several academic jobs including at Syracuse University where she was Bob Bogdan's (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) advisor, and Erving Goffman was at Berkeley. Wiseman (1979, 1981, 1991), a qualitative family researcher, was one of Goffman's students. Blumer also was at Berkeley for many years.

Nursing and sociology students at the University of California-San Francisco routinely took courses at Berkeley with Blumer, Goffman, and such phenomenologically-oriented philosophers as Dreyfus (1991), Rubin (1988), and Packer (1985; Packer & Addison, 1989), all of

whom have had a major influence. In some ways, the Berkeley area during these middle years and into contemporary times replicated the intellectual atmosphere of the University of Chicago in the early part of this century.

Life Course Research

The life course perspective is an example of approaches to research that draw upon Chicago School traditions. Glen Elder and Janet Giele, leading life course researchers, have consistently cited works from the early Chicago School as foundational to life course perspectives. For example, Elder (1978), in discussing family histories and the life course, cited Dollard (1949) regarding Dollard's views on life histories. Giele (2009) cited W. I. Thomas several times in the most recent iteration of life course theory. Giele attributed to Thomas emblematic life course perspectives that include the study of lives "influenced by a changing society" (p. 1), the importance of longitudinal research (p. 3), human agency as prominent in life course research (p. 10), the documentation of the influence of human relationships on human actions as mediated by family and community (p. 246), and the carryover of responsibility and obligation from one life stage to the next (p. 248). She also characterized other aspects of life story research in terms that connect her perspectives to the Chicago School. These perspectives include her view that life stories are based on subjective accounts that convey comprehensiveness and meanings, and that values are embedded in life history accounts.

Further documentation of the links between life course theory and Chicago School traditions are chapters in Elder and Giele (2009) on life records, life stories, and urban ethnographies. The urban ethnography is Welfare, Children, and Families: A Three Cities Study (Burton, Cherlin, Winn, Estacion, & Holder-Taylor, 2009; Burton, Purvin, & Garrett-Peters, 2009), which used a classic Chicago School design that included multiple methods and implemented the principles of immersion, symbolic interactionism, and researcher subjectivities. The influence of the Chicago School is far and wide. The present chapter does not exhaust these influences.

Summary

Human science traditions are deep and broad within family research, research that includes several disciplines including sociology, social work, human development, and anthropology as discussed in this chapter. These researchers have had an enduring commitment to multiple methods and perspectives, immersion, theory-building, descriptive research, and social reform. While empiricist traditions have challenged the human scientists, many researchers carried on with the ideas, goals, and approaches associated with human sciences and the traditions of the Chicago School of Sociology. As is now evident "sociology" is a misnomer because the Chicago School traditions are interdisciplinary and include social work, family studies, anthropology, philosophy, education, psychology, sociology, and human development. Many graduates of the sociology department called themselves social psychologists to emphasize their goals of understanding subjective experiences of research participants within the various environments in which they live their lives.

An Analysis of Contemporary Qualitative Family Research

From this overview of the methods and methodologies of the Chicago School, I have constructed an analytic framework that I use to examine contemporary qualitative family research. My purpose is to assess whether and how the themes carried on and how contemporary thought may have transformed them.

The Elements of the Framework

The methods and methodological themes of the Chicago School tradition are multiple and complex. They include the following dimensions.

They followed *human sciences traditions* including emancipatory perspectives, phenomenology, pragmatism, and symbolic interactionism that assumed that human phenomena are first to be understood in interactive social contexts. From these perspectives, researchers may go on to theorize, develop programs, and advocate for social policy to address social inequities. They used their imaginations in order to understand informants' experiences, and they often had implicit constructivist orientations.

Interdisciplinary perspectives characterized early researchers who were trained in several different disciplines including philosophy, sociology, social psychology, psychology, family studies, anthropology, education, and social work. These scholars borrowed methods, procedures, and ideas from multiple disciplines. Graduates in sociology often called themselves social psychologists and some called themselves social workers.

The place of prior research and theory. These early researchers had multiple points of view on the place of prior research and theory. Some avoided prior literature reviews in order to avoid biasing themselves and finding what they expected to find while others saw prior knowledge as sensitizing concepts that alert them as to what might be present in their data. Still others used existing research and theory to focus their research and as sources of hypotheses to test. They sought to develop understandings of the mutual influences of persons and situations. Variations on the use of negative case analysis characterized much of this research, and this approach supported the assumption that social processes are composed of variations and patterns across persons, situations, and time.

Methods include case studies of various units such as individuals, families, ethnic groups, neighborhoods, and cities. Life histories were one of several approaches used and served to depict lived experience within historical contexts over time. Participant observation was another approach that often involved immersion in the field to the point where researchers lived within the communities of persons on whom they did research. Other related approaches included interviews, analysis of personal and official documents, surveys, and social mapping. Group analysis for the purposes of understanding research material from multiple points of view and for making conceptual and theoretical sense of the material was the prime method of data analysis.

The methodological principles infused in these methods included immersion, emancipation, lived experience, persons in the multiple contexts, open-endedness, multiple perspectives, understanding lives over time, and theory grounded in lived experience. Understandings, concepts, and theories were subject to modification if new understandings warranted change. Many were positivists in the sense that each datum had to be studied in its particularity so that generally applicable conclusions could be reached. They did not follow empiricist principles of detachment, quantification, and focus on rational thought.

The centrality of experience is important and included both informants' lived experience and those of researchers. One of the purposes of research was to provide information on which to base informed social policy. Thus, persons on whom research was done were often poor and working families who had struggles that resulted from social policies and practices that researchers hoped to change.

Learning to do research was based on direct experience in the field, with classroom learning being de-emphasized. Good, interesting writing was important in order to draw in audiences. Drawing in audiences had many purposes, including mobilizing public opinion in support of social change. In presenting *findings*, detailed, multi-layered descriptions were central. When theory was an intended product, researchers still used ample descriptive material to show the foundations for their theory. Most if not all had a strong commitment to social justice and part of their analysis included implications for policy, programs, education, and practice.

The products included monographs (books) articles, social interventions such as policies, educational programs, and social programs such as widows' pensions. Some researchers hoped that

their findings would promote the social good, but did not become advocates. Others not only became advocates but developed and implemented social policies. Jane Addams and Helen Hall are prime examples of advocates who based their efforts not only upon research but on values such as social justice.

Analysis

To identify qualitative research on families, I reviewed every issue of family journals and journals that publish articles on families from January 2008 to January 2010. These journals are the *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *Family Relations*, *Journal of Family Economic Issues*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Journal of Family Psychology*, *Journal of Family Nursing*, *Families in Society*, and *Social Problems.*

Out of the many choices I had, I focused on four articles that showed the various types of research that is characteristic of the heritage of qualitative family research. One article was descriptive and done for the purposes of contributing to social policy. Another was theoretical, focusing on power relations in families along the lines of gender and age. The third was a study of the meanings young children in out-of-home care attributed to their separations from their families of origin. The final article is a classic study that replicates the methods of the Chicago School in almost all if not all of its aspects.

In the spirit of the principle that there is no one true way to do qualitative analysis, I chose to examine articles that interested me and that had some diversity in terms of informants and their situations. I did not seek articles that fell on either end of an empiricist-human sciences tradition; I remained neutral about those issues. In the analysis, I show how the articles are consistent or inconsistent with human sciences traditions.

Descriptive, Emancipatory Research

How Son and Bauer (2010) set up their study of low-income rural mothers is an example of contemporary work has direct roots in the heritage of qualitative family research. Their informants were low-income mothers, their unit of analysis was the case, they did in-depth studies of lives in context over time, and their perspectives were emancipatory. They also took phenomenological perspectives, used the literature review as a source of sensitizing concepts, and based their theorizing and policy recommendations on their descriptions of the women's situations. The setting of the study was rural, which contrasted with most Chicago School studies that took place in urban environments. Since the intent of the study was emancipatory and low-income mothers in rural areas are understudied, the divergence to rural settings is consistent with Chicago School traditions. Some empiricist influences are present in the article because the authors maintained a "distanced" stance by not describing their own subjectivities, although these subjectivities are implicit in their writing.

The study is emancipatory and ecological as evidenced by the following from Son and Bauer (2010):

> The current welfare policy in the United States discourages welfare recipients from staying on welfare by reducing cash assistance and expands work-first programs. In this welfare context, understanding the characteristics of employed, low-income, single mothers and low-wage jobs is critical in order to provide appropriate support and to develop policies.

These researchers had emancipatory perspectives and a goal of understanding the particular women's situations within particular contexts over time in response to changing policies and work opportunities.

They elaborated upon the ecological aspects of their research when they discussed their interests in describing matches and mismatches between environmental contingencies and women's employment histories. The contingencies included resources and challenges within families, work, communities, and the effects of social policies.

Bronfenbrenner's (1986) perspectives on human ecology helped them to explain their views on how environmental issues facilitated understanding of individual lives. They pointed out that components of macrosystems include

values and culture, topics of interest throughout the history of the human sciences.

This study also showed that immersion continues to be part of family research. Son and Bauer (2010) followed 28 single, low-income mothers for 4 years over three waves of data collection, providing them with a study of lives over time, a hallmark of the Chicago School.

In addition, these researchers had a multifaceted literature review from which they drew sensitizing concepts. Their interview questions came from their literature review and so did the concepts they used to organize their findings. In their analysis, they did not use the literature review as a source of codes. Instead, they attempted to put their explicit ideas aside and taken an inductive approach in order to identify themes and patterns within each case and then do within-case and cross-case analysis. This "putting aside" was practiced by many members of the Chicago School. Given the literature review and their knowledge of the subject area, it is unlikely that their analysis was "pure" induction, however, but rather a combination of induction and deduction, with the deductive aspect having to do with their prior knowledge. The literature review made them "theoretically sensitive" (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Again consistent with Chicago School traditions, their unit of analysis was the case, but they made no mention of attempts to find exceptions to the emerging themes, and so it is not clear if they did so. They identified four themes in the case studies, and they showed patterns within each theme. For example, for the theme of support from supervisors, they did descriptions and provided excerpts from interviews to describe from the mothers' points of view the impact of supervisory support and lack of support. They presented many excerpts from the cases to show the meanings of their experiences as low-income working mothers.

Son and Bauer (2010) based their theorizing and policy recommendations on their interpretations of the employed mothers' experiences, a strategy that shows clear links between the mothers' experiences, theory, and policy recommendations. Overall, then, the Son and Bauer (2010) study is a premier example of contemporary family research that is consistent with a human sciences and Chicago School tradition. The researchers used some theories, research, and language that did not exist in their present forms during the Chicago School years, but their work maintains and advances the tradition.

Research Whose Purpose Is Theory Development

Zuo's (2009) work shares many characteristics of the Son and Bauer (2010) study, including researcher "distance" with an implicit subjectivity related to her being of Chinese descent as her informants were. I will not repeat commonalities, but will point differences that show variations possible in studies that link to the human sciences and the Chicago School. Zou also studied lives in context over time, took phenomenological perspectives and a comparative approach, used sensitizing concepts, was implicitly emancipatory, and recognized patterns. In contrast to Son and Bauer, Zou's purpose was to contribute to theories of gender and power. Thus emancipatory goals were not directly related to concerns about influencing policy and practice, as was the case for Son and Bauer.

Zou's topic was changes in Chinese family patriarchy and women's social status during various stages of marriages among couples married before 1950. Because the changes over time in which she was interested were long past, Zou chose to do life histories, which she called life stories. Life histories are the hallmark method of the Chicago School. Zuo (2009) maximized the variations and perspectives in her sample in several different ways. Early in her article, she shared her assumption that male-dominated social orders are contested in a variety of systems. She therefore expected to see variations in her sample. Her methods were consistent with her assumption of contestations of gender orders. She interviewed couples as well as widowed individuals conjointly and individually, examined power relations in couples who resided with

husbands' parents when the parents were or were not dominant, compared power relationships in couples who lived or did not live with husbands' parents, and compared various types of economic dependencies between couples and their parents. To further ensure that she identified variations, her sample was from 14 rural and urban provinces and had a range of education and income. China has many different ethnic groups, and, although Zuo (2009) does not say so, presumably informants had diverse ethnic backgrounds as well.

In her literature review, she presents research and theory that of course did not exist during the early years of human sciences research, but nonetheless is consistent with it. For example, she addresses issues of process and change within Chinese families and culture in terms of women's increasing power as mothers and mothers-in-law as they grow older. She emphasizes cultural meanings of age and gender as they relate to authority in families. Her literature review sets the stage for her focus on the meanings that older Chinese married or widowed women and men attribute to the status over time. Social constructionism is an explicit part of her conceptual framework, in contrast to the implicit nature of constructionism early on, but nonetheless consistent with human sciences methodologies.

The interview itself is derived from concepts in the literature review and also is the sources of the sensitizing concepts she used in data analysis. She followed the principle of immersion in her use of two interviews per informant or couple for a total of five hour of interview time. She did her data analysis following the generic coding schema of Strauss and Corbin (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), with the result that she identified a core concept she called patrilineality, around which she organized her findings.

The concept of patrilineality was not part of her literature review but is evidence of her theoretical sensitivity (Glaser, 1978), which means that she had the concept of patrilineality in her mind and was able to identify and document processes she called "patrilineality." This also illustrates what Blumer (1954/1986) meant by sensitizing concepts and what Mowrer (1932) was getting at when he observed that "facts are not born full bloom"

and that training and, presumably, experience influence what individuals notice.

Phenomenological perspectives are clear in Zuo's (2009) findings section, where she described the experiences of informants in a systemic way, organized by the framework she developed through her analysis. Her framework shows the many variations are related to age and gender in two-generation Chinese families. In an extended discussion, Zuo (2009) considered the theoretical implications of her study. This excerpt shows not only her theorizing, but theorizing that recognizes variations with and across couples and families over time.

> I uniquely situate the lives of married women and men in multiple and intertwining power processes that produced ever shifting experiences of women and men with family patriarchy at different stages of their family life. When dominated by generation patriarchy, neither husband nor wife enjoyed family power or personal autonomy, although such deprivation had gendered effects channeled through gendered roles performed by husbands and wives as well as through spouses' differential relations to the family. As parental control became more relaxed or absent in later stages of family life, both spouses seemed to enjoy greater autonomy in personal life and in family power (p. 554).

Emancipatory Research for Practice

The third study I analyze is Winter's (2010) descriptive, emancipatory research on children ages 4–7 in out-of-home placement in England. This work shares many of the characteristics of the Son and Bauer (2010) and Zuo (2009) research in terms of phenomenological perspectives, sensitizing concepts, immersion, social justice, and person-environment interactions. I chose to analyze this study for its human sciences components based on my own emancipatory inclinations, which in this case is my concern that social policy and practice formulate actions around the meanings young children attribute to their life circumstances. I share this stance with Winter who clearly articulates her views on this matter. I also think that Winter's views on subjectivity respond to issues characteristic of the Chicago School and human sciences traditions. Neither the Zou nor the Son and Bauer studies explicitly

addressed or acknowledged subjectivity in such frank terms as Winter did.

Winter's (2010) study is noteworthy for its immersion into the meanings that children attribute to being in care. She did 10 case studies and 39 interviews. While some may believe that this many interviews would be oppressive, the children were delighted and gratified that an adult would take that much time to listen to how they experience their lives. Winter's rationale for in-depth interviews with young children include a child rights framework integrated with what Winter described as "a sociological approach to childhood in which the emphasis was on the social agency of the children and their competence and capacity to express a perspective" (p. 187).

Also noteworthy about Winter's (2010) work is her discussion of researcher sensitivity to the children during the process of doing the research. Consistent with her framework of children's autonomy, agency, and freedom of choice, she described her interview style as flexible and responsive to the children. As a researcher with vulnerable persons on sensitive topics, I imagine, although Winter does not say so, that she did not ask standardized questions but tailored her questions, comments, requests for elaborations, and responses according to how the children responded and what the children wanted. She is a trained social worker, as I am, and she stated that her skills as a professional were significant in her capacity to form relationships with children and to foster their sense of safety.

Furthermore, in her reflexivity statement, she said that she had had a prior relationship with the children she interviewed in her capacity as a guardian *ad leitum*. The interviews were part of a research project, and she undertook several layers of consent before she began the interviews. As she pointed out, her prior relationship with the children had the advantage of establishing a degree of trust, which is foundational for research in sensitive areas. Since do no harm is the fundamental premise in the helping professions, the issue of trust is paramount. Such concerns about the ethics of research are consistent with human sciences traditions. These issues are of high importance when working in sensitive areas

with vulnerable persons. Although Winter (2010) could have said much more for the sake of educating her readers, she did say enough to emphasize how sensitive she had to be to the children.

As is true for many researchers who concern themselves with their own subjectivities and the subjectivities of informants, Winter (2010) defended her subjective stances and acknowledged the empiricist-based concerns about reliability, validity, and generalizability that some may raise. She stated that she did not want to construct objective accounts because the point of her study was to focus on the children's subjectivities. Furthermore, she was not concerned with the reliability of their perspectives, but simply wanted to know what the perspectives are. Along the lines of the thought of Mowrer (1932) and other human scientists, she pointed out that "all perspectives are subjective and filtered through many lenses (McLeod, 2007; Schofield, 2005), but that they are still valid" (p. 189).

In terms of generalizability, Winter (2010) made no claims of probabilistic generalizability, but stated that she had identified and documented an "emotional void" that can further the trauma that children experience in response to the almost cataclysmic changes they experienced in moving from biological families to out of home care. She documented how young children have few if any opportunities to process, understand, and learn to manage the impact of trauma on their sense of themselves. Adults were generally unresponsive to their emotional needs and abandoned them into "emotional voids." Winter made no claims that every child experiences out-of-home care in this way, but that social workers, policy makers, and program supervisors and developers must pay attention to the emotional void of being unresponsive to young, traumatized children. Winter is not explicit in her evocation of the values of social justice and care, but these values are infused in her research report.

Winter's (2010) article, of the four I examined, especially contrasts with empiricist principles of objectivity, quantification, and avoidance of ethical and emancipatory concerns. In addition, her use of excerpts from interviews is exemplary in that they evoke responses in audiences, which is a

principle that Park impressed upon his students, as previously discussed. As a study of human beings in difficult circumstances, it exemplifies long-held human sciences perspectives.

The Three Cities Study: A Project in Classic Chicago Traditions

The final example of contemporary research in the tradition of the human sciences and the Chicago School is the Three Cities Study, six-year, longitudinal research on welfare, children, and their families (Burton, Cherlin, et al., 2009; Burton, Purvin, et al., 2009). The project took place over a six-year period and used a classic design that was multisite and urban. It combined surveys, a developmental study, and longitudinal ethnographies. The conceptual framework included symbolic interactionism and the associated principle of immersion with the purpose of understanding in great detail the experiences of low-income women and their families over a six-year period. The methodological principles included the importance of forming relationships in the field with informants in order to establish trust. Trust provides contexts for informants to discuss "sensitive or potentially hidden behavior" (Burton, Cherlin, et al.). The purpose of this study was to understand low-income women and their families, to document the effects of welfare reform, and to have an impact on welfare policy, an example of an emancipatory goal. This study shows that classic Chicago traditions are alive and well in contemporary family research.

Summary

Overall, these four articles demonstrate the continuities and changes over time that have occurred in Chicago-style and human sciences research. Many methods and methodologies have endured. For the most part, the changes have built upon and supplemented the traditions. Some empiricist perspectives have influenced researchers, such as Son and Bauer's (2010) and Zou's apparent "objective" stance regarding themselves as researchers and Winter's (2010) defense of the

subjectivity of her research, but on the whole, the traditions have endured.

Final Words

Qualitative research on families builds on enduring traditions whose roots extend to the middle of the nineteenth century and the origins of social research. The Chicago School of Sociology in the first third of the twentieth century pulled together methods, methodologies, and philosophies of science that encouraged methodological pluralism. These diverse methodologies included studies of interactions between persons and historical contexts over time, subjective accounts of informants and of researchers, immersion, multiple methods, emancipatory perspectives, and interest in description and theory. There was no one way to do research, and any combination of the above and other creative strategies were part of the diverse bundle of approaches to social inquiry that characterized Chicago traditions. When empiricist approaches gained dominance in social research, the traditions persisted throughout the United States and internationally, although in relatively small numbers. It is not clear how much of a resurgence is occurring today in terms of these traditional approaches to research. However, they do persist, appear in new forms with updated perspectives, and show signs of effectiveness in advancing both human understanding and social change. There is reason to believe that they will persist and continue to contribute to the social good.

Social research began with multi-method studies, and researchers have continued to do them to this day. Many agencies of the federal government want to fund multiple method studies, often called mixed methods, for the purposes of capitalizing on the depth and breadth that qualitative research can deliver and on the scope and quantitative testing that survey methods and experiments can provide. This is an important development that represents a turn to tradition that itself is deep and rich.

The future of family research is likely to see a continuation of human sciences traditions since they have endured for so long and have a proven

record of theory development, descriptive research, and practical applications. My hope is that family researchers also return wholeheartedly to embracing emancipatory research, reflexivity, research infused with values, and the role of advocate. Value-free, objective research is unlikely to be possible. The best we can do is to reflect upon our own assumptions, values, and perspectives and to be as transparent as possible about them. By so doing, we may be clear-minded enough to do research that follows principles whose purpose is to create trustworthy research, useful theory, and valid interventions in terms of policies, programs, and practices. Interventions, such as policies and programs, are valid not only in terms of external, internal, construct, and statistical conclusion validity but they also are valid when they are responsive to the lived experiences of the persons for whom the interventions are crafted.

Qualitative approaches bring researchers into direct contact with the lived experiences of family members. Sometimes these experiences are joyful and happy, but often we do research out of concern for human suffering. Through immersion, we develop in-depth understandings of suffering. The research of Winter (2010) and Son and Bauer (2010) are examples. We can chose to write research up and, like Robert Park, assume that the research will influence public opinion. We can also be like Rosalie Wax, Beatrice Webb, Sidney Webb, Frederic LePlay, among many others, who found their research so compelling that they wanted to do something to change social conditions that were hurtful. They took on the roles of advocates for social change. To be effective researchers and advocates, we would have to keep these roles separate in the sense that we can't let our social concerns distort what research participants tell us and how we interpret what we hear. By being good researchers and skilled advocates, we could be advocates of social change. We could testify before legislative committees, create draft legislation, and plan intervention programs.

In the future, if family researchers turn to emancipatory perspectives, increasing numbers may consider the Internet as a site of dissemination. Refereed journal articles and scholarly books would continue to be of high value, but much of what we learn in our research is of importance to family members, practitioners, policy makers, and the general public, few of whom read academic journals. There are multiple Internet sites where researchers may disseminate brief articles. For example, I disseminate my research in scholarly journals and books and testify whenever I have the opportunity before legislative bodies. I also have published about 250 articles on a website called scribd.com between June 2009 and August 2012. By August 2012, I had more than a half a million reads of my short articles. This means a great deal to me, that my research and other writings draw interest and may contribute to the common good. Surprising to some academic scholars, perhaps, is that many people do not like to read. There is always YouTube where we can disseminate brief videos about our research, a tactic that many researchers use in their quest to make a difference.

Few researchers study families only because it's interesting and because theory and descriptions are important solely for their own sakes. We want to make a difference. Reassessing the place of values, advocacy, and reflexivity in our research may be a route many family researchers want to take. Such directions are traditional in family research and serve many purposes, among them contributions to the common good.

References

Anderson, N. (1925). *The hobo*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Becker, H. S. (1953). Becoming a marihuana user. *The American Journal of Sociology, 59*, 235–242.

Becker, H. S. (1988). Blumer's conceptual impact. *Symbolic Interaction, 11*, 13–20.

Becker, H. S., Geer, B., Hughes, E., & Strauss, A. L. (1961). *Boys in white*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Blumer, H. (1928). *Method in social psychology*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, Chicago.

Blumer, H. (1969). An appraisal of Thomas and Znaniecki's The Polish peasant in Europe and America (pp. 117–126). (Original work published 1939 in *Social Science Council Bulletin, 44, Critiques of research in the social sciences I*, 69–81)

Blumer, H. (1986). What is wrong with social theory? In H. Blumer (1969/1986), *Symbolic interactionism* (pp. 140–152). Berkeley: University of California Press. Originally published in Vol. XIX in *The American Sociological Review*. (Original work published 1954)

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Booth, C. (1889). *Life and labour of the people* (Vol. I). London: Macmillan.

Booth, C. (1903). *Life and labour of the people in London*. Final volume. London: Macmillan.

Bott, E. (1971). *Family and social network*. New York: Free Press. (Original work published 1957)

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. *Developmental Psychology, 22*, 723–742.

Bulmer, M. (1984). *The Chicago School of Sociology: Institutionalization, diversity, and the rise of sociological research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Burgess, E. W. (1926). The family as a unity of interacting personalities. *Family, 7*, 3–9.

Burgess, E. W. (1927). Statistics and case studies as methods of sociological research. *Sociology and Social Research, 12*, 103–120.

Burgess, E. W. (1932). Editor's preface. In E. Franklin Frazier (Ed.), *The Negro family in Chicago* (pp. ix–xii). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Burton, L. M., Cherlin, A., Winn, D. M., Estacion, A., & Holder-Taylor, C. (2009). The role of trust in low-income mothers' intimate unions. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 71*, 1107–1124.

Burton, L. M., Purvin, D., & Garrett-Peters, R. (2009). Longitudinal ethnography: Uncovering domestic abuse in low-income women's lives. In G. H. Elder Jr. & J. Z. Giele (Eds.), *The craft of life course research* (pp. 70–92). New York: Guilford.

Calkins, C. (1930). *Some folks won't work*. Rahway, NJ: Quinn and Goden.

Cooley, C. H. (1930). *Sociological theory and social research*. New York: Holt.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. L. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cressey, D. (1953). The criminal violation of financial trust. *American Sociological Review, 15*(6), 738–743.

Deegan, M. J. (1990). *Jane Addams and the men of the Chicago School, 1892–1918*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Dilthey, W. (1976). *Selected writings* (H. P. Rickman, Ed. & Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dollard, J. (1937). *Caste and class in a southern town*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Dollard, J. (1949). *Criteria for the life history*. New York: Smith.

Dreyfus, H. L. (1991). *Being in the world: A commentary on Heidegger's being and time, division I*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Elder, G. H., Jr. (1978). *Family history and the life course. Transitions: The family and the life course in historical perspective* (pp. 17–64). New York: Academic.

Elder, G. H., Jr., & J. Z. Giele (Eds.). (1979). *The craft of life course research*. (pp. 70–92) New York: Guilford.

Faris, R. E. L. (1967). *Chicago sociology 1920–1932*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Frazier, E. F. (1932). *The Negro family in Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Frazier, E. F. (1939). *The Negro family in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Giele, J. Z. (2009). Life stories to understand diversity: Variations by class, race, and gender. In G. H. Elder Jr. & J. Z. Giele (Eds.), *The craft of life course research* (pp. 236–257). New York: Guilford.

Gilgun, J. F. (1992). Chicago days: Handel, Lopata, and Strauss tell stories of their lives as students at Chicago. *Qualitative Family Research, 6*(2), 3–6.

Gilgun, J. F. (1995). We shared something special: The moral discourse of incest perpetrators. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 57*, 265–281.

Gilgun, J. F. (1999). Methodological pluralism and qualitative family research. In M. B. Sussman, S. K. Steinmetz, & G. W. Peterson (Eds.), *Handbook of marriage and the family* (2nd ed., pp. 219–261). New York: Plenum.

Gilgun, J. F. (2002). Conjectures and refutations: Governmental funding and qualitative research. *Qualitative Social Work, 1*(3), 359–375.

Gilgun, J. F. (2005). Qualitative research and family psychology. *Journal of Family Psychology, 19*(1), 40–50.

Gilgun, J. F. (2007). *The legacy of the Chicago school of sociology for family theory-building*. In Pre-conference workshop on theory construction and research methodology. Pittsburgh, PA: National Council on Family Relation, November 7, 2007.

Gilgun, J. F., Daly, K., & Handel, G. (1992). *Qualitative methods in family research*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Gilgun, J. F. (2012). *Enduring themes in qualitative family research*. *Journal of Family Theory and Review, 4*, 80–95.

Glaser, B. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B. (1992). *Basics of grounded theory analysis: Emergence vs. forcing*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Chicago: Aldine.

Gluckman, M. (1971). Preface. In E. Bott (Ed.), *Family and social network* (2nd ed., pp. xiii–xxx). New York: Free Press.

Hall, H. (1931). Introduction. In National Federation of Settlements, *Case studies of unemployment*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.

Hammersley, M. (1989). *The dilemma of qualitative method: Herbert Blumer and the Chicago tradition*. London: Routledge.

Handel, G. (1965). Psychological study of whole families. *Psychological Bulletin, 63*, 19–41.

Handel, G. (Ed.). (1967). *The psychosocial interior of the family*. Chicago: Aldine.

Handel, G. (Ed.). (1988). *Childhood socialization*. New York: Aldine.

Handel, G. (1991). Case study in family research. In J. R. Geagin, A. M. Orum, & G. Sjoberg (Eds.), *A case for the case study* (pp. 244–268). Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Handel, G. (1996). Family worlds and qualitative family research. In J. F. Gilgun & M. B. Sussman (Eds.), *The methods and methodologies of qualitative family research* (pp. 335–348). New York: Haworth.

Handel, G., & Whitchurch, G. G. (Eds.). (1993). *The psychosocial interior of the family* (4th ed., pp. 69–85). New York: Aldine.

Harding, S. (1991). *Whose science? Whose knowledge? Thinking form women's lives*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Hess, R. D., & Handel, G. (1959). *Family worlds: A psychosocial approach to family life*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hodges, H. A. (1994). *William Dilthey: An introduction*. London: Routledge.

Hull-House maps and papers, by residents of Hull-House, a social settlement. A presentation of nationalities and wages in a congested district of Chicago, together with comments and essays on problems growing out of the social conditions (1895). New York: Crowell.

Johnson, C. S. (1922). *The Negro in Chicago: A study of race relations and a race riot*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kellogg, P. U. (Ed.). (1914a). *Pittsburgh district: Civic frontage*. New York: Russsell Sage Foundation.

Kellogg, P. U. (1914b). *The Pittsburgh survey vol. I, The Pittsburgh district—civic frontage*. New York: Survey Associates.

Komarovsky, M. (1940). *The unemployed man and his family*. New York: Dryden.

Komarovsky, M. (1962). *Blue-collar marriage*. New York: Random House.

LaRossa, R., & Reitzes, D. C. (1993). Symbolic interactionism and family studies. In P. G. Boss, W. J. Doherty, R. LaRossa, W. R. Schummn, & S. K. Steinmetz (Eds.), *Sourcebook of family theories and methods: A contextual approach* (pp. 135–163). New York: Plenum.

Laslett, B. (1991). Biography as historical sociology: The case of William Fielding Ogburn. *Theory and Society, 20*, 511–538.

LePlay, F. (1855). *Les ouvrierseuropeens*. Tours: Alfred Mame.

LePlay, F. E. (1866). *La reforme social en France*. Paris: Dentu.

LePlay, F. (1879). *Les ouvrierseuropeens* (2nd ed., Vol. 1). Paris: Alfred Mame et fils.

Lewin, K. (1935). *A dynamic theory of personality*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Lewin, K. (1936). *Principles of topological psychology*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Lindesmith, A. R. (1947). *Opiate addiction*. Bloomington, IN: Principia.

Lopata, H. Z. (1992). Sensitizing concepts, historical analysis, and role theory. *Qualitative Family Research, 6*(1), 1–2, 13.

Matthews, F. H. (1977). *Quest for an American sociology: Robert E. Park and the Chicago School*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press.

McLeod, A. (2007). Whose agenda? Issues of power and relation- ship when listening to looked after young people. *Child & Family Social Work, 12*, 278–286.

Morrissey, M. H. (1996). *A public face for private troubles: Helen Hall and the Unemployment Study of 1928*. In Paper presented at the 42nd annual program meeting council on social work education, Washington, DC, February 1996.

Mowrer, E. R. (1932). *Family*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

National Federation of Settlements. (1931). *Case studies of unemployment*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.

Packer, M. (1985). Hermeneutic inquiry in the study of human conduct. *American Psychologist, 40*, 1081–1093.

Packer, M. J., & Addison, R. B. (Eds.). (1989). *Entering the circle: Hermeneutic investigation in psychology*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Palmer, R. E. (1969). *Hermeneutics: Interpretive theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Palmer, V. (1928). *Field methods in sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Park, R. E., & Burgess, E. W. (Eds.). (1921). *Introduction to the science of sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Polkinghorne, D. (1983). *Methodology for the human sciences: Systems of inquiry*. Albany: State University of New York at Albany.

Rainwater, L. (1970). *Behind ghetto walls*. Chicago: Aldine.

Rainwater, L., Coleman, R., & Handel, G. (1959). *Workingman's wife*. New York: Oceana.

Riach, K. (2009). Exploring participant-centred reflexivity in the research interview. *Sociology, 43*(2), 356–370.

Rosenblatt, P. C., & Fischer, L. R. (1993). Qualitative family research. In P. G. Boss, W. J. Doherty, R. LaRossa, W. R. Schummn, & S. K. Steinmetz (Eds.), *Sourcebook of family theories and methods: A contextual approach* (pp. 167–177). New York: Plenum.

Rowntree, B. S. (1902). *Poverty: A study of town life* (4th ed.). London: MacMillan. (Original work published 1901)

Rubin, J. (1988, January). *Ethics and the concept of the person*. Lecture series at the University of California, San Francisco.

Schofield, G. (2005). The voice of the child in family placement decision making: A developmental model. *Adoption and Fostering, 29*, 29–44.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York: Basic.

Silver, C. B. (1982). Edited, translated and with an introduction by Catherine Bodard Silver. In F. LePlay (Ed.),

On family, work, and social change (pp. 3–134). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Small, A. W. (1916). Fifty years of sociology in the United States, 1865–1915. *The American Journal of Sociology, 21*, 712–864.

Son, S., & Bauer, J. W. (2010). Employed, rural, low-income, single mothers' family and work over time. *Journal of Family Economic Issues, 31*, 107–120.

Stack, C. B. (1974). *All our kin: Strategies for survival in a black community*. New York: Harper.

Strauss, A. (1991). A personal history of the development of grounded theory. *Qualitative Family Research, 5*(2), 1–2.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (Eds.). (1997). *Grounded theory in practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Strauss, A. L. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Thomas, W. I., & Thomas, D. S. (1929). *The child in America: Behavior problems and programs* (2nd ed.). New York: Knopf.

Thomas, W. I., & Znaniecki, F. (1927). *The Polish peasant in Europe and America* (Vols. 1–2). New York: Knopf. (Original work published 1918–1920)

Waller, W. (1934). Insight and the scientific method. *The American Journal of Sociology, XL*, 285–297.

Warner, W. L., & Lunt, P. S. (1941). The *social life of a modern community*. Vol. 1 of The Yankee City Series. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Wax, R. H. (1971). *Doing fieldwork: Warnings and advice*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Webb, S., & Webb, B. (1932). *Methods of social study*. London: Longman, Green.

Winter, K. (2010). The perspectives of young children in care about their circumstances and implications for social work practice. *Child and Family Social Work, 15*, 186–195.

Wiseman, J. E. (1979). *Stations of the lost: The treatment of skid row alcoholics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wiseman, J. E. (1981). The family and its researcher in the eighties: Retrenching, renewing, and revitalizing. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 43*, 263–266.

Wiseman, J. E. (1991). *The other half: Wives of alcoholics and their social-psychological situation*. New York: Aldine.

Wolcott, H. F. (1994). *Transforming qualitative data: Description, analysis, and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Young, P. (1932). *The pilgrims of Russian Town*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zimbalist, S. E. (1977). *Historic themes and landmarks in social welfare research*. New York: Harper & Row.

Zimmerman, C. C., & Frampton, M. E. (1935). *Family and society: A study of the sociology of reconstruction*. New York: Van Nostrand.

Znaniecki, F. (1934). *The method of sociology*. New York: Farrar & Rinehart.

Zuo, J. (2009). Rethinking family patriarchy and women's positions in presocialist China. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 71*, 542–557.