

Journal of Applied Gerontology

<http://jag.sagepub.com/>

Food for Thought: Nourishing the Publication of Qualitative Research

Nancy E. Schoenberg, Dena Shenk and Cary S. Kart
Journal of Applied Gerontology 2007 26: 4
DOI: 10.1177/0733464806296938

The online version of this article can be found at:
<http://jag.sagepub.com/content/26/1/4>

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

On behalf of:



[Southern Gerontological Society](http://www.sagepublications.com)

Additional services and information for *Journal of Applied Gerontology* can be found at:

Email Alerts: <http://jag.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

Subscriptions: <http://jag.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

Reprints: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

Permissions: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

Citations: <http://jag.sagepub.com/content/26/1/4.refs.html>

>> **Version of Record** - Jan 9, 2007
Downloaded from jag.sagepub.com at SAGE Publications on November 19, 2012

What is This?

Food for Thought: Nourishing the Publication of Qualitative Research

Nancy E. Schoenberg
University of Kentucky

Dena Shenk
University of North Carolina, Charlotte

Cary S. Kart
Miami University

In recent years, journal editors have issued loud and earnest calls for high-quality manuscripts based on qualitative methods. Yet, in reviewing the past several years of gerontological journals, including the Journal of Applied Gerontology (JAG), the authors noticed that the rate at which qualitative papers are published has held steady at modest percentages of the total number of published works. This essay explores this seemingly contradictory situation by providing insights into several key questions: Why are not more research articles published that use qualitative methods? Why is it important that qualitative researchers publish their works in applied venues like the JAG? What should authors of qualitative pieces keep in mind when developing their manuscripts?

Keywords: *qualitative research; aging research; applied research; research methods*

The three of us happened to sit near each other at the *JAG* editorial board breakfast during last year's Gerontological Society of America (GSA) meeting in Orlando. After filling our plates more than adequately from the all-too-sumptuous buffet, we began discussing the rewards and frustrations of the growing popularity of qualitative methods. We conversed about how the pleasures of qualitative methods finally being acknowledged as useful and valid empirical approaches were somewhat offset by concerns about problematically conducted and reported qualitative research. As we discussed our way through the meal, we applauded the qualitative-quantitative détente and the democratization of qualitative inquiry, all the while expressing frustration about occasionally reading manuscripts and research proposals replete with inappropriate references to grounded theory or ethnography, overly pithy

discussions of analytic procedures, and even inaccurate assumptions about qualitative inquiry. This conversation would have long outlasted our now-replete appetites, but Editor Mitchell called us to order and we began our official business. Toward the end of the meeting, when asked about the frequency of specific topical and methodological submissions, the editor bemoaned the relatively few qualitative pieces received by the journal and expressed concern about the suitability of some of the qualitative articles that were submitted. This observation, made by other editors as well, reignited our discussion and has led us to share our observations in this essay.

Qualitative Journal Articles: Relatively Few Despite Their Potential Contribution

Despite sincere calls from well-respected editors of preeminent publishing outlets, the presence of qualitative articles in many gerontology journals continues to fall short of their potential contribution. A hasty review of articles using qualitative methods during the past full 3 years in three major gerontology journal outlets¹ associated with two of the largest gerontological organizations, the *Journal of Applied Gerontology (JAG)*, *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences (JG:SS)*, and *The Gerontologist (TG)*, provides some evidence of this shortcoming. As Figure 1 shows, approximately 1 in every 10 articles published in these three journals employed a qualitative research design and analysis.² In these 3 years, *JAG* has published the largest percentage of qualitative research of these three journals, about 18%, with *JG:SS* and *TG* averaging 10.5% and 6.4%, respectively. Although 2004 seemed to be a good year for qualitative publishing, there are no discernable trends signaling an increase or decrease in the proportion of qualitative articles published.

Admittedly, because there are no existing data on the predominant methodological training of gerontologists or on the total distribution of qualitative versus quantitative research designs in aging studies, we lack a basis for suggesting what a reasonable distribution might be. It is simply our assessment that, given the relative utility and insights available through qualitative inquiry, 1 in 10 seems insufficient. In this brief discussion, we tackle the questions of why so few articles that use qualitative methods are published in aging-oriented journals, why applied journals like *JAG* constitute an excellent venue for qualitative pieces, and what authors of qualitative manuscripts should keep in mind when developing manuscripts.

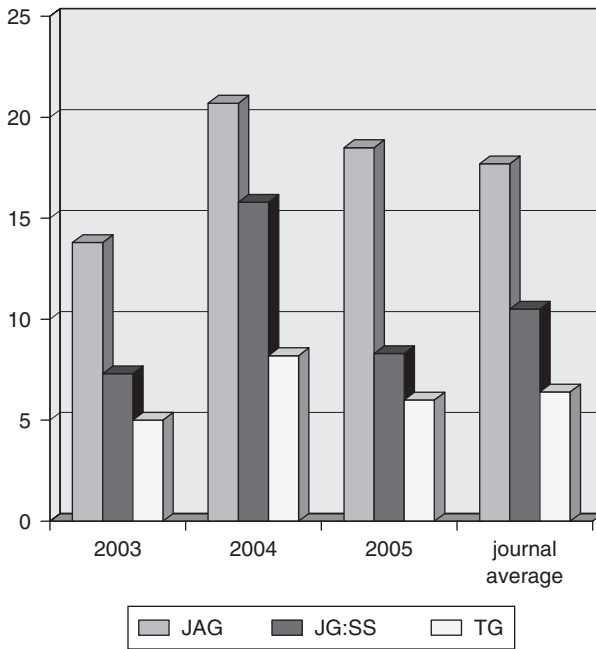


Figure 1. Percentage of Qualitative Articles of All Research Articles Published in JAG, JG:SS, and TG, 2003- 2005 and Years' Combined Averages

Why Aren't More Research Articles Published That Use Qualitative Methods?

In the United States, by the late 1930s, old age was being defined as a social problem. Stimulated by increasing life expectancy, the growth of the older population and, perhaps most of all, an economic depression, researchers using field observation, clinical practice, and social activism identified the prevalence of incapacity, isolation, and poverty in the aged citizenry. Not only did legislation result (i.e., the Social Security Act of 1935), but also a new institutional approach was launched into the study of aging as a social scientific problem.

After World War II ended in 1945, the growth of gerontology as an academic field went into overdrive. With the founding of new professional

organizations (e.g., GSA, the American Psychological Association's [APA] Division 20, and the American Geriatrics Society [AGS]) and an increase in journal outlets for gerontological research, the volume of gerontological literature increased dramatically, and this trend appears to be continuing unabated. Gerontology has mirrored the growth and development of its constituent disciplines and the scientific enterprise during the postwar years. With increasing reliance on, and prestige associated with, research funding from federal governmental sources and the development of national data collection efforts to assess the health and status of older adults (e.g., National Health Interview Survey), positivism became dominant. The research problems encountered by gerontologists began to look much like those encountered by scientists working in a wide array of scientific disciplines. Concerns about research design, measurement issues, sampling, ever-more-sophisticated quantitative data analysis, and generalizability rose to the fore, sometimes even trumping the very substantive issues under study.

With adherence to the "scientific method," gerontologists also gained access to federal funding for training and research. With institutional and personal professional credibility on the line, power and privilege accrued to those most successful in securing this funding. The privileged nature of the quantitative research world persists and recreates itself. Funding for training and research in qualitative methods is minimal. Research mentors are likely to discourage qualitative work or view it as useful exclusively for pilot testing or hypothesis generating. And with few specific publication outlets dedicated to qualitative research and page limitations in other journals, qualitative researchers are often limited in opportunities for publishing protracted ethnographic accounts, detailed case studies, or mixed-method pieces that require extensive background on both qualitative and quantitative components.

Our colleague at Miami University, Lisa Groger, offers another plausible explanation for the limited use of qualitative methods in aging research, saying, "Even when highly qualified researchers do it right, it is too bloody difficult and takes too long." Dr. Groger also notes that the number of researchers with specific training in qualitative methods remains relatively small and, given the years that it takes to develop these skills, the pool of qualitative researchers who "do it right" is even smaller. This combination of a privileged status for quantitative research, some incompatibility with standard forms of publishing, the length of time and amount of effort that goes into each qualitative piece, and the small pool of qualified researchers has led to a relative lack of qualitative articles.

Why Is It Important That Qualitative Researchers Publish Their Works in Applied Venues Like the *JAG*?

As described in its mission statement, *JAG* is “devoted to the publication of contributions that focus explicitly on the application of knowledge and insights from research and practice to(ward) improvement of the quality of life of older persons.” Although such an orientation is not unique, gerontological scholarship traditionally has straddled the worlds of basic knowledge and biomedicalized approaches to aging, sometimes overlooking application. Given the growing emphasis on translational studies, health disparities research, and an increasing concern about research significance, *JAG* is positioned particularly well to be at the forefront of applied aging scholarship.

Because qualitative inquiry intersects naturally with efforts to improve the lives of older adults, it is not surprising that *JAG* publishes more qualitative articles than other gerontology journals. Qualitative research designs include elements fundamental to application, such as the representation of multiple viewpoints, the use of techniques that elicit previously unexplored perspectives, and an emphasis on process and on eliciting the voices of the marginalized. The conduct of many types of qualitative approaches lends itself to a localized and grounded perspective. For example, by cultivating rapport and meaningful relationships with participants, qualitative researchers frequently are able to gain access to communities considered “hard to reach” and at the greatest risk, which are arguably those in greatest need of constructive engagement.

In addition, qualitative research efforts often allow researchers to understand people and the social and cultural contexts in which they live from the participants’ points of view. Recent past editor of *JG:SS*, Chuck Longino, lamented how these insider perspectives are often lost when essentialized to surveys or numerical representations.

Unfortunately, it is very easy to forget that people do not live in data sets. They live in “fields of experience” that phenomenologists call “life worlds,” and their own understandings of who they really are, their identities, shift daily in response to shifts in their audiences, circumstances, and concerns. (Longino, 2005, p. 117)

Despite the importance of this task, numerous challenges face qualitative researchers when representing such life worlds. Enabling the participants to speak for themselves is among the most challenging and potentially powerful aspects of writing up qualitative studies. Effective

qualitative writers make use of examples that accurately integrate the participants' own words with their social situation or context. The compelling use of insights from study participants to enhance analysis can be seen in two early classics, *Living and Dying at Murray Manor* (Gubrium, 1975) and *Speaking of Life: Horizons of Meaning for Nursing Home Residents* (Gubrium, 1993). Another approach to representing realities that we have found to be useful is weaving examples into extensive case studies that explicate more than the individual case. In *Someone to Lend a Helping Hand* (Shenk, 1998), the experience of women aging in a rural environment is presented through a small number of extended case studies that were developed throughout the book. Contextually grounded and richly developed stories emerge that provide a coherent and illuminating perspective into the lives of a few rural women. Without such intimacy, insights into these women's lives might be overlooked and carelessly thrown away, perpetuating notions that these women's lives are homogenous, one-dimensional, or somehow ordinary.

The privileges that qualitative researchers derive from their "up close and personal" approaches provide critical insights for policy planning, appropriate service provision, and optimal provider and client/patient communication. Much existing intervention work has its empirical foundation in qualitative research designs, with process evaluations, key informant interviews, and member checks rapidly becoming de rigor in assessing the feasibility and utility of and preferences for programs and projects.

Given this intimate and grounded vantage point, many qualitative researchers notice emerging trends in the lives of their participants, leading them to investigate such trends and unexplored perspectives. For example, Kinney and her colleagues (Kinney, Kart, Murdoch, & Conley, 2004; Kinney, Kart, Murdoch, & Ziemba, 2003) qualitatively assessed the use of an Internet-based monitoring system (e.g., cameras and sensors) to facilitate caring for a relative with dementia at home, contributing to a rapidly growing literature on technology and aging (e.g., Agree & Freeman, 2003). Kinney and associates extended this literature by identifying key issues that should be addressed before translating research interventions with similar technology into actual community-based services. Caregivers provided narratives that pinpointed the merits and limitations of implementing new technologies into eldercare, including a son's description of watching remotely, via an Internet-based monitoring system, as his frail mother with dementia moved a microwave oven from room to room, with the cord dangling dangerously between her legs. Told and retold, these narratives provide the lasting impressions that motivate researchers to continue their efforts to help family caregivers assure the safety of their relatives with dementia.

Overall, researchers using qualitative methods to improve the lives of older populations have addressed diverse topics, including the complex factors influential in poststroke quality of life among survivors (in-depth interviews; Clarke & Black, 2005), the experiences of health care access among ethnic elderly female clients and their service providers (ethnography; Brotman, 2003), the determinants of hospice use among terminally ill cancer patients (in-depth interviews; Waldrop, 2006), and the variations in service use among older Asian/Chinese Americans (case study; Liu, 2003). Liu's (2003) research, for instance, used a community-based case study approach to demonstrate that the internal diversity that characterizes the Asian/Chinese American population defies the standard perception of uniformity of service need. Such study findings highlight the utility of using data that enable a complex representation of the mechanisms and meanings of aging.

What Should Authors of Qualitative Pieces Keep in Mind When Developing Their Manuscript?

Although it may be appealing to blame the perceived difficulties in getting qualitative manuscripts published on journal editors, peer reviewers, or the publishing climate in general, qualitative researchers are ultimately responsible for submitting the highest-quality research. It is not enough to bemoan the admittedly more limited opportunities for publication; rather, it falls to the qualitative research community to sufficiently raise the quality (and quantity) of the work that we submit to compel editors to publish the articles. What does this involve, and how can we do this with our own manuscripts?

It may seem that with the growing popularity of qualitative research methods, there is no longer a need to justify the selection of a qualitative approach. We agree but are cognizant that many of the best pieces we have encountered have shared with readers their theoretical approach to selecting a method, something that has the potential of demystifying and explicating the lesser-known world of qualitative inquiry. Whereas qualitative researchers may know that a phenomenological study starts with a different orientation than, say, a grounded ethnography, it would be useful to include an adequate discussion of how the research questions directed the selection of a particular method. Because we all know that there is no single qualitative method, authors must describe what type of qualitative approach or approaches they have used and avoid broad statements like "we used qualitative methods to study X, Y, or Z."

Another item for qualitative authors to avoid is unnecessarily pointing out in the title that your work uses qualitative methods. Sometimes we are

asked to review an article with a title such as, "How Adult Sons Manage Their Parents' Health Declines: A Qualitative Study." It is difficult to imagine submitting a manuscript titled, "How Adult Sons Manage Their Parents' Health Declines: A Quantitative Study," and the parallel should be true for qualitative studies. Reference to the qualitative nature of a study can be made in the abstract where it doesn't place undue emphasis, set the piece off as the "other," or wave a "red flag." We need to take care not to be defensive about our methods or perpetuate the perception that qualitative methods are different or unusual. The use of terms such as *woman doctor* or *male nurse* comes to mind.

A third area that qualitative researchers must address is the effective description of the sampling frame, an explanation of the sample size, and a discussion of the study population in its context. There are fundamental differences between sampling in qualitative and quantitative research, not the least of which is qualitative researchers' greater reliance on small, convenience, and oftentimes even opportunistic samples. This is not something for authors to be particularly defensive about more than any author submitting her or his work for publication in a reputable journal. A large sample may provide adequate power to achieve assumptions of statistical significance and generalizability, but the data set may not be appropriate to the specific research question at hand and the results subsequently fail to advance the field. On the other hand, a qualitative study that employs a limited number of cases with rich contextual data and no pretensions of generalizability may be particularly informative for the specific research question being addressed and induces significant discussion among colleagues working in the area.

Authors of qualitative research papers have the same responsibility as all authors do when it comes to describing and justifying their research design. This includes full and accurate description of all the relevant sampling issues, including strengths and weaknesses of the sampling strategy and selection criteria, the likely heterogeneity within the sampling frame concerning domains of interest, and issues of sample attrition, and bias. Sometimes researchers need to be reminded that, in the formal study of research methods, defining terms precisely and without extensive jargon is essential. Know this language (e.g., nonprobability sampling, induction) and use it carefully and accurately. Finally, qualitative researchers often seek to answer specific research questions that their peers in quantitative research are unable to address. In doing so, they bring a knowledge and expertise that can and should be applied in the development of a sampling strategy and case selection. Done conscientiously with appropriate explanation and justification, this becomes the strength of a manuscript rather than a weakness.

A final area that warrants additional attention is the clear and systematic discussion of data analysis procedures, the absence of which continues to plague many qualitative research submissions. Granted, numerous issues complicate qualitative data analysis, including the broad array of qualitative research approaches, the traditional lack of clear explanation of analytic procedures, and the inappropriate extrapolation of quantitative procedures to qualitative designs. First, because there is no single qualitative research design, it is unreasonable to think that there would be a standard way of presenting analytic procedures. Participant observation in a geriatric clinic, in-depth interviews with male caregivers, and textual analysis of ageism in the popular media all demand distinct data analysis procedures. Even seemingly similar types of qualitative data collection, such as focus group discussions and in-person interviews, require special consideration when discussing analysis and presenting results. For example, as focus groups use group dynamics to reveal or confirm perspectives or beliefs, the unit of analysis for such data is not necessarily the individual, as it is with individual interviews. Presentation of data necessarily differs between focus groups and individual interviews; reports of focus group data tend to include general descriptive tables on the groups' characteristics and predominant themes illustrated by insightful quotations that emerge from lively discussions, whereas individual interviews yield extensive background on each informant and rich and contextually grounded narratives.

Publishing qualitative research has been stymied by vague or incomplete descriptions of analytic procedures. As reviewers, we have frequently encountered several lines that simplistically and inadequately state, "we analyzed the transcripts," "we developed the themes inductively," or, perhaps in the attempt to assuage more quantitatively oriented reviewers, "we used computer analysis software to analyze our data." Such limited treatment of analytic procedures is puzzling; the researchers did *something* to come up with their findings—why not explain the process?

This lack of clarity may have several sources. First, until relatively recently, there were few formal attempts at qualitative research training and, according to the Consortium on Qualitative Research Methods (<http://www.asu.edu/clas/polisci/cqrm/>; accessed July 27, 2006), courses at the graduate level remain scarce and optional, unlike their quantitative counterparts. Many of those who were trained in ethnographic methods were simply instructed to carefully enter field sites, become immersed, take copious notes and, on return, write up their findings. Speaking of his own anthropological training in the 1950s and 1960s, Bernard (2002) noted, "There was something rather mystical about the how-to of fieldwork; it seemed inappropriate to make the experience too methodological" (p. vii).

In addition, because qualitative research articles often begin with a theoretical overview on which type of epistemological stance the researchers have selected—grounded theory, hermeneutics, social constructionism, and so on—authors sometimes substitute these theoretical descriptions for methodological clarity. Such theoretical descriptions are necessary; they help the reader understand the “aims and the practice of understanding human action, different ethical commitments, and different stances on methodological and epistemological issues of representation, validity, objectivity” (Schwandt, 2000, p. 190). However, attention to the theory that guides the method cannot substitute for accessible descriptions of the methods themselves.

In our own work, we have aimed to offer insights on both the theoretical orientation of the qualitative method and the specific methodological description that the reader might find useful. For example, in a study of women’s decision making in the face of a heart attack, we provided several paragraphs on how phenomenology and grounded theory directed our research, explaining how these epistemologies guided our data collection procedures (including theoretical sampling), theoretical assumptions, and analytical procedures. Our research description specified the procedural aspects of meaning making for women who had experienced a heart attack, but we also specified how our team assembled a codebook, evaluated the utility of a computer analysis program (ultimately, we did not use one), and calculated interrater reliability scores (Schoenberg, Peters, & Drew, 2003).

Yet another issue that complicates qualitative data analysis procedures is the inappropriate extrapolation of quantitative expectations to qualitative designs. Although qualitative designs increasingly are recognized as having their own traditions, assumptions, and standards, some of those less familiar with such precepts continue to evaluate the quality of qualitative research on generalizability, representativeness, and significance levels. An article that appeared in *JAG* regarding attitudes toward community-based service (CBS) underscores this continued divide and, specifically, the problem of quantifying qualitative data (Schoenberg, Coward, & Dougherty, 1998). The reviewers, pointing to our fairly large sample size of 115 elders, requested that we reanalyze the data, specifying percentages that expressed this theme or that theme. We considered this recommendation problematic. As our goal was to describe perceived barriers to using CBS through in-depth interviews using an open-ended questionnaire, we did not ask everyone whether they perceived a particular barrier to be a concern; thus, we felt that counting up those who mentioned a particular concern about using CBS was at odds with our intention. Moreover, such a tally could not convey the depths, or essence, of each theme. Although we could indicate that

many elders expressed a theme, quantifying the open-ended questionnaire was incompatible with our research design and analysis.

On the other hand, many qualitative researchers believe that explicating their methods somehow is a quantitative exercise. The methodological tools developed to capture the many mysteries of human experience in a more systematic, replicable, and reliable manner makes data collection and analysis all the more fantastic. These tools include increasingly high-quality coursework or, if not offered at local universities, well-reputed institutes like the Annual Summer Institute in Qualitative Research offered at the School of Nursing at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill or the Institute for Qualitative Research at the University of Alberta each year. Improvements in technologies for data collection and analysis ease the significant burdens inherent in qualitative designs. Also, those old standbys, books and journal articles, provide excellent resources for qualitative data analysis, including Strauss and Corbin (1990), Boyatzis (1998), Denzin and Lincoln (2000), Wolcott (2001), and Gubrium and Holstein (2002).

As the editorial board meeting ended, we had digested a great many thoughts on research endeavors in general and on the need to play some role in encouraging qualitative publications. Although our suggestions constitute food for thought from our particular perspectives, we suspect that others will encounter different challenges, maintain other pet peeves, and possess different methodological tools. We offer these comments and suggestions as a challenge to all of us to enhance the development of high-quality manuscripts and increased submissions of qualitative manuscripts to appropriate journals.

Notes

1. Of course, there are other gerontology journals that more frequently publish qualitative aging research. For example, the *Journal of Aging Studies* and *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology* are excellent venues for high-quality, peer-reviewed qualitative research. We limited our review to journals that might be considered the most widely recognized and visible in gerontological research.

2. These averages were computed by tallying the number of qualitative articles in each issue during the three most current and complete calendar years. We included only data-driven articles (i.e., no editorials, letters, book reviews, etc.). The articles were considered qualitative if the authors indicated any of the following: using “qualitative” as a key word; using standard qualitative methods like in-depth interviewing, case studies, focus groups, or ethnography along with qualitative analytic techniques; and/or presenting results standard in qualitative research (e.g., quotes, derived themes, thematic matrices). When in doubt, we considered it qualitative; thus, we may have erred on being overly inclusive.

References

- Agree, E. M., & Freedman, V. A. (2003). A comparison of assistive technology and personal care in alleviating disability and unmet need. *The Gerontologist*, *43*(3), 335-344.
- Bernard, H. R. (2002). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (3rd ed.). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Brotman, S. (2003). The limits of multiculturalism in eldercare services. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *17*(2), 209-229.
- Clarke, P., & Black, S. E. (2005). Quality of life following stroke: Negotiating disability, identity, and resources. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, *24*(4), 319-336.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Gubrium, J. F. (1975). *Living and dying at Murray Manor*. New York: St. Martin's.
- Gubrium, J. F. (1993). *Speaking of life: Horizons of meaning for nursing home residents*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine.
- Gubrium, J. F., & Holstein, J. A. (2002). *Handbook of interview research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kinney, J. M., Kart, C. S., Murdoch, L. D., & Conley, C. J. (2003). Striving to provide safety assistance for families of elders: The SAFE House project. *Dementia*, *3*(3), 351-370.
- Kinney, J. M., Kart, C. S., Murdoch, L. D., & Ziemba, T. F. (2004). Challenges in caregiving and creative solutions: Using technology to facilitate caring for a relative with dementia. *Ageing International*, *28*(3), 295-314.
- Liu, Y.-L. (2003). Aging service need and use among Chinese American seniors: Intragroup variations. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, *18*(4), 273-301.
- Longino, C. F. (2005). Putting a human face on gerontological research: Identity issues. *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*, *60*, S117.
- Schoenberg, N. E., Coward, R. T., & Dougherty, M. C. (1998). Perceptions of community-based services among African-American and White elders. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, *17*(1), 67-78.
- Schoenberg, N. E., Peters, J., & Drew, E. M. (2003). Unraveling the mysteries of timing: Emically-derived explanations for time to treatment for women with cardiac symptoms. *Social Science and Medicine*, *56*, 271-284.
- Schwandt, T. (2000). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 189-213). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Shenk, D. (1998). *Someone to lend a helping hand: Women growing old in rural America*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Gordon and Breach.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Waldrop, D. P. (2006). At the eleventh hour: Psychosocial dynamics in short hospice stays. *The Gerontologist*, *46*(1), 106-114.
- Wolcott, H. F. (2001). *Writing up qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Nancy E. Schoenberg, associate professor of behavioral science, anthropology, gerontology, and internal medicine, is a medical anthropologist and gerontologist. Her research interests address the long-term health and care needs of middle-aged and older adults, particularly those populations that suffer the greatest health inequities.

Most of her research uses qualitative and complementary methods to explore how middle-aged and older adults prevent and manage serious chronic diseases. Throughout her work, there is an emphasis on the cultural context of health decisions and community-based participatory approaches.

Dena Shenk is director of the Gerontology Program and Professor of Anthropology at University of North Carolina, Charlotte (UNC). Her broad research interests are diversity within the older population based on gender, culture, and environment with an emphasis on individual expectations and experiences of aging. She is a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America and a charter Fellow of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education and the UNC Institute on Aging.

Cary S. Kart is a senior researcher at the Scripps Gerontology Center, Miami University, in Oxford, Ohio. His research interests include health and aging, with particular interests in racial/ethnic disparities in clinical and self-management of chronic illness. His body of published work includes use of both quantitative and qualitative analytic strategies. He is a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America and a long-standing member of the Board of Trustees of the Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc.