

Expecting the Unexpected: How Novice Researchers Negotiate Unexpected Ethical Issues

By

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Abstract

Conducting ethical research extends far beyond a compulsory ethics application form completed prior to research beginning, especially when using iterative qualitative methodologies. Ethically responsible researchers must constantly ponder how to deal with unpredictable ethical moments that occur in the field. This thesis draws together the stories of ten novice researchers, who researched with qualitative methods within the social sciences, to explore the unexpected ethical issues that arose post procedural ethics, and how these unexpected ethical issues were negotiated. Using thematic analysis, this thesis identifies that all ten participants experienced what Guillemin and Gillam called “ethically important moments” and had to revise their “procedural ethics” once in the field, in three common areas. First, researchers had to negotiate getting past gatekeepers and into research sites. Second, researchers could not predict the limits confidentiality would place on their research. Third, researchers found that managing their own moral compass, and researching with integrity was particularly when practitioner or virtue ethics clashed with research ethics. The thesis that argues unexpected ethical issues are likely to occur during *ethics in practice* for qualitative researchers, and novice researchers therefore need to employ a variety of techniques to successfully negotiate these ethically important moments in order to complete their research. Alongside this, ethics committees and graduate advisors could do more to prepare graduate students for the unexpected.

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1. Setting the Scene

Harry¹ was in his forties and had spent years in and out of a classroom, following migrant children through their transitions into new schools. Harry was both a trained teacher and academic researcher working towards his PhD when I interviewed him. He spent much of his research time as an outsider, observing the way non-migrant and migrant children interacted at school, particularly when their first languages differed. Harry took a fly on the wall position most of the time in the classroom. He tended to be reactive rather than proactive, occasionally stepping in to help when teachers called upon him. Harry did not want to be seen as another adult in the room as that would compromise how the children acted in front of him, impacting the data he was collecting. Yet, parents and teachers expected him to take on a teacher aide position, and use his authority and power as an adult to regulate children's behaviour. Harry found himself in one situation that was completely unexpected, compromising his ability to be just a fly on the wall. He explains:

I did get caught in another scenario that I didn't anticipate and that was a student's parent complained their child was being bullied so here's Harry who is a researcher and been observing the classroom. And all of a sudden being called upon to say is this person being bullied? Now it wasn't the student I was focusing on, it was another student who did happen to be part of the research. And, I did have a good sense of what was happening the in classroom.

¹ All participants have been given pseudonyms to protect participants' identities. In addition in many cases the PhD topics, and/or research sites have been deliberately changed.

In this moment Harry faces a huge ethical dilemma. Should he refuse to answer the question because of his position as a researcher? Harry's response must be made in a short space of time. He does not have the luxury of reflexivity; nor does he have an ethical platform with committee members or supervisors to work through this issue. Harry needs to respond to the school immediately.

As I was listening to Harry recount his ethical dilemma I began to wonder how I would respond in a similar situation. Would I remain a detached fly on the wall, or would I get involved? Social scientists often immerse themselves in a field to obtain data, be it through in-depth interviewing or focus groups, participant observation, or field notes. Research ethics were designed to help protect participants, and ensure researchers have minimised serious ethical issues. So why then are researchers like Harry still negotiating ethical dilemmas during data collection and analysis? This dilemma was not featured in his ethics application.

I began this thesis with certain goals. I wanted to explore what ethical issues arise unexpectedly in research and how recent novice researchers managed these unexpected ethical moments. My project is qualitative, so I expected I would have my own ethical issues to negotiate that were shaped by the iterative project. I found myself constantly asking where is my project actually going? What do I really want to find out? While I was never as ethically compromised as Harry was, I wondered how I would have responded in a similar situation. Novice researchers are often thrown in the deep end of data collection and forced to make quick decisions with ethical complications, about a complex situation with little experience to draw on. Yet there is no a platform available to researchers allowing them to figure out the issues on hand. For example, Harry

could have refused to be a witness to the classroom bullying because it may have broken his confidentiality agreement and compromised his fly on the wall position. This verdict may have broken the trust of the schoolteachers, principals and students' parents, which could have serious consequences for the remainder of his research. If Harry chose not to disclose what was happening with the bullying then the school gatekeepers may have cut his access off, thus terminating the research. If Harry did break his silence explaining what he had witnessed in the classroom, what implications could that have had? The students may have felt betrayed by Harry, and this betrayal might have impacted what the children shared during the rest of data collection. The children might have seen Harry in another adult role, rather than as a fly on the wall, and moderated their behaviour accordingly, impacting the data and overall answer to the research question.

If Harry had witnessed bullying in the classroom and not said anything thus far, perhaps the teachers may have felt Harry had not behaved professionally. School staff may have expected him to report the bullying as adults/teachers who witness bullying should. As a registered teacher, Harry had professional obligations beyond these research ethics to step in and prevent bullying. Did these professional obligations align with confidentiality agreements in his research ethics? However, Harry chose to respond had implications for his research. Harry chose to testify to the bullying.

I suppose in that moment, I was able to reassure [the parents and teachers] what I had seen happening. I felt it was okay because I was able to demonstrate that it wasn't as bad as they may have thought, rather than it being really bad.

Harry felt he was able to reassure the parents and school that the bullying was not as bad as it appeared, however there were still ethical consequences to this decision as well. Harry was an adult, with more measured and mature coping abilities than school children. What if Harry's view of the bullying was contrary to the student's views? What if the child being bullied actually did feel it was worse than it seemed to an outsider? Perhaps there was sly, subtle bullying going on that Harry could not see as just a fly on the wall. What if the greater context of the bullying was not something Harry was aware of?

Novice, qualitative researchers in this thesis are thrown in the deep end all the time. It is partly how people learn. But, if 'formal ethics' occurs before fieldwork, with whom and how do researchers negotiate these unforeseen scenarios and the aftermath with? So I ask the question: how do novice researchers negotiate unanticipated ethical issues when researching a qualitative thesis that is both emergent and iterative?

I wanted to examine the distinction between what Guillemin and Gillam (2004) called procedural ethics and ethics in practice. Guillemin and Gillam explained procedural ethics are the formal ethics applications that researchers must complete and pass before beginning recruitment or data collection. For most university-based researchers, procedural ethics entails submitting ethics forms to a university-based ethics committee and sometimes, another independent ethics review committee, such as research review committees when working in schools. What Guillemin and Gillam's (2004) work does not address is the outcome of ethics in practice. They do not explore how the researcher addresses unexpected ethical issues during the course of the investigation.

This thesis explores the unexpected ethical issues that arise in qualitative research and unpacks how novice researchers, with minimal experience, deal or do not deal with the ethical issues they are faced with. These include negotiating gatekeepers, blurring data to protect confidentiality and drawing on their own moral compass. Issues Harry dealt with when he chose to draw on his professional obligations rather than remaining a fly on the wall.

Chapter two is a literature review of academic work around qualitative research. This chapter discusses why qualitative research has different ethical issues than quantitative research. It covers concepts such as benefit, methodology, anonymity and confidentiality, and informed consent. As stated above, I draw heavily on Guillemin and Gillam's (2004) article calling attention to the differences between procedural ethics: the formal ethics application that occurs before research begins; and ethics in practice: the unexpected ethical issues that occur in the field. Guillemin and Gillam discuss how procedural ethics are just one part of ethics and cannot ever prepare a qualitative researcher for everything that may happen during the research journey. Instead, the authors argue ethics in practice are more important for qualitative researchers. What Guillemin and Gillam's (2004) article does not do is explain how ethics in practice can be negotiated in qualitative research. This practice is what my thesis sets out to explore.

Chapter three details the research methodology. I used semi-structured interviews to explore how novice researchers negotiated these issues. Situated within a social constructionist framework, I used latent level thematic analysis to explore how ten novice researchers negotiated ethics in practice. My sample included two types of participants: PhD candidates, who had completed data

collection for at least three months; and PhD graduates, who had completed within the last seven years. Participants had undertaken PhD study at five institutions, including national and international universities. Interviews were voice recorded and transcribed by myself.

Chapter four, five and six are the three results chapters. Chapter four introduces the researchers I interviewed, and explains how they negotiated getting past gatekeepers and into their research sites. Gatekeepers came in various shapes: institutional (school principals), non-institutional (community leaders) and bureaucratic (ethics committees). Four core themes emerged from negotiating and renegotiating: negotiating benefit and legitimacy, altering methodologies, using a facilitator, and circumvention.

Confidentiality was not a straightforward experience in PhD research. Chapter five explores how researchers managed the limits and ramifications of confidentiality when collecting, analysing, and publishing data. Most researchers found their data was severely compromised by events that took place in the field, which meant they could not accurately present their findings, and simultaneously protect their participants' identities. This chapter explores different techniques researchers used to protect their participants' identities by blurring identifying data, and privileging confidentiality over contributing new knowledge.

As found in Harry's example, contrasting professional obligations and research ethics are challenging. Chapter six describes how researching with integrity can be difficult. Qualitative researchers have to negotiate the ethics of rapport and friendship, and anthropological strangeness simultaneously. Also, practitioner-researchers have multiple jarring ethical codes, which offer

conflicting advice to ethical dilemmas. On one hand, this constrained social workers, nurses, teachers, and counsellors who are ethically bound to a code of conduct. On the other hand researchers that did not have a practitioner background sometimes lacked the skills required to deal with disclosures, or emotionally fraught and complicated topics that arose during the research.

Chapter seven, the conclusion, highlights the main research findings and offers some answers to the two main research questions underpinning this research: what unexpected ethical issues arise in qualitative research; and how do novice researchers negotiate these issues. I also suggest some limitations of this research and avenues for further research.

2. Literature Review

The history of formal ethics review had many starting points. Hay and Israel (2006) explain that while codes governing medical research existed before the Second World War, the typical story about where, why, and how formal research ethics originated begins at World War Two. After the dreadful scientific research conducted on concentration camp prisoners by Nazi Germany, the Western world developed the Nuremberg code in 1946, and following that in 1964 the World Medical Association adopted the Declaration of Helsinki (Hay & Israel, 2006).

But, unethical research was occurring well before the Second World War. Between 1932 and 1972, the Tuskegee study took place. In this study, six hundred African American men in Alabama were not informed they had syphilis nor were they offered penicillin as treatment when it “became the standard of care...It is estimated that between 28 and 100 men died as a result” (Freimuth et al., 2001, p. 799).

Meanwhile in New Zealand, between 1966-1982 the ‘Unfortunate Experiment’ commenced. Here, women with abnormal cervical smears were monitored but not offered the treatment at the time: a hysterectomy (Coney, 1988). Only when the study was leaked to the public did the unethical investigation end. The number of women that died because of the study was never confirmed. As a result in 1987, the Cartwright inquiry was conducted. It created change. Now all research in New Zealand universities involving human beings must undergo ethics review (Hay & Israel, 2006).

However, it was not just biomedical research that was unethical. In 1961, Milgram's study of authority and obedience denied participants the right to withdraw from research at anytime. Participants were led to believe they were administering real pain through electric shocks to another participant as part of a learning experiment. However, the entire experiment was a set up. The shocks were fake, and the other participant was actually an actor. "The whole experiment was designed to see if ordinary Americans would obey immoral orders, as many Germans had done during the Nazi period" (Dimow, 2004, p. 2). Baumrind (1964) explains participants became distressed and nervous when they thought they were administering severe shocks; but when participants asked the experiment to be stopped, the researcher would verbally prompt them, saying the experiment must continue. Deception was employed. While participants were informed the 'shocks' were actually fake, appropriate debriefing to deal with the level of stress the participants underwent was never offered.

Consequently in 1974, the Belmont Report and US National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioural Research were derived to guarantee ethical research. These codes applied to any research involving human beings, not only biomedical research. The Nuremburg code, Declaration of Helsinki, the Belmont Report, and US National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioural Research, were highly influential and provide the foundations for many other ethical codes today, including codes that govern social science research (Hay & Israel, 2006).

Recently, biomedical research ethics have come to dominate social science research. In response some social scientists (Bosk & De Vries, 2004; Hay

& Israel, 2006; van den Hoonaard, 2001) have become frustrated. Many formal ethics codes do not grasp the complexity of social science research, especially qualitative research epistemologies that feature the development of an emergent research question.

This chapter reviews some of the quandaries formal ethics presents qualitative researchers. Also, it examines why qualitative researchers face different ethical dilemmas than quantitative researchers. The chapter is framed around a research article written by Guillemin and Gillam (2004) who made an important distinction between procedural ethics, commonly known as formal ethics review, and ethics in practice, the ethical issues not predicted by the researcher or the ethics committee that arise in the field. While formal ethics review is essential to help researchers start thinking ethically about their research, it is only one step to developing ethically sound research. Ethically responsible research needs to involve constant ethical thought before, during, and after formal ethics. This thesis focuses on ethics in practice, examining the unique features of qualitative research that researchers face when getting into a research site, such as negotiating gatekeepers, and once inside, the ethical considerations that unravel around both the limits of confidentiality and their own moral compass.

Procedural Research Ethics vs. Ethics in Practice

Guillemin and Gillam's (2004) ground-breaking study demarcating between procedural and ethics in practice provided a hypothetical. They asked the reader to imagine a situation where a researcher is interviewing a woman they called Sonia, in her forties about her heart disease. Sonia lives with her daughter and

husband on a farm. The interview is going well until suddenly, Sonia starts to tear up and admits she is not coping – “not because of her heart disease, but because she has just found out that her husband has been sexually abusing her daughter since she was a child” (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004, p.261). Sonia’s story is the starting point for this thesis as Guillemin and Gillam (2004) do not provide a solution to the dilemma, other than to urge researchers to think reflexively about ethical issues in situations like this that are not unusual in qualitative research.

Whenever, what Guillemin and Gillam (2004, p. 261) call “ethically important moments”, arise, they urge researchers to put on their ethical thinking hats and come up with the best possible solution to the unpredictable moment, often without time to consult supervisors, colleagues, or an ethics committee. In the example given, the researcher must immediately decide how to respond to Sonia, and subsequently what to do with the data during analysis. The ten participants in this study came across similar ethically important moments and the thesis describes how they successfully or unsuccessfully addressed them.

Guillemin and Gillam (2004, p. 263) describe procedural ethics, the first dimension of ethics, as the process of “seeking approval from a relevant ethics committee to undertake research involv[ing] humans.” Researchers often associate ‘ethics’ with pre-research ethics approval or procedural ethics, as it is tangible and typically compulsory. Procedural ethics requires researchers to fill out ethics forms explaining how their research fulfils ethical considerations like informed consent and do no harm. Qualitative researchers frequently see procedural ethics as a formality or roadblock that must be dealt with or ticked off before the real research can begin (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; McCormack et

al., 2012). Hay and Israel (2006, p.1) believe “social scientists are angry and frustrated. They believe their work is being constrained and distorted by regulators of ethical practice who do not necessarily understand social science research.” The procedural ethics forms usually ask how the researcher has minimised potential risks or will deal with them as they arise, yet fails to question how the researcher may deal with unexpected ethical concerns that arise from the emergent, iterative qualitative research.

Ethics in practice involves the “day-to-day ethical issues” that occur in the field or during data analysis (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004, p. 264). These ethical issues are not, and often cannot, be planned for in qualitative research. Therefore, researchers can have what Guillemin and Gillam (2004) call ethically important moments during ethics in practice that were not considered in the procedural ethics: Guillemin and Gillam (2004, p. 262) term these moments “ethically important... [as they are] the difficult, often subtle, and usually unpredictable situations that arise in the practice of doing research.” Mostly, in these ethically important moments researchers must decide alone, without the support of the ethics committee, how to handle these issues (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

Guillemin and Gillam (2004) state the relationship between procedural ethics and ethics in practice can be unaligned and frustrating. Often only some of the issues envisaged in procedural ethics will occur, but many unplanned issues will ensue. Sonia’s story is a case in point. No researcher or ethics committee could have predicted this big ethical moment. Qualitative research almost always moves or changes direction in some way from what was written in

procedural ethics. When this happens researchers should reconsider the potential harm and risks of the project.

Guillemin and Gillam's (2004) concepts of procedural ethics and ethics in practice are important shedding light on why qualitative researchers are frustrated by ethics and why qualitative researchers' emergent epistemologies leave them unprepared for ethical dilemmas that develop in the field.

Qualitative Epistemology

Understanding why qualitative research does not fit well with procedural ethics is important. There are key differences between qualitative and quantitative research that demonstrate why having the same ethical rules for both research methods is unreasonable (Sieber & Tolich, 2013). Quantitative research lends itself easily to procedural ethics: it is linear and reproducible. It stems from a positivist epistemology, which values hypotheses, objectivity and generalizability (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Yaremko, 1986). Quantitative researchers see the world as stable and knowable (Bryman, 1984; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Qualitative research is different with alternative epistemological starting points. Bosk and De Vries (2004) point out that unlike quantitative research, qualitative research often stems from an interpretive epistemology. Tolich and Fitzgerald (2006) explain the methodologies of qualitative research do not always align with the information required in ethics applications. Hypotheses do not always exist; nor does random sampling. Instead qualitative research begins with aims or a series of questions around a topic and involves observations, unstructured interviews, or focus group questions, which are redefined and

adjusted after each interview, to focus on particular themes or ideas. These iterative themes generate the research question.

The differences between biomedical and social science ontology, epistemology, and methodology are vast, thus it seems unreasonable that the ethics review guidelines are the same. The main similarity between quantitative and qualitative investigation at universities is that all research that involves human participants must receive ethics approval before starting to recruit participants for the research.

Much of the literature on how qualitative research interfaces with ethics review is both negative and one-sided. Predominantly qualitative researchers (Bosk & De Vries, 2004; Gunsalus et al., 2006; Haggerty, 2004; Hay & Israel, 2006; van den Hoonaard, 2002; van den Hoonaard, 2001) have found certain aspects of obtaining procedural ethics approval frustrating. Tolich and Fitzgerald (2006) liken the fit as trying to put a square peg into a round hole. McCormack et al. (2012) recognises the same miss fit describing procedural ethics as an obstacle to get past before research can start. McCormack et al. (2012, p. 30) argue without addressing the causes of social scientists' frustration "qualitative researchers will continue to perceive ethical review as "something to get through," rather than a welcomed collegial process". Haggerty's (2004) article "ethics creep" recognised this problem: asking qualitative researchers to apply biomedical research methods to research can compromise and distort qualitative research. A researcher cannot always submit an honest proposal as they cannot know what interview questions they will ask ahead of time.

Some of these fraught issues have been identified and remediated in the revised 2010 Canadian Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS 2 Chapter 10). This

new version of the Canadian guide to ethical research is more applicable to qualitative research and highlights emergent research designs (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, December 2010). TCPS(2) recognises knowledge is socially constructed and a wide range of overlapping phenomena and epistemologies can initiate qualitative research. It defines research as “an undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry or systematic investigation” (“Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans,” 2010, p. 15). This definition is consistent with qualitative researchers’ methodologies. TCPS(2) removes inapplicable and impractical rules that distort and constrain qualitative research. It has made gaining ethics committee approval more practical for qualitative researchers. Problems with how ethics committees review qualitative research are important but are beyond the scope of this thesis.

The biomedical terminology is not the only aspect of ethics review that frustrates qualitative researchers. Guillemin and Gillam (2004) found that procedural ethics guidelines and codes recommend all research adheres to basic ethical principles including beneficence, informed consent, and protecting participants’ identities (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). While these principles are obviously important to ensure participants are protected, the guidelines are vague when suggesting how these principles must be upheld in qualitative research when the research question changes and new ethical considerations are brought to the fore. Procedural ethics must not be an end point. Once researchers have successfully jumped the procedural ethics hurdle, some

researchers may “believe that their time for ethical reflection is over. However...social scientists are likely to have to deal with a variety of unanticipated ethical dilemmas and problems once their research commences” (Hay & Israel, 2006, p. 130).

Qualitative researchers may seek informed consent from participants for a clear-cut, thoughtful project, which has been approved by an ethics committee, but as the research question evolves, the aims and purpose of the project will change; thus participants end up consenting to something that is not done. So “once approved by an ethics committee there is a high likelihood that both the qualitative research problem and the ethical considerations that go with it will change” (Tolich, 2003, p. 22).

Ethics in Practice

Guillemin and Gillam (2004) rightly forecast that procedural ethics cannot predict all potential ethical issues qualitative researchers will face, as all qualitative researchers are likely to encounter “ethics in practice.” These ethically important moments and decisions must be dealt with in the field; often they were not and could not have been foreseen by either the researcher or the ethics committee during procedural ethics. As qualitative research is not a linear, deductive process, unexpected ethical issues are almost expected when working closely with human participants, be it during observations, in depth interviews, or focus groups. When ethically important moments do occur, qualitative researchers are not usually presented with two solutions: one obviously right and one obviously wrong. Duska (1998) presses researchers to always seek at least three solutions to ethically important moments, as a third or fourth answer

is likely to be a solution to the dilemma that does not favour one side more than the other.

There is a reason for looking for the third option. A dilemma is a situation where only two courses of action appear to be possible, and there are reasons for and against each course of action...that is, you are damned if you do and damned if you don't (Duska, 1998, p. 28).

Researchers are usually presented with an array of messy, complicated questions requiring them to think quickly and ethically, despite being thrown into the deep end of an ethically complex situation.

Ethically important moments sometimes have immediate concerns. The researcher must decide what action to take while in the field. In the case of Sonia, does the researcher leave the recording device on or turn it off? Does the researcher provide friendship or counselling when a personal issue is disclosed? Do they abandon the interview or return to it? The problem with Gillam and Guillemin's (2004) discussion of Sonia is they do not say what should happen. They leave these questions unanswered. This thesis takes up these issues and documents how PhD graduates using a qualitative methodology attempted to resolve their ethics in practice dilemmas especially when they are getting in and getting along in the research site.

Getting In

Gaining access to research sites is treated as straightforward exercises in procedural ethics but the PhD graduates discussed in this thesis found the task anything but straightforward. When planning research these ten researchers considered how they would access their participants. Recruitment often involves a 'gatekeeper', or 'key informant', who can facilitate the researchers' access to the site. These people are "adult[s] who are able to control or limit researchers'

access to participants” (Coyne, 2010, p. 452); or a person, or group of people, who “are in a position to ‘permit’ [or deny] access to others for the purpose of” research (Miller, Birch, Mauthner, & Jessop, 2002, p. 55). Mostly, gatekeepers are in place to protect participants from “research that could potentially be exploitative, invasive or coercive” (Coyne, 2010, p. 452). However researchers often have to negotiate institutional and non-institutional gatekeepers to get access to autonomous, non-vulnerable participants.

Institutional

Institutional gatekeepers govern formal institutions, such as hospitals, churches, businesses, companies, and schools (Coyne, Hayes, & Gallagher, 2009; Sieber & Tolich, 2013). Mainly, institutional gatekeepers are easily identifiable and contactable. In some cases, institutional research sites have layers of gatekeepers that researchers must gain approval from: education and health institutions included (Coyne, 2010; Coyne et al., 2009; Wanat, 2008).

Tilley, Powick-Kumar, and Ratković (2009) explain many schools have exceptionally thorough gatekeeping methods. Research review committees (RRCs), specific to schools, have their own ethics practices researchers are required to undergo before beginning research, even if another ethics committee has previously approved the research plan. Mostly, research committees highlight one ethical principle: beneficence. A working definition of beneficence is twofold; potential harm to participants should be minimised and potential benefit or good for the participants or society should be maximised (Hay & Israel, 2006). The RRCs examine how the research will be beneficial for the schools. RRCs are gatekeepers; preventing researchers from accessing research

sites and participants, until mutual benefit is derived from the project (Wanat, 2008). Tilley et al. (2009) claim the best way for researchers to successfully get past RRC gatekeepers is to build a relationship with the school and RRC before submitting research proposals. However, research ethics committees normally prohibit recruitment until ethics approval has been granted. This added level of procedural ethics shows how school gatekeeping is present. Researchers should be prepared for gatekeepers like RRCs when researching in all institutional environments.

Non-Institutional Gatekeepers

Gatekeepers do not only exist in institutions. Non-conventional gatekeepers are present in some hard to reach communities, even if the participants are not vulnerable.

Miller (1995) conducted research with Bangladeshi women in Britain about experiences of pregnancy and antenatal care. Bangladeshi women in this area of Britain were a 'hidden group', so Miller had to find a gatekeeper to gain access to her potential participants. After some time struggling, Miller found a Bangladeshi community worker, J, who ran a Bangladeshi women's group. J agreed to work as a gatekeeper for Miller's research allowing Miller to join the group. Miller (1995, pp. 301-2) reflects: "Throughout the process of gaining access and negotiating roles [J] who had enabled me to join the group used her authority to act as a "gatekeeper"". J "occupied a respected position in the local community; she was more powerful than the other women in terms of her perceived social class and status" (Miller et al., 2002, p. 62); J volunteered the women for the project on their behalf. Thus, the women's participation was

arguably involuntary and coerced. The participants may not have felt they could decline the research invitation because of the power dynamics between J and themselves. Although the Bangladeshi women were adults capable of giving their own consent, they may have been coerced into the research project because of the gatekeepers' power and actions.

Gatekeepers are likely to be present in any participant communities where strong power relations affect the participants, such as migrant communities. Coyne (2010) argues unequal power relations between the gatekeeper and participants may influence participants' decisions to consent to a study. Participants may feel coerced or obliged to participate, or their consent may be assumed, because of the power the gatekeeper holds over the participants (Miller & Bell, 2002; Sieber & Tolich, 2013). Qualitative researchers should be aware of the unequal power dynamics between the gatekeeper and participants when researching. Informed consent should always be confirmed, even when gatekeepers have approved the research on behalf of participants. Researchers may need to consider or seek informed consent multiple times from participants when the gatekeeper is not around so participants know they do not have to partake. This nuance is unlikely to have been predicted in procedural ethics.

Gatekeepers have power over individuals; the power may be institutional, cultural or hierarchal, bureaucratic, gendered, racial, ageist, or paternalistic (Coyne et al., 2009; Miller et al., 2002). Ultimately, the power can undermine informed consent. Regardless of the type of power, researchers requiring gatekeepers' approval to access research participants must be concerned with

how the gatekeepers' power can influence participants' informed and voluntary consent.

Even the most ethically cautious gatekeepers may subtly or unconsciously encourage participants to take place because the research is beneficial to them professionally or personally. Here are two examples.

First, Coyne (2010) discusses how hospitalised children involved in research projects can easily be coerced into research. Between 1952-1972 the Willowbrook hepatitis vaccine trials on intellectually disabled children occurred because parents and doctors volunteered institutionalised children without seeking their informed consent (Adair, Dushenko, & Lindsay, 1985; Hay & Israel, 2006). Multiple layers of gatekeepers when working with children means by the time the researcher contacts the child for assent/consent to participate, the child's actual possibility or right to decide about participation is debatable because so many adults have consented on behalf of the child already. Coyne et al. (2009, p. 424) state, "some children may feel unable to refuse once they know that all the significant adults have consented to their potential participation". While Coyne's work is primarily with children in hospital, children who participate in research conducted in schools may also be giving coerced consent.

Second, researchers getting access to children in schools must negotiate multiple gatekeepers. Within school situations, researchers must negotiate with secretaries to gain access to the head of the school, often the Board of Trustees or principal, who then consent on behalf of the school. However, if researchers are working in a classroom setting, classroom teachers are gatekeepers as they have control over their own classroom (Rogers, 1997). Furthermore, if a researcher wants to conduct research that involves children, researchers must

then acquire parental consent (Allen, 2009; National Ethics Advisory Committee, 2010), before asking children to participate. At this stage the child is asked to take part in the research. Under moral circumstances a researcher cannot seek a child's assent until the parent has consented.

Ethics Committee Gatekeeping

Turner and Webb (2012) claim ethics committees who grant approval for research projects act similarly to gatekeepers. Researchers are often given conditional approval pending the implementation of the ethics committees' recommendations, however, if a researcher disagrees with ethics committees' recommendations, they risk having the project completely rejected.

Ethics committees require specific research requirements, which can constrain research, such as which participants researchers may speak with and about what. While procedural ethics were in place to formally deal with risks that may harm participants, "ethics creep" has expanded to ensure procedural ethics does more than protecting the participants. Haggerty (2004, p. 394) uses the concept of "ethics creep" to further explain how research governance has crept over research ethics:

Ethics creep involves a dual process whereby the regulatory structure of the ethics bureaucracy is expanding outward, colonizing new groups, practices, and institutions, while at the same time intensifying the regulation of practices deemed to fall within its official ambit.

Haggerty (2004) fears the bureaucracy involved in procedural ethics can suppress students' motivation to research as procedural ethics takes effort and time, sometimes resulting in extra tuition fees for students (Hay & Israel, 2006). Procedural ethics are governed by "bureaucratic oversight" hence compromising the primary goal of ethics committees: protecting vulnerable participants.

Iphofen (2011) questions whose interests are served by the ethics review. Are procedural ethics protecting the research participants or do they protect the institution? Iphofen claims the research governance process served the interests of the institution protecting them from lawsuits. For researchers experiencing research governance, gatekeeping issues begin right at the outset of research.

Failure to gain access via gatekeepers is only part of the difficulties facing qualitative researchers. Once they are on site and conducting the research other ethical issues, not predicted by procedural ethics, arise. Notable among these is how the limits of confidentiality undermine ethical assurances. Additionally, researchers' moral compass plays a part in getting along with participants and oneself in the field.

Getting Along

Once the researcher has achieved access, other ethical issues involving informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality emerge. In each case the emergent nature of qualitative epistemology creates unique ethical considerations. For example, once in a school the researcher must carefully consider children's voluntary consent. Ensuring consent is informed and voluntary is a constant concern for researchers and some qualitative researchers address the evolving research question by using a modified or delayed informed consent process that Ellis (2007) calls process consent.

Process consent involves the researcher going back to the participant when the research aims change. This ensures they consent to the data being used for what the project has become, not just what the original plan of the project was. Hence, process consent is different from a one-off informed consent.

Process consent “is a strategy that allows...the researcher [to] check at each stage to make sure the participants still want to be part of the project” (Sieber & Tolich, 2013, p. 139). Ensuring voluntary, informed consent for the project at hand may need to be a continuing process. Researchers should consider participants’ consent during procedural ethics and ethics in practice.

Haggerty (2004, pp. 407-408) states ethics committees presume all research will be anonymous: “researchers are expected to protect the identity of their research participants. While this is useful and often essential to ensure participants are protected, the terminology used by ethics committees often poses problems for social scientists.” As biomedical research terminology colonises social science research, how participant identity is protected becomes problematic. Biomedical research uses the terminology of anonymity, but in social science research anonymity is impossible.

Procedural ethics expect researchers to obtain signed informed consent from research participants, where the participants sign their name on a written consent form; thus breaking anonymity. Instead qualitative researchers protect participants’ identity by promising to keep the information as confidential as possible.

Limits to Confidentiality

“Confidentiality is where the researcher can identify a person’s response but promises not to make the connections publicly” (Tolich & Davidson, 1999, p. 76). Yet van den Hoonaard (2001, p. 26) explains researchers are not protected in the way that doctors, priests, and lawyers may be and must be prepared to potentially face legal consequences “if they wish to follow through on their

promise of anonymity of sources and confidentiality of research data” if data is subpoenaed.

In 1994, a criminology graduate student, Russel Ogden researching illegal, assisted suicides faced a legal dilemma. Ogden studied assisted suicides of HIV positive people. After the research, “the coroner subpoenaed Ogden and his records” (van den Hoonaard, 2002, p. 20). The data had been destroyed but the court expected Ogden to testify. When he declined to testify, he was threatened with charges of contempt of court. Cases like Ogden’s are exceptionally rare but it does demonstrate the limits that may surround confidentiality.

Qualitative researchers can hardly ever promise complete confidentiality (Ensign, 2003). Whilst confidentiality is more applicable to qualitative research than anonymity, it still has limitations yet these are not found in any ethics code. Qualitative researchers distinguish external confidentiality from internal confidentiality.

External Confidentiality

External confidentiality refers to protecting research participants from being identified by people outside the research project, or research site. “External confidentiality is traditional confidentiality where the researcher acknowledges they know what the person said but promises not to identify them in the final report” (Tolich, 2004, p. 101). Most ethical codes do not distinguish types of confidentiality. Confidentiality agreements usually include using pseudonyms; this is so “no one in the outside world would know who said what or who” (Tolich, 2004, p. 103) the participants are. Sometimes, confidentiality is achieved by changing other identifying factors (Kantrowitz, 2004) such as occupation,

location, ethnicities or genders, not allowing anyone to listen to audiotapes, and destroying audiotapes, transcripts, and notes after the research has been published (Sieber & Tolich, 2013).

Unfortunately, offering external confidentiality is not always adequate for ensuring participants' identities are protected, particularly when working in a small research site. If research is only completely confidential if participants cannot recognise others who are close to them in the final report (Sieber & Tolich, 2013, p. 159), then ethnographic research may pose difficulties for researchers as participants' stories may be recognised by people close them. Assigning pseudonyms may not adequately protect participants' internal confidentiality.

Internal Confidentiality

Ensuring external confidentiality is limited and does not always prevent participants from being harmed. For example, Ellis' ethnography on Fisher folk certainly fulfilled the promise of external confidentiality, yet her participants' identities were compromised. Ellis explained: (1995, p. 78)

My strategy of inventing pseudonyms starting with the same letters as the double names of the Fishnecker and having other similarities in sound had made it easy to keep names straight, but at the cost of making it convenient for the Fishnecker to figure out the characters in my story.

Ellis' participants were easily identifiable when she wrote her research up as a book. After the book was published, Ellis' participants were distraught that her research had subsequently revealed secrets and vulnerable stories to the entire town. Participants, and other members of the fishing town, were able to identify themselves and others. Ellis published sensitive data leaving some vulnerable

participants “twice harmed by a less-than-robust principle of confidentiality” (Sieber & Tolich, 2013, p. 161).

Internal confidentiality needs to be addressed to ensure people connected to the research cannot identify participants in final publications (Tolich, 2004). Researchers must seek to change or hide any details that might identify participants. Potential harm from internal confidentiality is not always addressed during procedural ethics, thus researchers like my ten participants needed to constantly think about how to maintain participants’ confidentiality both during the data collection and in subsequent publications. Sometimes internal confidentiality places limits on the amount of data that can be presented in qualitative research publications. Holloway and Wheeler (1995, p. 227) explain “[participants], in particular, sometimes disclose intimate details of their lives, which the researcher cannot divulge, although the information could be useful for the research.” In these cases, the researcher must decide what is too identifying for research publications. Similarly, Boman and Jevne (2000) explain the struggles between the theoretical promises of maintaining confidentiality and practically upholding confidentiality when researching life histories: ethnographies make maintaining confidentiality tremendously difficult.

One way to address the limits of confidentiality is to waive its protection as *caveat emptor*, let the buyer beware (Tolich 2009), and warn participants that some qualitative research can offer few ethical protections. Confidential data collection in qualitative projects can be complex.

Caveat Emptor

Focus groups are a standard qualitative research technique, yet addressing confidentiality issues that arise in focus groups is a challenge. In focus groups, researchers are unable to guarantee participants' confidentiality. The researcher can ensure they themselves do not break confidentiality yet are unable to promise confidentiality to participants in focus groups or group interviews, as researchers cannot be sure the other members of the focus group will keep confidence. The principle of emptor caveat, let the buyer beware, can signal the limits of confidentiality to participants involved in qualitative research (Tolich, 2009). Tolich (2009, p. 99) describes how "the principle of caveat emptor (let the buyer beware) may be a ... useful tool for those involved in focus group research." But, researchers cannot always promise to maintain internal confidentiality; so using caveat emptor means participants should participate with the risks of internal confidentiality in mind (Tolich, 2009). When designing, conducting, and publishing research, social scientists should consider the limitations of participants' privacy and find alternative methods to protect privacy as much as possible.

Other Ethical Considerations

Researchers may also bring their own professional codes or moral compass to the research site, which too can lie outside procedural ethics. Researchers who are practitioners, teachers, nurses, social workers, doctors, and counsellors are often bound by their professional codes of ethics; thus if research ethics fail them, practitioners may have other ethical guidelines to draw on.

Practitioner Ethics

Practitioner ethics are the professional guidelines and rules that health and social care practitioners must abide by in their employment (Bell & Nutt, 2002). For example, New Zealand social workers are expected to abide by the Social Work Practice Code of Ethics (Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers, 2013), teachers are under the Code of Ethics for Registered Teachers (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2004) and New Zealand nurses are bound by the New Zealand Nursing Code of Ethics (New Zealand Nurses Organisation, 2010); similar to ethical guides or codes that researchers abide by (Coy, 2006).

Having practitioner ethics can aid researchers when research ethics fail them. But also, practitioner ethics, and research ethics can contradict. Bell and Nutt (2002, p. 70) show “dilemmas are especially likely to occur when researchers who are also practitioners recognise the need to acknowledge relevant multiple responsibilities and sensitivities.” If these practitioners also decide to conduct research, they may be presented with conflicting ethical guidelines. Prior to research beginning, “practitioner-researchers may make initial decisions about separating and connecting these roles, which may be difficult to achieve in practice” (Bell & Nutt, 2002, p.71). Not acting as a nurse or social worker can be difficult for researchers when researching in their related field.

For example, Bell and Nutt (2002) discuss the dilemmas Nutt experienced when working as a social worker-researcher studying foster carers. Prior to research beginning, Nutt decided to foreground being a researcher and background being a social worker; but in practice this was harder than she anticipated. Nutt was a “paid professional social worker bound by general social

work codes of practice” (Bell & Nutt, 2002, p. 79). Whilst interviewing a foster care parent participant in their home, Nutt noticed a sexually explicit picture on the wall.

For most researchers this would not be an issue: art is a matter of personal taste. But Nutt wasn't just a researcher she was also a practitioner...[Nutt] wanted to keep the roles clear and separate...Nutt chose not to tackle this issue with these new carers but spent several days considering this ethical dilemma. In the end the ...social worker practitioner overcame that of the researcher identity and Nutt informed local authority of her unease regarding the picture and its potential impact upon the foster children. Her reaction to its subject matter was guided by her professional training and the fact the painting was displayed in a house that offered refuge to children who could have been sexually abused. She did not mention this to the carers [also her participants] but left the social services department to make their own assessment (Bell & Nutt, 2002, pp. 79-80).

In the above anecdote, Nutt was faced with a practitioner-researcher ethical dilemma. As a researcher, her participant's art was none of her business. Also, contacting the local authority breached confidentiality agreements. Her participants may not have wanted the authorities to know they were part of Nutt's research project. Moreover, reporting the participants to the authorities was an abuse of Nutt's power in the participant-researcher power relationship. Fryer (2004) and Coy (2006) caution practitioner-researchers to be aware of power dynamics. But as a social worker, Nutt felt obliged to speak out about the picture as she feared for the children's safety (Bell & Nutt, 2002). This ethical dilemma arose because Nutt was bound by two separate ethical codes: social work ethics, and researcher ethics.

A similar example arose for Coy (2006) when she studied young female sex workers. Coy was an outreach worker, working on the street with young sex workers; a job she had been doing and would continue to do regardless of her research project. Her outreach work with female sex workers made gaining

access to her participants easy, but raised complexities with informed consent. She did not want the women to participate because they thought that was the only way to receive Coy's help. As an outreach worker Coy would have continued to support the women even if they did not partake in the research. The welfare of the women Coy studied was her top priority as both a researcher and outreach worker, yet ethical concerns surrounding informed consent still arose. Eventually, Coy decided to not invite some women to participate in the research, as she did not want them to be coerced into participating.

Yet, being a practitioner-researcher can be useful, particularly when researching with hard-to-reach participants. If researchers already have access to research sites or participants they bypass dilemmas that arise getting into the field. But once inside, these researchers may need to negotiate their insider/outsider position.

Professional doctorates, action research, and participatory methodologies are growing in popularity creating insider/outsider complexities for researchers (Hellawell, 2006). While these methodologies may be useful for bypassing gatekeepers, researchers should be aware of how their positioning can impact data. If researchers are insiders they need to negotiate anthropological strangeness and reflect on how their insider knowledge might affect the research. Anthropological strangeness occurs when an insider is able to perform as an outsider with a social setting they are familiar with. It is useful as strangers can encounter new social settings and situations with an open mind (Slezak, 1994; Star, 2010).

Khawaja and Mörck (2009) suggest it is impossible for researchers to overcome all the disclosures, or anthropological strangeness, that may impact research.

It is not a question of overcoming these influences but rather of being aware of them, reflecting on them, and where possible using them meaningfully in the research process... Either way it represents an important discussion point in regard to the question of whether it is possible to control how you are read and positioned by your researcher participants (Khawaja & Mörck, 2009, p. 39).

Participants will make assumptions about researchers; researchers cannot fully control how the researched perceive the researcher. Deciding how, when, or even if, to disclose insider knowledge to participants does not have a straightforward, black or white answer. Rather, it involves constant reflection and awareness.

These conflicting ethical codes and positions qualitative researchers may have are not often dealt with in procedural ethics. And, the dilemmas that can occur because of the double ethics are ignored. Here, practitioner-researchers and academic-researchers may experience ethics in practice differently.

Personal Ethics and Integrity

Not all researchers are practitioners with access to other ethical codes. If research ethics fail academic-researchers, these researchers may draw on personal morals or virtues to make ethical decisions. Edwards and Mauthner (2002) claim employing personal ethics that emphasise researchers' morals and virtues may be useful when negotiating unexpected ethical dilemmas. Personal ethics and integrity, alongside research ethics, may be a useful way of ensuring ethical research takes place.

Virtue theory examines the “moral character of the ethical decision-makers and not the consequences of their actions” (Hay & Israel, 2006, p. 17). Researchers, bound by the same research ethics, may have varying morals and virtues, which impact how they engage the research ethics codes. For example, imagine a sociologist is interviewing women about their experiences with alcoholic parents. They have assured their participants the research will be confidential. During interviewing, one participant discloses her alcoholic father regularly abuses her mother emotionally; it’s hidden abuse, nobody knows about it. Two researchers may respond differently. A rule-abiding researcher would keep this information confidential, despite knowing about the abuse. A virtue-abiding researcher may feel ethically compelled to report the abuse to authorities, or support networks (Francis, 1990). Breaking confidentiality could have negative consequences for the participant, despite that it may help stop the family violence occurring in the participant’s home. Researchers’ virtue ethics and ideas of research integrity may vary depending on their own morals. But also on their research epistemologies, methodologies, and framework.

Researching with integrity has various meanings. Mostly, integrity is associated with virtues, morals, and ideal behaviours. And almost always, integrity is recognised as a positive quality; thus researching with integrity is a positive goal to aspire towards. Qualitative research usually involves emotions and events because people are unpredictable or changeable. No two people will react the same way in certain situations. Mostly, codes of ethics can give limited help when opposed with ethics in practice (Macfarlane, 2009).

Some research frameworks come with ethical expectations. For example, feminist research expect researchers will actively work to remove power

imbalances between the researchers and researched (Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach, 2009). “To...balance out the inequities of power between the researcher and the researched, some feminist researchers and others advocate the process of giving back their research findings and interpretations to the respondent” (Hesse-Biber, 2013, p. 128). Researchers have more power than participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Feminist methodology often compels researchers to minimise this power by returning the knowledge gathered to the participants or research site (Hesse-Biber, 2013). So minimising power imbalances can help researchers research with integrity.

Other complications for qualitative researchers can arise whilst obtaining research data. Employing rapport is necessary as many researchers conduct qualitative research with participants about their life experiences. Duncombe and Jessop (2002) explain the ethics of ‘doing rapport’ and ‘faking friendship’ are complex. Building close rapport with participants may allow researchers to gain deeper understandings of their participants’ lives (Duncombe & Jessop, 2002) but Oakley and Roberts (1981, p. 55) caution researchers explaining “ethical dilemmas are the greatest where there is least social distance between the interviewer and interviewee. Where both share the same...critical life experiences, social distance can be minimal.” Thus building rapport can be ethically complex. Knowledge that is gained using rapport, or through faking friendship, is normally for research conclusions (Sjoberg & Nett, 1968); yet sometimes participants may forget the researcher is in fact researching them, not just engaging in conversation with a friend (Ellis, 2007).

An empathetic, knowledgeable, responsible researcher will protect participants better than any set of ethical regulations (Beauchamp & Childress,

2001). Ethical rules can remove an individual's responsibility for certain acts as people see it as 'right' to obey rules. But virtue ethics and research integrity are also useful for helping researchers negotiate situations that are not governed by rules. The "golden rule" is to treat others the way you would like them to treat you (Colnerud, 2006). Mostly, ethical rules in conjunction with virtue ethics, should "form parts of an expanded rationality" (Colnerud, 2006, p. 371); virtue ethics and other ethical rules, including research and professional ethics, should be complementary, not conflicting.

Procedural ethics do not hold all the answers for researchers negotiating ethically important moments so drawing on virtue ethics, and at times practitioner ethics, may be beneficial. Yet researchers need to consider the consequences when research ethics intertwine with other ethics such as practitioner and virtue ethics.

Overall, this literature review identified that qualitative researchers have a number of ethical considerations to make while conducting research. Procedural ethics cannot predict every possible ethical dilemma; hence qualitative researchers do have ethically important moments that must be dealt with in the field. While Guillemin and Gillam (2004) acknowledged there is a difference between procedural ethics and ethics in practice, they did not unpack how researchers negotiate ethics in practice, particularly if they are inexperienced. The research question for this thesis stems from this gap. How do novice researchers negotiate unexpected ethical issues when researching qualitatively? The rest of this thesis will go on to address this question.

What makes this research important is that investigating how novice researchers negotiate unexpected ethical issues has two benefits. First this

research helps identify what types of unexpected ethical issues novice researchers may experience. Consequently, identifying these issues means researchers will expect them. Second this research suggests how novice researchers can be better prepared for negotiating unexpected ethical issues in the field. This information will be useful for emerging researchers, their advisors, and research ethics committees. Understanding how novice researchers conduct ethics in practice is important, as it may lead to further development of pre-research courses to prepare novice researchers for the unexpected. It is also useful for ethics committees and those revising ethical codes, because it demonstrates where some shortfalls and challenges for novice qualitative researchers lie. Ethics committees and code reviewers may use this information to better inform their responses to novice researchers' procedural ethics, or revise problematic ethical codes.

3. Research Methods

The primary purpose of this study was to explore how novice researchers negotiated ethics in practice. It was important to investigate qualitative research separately from quantitative research, as iterative, emergent research designs tend to alter as research unravels. Consequently, ethical issues that surface during emergent research are likely to be unconsidered in procedural ethics. I was particularly interested in novice researchers, specifically PhD graduates, as these researchers have minimal previous research experience to draw on. Their bank of knowledge for negotiating unexpected issues is likely to be small. Hence, I was interested in what other resources or techniques these researchers pulled on to managed ethics in practice. In other words, I wanted to explore if/how novice researchers' negotiated unexpected ethical issues. My analysis may provide insight into why researchers experience messy ethical dilemmas when conducting qualitative research. Potentially my analysis may present an opportunity to discuss how ethically important moments can be reduced for future researchers.

Research Design

The epistemology underpinning this research attempts to grasp an unknown world. An epistemology is a theory of knowledge that explains how we know what is true (DeRose, 2002). There are a huge variety of epistemologies offered; however this research has been positioned within a social constructionist framework because I was interested in novice researchers' opinions and recounts of their own experiences. Constructionism is "the view that all

knowledge and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world” (Crotty, 1998, p. 42); thus meaning is created or constructed rather than discovered. Social constructionism therefore posits that social realities and meanings are created and continued because social actors observe social rules in social situations. Meaning or knowledge is produced when social beings interact. The knowledge produced will vary depending on how the social beings interact and where they are interacting.

I chose a social constructionist framework for my research because novice researchers socially interact with various people throughout their PhD research, such as participants, connected-people,² advisors, and ethics committee members. The actions of those people affect what types of ethical issues arise during the research and how the researchers choose to deal with them.

Social constructionism believes that meanings and definitions of the world are constructed rather than uncovered. “Users of this paradigm are oriented to the production of reconstructed understandings of the social work” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 158). How humans interact and engage with their social world reflects how humans construct and sustain a meaningful reality (Woo & Reeves, 2007). Hence constructionists are open to a variety of meanings, experiences, definitions, and realities. However, as my understandings and interpretations of my participants’ experiences are examined within this thesis, some of my interpretations may differ from the participants’ ideas.

² Connected-people are people who are not participants in a research project but are connected to participants, such as colleagues, friends, and family members.

Within a constructionism framework, participants' opinions, positions, stories, and experiences are highlighted (Creswell, 2012); and the way individuals view their experiences can alter depending on what knowledge they hold as true. "Obviously, it is possible to make sense of the same reality in quite different ways" (Crotty, 1998, p. 47). Thus, I may interpret and understand my participants' stories differently to how they understand them, as it is possible we may make sense of those realities differently. As a constructionist, I believe "meaning is hidden and must be brought to the surface through deep reflection" (Ponterotto, 2005, p. 129); thus I tended to work with my participants to uncover and create themes and findings: the findings did not just obviously appear.

I viewed all my participants' knowledge as equal and true. I ensured that they, not I, defined their experiences and knowledge; hence engaging with and understanding each participant's individual reality was important for my research. I was interested in their interpretation of ethics. Some participants immediately associated 'ethics' with procedural ethics; other participants talked more generally about what 'ethical' research meant for them. Unsurprisingly the interpretations of 'ethical research' varied between participants.

As a constructionist, I allowed the participants to interpret the word 'ethical' as they wanted to. I wanted to explore how individuals perceived their own research and the ethical issues therein. To do this, I needed a research technique that allowed me to be open to an array of meanings and descriptions of 'ethics'; likewise for the word 'unexpected'. Semi-structured interviews proved ideal.

Qualitative Research Analysis

Qualitative research involves using interactive, material practices to explore phenomena in their contexts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Researchers can use qualitative methods, based on the meanings that are attributed by people to interpret experiences and trends that occur in social worlds. My methodology was a general qualitative methodology embedded within a social constructionist epistemology and thematic analysis. Qualitative methodology values

social research in which the researcher relies on text data rather than numerical data, analyzes those data in a textual form rather than converting them to numbers for analysis, aims, and asks open questions about phenomena as they occur in context rather than setting out to test predetermined hypotheses (Carter & Little, 2007, p. 1316).

While not always claimed explicitly as a method, “thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes...data in (rich) detail, and...often...interprets various aspects of the research topic” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82).

I used thematic analysis inductively; this allowed me to conduct a critical analysis of the stories and experiences my participants shared with me. In inductive research, the researcher creates meaning by coding and analysing the data they have gathered from the field (Creswell, 2012). Inductive research usually begins with a review of literature but then specific knowledge of existing theories and hypotheses are suspended while the researcher engages with the participants. Then the research progresses to a fieldwork phase during which the researcher(s) listens to, or observes, people and attempts to let the subjects’ meanings guide the research (Holloway & Wheeler, 1995). As a social constructionist, I recognise that there is a variation to this because of the meanings I bring to the data both in my recording and interpreting thereof.

Thematic analysis is inductive, usually beginning with an overall research aim or goal, rather than testable hypotheses. Flexibility is needed on the part of the researcher as the research question gets “revisited in relation to themes and sub-themes” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). Braun and Clark (2006, p. 89) state that “thematic analysis is data-driven” and as a form of inductive analysis, in practice this means coding data without fitting it to a pre-existing coding framework. Consequently I did not know what themes would appear from my research; therefore I also needed to be flexible with my aims and goals.

Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87) argue that a theme “captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.” Thematic analysis involves an active researcher uncovering themes entrenched in the data. Hence, rather than themes emerging, the researcher actively chooses themes that are of interest to the research goals and reports them to the readers (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis offers guidelines for coding data to find patterns and themes. Within a social constructionist framework, thematic analysis allows for themes that are socially constructed to be identified (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

My thematic analysis involved identifying themes in my interview transcripts on the latent level, rather than the explicit or semantic levels. Identifying themes on a latent level means looking at the “underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations” of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 13). This was appropriate for my thematic analysis as ethical issues are not always explicitly stated, as they can be messy and complicated. They are found in the

subtext rather than clearly stated ideas, bearing obviously right or wrong answers.

An iterative data collection and analysis, as suggested by Glaser and Strauss, was employed for this research. Glaser and Strauss (2009, p. 45) identify iterative data collection as a process “whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges.” Although I am not presenting a grounded theory, I adopted the iterative aspect of the method in order to gather and analyse data simultaneously. This was useful for developing categories and refining ideas, and fitted well with the semi-structured interview format I used, as I was able to adapt my questions throughout the data collection. As my research was interested in how novice researchers negotiate unexpected ethical issues, an iterative approach to the data collection and analysis helped to explore how novice researchers dealt with these issues during the course of their research.

I conducted eleven semi-structured interviews asking three PhD candidates, and eight recent PhD graduates, to reflect on their experiences conducting qualitative research as novice researchers. All participants were interviewed once. Semi-structured interviews are informal and flexible with questions that are not necessarily set (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Longhurst, 2003). Consistent with my iterative approach, this interviewing method also allows interview questions to be altered as the analysis reveals themes and if the research goals change. Moreover, it allows the interviews to be participant-led rather than researcher-led. Hence, themes are more likely to be data-driven, as the researcher is not asking specific questions that stem from a particular theory

or set of assumptions; rather the participants share their stories and own understandings of the research topic. For example, broad opening questions such as “tell me about your PhD journey” and “tell me about the ethical process(es) involved in your PhD” allowed participants to lead the conversation and share experiences and stories from their PhD journey that they deemed important. When working within a social constructionism framework, it is important to explore how individuals construct meaning from their own experiences; their knowledge may not be derived from one set of assumptions or ideas.

I gathered and analysed data concurrently, modifying interview guides both during the interviews and while analysing. I reflected on interviews after each one had been conducted so I could revise the interview guide³ before the next interview took place. As data was collected in a short time frame, revising whilst interviewing and immediately after was beneficial. For example, in the first few interviews I asked, “what would you do differently if you re-did the project”? Early participants said that was a hard question and did not know how to answer it. So I revised the interview guide and altered that question. Asking, “What advice would you have for someone who was going to do your project again?” proved more successful. Analysing simultaneously with data collection was particularly useful for refining the interview guide and making interviews productive. In later interviews, I rephrased questions to make them clearer to get participants to talk about certain parts of the research more specifically.

Another way I gathered and analysed data simultaneously was during the reading of interview transcripts. Here I paid close attention to the techniques

³ The progressive interview guides are included as Appendices 6, 7, and 8.

novice researchers used to negotiate unexpected ethical issues. Yet, sometimes the technique was unclear upon first reading and it was not until the third reading, after more interviews, that the techniques became clear. As I immersed myself in the data further I began to understand the variety of techniques my participants employed. As my knowledge of novice researchers' experiences expanded so did my understanding of how these novice researchers negotiated ethics in practice. Reflecting on the same 'ethically important moments' multiple times was useful for refining the technique or ideas underlying the unexpected ethical issues that participants discussed.

It was important to ask the participants to define their experiences, rather than just reading their PhD theses, as rarely all the difficulties researchers face are written about in final publications. I was interested in their interpretation of their own experiences, not my assumptions or interpretations of their ethical journey. Furthermore, I was interested in how researchers reacted when they felt unprepared, and what they may do differently if the research was conducted again.

My Participants

I wanted to research novice researchers as recent PhD graduates, who had completed their PhD within the last seven years, mainly in New Zealand universities. My goal was to capture recent experiences as early as possible knowing that reflexivity and hindsight can change perspectives over time. In other words, how researchers viewed their experiences may have altered as they gained more experience. Their responses, and suggestions for dealing with

unexpected issues, may have also changed. Thus interviewing experienced researchers about their first research journeys seemed inappropriate.

Recruitment

I invited only researchers whose PhD projects were qualitative and in the social sciences as I was mainly interested in how emergent research designs, prominent in qualitative research, can impact ethics in practice. In the end I recruited eleven participants using a snowball sample. To get into the potential pool of participants, my supervisors, acting as key informants, emailed the Participant Information Sheet⁴ to various members of the academy who fit the participant criteria. Initially recruitment was smooth. My supervisors' email invitations brought forward two participants within the same department in one university. I interviewed both these people. After the first two interviews I snowballed asking my two participants to pass the Participant Information Sheet onto anyone else who might want to participate. This was initially productive until all potential participants within that department had been invited to participate. Mainly, my participants only knew potential participants within their department. By the fourth interview, all the suggested future participants had already been interviewed or declined to participate. Thus, my snowball sample halted.

At this point I expanded my recruitment strategy and began to loosen my recruitment criteria to include PhD candidates who had completed their data collection over three months previous. I emailed administrators at various organisations such as SAANZ (Sociological Association of Aotearoa New

⁴ The Participant Information Sheet is included in Appendix 2.

Zealand), ESocSci (Engaged Social Sciences), postgraduate social media sites like Otago Postgraduate Group Facebook page, and administrators at various social science departments around New Zealand. In this email⁵ I asked them to pass on my Participant Information Sheet to any potential participants. The difficulties I faced were mainly logistical; PhD graduates tended to move away from their original institutions after their studies were complete. Often department administrators did not have contact details for these potential participants. Five of the eleven participants responded to the call these administrators put out. Snowball sampling was then re-employed and these participants recommended the remainder of my sample.

Sample

To protect my participants' identities I have been deliberately vague with some details in this section. Small communities, such as academia, are well connected; and certain research stories, topics, and events are well known to other members of the academy. These stories, topics, and events can reveal people's identities easily so I have consciously omitted details that may compromise my confidentiality agreements.

Eight of the researchers were PhD graduates and had completed their doctorates up to seven years ago at four New Zealand universities and one North American institution. Three of the researchers were PhD candidates who had completed their data collection more than three months ago. The researchers came from four different disciplines: five from education; two from public health; three from social science; and one from social work. The majority of the

⁵ The letter attached in the emails is included in Appendix 1.

participants were female; less than 30% of the participants were male. The researchers used a variety of methods in their PhD research including participant observation, focus groups, semi-structured interviews, phone interviews, and surveys. At the time of interviewing, three of the eleven researchers were still in the final writing and editing stages of their PhDs. In total, eleven participants were interviewed but one participant decided, after taking part in the interview, they did not want their interview data quoted or paraphrased in the thesis publication. The data from this interview was initially included during the first two phases of thematic analysis; that is the interview was transcribed and coded. However, the codes from this interview were never transformed into themes. As a full thematic analysis of this interview was not completed, I decided to exclude the data from the analysis.

Interview Process

I conducted all the semi-structured interviews using an iterative interview guide, which was revised and altered after each interview. Interviews were conducted between February 2014 and June 2014 in Dunedin and Auckland. The interviews lasted between 30 - 90 minutes. Nine of the interviews were conducted in spaces chosen by the participants. These included academics' offices, study rooms, cafes, and in one case, a participant's home. Two of the interviews were conducted on Skype.

All the interviews began the same way. The participants were asked to describe their PhD projects, methodologies, and experiences with ethics. From there, the interviews unfolded depending on the themes that were apparent. Mostly, the interviews were participant-led; however I prompted all participants,

asking if they encountered any unexpected issues while collecting or analysing data.

Interviews were transcribed and analysed immediately after they took place. I used negative coding techniques to refine my interviewing skills.

“Negative coding identifies areas of weakness in the expanded... transcripts...highlight[ing] the researcher’s own inability to capture an aspect of social interaction owing to poor questions” (Tolich & Davidson, 1999, p. 141). Negative coding was used to identify when I used assumptions or leading questions. For example, in the first interview I assumed the participant and I had the same understanding of what a ‘gatekeeper’ of research was. When transcribing and coding that interview I realised my assumption was false. In the subsequent interviews I asked participants to explain or define any technical language to ensure our understandings were the same.

All the interviews were voice recorded and stored on a locked device. At the end of the interview all participants were asked whether or not they wanted the transcript returned to them. They were then invited to remove parts of the interview they did not want included during analysis, or highlight parts they did not want directly quoted in the final publication. This was offered to help protect participants’ identities and the identity of their topics. Four participants did request transcripts to be returned. They made no changes to the original transcripts but two of these participants did ask for certain parts of the interviews not to be quoted verbatim. This has been respected.

I transcribed all the interviews completely initially including filler words such as um, like, ahh, in the original transcription. These have been removed from the final quotes in the thesis to ensure the detail and main points were not

lost in translation. After the original transcription the interviews were cleaned, I read through the transcribed interview while listening to the recording to ensure my transcription was correct. The transcripts were kept on a password-protected computer in my postgraduate office.

After each transcript had been generated and reviewed (when requested) I proceeded to analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis can be understood as a six-phase process. Phase one involves the researcher becoming familiar with or immersed in the data. First, entire, verbatim transcription occurs almost immediately after the interviews have taken place. Then, the researcher undertakes active repeated reading of interview transcripts, searching for themes and meaning. I used the NVivo coding programme as a data library. All ten finalised transcripts were uploaded to the program. NVivo was useful for collating codes for phase two of thematic analysis.

Phase two requires the researcher to generate initial codes: a list of interesting ideas within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Codes allow the researcher to organise data into significant groups from which themes are uncovered. Coding quickly highlighted the main themes surrounding procedural ethics and ethics in practice. Commonalties were found in interviews. These were given a code name: confidentiality, harm, gatekeeping, safety, ethics committee, big ethical moment, getting in, getting out, reflexivity, research governance, consent, or data storage.

Phase three entails the researcher to search for potential themes, and collate “all the relevant coded data extractions within the identified themes” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 96). After I had coded the interviews, the codes were sorted into themes. Initially, many of the quotes had multiple codes present in

them, for example, 'getting in' doubled up with 'gatekeepers' or 'ethics committee.' As the interviews progressed, issues that were most striking fell into one of five main themes: gatekeepers and informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, storage and privacy, other ethical codes, and unresolved issues.

Phase four involves refining the themes derived in phase three (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Here, some themes will be discarded due to lack of data, or too much diversity, and other themes may fold together. This phase also includes reviewing the legitimacy of the themes with the whole data set. At this stage, I collapsed the themes 'storage' and 'privacy' into the single theme 'confidentiality and anonymity,' as the underlying ideas in these quotes were all about protecting participants' identities.

Phase five should be used to define and name themes. The essence of each theme should be identified, as should what aspects the theme reveals about the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By the end of phase five, all the themes should be clearly named and defined, able to be described in one or two sentences. During this phase I created separate word documents for each themes. The quotes were then transferred into these separate documents and the theme names were derived. To help me identify what the main ideas within each theme were, I looked at when the issues described within the themes occurred. I subtitled the themes either 'getting in', 'getting along', or 'getting out' of the research. This was based on where in the research journey the themes occurred most. So 'gatekeepers' became 'gatekeepers: getting in'. These subheadings helped me identify the crux of the themes and how the themes related to my research questions. The various unexpected ethical issues for the novice researchers centred on getting in, along, and out of research sites.

Finally, phase six comprised of writing up the themes. Here, the researcher should use the themes to convincingly tell the complicated story of the data, and justify why the analysis is valid (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I began this phase by grouping the quotes within the themes into categories. For example, all the quotes that referred to school principals as gatekeepers were grouped together, and all the quotes discussing the limits of internal confidentiality were placed together.

Ethical Considerations

Like all my participants' research projects, I had my own experience with procedural ethics. My original research proposal was reviewed and approved (Reference Number 14017) by the University of Otago's Human Ethics Committee, and accepted with minor revisions. As the academy in New Zealand is relatively small, and academy members, via their institution and PhD topic are easily identified, the ethics committee alerted me to potential internal confidentiality issues. The ethics committee was concerned this project may identify researchers and their participants.

I revised a clause in the Participant Information Sheet asking the novice researchers not to identify their research participants during our interview.⁶ The committee also asked me to restate this verbally at the beginning of each interview. The ethics committee was doing their job to ensure my participants and the connected-people in my study were protected.

Even with these caveats, problems did arise in my own ethics in practice. In the first three interviews I had, I explicitly stated that the researchers should

⁶ The Participant Information Sheet is included in Appendix 2.

not refer to any of their participants, or participants' experiences, by name or the pseudonym they were assigned in their PhD. I wanted to say this as lightly as possible; I did not want to accuse researchers of something they probably would not do anyway. I did not want to suggest the researchers would break their participants' confidentiality. As the researchers knew I was conducting an interview about research ethics they were very sensitised to ethical issues, like confidentiality and privacy, even before my required highlighting of this issue.

This was when I encountered my own ethics in practice. My procedural ethics expected me to explicitly remind my participants not to break their participants' confidentiality. Yet when it came to implementing this aspect of procedural ethics, I was confronted with a dilemma. In the first three interviews I conducted, I asked the participants to re-read the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form, and then I verbally restated clause six⁷.

Each time I did this, the atmosphere in the room got extremely heavy. I could sense my participants closing up. The ethical consideration stifled the beginning fifteen minutes of the interview. After the third interview my supervisors and I questioned how necessary the verbal restating of the clause was. We agreed that rather than invoke this tension at the beginning, and only if need be, I would remind participants throughout the interview not to use their participants' names or pseudonyms. Bean (2006, p. 362) explains the formal consent process "can damage the trust required to conduct a study." Connelly

⁷ Clause six: I will protect the confidentiality of my participants during the interview by not using their names, original pseudonyms, or other identifying information.

and Clandinin (2000, p. 170) suggest procedural ethics “works against the relational negotiation” that qualitative research requires. So, it is unsurprising that my procedural ethics requirements worked better in theory than they did in practice. My procedural ethics requirements were restricting my data collection. As it was, none of my participants used names to describe their participants; thus my assumption that they would be unlikely to breach their confidentiality agreements with their own participants, was correct. Negotiating my own ethics in practice was beneficial. I learnt even in research without vulnerable participants, unexpected ethical issues could still occur.

Worth mentioning too is that I had to obtain two amendments from the ethics committee to expand my participant criteria. When I increased my participant criterion I applied to amend my sample. First, I altered the participant criterion from “people who have completed a qualitative PhD in New Zealand in the social sciences within the last 7 years” to “people who have completed data collection of a qualitative PhD in New Zealand three or more months ago, or people who had completed a qualitative PhD in New Zealand within the last 7 years.” Second, I extended the sample to include New Zealand and overseas PhD candidates and graduates. These changes made recruiting participants easier. By including participants that studied overseas, I was able to recruit participants faster. Moreover, it made managing internal confidentiality easier⁸.

Like my participants, I had my own ethical considerations and experiences. Protecting my participants’ and their participants’ identities was a huge concern in my research. The smallness of the academy, particularly the

⁸ These amendments are included in appendices 4 and 5.

New Zealand academy, means participants' identities are potentially identifiable. Researchers' PhD topics are very recognisable. To maintain confidentiality I gave all my participants' pseudonyms and also changed their PhD topic. Additionally, I have altered factors such as gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and study discipline. I have also omitted the institutions the researchers studied and worked at. Not all the participants have had the same details altered: the details that have been altered vary, as does the degree to which the details have been varied. Being unclear about what details I have blurred for each participant helps maintain participants' confidentiality.

At times in my analysis I have had to quote or paraphrase participants' stories to give context to an ethical dilemma. It is important to note the details in the stories may not actually be true because the PhD topic has been changed. What are accurate are the ethical issues discussed, and the way the researchers dealt with the issues. This information has all been changed to protect my participants, and subsequently their participants and connected-people. In Chapter Five, I document how my participants blurred their data to protect their participants. The techniques I employed to maintain confidentiality resonate with some of my participants' stories

Limitations

The most obvious limitation to this study is the small sample size, with only eleven interviews conducted, and only ten interviews thematically analysed. Clearly the small sample size means the results and data gathered from this study are not generalisable to all novice researchers using qualitative methods within the social sciences. Having said that the insights my ten participants

shared with me have signalled some important unexpected ethical issues that may arise. Their sharing can start preparing emerging researchers for some potential unexpected issues getting in and along in research sites.

Another limitation is related to recruitment. The aim of the research was to investigate how PhD students dealt with unexpected ethical issues when in the field. Therefore, PhD graduates or candidates that did not experience unexpected ethical issues may not have desired to participate, or may have felt as though the research was not relevant to them. Thus, the voices of novice researchers whose ethics in practice was smooth may be underrepresented.

4. Negotiating Gatekeepers

The six researchers based in education sites – Gina, Nick, Jules, Harry, Lexi and Miranda – I interviewed had varying experiences with different institutional and non-institutional gatekeepers. The other four informants – Olive, Edward, Wendy, and Rachel - researched in non-education settings; mainly they had to negotiate non-institutional gatekeepers.

The six education-based researchers negotiated with core institutional gatekeepers such as Board of Trustees, principals, wardens, school secretaries, and classroom teachers. The education researchers had to negotiate with institution officials before getting access to the school research sites and the pool of potential participants. They used a variety of different techniques to convince gatekeepers they should be allowed access to the participants: either students or teachers.

The four non-education based researchers negotiated with non-institutional gatekeepers. These gatekeepers included facilitators, mutual people or key informants, elite club leaders such as sports clubs, and university academics.

Noteworthy, Lexi and Nick, two of the education based researchers, also negotiated with non-institutional gatekeepers including patriarchal male relatives and paternal gatekeepers such as university residence masters respectively.

This chapter contrasts institutional and non-institutional gatekeepers. Institutional gatekeepers were foreseen, identifiable, and mostly easy to get to. Researchers in education sites expected gatekeepers; thus were prepared to deal

with some of the gatekeeping issues. Contrastingly, non-institutional gatekeepers were unforeseen and difficult to identify. Mainly, researchers were unprepared for dealing with non-institutional gatekeepers.

This chapter documents the four strategies the researchers used to negotiate access to these research sites. First, researchers learnt to bargain with their gatekeepers by figuring out what the gatekeepers would allow prior to approaching them requesting access to participants. The two resources the researchers needed to negotiate with gatekeepers were benefit and legitimacy. They had to make sure the research benefited gatekeepers. Also, the researchers were required to justify the legitimacy of the proposed research.

Second, negotiating access was flexible, with researchers often forced to change their original research goal or ethically approved methodology to better suit gatekeepers' expectations or assumptions of the research. Often time restraints and/or small sample numbers dictated these methodological changes.

A third strategy the researchers used involved a go-between to facilitate access and begin conversation with gatekeepers. Usually this go-between was someone both the gatekeeper and researcher trusted. At times this go-between had the power to act as a gatekeeper if they so desired.

A fourth strategy these researchers used involved circumventing the gatekeepers. This involved researching in sites that either did not have a gatekeeper, or researching in a site that researchers already had access to. While this strategy was preferred by many of the researchers (Olive, Gina, Edward, Rachel, Nick), only Olive successfully achieved it.

Institutional Gatekeepers

Institutional gatekeepers govern education research sites. Coyne (2010), Coyne et al. (2009), and Tilley, Killins, and Van Oosten (2005) all discovered research involving children is likely to involve institutional gatekeepers. My participants' experiences resonated with these scholars. Gina, Harry, Miranda, and Jules researched in primary and secondary schools, while Nick and Lexi researched within universities. Nick wanted to research in schools but gatekeepers denied him access. Each of their stories, presented here as case studies reveal the complexity of the four strategies.

Gina

Gina studied how teachers used technology in their classrooms. She gained ethics committee approval to survey over 400 teachers in urban and rural areas, observe teachers in their classrooms, and interview teachers. The planned project was reasonably time consuming for classroom teachers; consequently Gina had to re-evaluate the amount of time she needed from teachers to get past the gatekeepers and access her potential pool of participants.

Gina: I think I ended up with 67 survey forms back [out of 400-500] and you can't do anything with that other than some very basic demographic stuff and even then it's dodgy. So my mixed methods study which I had written about painstakingly in my methodology section [of the ethics approval] evolved into a mainly qualitative study with some data that was collected quantitatively but not analysed as such.

Wanat (2008) and Tilley et al. (2009) explain school gatekeepers are more likely to approve research if they see benefit or value in the research proposal, either for themselves, or for the research site. Gina's original research was too time-consuming and did not benefit the school gatekeepers. Despite her best efforts to

ensure data was collected in a timely fashion, school gatekeepers did not distribute the surveys, as the demand on teachers was already high.

Gina: The paperwork for teaching is phenomenal. The workload is phenomenal. And then you get someone in who says I want you to keep a journal. I want to sit in your class and observe, you to fill out a survey...Plus they have their own professional development activities and Lord know what else. You say you're from the University and sorry. You can't get past the gatekeepers

Gina was unable to get past the school gatekeepers who were protecting their employees' valuable time. Gina was left with no choice but to change the mixed methodology to a simple qualitative methodology. Low response rates proved her undoing.

Gina's next strategy was to rework her survey but she described encountering the same problems.

Gina: I knew I had a problem. A school rang me up and said, we've got your questionnaires here, well our teachers are too busy, do you want them back or do you want them binned? I've probably had many willing teachers out there but the forms did not get distributed. They were binned...[I negotiated that] just by sending out forms with covering letters saying what I would like to do and making sure the survey was as simple and as easy to do as possible I suppose. However, I made sure there was lots of white space and it looked attractive, and it looked like you could just tick, tick, tick, tick. Small bit for a qualitative sentence there and a small bit for a qualitative sentence there. So very, very basic.

After failing to convince gatekeepers her original project and methodology were worthwhile or beneficial, Gina learnt how to get into schools. Her research needed to be more time efficient for her participants.

Gina: They [school gatekeepers] just don't want to know about it. You say you're from the University and sorry. You can't get past the gatekeepers ...they are very effective. Instead you say I am, your name, I am from the university. I have some research I would like to do in the school. It involves no teacher participation whatsoever. And suddenly the doors open a bit... You learn how to get in. They don't want to add to their workload. So if you want to do something, it's not going to take up a lot of time with the kids, it's not going to disrupt their routine, they are more likely to help.

Principals, it appears, do not want their teachers to have heavier workloads than they already do, as that may compromise their teaching ability. Yet this questions principals' faith in teachers' autonomy, time management, and decision-making skills. Do teachers really require gatekeepers to act on their behalf? Bredeson (2000) argues a principal's role is to support and encourage teachers, but not to act as a gatekeeper. In hindsight, Gina identified getting past the gatekeepers faster, or circumventing them completely, would have improved the research journey for her. While Gina did eventually complete her PhD the gatekeeping problems slowed down her progress.

Wanat (2008) advises researchers that the fewer gatekeepers there are to negotiate and get past, the easier getting into research sites will be. Gina's advice for budding researchers is similar to Wanat's: circumvent gatekeepers where possible. However she acknowledged avoiding gatekeepers is sometimes impossible; she concedes using a facilitator or key informant may help researchers get into sites when circumvention is not an option.

Gina: if you have several friends who are teachers you could have a word with them who could maybe smooth the waters for you.

In sum, Gina effectively conducted research by negotiating with gatekeepers about the time the research would take and the legitimacy it would have. Gina altered her methodology, relying solely on qualitative interviews, to better suit the gatekeepers' expectations. None of this renegotiation was part of her original ethics application and research design. While Gina successfully got in past the gatekeepers she acknowledged it would have been useful to have a facilitator or mutual person to get her into the schools. Gina had to employ two strategies to

get past the gatekeepers: negotiating time, legitimacy, and methodological changes.

Harry

Harry also researched in schools: migrant children's experiences when moving schools. His research involved observing and interviewing several students as they transitioned from primary to secondary school. Mostly, Harry's project was based on participant observation in classrooms, but he also interviewed children, had informal conversations with classroom teachers and children's parents, and spoke with afterschool facilities the children attended. After obtaining ethical approval unproblematically, Harry had to get past primary school principals, Boards of Trustees, classroom teachers, and children's parents to access his participants. Using a key informant or facilitator to get past the initial gatekeepers was fruitful.

Harry: There was a key person who got me into the schools, that was the deputy principal. He was responsible for organising transfer students, but he was the link within the school. He then introduced me to other people, teachers that the child would have through that year...The parents are facilitators, and the gatekeepers are the people the schools have delegated responsibility to. So the principal is the key person... it is better to have somebody else who is supportive of the idea who has spoken with whoever you want to sign the piece of paper at the bottom.

Harry found having a facilitator, such as the deputy principal and parents, enabled Harry to gain the principal's approval. Harry's research site changed part way through the projects as children transitioned from primary school to secondary school; hence Harry had to renegotiate the existing, happening research with new school gatekeepers. Harry's participants did not decide which secondary schools they would attend until the project was underway. While

negotiating this research site transition could have been extremely problematic, the key informants made the process smooth.

Contrary to Coyne et al.'s (2009) warning, Harry's child participants' parents did not act as gatekeepers. In fact, participants' parents were the best port of call when Harry needed help getting past the secondary school gatekeepers. Mostly the parents had existing relationships with school principals so they knew whom Harry should contact.

Harry: it was a matter of finding out [what secondary school they would attend], and the trying to get a key name, usually a parent gave one, who I should best approach.

Although parents had the power to act as gatekeepers, they actually were key informants who facilitated entry. They introduced Harry to key people within the school who helped Harry negotiate the new appropriate gatekeepers. Harry attributed his success getting into secondary schools to the parents' assistance, as they were supportive of the research and pushed the schools for it to continue. Yet getting in was only one of many gatekeeping issues Harry faced in secondary schools.

Once principals had approved the research, Harry needed to recruit the classroom teachers. Rogers (1997) explains teachers are gatekeepers of their classrooms. Harry had many conversations with classroom teachers negotiating when classroom observations could take place.

Harry: the agreement was with the classroom teacher who would ask when are you coming back next? And I say, I'll come back in four weeks so you sort of negotiate that or she might say oh, it's a really mucky week that week come back the following one after. So you negotiate that at that level... You are continually doing that.

In this case, Harry negotiated his time spent in the classroom with the teachers, weeks in advance. Both the classroom teacher and students knew what Harry

was planning on doing because Harry communicated well with research stakeholders. This constant negotiation allowed Harry to build a productive relationship with the classroom teachers.

Harry's education qualifications helped gain access. Most of the time Harry was seen as a resource, so teachers were happy to have him in the classroom. Harry would likely agree with Wanat's (2008, p. 201) claim: "If gatekeepers thought a project would benefit them, they would more likely cooperate."

Harry: [A teacher] expressed that she was finding things difficult and she wanted to be a bit more directive in using my support in the classroom. I'm happy to do that if that was a way of building a bridge. I'll help where I can.

He found a good relationship with the migrant children's classroom teachers allowed him to easily gain and maintain access to classrooms. Harry made his teaching expertise available to help the teacher, while conducting classroom observations. Harry's skills were beneficial to the classroom teacher allowing him to successfully avoid any major gate closing and complete his PhD.

If gatekeepers and researchers have mutual or shared goals, research is likely to run smoothly. Harry successfully got in and along by making research beneficial to gatekeepers, participants, and research sites. Unlike Gina who was forced to change her research a number of times, Harry employed benefit negotiation successfully: his skill set opened doors.

Jules

Jules' research was more sensitive than Gina's or Harry's. This led to a change of research design from the outset. Jules studied racially disadvantaged students at school. Her original research plan was an ethnography, which included

participant observation at school events, and interviews with teachers, parents, and students. Yet Jules' experience with the ethics committees was frustrating. They stymied her project; the ethics committee was a gatekeeper from the outset of the research forcing her to change her methodology to gain ethics approval.

Jules: The committee was concerned I was going to be observing people who will be unaware of it ... I said I'm not going anywhere that I haven't been invited, it isn't even the bit of the research I'm most interested in, most of it is about the interviews. These events I want to go to are public events that anyone can go to and it isn't viable to ask consent from everyone that walks in if I end up at a school concert. However the school will put out a notice in the newsletter about my potential research, if you want to, meet her and have a conversation. ... They were unhappy about the observations which were the least important but I had included it because I was setting up the observations as a possibility even though I wasn't sure I was going to do them, but it would have been unethical not to say that I might do them, and I needed to take in what was going on around the place when I was talking to people. So I thought if they don't want me to include that [observations] I can live with it... The committee didn't like the methodology or didn't understand it and they contested it... what they had debated was the research not the ethical issues.

Haggerty (2004, p. 394) explains "bureaucratic oversight" sometimes block ethics committees' primary goal: to ensure participants are protected from harm. This "bureaucratic oversight" is present in Jules' story. The ethics committee assessing Jules' procedural ethics seemed more concerned with reviewing Jules' research methodology than the ethical issues that were likely to arise during the research process itself. Jules experienced "ethics creep" (Haggerty, 2004), as procedural ethics was not solely about protecting participants, but rather evaluating the research methodology and process. The ethics committee's power (Turner & Webb, 2012) over Jules' research was too much for her to overcome and in response Jules adopted a non-ethnographic method. Disappointingly, Jules was left with no choice but to abandon participant observations and rely on interview data alone.

However, this was not the end of the gatekeeping. After Jules gained ethics approval she employed the negotiation strategy: negotiating benefits of the project with the school gatekeepers.

Jules: the first school I called said yes come in and go! They had lots of interest because in education there is a lot of stuff about what teachers should do and how they can manage stuff. It is easy to not hear things because of the medium it's heard through. So the school was very encouraging.

One of Jules' foci was on communication mediums within schools. The principal was exceptionally positive about the research proposal and Jules hoped this positivity would transfer into smooth access to areas of the school. Tilley et al. (2009) suggest building a positive relationship with gatekeepers can smooth the research journey. Disappointingly for Jules, this did not happen. While Jules found getting into the school initially easy, getting along in the school was more complicated. The principal was keen for Jules to conduct research but did not help Jules form relationships with other members of the school that she needed. Further complications arose when the principal who approved her research went on sabbatical. The replacement principal did not share his enthusiasm for the project. This change of personnel made it difficult for Jules to smoothly get along once in the research site.

Jules: the principal was a gatekeeper for me right from the design. I wanted to get past him to the teaching staff, to the BOT, and have a direct relationship. Neither of those things have I been able to achieve and some of that is based on how schools work, and part of it because of the [original] principal. The principal could have made it happen but that was problematic. Also, he went on a sabbatical for the first term of my research and so I had to go in and he clearly hadn't shared his thinking with other people. He emailed three days before term began and told me he was away for 3 months and so I didn't feel I could turn up on the first day [to recruit participants]. I emailed back and said I'll leave it a week and then I'll try and talk to the acting principal. I did that. They were clearly struggling and really not that interested, lovely but not on the same page. They said you better talk to the staff come to the staff

meetings and I could talk for 5 minutes. I turned up early and had a chat to some teachers, some teachers I knew and that was when I put it out there. There was a lot of anxiety and upset because the whole school had to be reorganised at short notice.

Jules' methodology was stalled when the original school principal disappeared. Her research plan, time management, teacher and parent participant recruitment strategy, and whom she communicated with about the schools' activities were all negatively affected. Jules was compelled to adjust the original research plans with very little time to make any adjustments that were needed.

Reshuffling the school meant Jules' project made school staff anxious and upset, yet Jules had tried to pre-empt these feelings by making connections within the school prior to research beginning. Unfortunately, when the original gatekeeper left, Jules had to re-establish trust and relationships with upset staff members.

After three months Jules had to negotiate another transition: the original principal (here after returned principal) returned from sabbatical and once again became the school gatekeeper. All the contact she had with the acting principal disappeared and she was back to negotiating with the original gatekeeper. This unplanned, awkward changing of gatekeepers extended Jules' gatekeeping issues. While the original principal was helpful and permitted Jules to conduct research, when he returned from sabbatical he was nonchalant about helping Jules' get along with other gatekeepers within the school, such as classroom teachers (Rogers, 1997). Jules needed teachers' and returned principal's approval to access children for interviews: both gatekeepers were unhelpful here.

Although the gatekeepers' help was varied, conversing with the returned principal was useful because Jules knew her project was something the school wanted. Wanat (2008) contends researchers will likely gain gatekeepers' approval if they see merit in the project.

Jules: I had long conversations with the [returned] principal trying to get a sense of things and trying to work out so it would be useful to the school and to me. That process was a lot harder. He just kept saying oh whatever you want and I couldn't get him to concentrate to me it was important...But I really struggled to get him to pay that kind of attention...I emailed him saying this is what I've thought and he said that's fine that's fine. He was very blasé about the whole thing.

On one hand, she struggled to get the returned principal to focus on specific aspects of the research. Jules stumbled her way through school systems. On the other hand, the long conversation about the project with the principal meant Jules was permitted to do whatever she wanted which had advantages and disadvantages. Part of Jules' original methodology included interviews with children. Unfortunately the returned principal did not understand the ethics of interviewing children. His attitude was indifferent towards Jules' ethical requirements.

Although Jules constantly reminded the returned principal that she needed his cooperation and assistance to recruit child participants ethically, he did not cooperate.

Jules: there was so much stuff to set up, I kept trying to say to the principal I need to get this started now if it is going to happen and I wanted them in the third term ideally. I can't be dragging it on forever. And it just never happened he was away a lot so it never happened. I emailed them at the end of year and said I've chatted with my supervisors and we can't make this happen we need to reconsider the children.

Regrettably Jules failed to gain the principals' cooperation and get the interviews with children off the ground. Jules was forced to alter her methodology: she

relied solely on interview with school staff members, school connected-people, and parents.

Wanat (2008) warns researchers that the fewer gatekeepers, the easier the research journey will likely be. Unfortunately before beginning the project, Jules was unaware how gatekeeping access to her participants could slow the research process. Eventually Jules had to begin interviewing other people, such as Ministry workers, and social workers, who were connected to the school but did not require the principal's approval.

Jules: I waited a month but then I decided I couldn't waste any more time so I started talking with people who come into the school who are outside the school.

Although the returned principal wanted the research to go ahead, he was not proactive, or even reactive, with helping Jules get the project underway, partly because he was not aware of the limitations that research ethics, the original gatekeeper, placed on research. Unfortunately, like Hay and Israel (2006) caution, gatekeeping cost Jules irreplaceable amounts of time. At the time of interviewing Jules was still on track for successfully completing her PhD, however it was taking her longer than expected.

Nick

Unlike Jules', Nick's experience with the ethics committee was very positive. The ethics committee approved Nick's qualitative study; however Nick failed to gain approval from a range of gatekeepers. Nick studied first year university students' perspectives of legal highs. His original plan was to interview forty final-year, secondary school students over their summer break before they began university. Recruiting students while they were at school would have been more

time efficient, allowing Nick to interview over the summer holidays, but school gatekeepers disallowed Nick to recruit during examination time.

Nick: Most schools would say call back tomorrow, then when you called back the next day they would say call next week. So I went down to a few schools as well, talked with principals. Initially right in front of you they would say yeah sure, that would be good, but then later they would say no you can't do it now. They would often say, why are you doing this to the kids? Can't you just leave them alone?

Nick found paternalistic school gatekeepers were not originally blunt, but did become quite rude when they did shut the research proposal down.

Nick: One principal actually shouted at me and said leave these final year students alone. So then I had to change my strategy. I wanted to have the same objective of the research but I needed a new strategy. Of all the schools only one was willing to participate.

Nick was unable to get past paternalistic school gatekeepers so left with no choice but to change his ethically approved methodology.

Nick decided to recruit students in orientation week of semester one through the university's hall of residences. He consulted with the masters of the residences, trying to find a strategy to recruit enough participants in just one week. Speaking at mealtimes would allow Nick to advertise his study to a large number of potential participants at once.

Originally the university residence gatekeepers approved the research but later prohibited Nick from recruiting on site at mealtimes. Once again, like Wanat (2008) warns, multiple gatekeepers can cause research delays. Thus, had Nick no choice but to reconsider his methodology again.

Nick: I changed strategy again [a second change] and used survey monkey to recruit through the university database system. But it's not straightforward because if you want to do that you need to get approval from the director of university accommodation...but yep he was okay with it.

Nick was able to access participants through the accommodation services director, who approved Nick's research immediately.

Unfortunately residence wardens prohibited Nick from getting along by disallowing interviews to be conducted at residences. And as many of Nick's students were new to the area, finding a convenient interview location was difficult.

Nick: the problem was some hall of residences didn't allow me to do it there. They said, no you need to find a central place, for some personal reason, I don't know why. So in some places I had to travel [quite a distance]. I remember walking down in the rain, thunderstorms.

Nick was under time constraints. He needed to complete interviews before first semester lectures began, meaning he had one week to recruit and interview all 40 participants. Residence masters were open to the research, and supported their students being participants, but disallowed access on a technicality.

It is important to note not all residence wardens were hindrances for Nick. Some wardens were willing to help, so long as, like Wanat (2008) suggest, they got something in return.

Nick: a few hall of residence masters were pretty keen for the project but said they didn't want a project unless they got a report afterwards.

Nick was permitted to conduct interviews with participants in the residential halls if he exchanged his final findings with the gatekeepers: at the time of my interviewing Nick still needed to do this. Slack and Vigurs (2006) warn that institutional gatekeepers may push their own agendas onto researchers reframing benefits by bargaining for new research goals or aims to come out of pre-existing ethically approved research. A report for residence wardens was not part of Nick's original research plan.

Nick negotiated with five gatekeepers and these gatekeepers caused Nick to rethink his recruitment strategy three times.

Nick: Right department approval, ethics and Māori consultation, principals, director of university accommodation and the hall of residence masters...I had to go back to ethics...three times but I think that if you are doing amendments it's a fast track. It doesn't really take much time, but whatever you do, you actually have to tell them.

Although Nick defined the ethics committee as a gatekeeper, his experiences with them were straightforward. Each time the methodology changed, Nick had to write to the ethics committee for an amendment, which further halted the research process.

The school principals were protective of the students during exam time and the university residence masters were risk adverse. Against all odds, Nick did accomplish 40 interviews with first year students during the first few weeks of semester one. Although, the extensive gatekeeping meant his interviewing period was exceedingly limited in time. At present, Nick is awaiting confirmation of his PhD.

Nick eventually negotiated gatekeepers; but he had to make severe methodological changes to get in and get along with gatekeepers. Like Gina and Jules, Nick found revamping the methodology aided in successfully gain gatekeepers' approval of research. Similar to Gina, Nick discovered avoiding or circumventing gatekeepers when possible was ideal.

Miranda

Sieber and Tolich (2013) argue the camera adds ten pounds of ethics. In Miranda's study of secondary school performances the camera added fifty pounds of ethics and the burden was too great for the project. Miranda's

research investigated how gender norms were reinforced in school performances. Her research methodology was ethnography of three different schools. It entailed in-depth interviews with students, participant observation at performance rehearsals and concerts, and photographs. Miranda wanted students to photograph aspects of school performances, such as set design, costumes, and dress rehearsals.

Turner and Webb's (2012) suggest ethics committees gate-keep research by granting conditional approval, and cost researchers valuable time. This was very true for Miranda. It took her six months to gain ethics approval, as the committee was concerned photographs were too identifying.

Miranda: the main thing to do with the ethics committee was to do with the photographs... the performance attire, is readily identifiable, so I had to go back and disguise, and put in clauses, like that I had to disguise people's costumes and all that...photos are seen as more readily able to identify people than transcripts like interviews.

Miranda did finally obtained ethics approval for a somewhat tricky research methodology; editing photos and removing identifying details would protect her participants. But despite gaining ethics committee approval, school gatekeepers were hesitant about the photo methodology as they believed even edited photos would be too identifying. Miranda negotiated the photos successfully with the first gatekeeper, but unsuccessfully with the second. Thus Miranda changed the methodology to get the school gatekeepers' approval.

Miranda: the photographs seemed to be a bit of a sticking point. I approached all schools in a particular site and I couldn't get anyone to agree because of the issues of photos, so I had to abandon that method. I had to abandon the photos.

Once she abandoned the problematic photographs, gatekeepers allowed Miranda to conduct the research. She observed three different schools' performances over

a nine-month period, conducting interviews with members of the performances, observing rehearsals and attending the actual events.

Getting in was not the only gatekeeping issue Miranda faced. Wanat (2008) warns gatekeepers can be forgetful. Miranda experienced one-off gatekeeper forgetfulness during the observation part of data collection. They reneged on their promise to inform students about the research leaving Miranda with unexpected issues to negotiate.

Miranda: I had information sheets for participants that I had drawn up to for three schools. But in one school the principal said that she would send this home with the students but she never got around to it and I didn't realise that and I went to the school performance and conducted observations there and had some people some students coming up to me and saying what are you doing here? I relied heavily on what my supervisors said, because I was just a novice... but I decided with in consultation with my two supervisors that because they did know when I went to gather participants that I was doing a study on the school performance that they would have some idea what I was doing there.

When the principal of one secondary school first approved the research, they allowed Miranda to speak at a school assembly to inform the students she would be observing the performances. Hence, a majority of the students would have been informed about the research Miranda was undertaking. Unfortunately this gatekeeper later reneged on their promise to give the Participant Information Sheet to students to take home, and also forgot to inform Miranda the students had not been given the Participant Information Sheet.

Not all of the students seemed aware of Miranda's invitation at the assembly. Perhaps the gatekeeper was either unaware or nonchalant about Miranda's ethical requirements. Either way the gatekeeper's forgetfulness to distribute the Participant Information Sheet meant Miranda had to question whether the using the participant observation data was ethical. Informed

consent and voluntary participation were questionable. Did Miranda need the consent of all the students who may be observed? If yes, then if all the students watching the school performance had not read the Participant Information Sheet, was relying on the information Miranda presented at the school assembly enough? What if the students had been absent that day? What if they had misunderstood the research goals when Miranda was talking? These were all questions Miranda needed to answer.

Batchelor and Briggs (1994) recommend collaborating with advisors can aid researchers when deciding whether or not to use the data that has been collected when informed consent is questionable. After discussing the situation with her supervisors Miranda included observation data in her final PhD, as after reminding the participants of Miranda's invitation at assembly, most of the students did seem aware of Miranda's research. Miranda was able to draw on their expertise as she had limited experience of her own.

Miranda's strategy to negotiate gatekeepers mainly involved altering her methodology: she abandoned the photographs. Miranda's story articulates how important gatekeepers' approval, and on-going cooperation, is to research. Not only do researchers need to get in past the gatekeepers but also often they need constant cooperation from the gatekeepers to successfully get along in the research site and complete ethical research.

Institutional and Non-Institutional Gatekeepers

Lexi

Not all gatekeepers are hindrances. Some gatekeepers actually act as bridges or facilitators themselves. Lexi's ethically approved research was ethnographic,

exploring Hindu women's experiences at university. She had experiences with both institutional and non-institutional gatekeepers. Her project included participant observations at a Hindu women's support group, set up by Lexi to act as her research site. She also conducted interviews with 20 of the women in the group. Lexi relied on the support of the inter-faith office and the student association to ensure the Hindu women's group operated smoothly. They were accommodating and supportive of the project and did all they could to help Lexi recruit participants.

Lexi: the inter-faith office funded food for the group which was great and student association gave us a free room...I had this other guy turn up on clubs day and he said oh can I sign up? I said oh it's actually for women and he goes, oh I know but my wife's coming next year and I just want to keep getting the information, so he was like a bridge.

Without the support of the university organisations Lexi would have struggled to recruit participants. Clubs day brought a lot of participants into the project. Men and women referred Hindu women to the project. Key informants who proactively shared information were very helpful. They could have used their power to act as a gatekeeper but instead chose to pass on the information, acting as a bridge between the participant and Lexi.

But not all of Lexi's gatekeeping experiences were positive. Lexi had challenges gaining non-institutional gatekeepers' approval. Miller and Bell (2002) and Miller (1995) explain gatekeeping can occur in any forum where unequal power dynamics lie. In Lexi's research, Hindu men had more power than Hindu women. Many Hindu women did not spend much time on campus so Lexi required their husbands or relatives to pass on the research invitation. Some of these male gatekeepers were patriarchal and frank.

Lexi: The interesting thing in terms of off-campus women was that you have to go via the male students. So I was invited to talk at an interfaith meeting about the group...I'll never forget this guy he goes, "oh, I don't think our women need that, they have their husbands and children at home" and it was like, the closing on the gate...but he just wouldn't take the information. So then I started putting signs up in like New World⁹, Plunket¹⁰, the public library.

Here, the male gatekeeper immediately rejected the research on behalf of all Hindu women. Lexi had to alter her recruitment strategy: she found, less direct, ways of reaching Hindu women off-campus. Lexi circumvented the male gatekeepers and advertised the study in places she thought Hindu women might frequent. Yet it was not just non-institutional gatekeepers Lexi had to negotiate.

Lexi needed university support to conduct her project on campus but because Lexi's research area was particularly topical at that time in the media, the university support waivered. Lexi was contacted by the media about an incident relating to Hindu women's experiences at university, and spoke briefly to a journalist about her research. The news article over exaggerated Hindu women's negative experiences studying at university. After the article was published Lexi received a harsh phone call from human resources.

Lexi: I got phone calls about you shouldn't speak from human resources. It was a very ethically fraught area. Some of the data I was getting was much less than positive around policy gaps around day-to-day reality, around women's encounters with racism, just sort every day, and also really happy stories as well so it wasn't just negative but yeah it sort of became a tension within in me. Do I talk about this or do I not? And I became very angry actually and I felt I have an obligation to speak up because these people can't.

Haggerty (2004) argues bureaucratic oversight is colonising institutions. In Lexi's story, the university bureaucracy was concerned with protecting the institution's reputation.

⁹ New World is a supermarket chain within New Zealand.

¹⁰ Plunket is a health care provider for children under five in New Zealand.

Lexi felt conflicted. On one hand she really wanted and needed the university's support, otherwise they may have removed the Hindu women's support group; also she did not want the research to negatively reflect on them. On the other hand, Lexi felt obliged to stand up for her participants. She had power to stand against racism that her participants did not have. Her priority was accurately representing data and Hindu women's experiences. Eventually she was able to calm the storm by apologising to human resources, and the issue blew over. After four years, Lexi successfully completed her PhD and the women's support group, after a short break, continued running. While Lexi did complete in a timely way, the issues with gatekeeping were exhausting and emotionally stressful for her: they slowed her research journey.

Overall, Lexi's strategy to negotiated gatekeepers involved changing her recruitment process. She circumvented patriarchal male gatekeepers by extending her recruitment areas. Lexi found less direct ways of reaching her potential participants that did not require gatekeepers.

Commonalities

All the researchers in education environments had fundamental, institutional gatekeepers while getting in and along. Miranda altered her methodology, and Harry negotiated benefit with gatekeepers. Gina, Nick, Lexi, and Jules employed two strategies to get past gatekeepers: negotiating benefit and legitimacy, and changing methodologies.

Negotiating Benefit

Like Tilley et al. (2009) and Wanat (2008) suggested if researchers could negotiate benefit or legitimacy with gatekeepers they were likely to get access to

participants and research sites. Harry, Jules, and Nick had successful experiences negotiating benefit with gatekeepers. Harry offered his help in the classroom. Nick agreed to provide a summary of his about students' perceptions and usage of legal highs to residence wardens. Jules' gatekeepers also asked her to share where improved communication was needed within the school. But it may be worth questioning how voluntary participants' consent is if gatekeepers have external motivation in the research. Miller and Bell (2002) and Coyne (2010) agree gatekeepers can coerce participants into participating, particularly if the research is beneficial to them. For example, if Nick's gatekeepers benefited from the research, would the gatekeeper be inclined to coerce participants into participants because the gatekeeper had something to gain from the project? Mainly, negotiating institutional gatekeepers was achievable but time-consuming.

Unfortunately, Gina and Nick ineffectively convinced gatekeepers the research was beneficial or worth participants' time and Lexi was unable to convince the male Hindu gatekeepers her project was beneficial. Their inability to effectively negotiate with these gatekeepers drastically slowed Nick, Gina, and Lexi's recruitment. Gina, Nick, and Lexi experienced paternal gatekeepers. These gatekeepers were overprotective of classroom teachers, adult students, and adult women, respectively. Researchers failed to communicate how important their ethical obligations were to gatekeepers. Miranda, Nick, and Jules had gatekeepers that were unaware of their ethical requirements. Miranda had to contemplate whether her observations could be used after the gatekeeper forgot to distribute the information sheet to participants, and Jules had to forgo interviews with children after the gatekeeper failed to set up pathways for her to

gain parents' consent. Nick's gatekeepers disallowed university residences to be used as recruitment or interview sites. These gatekeepers' actions dramatically delayed Jules, Nick, and Miranda's research projects and posed unexpected issues for the novice researchers to deal with.

Changing Methodologies

Slack and Vigurs (2006) believe gatekeepers can push their own agendas onto researchers, making researchers alter research goals, before giving them access to a site. Interestingly, renegotiating ethically approved methodologies often allowed researchers to gain access to research sites and participants; although researchers did have to apply to ethics committees for amendments, thus recruitment was, again, delayed. Nick altered his methodology three times. Instead of recruiting participants at secondary schools, or at university residence meal times, he eventually found participants through online surveys of the university student database. Miranda removed the photos from her study and relied solely on interviews with performing arts students and participant observations of school performances and rehearsals. After the ethics committee rejected her bid to conduct participant observations of school events, Jules removed the ethnographic aspects of her school-based project and relied only on interviews with teachers, parents, and school ministry and social workers. Gina resorted to qualitative interviews when schools refused to distribute her surveys. Renegotiating methodologies was time consuming and frustrating for researchers, however it did allow them to get past the gatekeepers.

Differences

It is worth noting not all gatekeepers hinder researchers from accessing participants. Lexi had positive experiences with bridging key informants who proactively passed on recruitment information to potential women. Also contradicting Tilley et al. (2009) and Gunsalus (2004), participants did not always define ethics committees as gatekeepers. Half of the education-based researchers did not have major difficulties getting through procedural ethics.

Despite researching in schools all researchers, except Harry, chose to interview people over 16 years old. Perhaps this made gaining ethics approval faster, as parental consent was not required. Also worth noting is the lack of difficulty Harry had getting parental consent for interviewing children. Harry's experiences with parents were quite the opposite of what Wanat (2008) and Coyne et al. (2009) suggested: exceptionally trouble free. The parents were remarkably positive about the research and happily approved children's participation.

Non-Institutional Gatekeepers

Gatekeepers come in various shapes and sizes. Schools and universities all have seemingly obvious gatekeepers to surpass. Other non-institutional sites, particularly in tightly knit, small communities have imperceptible gatekeepers; some of whom researchers did not expect to encounter. Miller and Bell (2002) and Coyne (2010) explain gatekeeping can occur in non-institutional research sites. Whenever there are unequal power relationships, gatekeepers will likely be present. Olive, Rachel, Edward, and Wendy researched in non-education sites.

These researchers had different gatekeepers or key informants, including elite sports club leaders, academics, or industry people, to get past and get along with.

Wendy¹¹

Wendy studied how Filipinos' ethnicity affected their identity. Her ethically approved research plan involved conducting interviews with Filipino men and women living in poverty in North America. She conducted 23 interviews with Filipinos from San Antonio, Houston, and Chicago. Although Wendy's participants were non-vulnerable adults and reasonably accessible, she still used a key informant's help to gain access. Before Wendy went to Texas for three months, she made contact with an organisation over there that helped her find participants.

Wendy: In Houston I had a contact and a name that ran organisations and from there it was snowballing...I had to be a bit persistent with chasing things up. I think I came back [to Chicago] from Texas with one or two names. You just need one name and that's enough.

The smallness of the Filipino community meant snowball sampling worked even between states; her participants sped up the recruitment process. For Wendy, the key informant and participants themselves were bridging gatekeepers: exceptionally helpful, providing Wendy with information about how to find and access participants in her sample sites. But not all of Wendy's gatekeeping experiences were positive.

Unpredictably, Wendy had to negotiate with high status members of the community, including the elite sports club leaders of a Filipino Football club, and Filipino academics working in America: these leaders had vast social prestige –

¹¹ Wendy and her participants are highly identifiable. For this reason I have kept to the spirit of what she said rather than citing her verbatim. Also her research location and research topic have been widely altered.

something that is paramount within the Filipino culture. Although the sports leaders and academics were not institutional gatekeepers, the cultural context and hierarchy meant these gatekeepers could have strongly discouraged Filipinos from participating in the research. Like Wendy, Miller and Bell (2002) and Coyne (2010) found non-institutional research environments with cultural power dynamics may produce gatekeepers. Particularly, noteworthy is the unpredictability of academic gatekeepers, usually a group of people who are pro-research. One might assume academics would be favourable towards research not gatekeepers of research, thus making these gatekeepers even more unpredictable.

These high status academics and sport leaders had legitimate concerns about how Wendy's research may reify some problematic ideas about Filipinos living in America. Wendy constantly discussed her research with local Filipinos, including the gatekeepers and other locals she befriended whilst living in San Antonio and Houston. She reassured them she was not reiterating problematic ideas about the American environment.

Wendy: at that point a lot of people had been coming over making documentaries, writing articles, and also on the end of the immigration reform. So there was a feeling that America was being constructed as safe haven. I really did not want to perpetuate this at all. Like people would say to me why can't you research our festivals? Do you have to do research on Filipino immigration? It's not what we want. And this was an ethical dilemma because at that point I had to decide who this work represented. No poor Filipino immigrant said we don't want you to do this research.

Wendy's participants, and other Filipino immigrants wanted the research done; however most of the wealthy Filipino community in Texas did not. Slack and Vigurs (2006) argue gatekeepers can influence research goals. This was tested in Wendy's research, however she did not let the wealthy Filipino gatekeepers

impact her research aims. Early on, Wendy figured out what the goals of her research were and whom the research represented. In other words, Wendy negotiated the legitimacy of her research with non-institutional gatekeepers. Overall, Wendy knew her research needed to represent the voices of her participants.

Wendy: But who am I representing? I'm not representing the wealthy Filipino population I'm representing a group that is somewhat marginalised and it is important to remember that is who I am representing. Once I worked that out it was a lot easier.

Wendy negotiated the issues the gatekeepers had through constant conversation with them. Her research represented the views of Filipino immigrants, not local white Americans' views; remembering that made negotiating with wealthy Filipino gatekeepers easier.

Wendy had to remember what the overall goals were and whom her project was representing. Contrary to the Texan gatekeepers' beliefs, Wendy's research did not focus on issues involving gang activity. The extended Texan communities all assumed because Wendy's research was based on immigration and poverty, the final report would include information on gang activity in the community.

Wendy: I didn't want to talk about gang workings but everyone assumed I wanted to talk about it... Other researchers had gone in and said we want to talk about gangs.

Instead, Wendy's research focused on certain themes such as how employment, religion, and westernisation had impacted her participants' identities.

For Wendy, getting in was easy but getting along with community gatekeepers was a constant challenge. Wendy negotiated the gatekeepers by conversing with them about the research goals. After negotiating and convincing

academics and sport leaders her project was valid, Wendy was able to complete her interviewing without too many hassles. Her PhD was successfully completed and she has published articles and books from the data.

Rachel

Rachel's ethics application to study New Zealand jersey cow farmers was straightforward. She planned to drive around rural New Zealand conducting interviews with farmers, and taking tours of farms. Rachel conducted 43 interviews with rural famers: she was on the road for over a month, staying in dodgy backpackers, in remote areas. Rachel used snowball sampling and researched in an area that did not involve institutional gatekeepers, although she did require some assistance getting into her site.

Using a key informant to get into the New Zealand farming industry was Rachel's main strategy for negotiating gatekeepers. Her friend knew some local jersey farmers and acted as a key informant for Rachel, assuring participants Rachel's research was valid and legitimate.

Rachel: there was a man that was part of my community group and I was telling him about my research and he was like oh I know someone who farms them. And he talked to that person and was like she's not crazy, she wants to interview you, and that kind of helped.

On one hand, Rachel discovered having a key informant could help researchers successfully access research sites. The key informant can legitimise the research and act as a bridge between researcher and participants. On the other hand, Rachel also found having mutual contacts does not always help researchers gain access to people.

Rachel: There was this guy who I bumped into a few times, he was really important in the area and I had seen him at events, I had met him, I contacted him about an interview about a couple of times but he did not

want to be interviewed by me at all, he was very sure he didn't want to be interviewed by me and I was totally fine with that but everyone would ask me have you talked to him, you need to talk to this guy, let me put you in touch with him, and I just didn't know how to deal with that exactly. I wanted to say yeah talk to him put in a good word for me because I would really like to know what he has to say but I was so worried about potentially harassing him.

Normally in research, key informants are exceptionally useful when accessing participants. However, Rachel was concerned that if too many people encouraged the same person to be part of the research, it could be coercive or harassing. Coyne et al. (2009) caution researchers that gatekeepers with power can coerce participants into partaking in research. This man was a key member of the farming community and recognised by Rachel's participants as someone who should be integral to her project. Rachel did not want the mutual people to use their collective power to pressure this person into being interviewed. He was also probably capable of discouraging other farmers from participating, so not hassling him was paramount if the project was to prosper. Perhaps fortunately the man never agreed to an interview because Rachel did not have to consider how voluntary his consent would have been. His refusal unfortunately meant Rachel missed out on the important information this man held about the jersey cow industry.

Rachel had reasonably easy access to her participants because she chose to research in an area that did not have institutional gatekeepers. Rachel did use a key informant to gain access to some participants, but mainly Rachel's gatekeeping issues were straightforward, functional, and did not affect the time it took her to complete her PhD.

Edward

Edward researched the history of sex work in New Zealand. He collated oral histories from 12 current and retired sex workers through in-depth interviews and archival analysis. Hay and Israel (2006) argue gaining ethics approval can be frustrating in qualitative research. While Edward's project did get ethics approval, he found obtaining approval irritating.

Edward: You fill in the paper work, I'm very aware, I had been doing years of advocacy with sex workers, I was very aware of the ethical issues I knew that I was walking into an ethical minefield with some of the people I was talking to but it's just a piece of paper...But it was a completely detached process. You send it off. I think I had a couple of things to change. Like a comma here, you know it felt a little bit like, we can't let an ethics thing go through without having something to change and then you're on your way.

Edward felt the process of obtaining ethics approval did not endorse ethical thinking. While he was very aware his research had some massive ethical issues to be mindful of, acquiring ethics approval did not help him think these through.

The lack of gatekeepers in Edward's research was surprising. Edward's 'sensitive' research required access to two separate sources of information: archives and participants. Scholars (Emmel, Hughes, Greenhalgh, & Sales, 2007; Heath, Charles, Crow, & Wiles, 2007; Moore & Miller, 1999) suggest gatekeepers are mostly found in groups with 'vulnerable' participants. Yet, ironically, Edward did not experience non-institutional gatekeepers of participants, despite having a 'sensitive' research topic and 'vulnerable' participants. Rather, Edward had connections to the sex work industry already. Fortunately this enabled Edward to access his participants without gatekeepers.

But accessing the archives was not as simple. The archives Edward required were slightly harder to find: they were not in any library collections or

online. Thankfully, Edward's previous advocacy work with sex workers meant he knew a key informant who had access to some archives. The key informant, who could have acted as a gatekeeper, from Prostitute's Collective allowed happily gave Edward access to the archives he required.

Edward: I went to Auckland, there's an organisation called Prostitute's Collective and head of that at the time said that she had a few archives, and I walked into her garage and she had three filing cabinets full.

Edward's previous connections with Prostitute's Collective meant the key informant, who could have acted as a gatekeeper, was happy for Edward to be doing the research. Hallowell, Lawton, and Gregory (2004) explain being an insider can help gain participants' cooperation and trust, making data collection easier. The key informant trusted Edward, as did the sex workers. Edward's previous advocacy work allowed him to directly contact potential participants, making recruitment uncomplicated. In the past, researchers had really mistreated sex workers so Edward was particularly careful and protective of his participants.

While Edward was able to surpass gatekeepers effortlessly, he himself was constantly thinking like a gatekeeper: he did not want to harm his participants.

Edward: I got into the community because I already know the community but I know other people who have tried to do research in the sex work community and nope...I was working with a population that had been fucked over so many times by researchers... my ethical practice of working with sex workers just had to be way above the bar because they have been fucked over too many times already.

Edward worked incredibly hard to conduct ethically sound research. He did not want to further destroy sex workers' trust in researchers.

For Edward, circumventing participant gatekeepers was essential to making sure research went exactly as he needed it to go. Coyne et al. (2009) caution gatekeepers can make decisions on behalf of participants. Edward did not want gatekeepers pressuring or coercing participants into being interviewed. Unlike Miranda and Jules' research gatekeepers who created ethical dilemmas, Edward was able to control his actions and did not have to worry about the gatekeepers' actions; hence circumventing gatekeepers was ideal for assuring that sex workers were treated respectfully.

Unfortunately Edward became exceptionally ill and withdrew from his PhD for personal reasons; gatekeeping experiences did not slow him down.

Pre-empting Gatekeepers

Olive

Olive researched teenage women's experiences after being diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection (STI), a research population that was deemed 'sensitive'. Olive's ethics application was thorough and well thought out. Sutton, Erlen, Glad, and Siminoff (2003) and Coyne (2010) explain gatekeepers are most likely present amongst 'vulnerable' populations or in 'sensitive' research areas, yet Olive received approval the first time around. Olive conducted interviews with young women and clinicians in person and by phone. Olive's ample sexual health experience through phone counselling enabled her to anticipate and circumvent many gatekeeping issues. It also aided her participant recruitment.

Olive pre-empted over-protective gatekeepers when planning her research and found a way to circumvent paternalism. Emmel et al. (2007) suggest gatekeepers are usually needed to access 'hard-to-reach' or 'hidden'

groups of people. Yet, Olive extensive reading prior to beginning research had warned her of this. Instead she found a way to reach her participants without using gatekeepers. She put research advertisements on sexual health counselling websites she worked with.

Olive: Once I started looking into the research I became aware of the amount of literature about the gatekeeping within medicine that often there is a high degree of paternalism which actually denies people having a voice because they are considered too vulnerable or marginalised and also when I read of other people's work, that gatekeeping process had really extended out their doctoral time. I wanted to complete in a really timely way without gatekeepers. I ended up conducting phone interviews with teenage women and health care professionals. I also knew that some of the teenage women I wanted to interview may well not go to clinics so I wouldn't necessarily find them so all I needed to do was put research advertisements on the two websites for which I am a counsellor and say does anyone want to participate in this research.

Wanat (2008) notes the fewer gatekeepers a research site has, the easier it is for researchers to gain access to sites and participants. Olive's reading prepared her for paternal gatekeepers and enabled her to expect or pre-empt gatekeeping issues and circumvent them.

Olive conducted phone and face-to-face interviews with 26 women and 12 clinicians. She had about six phone exchanges with each participant over an eight-month timeframe. Olive's carefully planned methodology allowed her to get in and out of the research site without an uncomfortable tapering off once the interview questions had been asked. Unlike Lexi mentioned above, whose informants want to carry on meeting after interviews were completed, Olive was more in control of the rapport she built with participants (Duncombe & Jessop, 2002). At the beginning of the research she requested a follow-up phone conversation with participants three months on.

Olive: I requested to check back in with them in 3 months about what they had thought of the project in hindsight and any further thoughts they

had. So it was like coming to an end and then a hello, goodbye and it felt really clear and tidy and I was really glad that I had read that literature about a muddily ending because I wouldn't have wanted that.

Olive's tidy ending and successful circumvention of gatekeepers enabled her to write up her PhD with few problems others experienced. She did not have to negotiate the difficulties ending rapport that Duncombe and Jessop (2002) experienced.

Separating out the data collection and the writing process prevented any awkward endings with participants. Also that, combined with avoiding gatekeepers, allowed Olive to finish in a timely manner and avoid certain paternalistic problems that medical gatekeeping can have. By circumventing gatekeepers, Olive easily accessed her participants and encountered very few problems throughout her PhD.

Commonalities

For researchers researching in non-education based sites, institutional gatekeepers were avoidable. Edward, Wendy, Rachel, and Olive all circumvented institutional gatekeepers but faced other, non-institutional gatekeepers or key informants they needed to negotiate with along the research journey.

Negotiating Benefit and Legitimacy

Like Wanat (2008) and Tilley et al. (2009) suggested, Lexi and Wendy both had to negotiate the legitimacy of their projects with non-institutional gatekeepers. Both Lexi and Wendy faced non-institutional gatekeepers, who were unsupportive of the research. Miller and Bell (2002) suggest gatekeepers can help researchers find participants who are 'hidden'. Lexi found Hindu men acted as paternal gatekeepers to hard-to-reach, 'hidden' Hindu women off-

campus. Wendy discovered powerful community members, such as highly educated university academics, and sports leaders, were negative about her researching Filipino's living in America.

Both Lexi and Wendy's non-institutional, unexpected gatekeepers had authority over the participants; they could prevent Hindu women and poverty-stricken Filipinos participating in the research projects because they had higher levels of power than the potential participants. Coyne et al.'s (2009) claim that gatekeepers can have influential cultural power over participants was true in Wendy and Lexi's research. While both Lexi and Wendy did gain access to their participants and complete the research, their failure or slowness to convince the gatekeepers the research was beneficial and legitimate, delayed their research journeys.

Facilitators

Rachel and Edward both used key informants to find their first participants and legitimise the research; but overall their gatekeepers were negligible. Working in research sites that are not governed by organisations or institutions may help researchers circumvent institutional gatekeepers. Coy (2006) posits getting into research sites is often tricky for researchers without connections. Rachel was grateful for her key informant's assistance. While she probably would have gained access to her participants eventually, having a key informant sped up her recruiting process. Edward was also thankful the key informant could provide him with the archives he required. His research could have worked without the archives, but having them added depth to the project.

Circumvention

Mostly, Edward and Olive were able to foresee how gatekeeping could impact their work, and figure out how to avoid it. Like Wanat (2008), my participants found few gatekeepers made accessing participants easier. Olive used prior connections with online counselling sites to avoid paternal gatekeeping when finding young women diagnosed with an STI. Edward researched within the sex work community; a community he was already familiar with. Like Olive, Edward had prior connections that made finding participants easy. Coyne (2010) and Coyne et al. (2009) warn gatekeepers can make participants' voluntary consent questionable. Without participant gatekeepers, Edward and Olive could ensure their participants were not coerced into participating in sensitive research. Noteworthy Sutton et al. (2003) and Coyne et al. (2009) suggest gatekeepers are most present within 'vulnerable' populations. Yet, Edward and Olive successfully conducted 'sensitive' research without gatekeepers.

Differences

Mostly, researchers in non-education sites did not have institutional gatekeepers; however, non-institutional gatekeepers were still an essential part of the researchers' journeys.

Facilitators

Edward did require the assistance of a key informant tied to an institution: Prostitutes' Collective. Yet as Edward was only after archives, gaining access to the material he needed was rather trouble-free, as archives do not require consent like people do.

Changing Methodology

Like Miller and Bell (2002), Lexi and Wendy did negotiate with non-institutional gatekeepers during the getting along part, rather than getting in, of the research. Lexi had to circumvent patriarchal Hindu men to reach her participants. And constant communication with academics and sports leaders was vital if Wendy's project was to succeed. Wendy was the only researcher in a non-education research site that had major issues with non-institutional gatekeepers.

Summary

Gatekeepers all have various idiosyncrasies: institutional, non-institutional, paternal, nonchalant, patriarchal, and helpful. The researchers I interviewed had varying experiences with gatekeepers. Nine researchers, all except Olive, relied on gatekeepers' help to successfully complete their research projects.

Researchers in education-based sites had more gatekeeping issues. Their gatekeepers were mostly institutional; namely school principals, school secretaries, classroom teachers, and university residence masters. Researchers in non-education based sites had few gatekeeping issues, but the gatekeepers they did encounter were usually unforeseen and non-institutional: sports leaders, academics, and key informants, such as mutual friends.

Researchers employed four main strategies to get past the gatekeepers and get into the research sites to access participants.

The first strategy Nick, Gina, Harry, Jules, Miranda, and Wendy tried was benefit negotiation. The researchers tried to convince gatekeepers why the project was valid and important. Researchers had to convince gatekeepers how

beneficent the project would be. Also, researchers had to negotiate who the group being represented was, and why.

The second strategy Nick, Gina, Jules, Miranda, and Lexi engaged involved changing their pre-planned, and ethically approved, research goals and methodology. This was done because gatekeepers expected or requested certain goals or information to come out of researchers' projects. Nick and Miranda altered the research methodology multiple times resulting in multiple ethics approval amendments, and significantly slowing the research journey.

The third strategy Harry, Wendy, Rachel, and Edward used was asking a key informant to help them gain access to the research site. Sometimes the key informant doubled as the gatekeeper; other times the key informant helped them get past the gatekeeper. Harry used parents to help him get past school principals, whereas Edward used a key informant to gain access to his research material. Mostly, key informants or facilitators were a productive way researchers could get past gatekeepers.

The fourth strategy Edward and Olive employed to get past gatekeepers was pre-empting and circumventing. Researchers who pre-empted gatekeepers in the research proposal or plan were better equipped at finding ways to circumvent gatekeepers altogether. Olive was the only researcher that actually completely achieved this, but Edward did circumvent gatekeepers to his participants. Circumventing gatekeepers allowed for time efficient, trouble-free research. Although not achieved by many researchers, Gina and Nick advised this strategy to upcoming researchers.

Mostly dealing with gatekeeping issues added unnecessary stress onto novice researchers' journeys. Gatekeeping delayed and slowed the research

process, and ultimately completion date of my participants' PhDs. While many of the gatekeepers were expected, some of the issues that arose because of gatekeeping were unforeseen and difficult for researchers to deal with. Novice researchers were generally unprepared for dealing with these gatekeeping issues. While most of the researchers wished they could circumvent gatekeepers and recommended this advice to other researchers, they were also unsure how the projects would work without gatekeepers. Researching, particularly in institutional research sites, required gatekeepers to aid researchers in getting access to participants. Perhaps novice researchers need education to better equip them for dealing with both expected and unexpected gatekeepers and the issues that come with getting in.

5. Limits of Confidentiality

Once researchers got past gatekeepers and into research sites they had to negotiate how to get along. Seven of the ten participants described how they had to negotiate the limits and ramifications of confidentiality when completing their PhDs: procedural ethics had not prepared researchers for these limits and ramifications. Not keeping confidence can harm participants. Sieber and Tolich (2013, p. 157) state “subjects may be willing to share highly personal information with a researcher if there is a believable confidentiality statement.” For example, participants might tell a researcher they strongly disagree with changes employers are making within the workplace, which if accidentally released to the employers, could result in participants losing their jobs (Sieber & Tolich, 2013). Participants may also disclose information about their own involvement in illegal behaviour. If this information was released to the public, participants could endure great harm. Moreover, if researchers do not offer confidentiality, participants may not be frank with researchers, withholding information that is valuable. Hence, unsurprisingly maintaining confidentiality was a prominent concern for all the researchers. Perhaps more surprisingly, researchers found either confidentiality was limited or maintaining confidentiality had serious ramifications for data.

This chapter explores three ways researchers negotiated the limits or ramifications of confidentiality. First, the chapter explores how researchers ensured their participants acknowledged the limits of confidentiality. Edward and Nick used disclaimers to signal the limits of confidentiality to participants. They were upfront with participants about the consequences of talking within a

small community. Researchers involved participants in the decisions necessary for maintaining confidentiality. Gina allowed her participants to choose the interview sites and times. Nick and Gina expected participants would not purposely 'out' themselves to friends after the study. Jules reacted to her participants' confidentiality concerns in the research. She created a summary sheet of all the data to reassure participants they all said very similar things, which made it hard to identify one particular person.

Second, researchers masked or blurred identifying details about participants. Wendy and Nick tried to avoid using pseudonyms when writing up the data. This protected the wholeness of the participants' stories. Lexi and Gina blurred other identifying details, such as gender, ethnicity, experience levels, and location. Blurring details made it difficult for connected-people to identify participants. In other words, internal confidentiality (Tolich, 2004) was maintained.

Third, researchers did not contribute new knowledge to their research field. Blurring or masking data came at a price. Gina, Jules, and Rachel found blurring the data to maintain confidentiality sometimes meant the data integrity was not upheld. Namely, these researchers had to choose between maintaining participants' confidentiality, or contributing new data back to the research population. Always the researchers chose to maintain confidentiality, but it did compromise the depth of their theses.

Acknowledging Limited Confidentiality

Caveat Emptor

Many researchers (Brotherson, 1994; Gibbs, 1997; Hyde, Howlett, Brady, & Drennan, 2005; Smith, 1995; Tolich, 2009) have acknowledged that promising complete confidentiality is rarely possible. My participants also recognised confidentiality was limited. They needed to warn their participants that they would try their best to protect their identities, but could not promise complete confidentiality. Acknowledging the limits of confidentiality was two-fold. First researchers used disclaimers to signal the limits of confidentiality to participants. Second, researchers encouraged participants to be involved in maintaining their confidentiality by making decisions about interview locations, and 'outing' themselves.

Tolich (2009, p. 99) proposes "the principle of caveat emptor (let the buyer beware) may be a ... useful tool for those involved in focus group research." Researchers I interviewed used disclaimers and caveat emptor to help safeguard internal confidentiality in small communities. The disclaimers suggested participants should be aware of these risks.

Edward, studying sex workers, described the difficulties with confidentiality in qualitative research, particularly when researching with a small sample. Prior to interviews he asked his participants if they were aware of the limits of confidentiality particularly within the small community.

Edward: I would ask are you aware I will try and disguise detail as much as possible but given the size of the community the idea of being anonymous¹² is difficult... I was working with the sex work population

¹² Edward used the term "anonymous" to describe what is actually confidential. This distinction is explained in the literature review on page 24.

and there were people who worked on the streets or through escort agencies and who don't want to be named. In the sex work community in New Zealand people could work it out like that.

Edward: They all were very aware of the issues around talking within the community and part of that came from another researcher years ago that had butchered it.

Previous researchers had not protected sex workers internal confidentiality and these sex workers had been badly hurt; limits of confidentiality were very real to most of Edward's participants.

Nick researched university students' perspectives and experiences of legal highs. Similarly to Edward, he pre-empted confidentiality issues in focus groups and tried to reduce the potential risks. Smith (2005) recognises researchers cannot be sure the other members of the focus group will not break confidence. Nick recognised this limit of confidentiality and thoughtfully suggested his participants did not reveal their names and living situations to the other members. This way some parts of participants' identities were not revealed. It would be difficult for focus group members to 'out' anyone else.

Nick: I told them don't tell your names to each other or where you are living but talk about anything else. That way you don't reveal all the identity. Because you can promise you won't say anything but they can't. And that's why I put in the Participant Information Sheet that a quote may identify you. You may be identifiable. How anonymous¹³ are you really?

Qualitative researchers can hardly ever promise anonymity so rely on confidentiality instead; yet Ensign (2003) suggests even confidentiality is limited. Sieber and Tolich (2013) state confidentiality in focus groups and group interviews is impossible. If Nick's participants' friends read the research they may be able to identify certain stories involving legal drugs that would identify

¹³ Nick used the term "anonymous" to describe what is actually confidential. This distinction is explained in the literature review on page 24.

participants. Quotes and stories often have incredibly identifying aspects that are difficult to change without ruining the crux of the story. Nick employed the principle of caveat emptor (Tolich, 2009) by warning the participants about confidentiality issues.

By employing disclaimers prior to interviews, participants should be aware of the limits of confidentiality, and consent knowing these limits. Similarly to Nick and Edward, Jules used disclaimers and constant verbal reminders when researching within a school. Jules, studying racially disadvantaged children at school, explained she had constantly reminded the gatekeepers there might be some critical data that comes out of the research, and that data may unintentionally identify the school, participants or connected-people.

Jules: He's [the principal] not worried about his identity but he suddenly realised there may be things with the school. I think it was then that he realised this was not entirely without consequence for the school. I had tried and tried to say that but he suddenly twigged. But I think my conscience is clear on that one. I had constantly tried to get him to see that.

Jules' "conscience is clear" because she felt she had done everything in her power to warn the gatekeepers that some members of the school community may be identifiable to others.

Researchers used disclaimers and constant reminders to acknowledge the limits of confidentiality when working with small communities or sample sizes. This ensured participants were aware that confidentiality is limited and that they consented knowing the limits.

Participant Accountability

The second way researchers acknowledged the limits of confidentiality was achieved through inviting participants to help maintain their own confidentiality.

Gina always allowed her participants to pick the location of the interview, but this may have breached confidentiality.

Gina: I interviewed a teacher at this location and it was fine. They were the only person there. It was after school. Go and interview the next person there, and some of my participants trot through with their cups of tea and see me interviewing this person. And they say oh you're doing well here aren't you.

The participant chose an interview location that was not appropriate for maintaining anonymity. Gina was unclear of the school layout and did not realise this until midway through the interview. While confidentiality of substantive content was assured, participation in the study was disclosed. When I asked Gina how she managed that confidentiality issue when writing up the publication she seemed to place some responsibility onto the participants. After all, it was up to the participant to choose the interview location.

Gina: I think it would be contributory negligence. If they didn't take precautions themselves then they didn't mind being outed...because if you are at school you will be seen. So that made me sleep a bit easier but I still had that uncomfortable feeling that the colleagues could have said something that they didn't want their fellow colleagues to know.

Here, Gina seemed to be removing some of her own unease caused by the limits of confidentiality by placing some responsibility on her participants instead. She felt participants needed to take precautions such as not telling others they had been involved in the study, or choosing an interview time and place that was private, if they did not want their identities compromised.

In saying this, some participants may have wanted to 'out' themselves; the participants who "trotted through with their cups of tea" outed themselves when they acknowledged Gina. Giordano, O'Reilly, Taylor, and Dogra (2007) acknowledge some participants do not desire confidentiality. They may want their involvement in the study to be public knowledge. Participants are free to

talk with whomever they wish about being part of the research project, disclosing their identity and involvement in research. Yet researchers must assume all participants want to be unrevealed.

Gina and Nick both explained researchers are unable to control to whom their participants talk to about being involved in the study. Nick's participants talked outside of the interviews. Sometimes he received the same story from different peers and he had to be extremely careful when writing up not to identify them to each other. While the participants may have 'outed' themselves to their friends, Nick could not make that assumption.

Nick: I had to be cautious because maybe some of the quotes would identify them...Sometimes when they talked about their experiences, or their friends, I had already interviewed their friend too. And sometimes they knew that. It's such a small place.

Likewise Gina, studying technology in schools, also studied in a small research site. The small sample numbers and the extent of the networking between schools in her research area made it difficult for Gina to completely maintain confidentiality.

Gina: You can do everything ethically correct under the sun, but your participants will talk to each other... I didn't predict just the extent of the networking of region's teachers, high schools, and primary and intermediate. There are only a handful of intermediate schools in the region...or only one male in the school.

Amber: So how do you manage that?

Gina: Well I would say it is almost impossible. Because like I say people are going to talk and say hey I did this interview and that.

Haggerty (2004) explains procedural ethics requires researchers to ensure participant identities are confidential, if not anonymous. Yet, not all participants always wish to be unidentifiable. Procedural ethics did not prepare Nick and Gina for how to manage participants who 'outed' themselves to friends. Small sample groups and research sites make upholding confidentiality dilemmas

challenging. Nick recognised there are serious limits to confidentiality. Although Gina felt she had done everything she was ethically supposed to do to manage confidentiality issues, she could not control to whom her participants spoke after the interview.

Jules' participants were exceptionally concerned the small research site would compromise their internal confidentiality. Jules helped her participants understand how the interview data would be used in the final report by returning transcripts and offering an overall summary sheet to the participants. The summary sheet showed what information Jules wanted to use from the interviews, and how Jules might protect participant identities. Giving back the transcripts also allowed the participants to retract any statement they made during the interview.

Jules: One teacher had a wonderful rich interview and she said a few days later and she was really distressed because of what she said. So I said I've given you the transcript also I'm going to go away and write down what I took from the interview in a summary form so you can see how wonderful the interview was. And she was okay after that. I did the same for all the teachers. This is what I've taken on the whole in a very brief summary.

Procedural ethics had not prepared Jules for deeply concerned participants. Jules decided a summary sheet might ease some legitimate concerns the teacher had. The summary sheet was an ethics in practice response to the lack of procedural ethics – responding to participants required Jules to constantly think ethically. Jules listened to her participants' concerns and found a way to address them, rather than just throwing the data away. She assured participants most of the teachers interviewed expressed similar ideas, so internal confidentiality was likely maintainable. Researchers needed to consider how they could reassure participants their confidentiality would be treated

extremely seriously, because completely acknowledging the limits could really affect how much participants shared with researchers.

Acknowledging the limits of confidentiality requires researchers to be very upfront with participants. Using disclaimers, giving back transcripts, writing summary sheets, constantly reminding gatekeepers of the limits, and allowing participants to choose interview locations, offered participants some control over their confidentiality. If participants choose to out themselves knowing the risks and limits of confidentiality, that is entirely their decision. However, researchers must take precautions and assume all participants wish to be unidentifiable at all times. Jules, Nick, Gina, and Edward had to employ techniques they had not pre-planned in the procedural ethics to manage the confidentiality issues that arose during ethics in practice.

Masking Details

Procedural ethics suggest pseudonyms can offer confidentiality. But often, qualitative researchers must mask other identifying details, not just participants' names. The next section of this chapter explores how researchers attempted to mask identities by altering participants' details. Kantrowitz (2004) suggests many researchers change identifying details, other than names, to maintain confidentiality. Unfortunately, researchers had to acknowledge sometimes altering enough details to ensure confidentiality was impossible. Researchers discussed having difficulties maintaining internal confidentiality when writing. Often researchers were blurry about identifying details or excluded data so new findings were not contributed back to the research population. Holloway and Wheeler (1995) suggest this can protect confidentiality but goes against the

purpose of conducting research: to find and contribute new knowledge (Swann, 2002). Lexi, Gina, Nick, Miranda, and Wendy tried to maintain confidentiality by blurring information to mask identities.

Nick studied university students' perspectives on legal highs. He tried, fruitlessly, to make following individuals' stories difficult. He decided to number participants instead of giving them pseudonyms. Nick thought numbers meant descriptive factors such as gender, religion, and ethnicity would have been blurred as far as possible, which would make following the stories through more difficult, although certainly not impossible.

Although not naming participants had serious consequences when the data was presented.

Nick: I've given them old-fashioned names because...initially, when I was writing I gave them numbers instead of names, but it doesn't give a sense of belonging, or connection. The names made the life come out. You tell a story and you feel like there is a person behind it rather than a number.

Nick felt the lack of names reduced the humanness of the stories being told.

While it was harder to connect the dots of people's lives, it meant Nick's participants' stories were lifeless. Numbering participants still allowed readers to follow through individual stories but Nick felt it deterred linking stories more so than when participants were named. When the numbering system failed, Nick assigned participants' old-fashioned names that did not fit stories the young people told.

Wendy researched Filipino's experiences living in America. Her way of blurring the boundaries involved not assigning participants or connected-people pseudonyms. Instead of using pseudonyms and retelling particular individuals' life stories, Wendy quoted her participants without linking them to a name.

Therefore, the quotes and participants could not be put back together and were less likely to identify a particular person. Wendy used generalisations about her participants' ages. This gave her quotes context but assisted in maintaining internal confidentiality.

Wendy: When I wrote my work up I didn't use names or pseudonyms because I knew if I gave people pseudonyms and attached it to their narrative it would be linkable. Some people had identifying stories and then that could be linked back to other stuff that wasn't public knowledge. It meant I couldn't tell someone's life story because it would have been identifiable to anyone in the Filipino community. I would briefly describe someone and talk about the things that were important to what I was talking about. So I could talk about generations, I would say this person in their forties as opposed to this person is in their twenties.

Wendy had to be extra cautious to maintain these secrets when writing up the research. Participants' narratives would give away their identity so Wendy chose not to link pieces of narrative to pseudonyms; this way their stories could not be followed through. Wendy was able to maintain confidentiality and divulge intimate, otherwise identifiable stories.

Unfortunately, not using names meant the wholeness of participants' stories, and the relevance of some events, was lost. Holloway and Wheeler (1995) discuss sometimes participants reveal information that is vital to the research but also extremely identifying. There was no way for Wendy or Nick to change enough details in their participants' stories to maintain internal confidentiality. The writing process, and accordingly the ability to contribute new knowledge, was compromised.

Nick and Wendy's attempts to manage internal confidentiality were mostly successful but they came at a price. The data presented may have been less impactful because they were not able to fully engage their audiences with people's stories. For example, hearing one isolated experience about verbal

racism at secondary school may be unexceptional. However, if Wendy's participant had also experienced racism in the workplace, and at sports clubs, the result of this racism may be more striking. It may suggest that racism is an issue across multiple levels within the community, not just at secondary school. Still, Wendy would have been unable to make claims about how persistent racism had impacted a person's life without honouring the wholeness of the stories, potentially revealing the participant or connected-people. The events and incidents themselves may have been very personal and embarrassing. Some of the events were public knowledge; others were not. If Wendy chose to describe all the racism that had occurred, it is likely the perpetrators would be able to identify the participant, which may place the participant at further risk. If the perpetrators did recognise the violent stories they may retaliate because the participant spoke out about the incidents. Likewise, if other community members recalled the racism that was public knowledge, they would be able to link the participant's story together and find out about other personal stories that were not public knowledge. Like Holloway and Wheeler (1995) alerted, Wendy found without the wholeness of participants' stories, particular findings were compromised.

Similarly, Nick was unable to explain how and why one person's views on legal highs changed based on a number of consecutive experiences they had with a certain type of legal high. Nick could not put verbatim quotes in at times, as some participants would recognise their friends' stories, particularly through certain speech patterns, then be able to follow that story through using pseudonyms.

For example, one participant may have shared a story of taking legal highs then streaking through a community sports event, and another story about being arrested for dangerous driving under the influence of legal highs. Other participants also recited how they watched their friend streak while under the influence of legal highs. Here, Nick could be fairly sure all participants were speaking of the same streaking incident. The danger was that participants could recognise this story in the thesis then follow the pseudonyms through to find out the friend had been convicted of dangerous driving. Instead, Nick needed to find a way to discuss both the streaking incident, and the dangerous driving arrest without linking the stories to one pseudonym so the participant's arrest was kept confidential. This was impossible so the story was not told at all.

While Wendy and Nick did manage to protect their participants' identities by not telling participants' stories as a whole, it came at a cost to the knowledge produced. The procedural ethics recommendations for protecting confidentiality resulted in data being compromised. The complexities around potentially identifying participants through the wholeness of their stories had not been foreseen in procedural ethics. During ethics in practice, Wendy and Nick had to explore how they could protect their participants' stories and secrets without compromising the data depth. In these cases, Wendy and Nick were unable to successfully achieve both. Participants' identities were protected over the relevance of the wholeness of stories.

Kantrowitz (2004) recommends blurring identifying details to help offer confidentiality. Miranda and Gina blurred aspects of participants' identities. Miranda studied gender norms in school performances. Part of her project involved students taking photographs of the school performances. Her

procedural ethics prepared her that maintaining confidentiality in photographs can be difficult. To combat these issues, Miranda decided to edit the photos by changing people's costumes, hairstyles, and character roles.

Miranda: the ethics committee said, the performance attire is readily identifiable, so I had to...disguise people's costumes...but it was just too tricky to get photographs taken and couldn't get enough schools who were willing to take part in the photo.

Miranda's procedural ethics expected her to blur identifying details of participants as much as possible. Interestingly, school gatekeepers decided this approach was inadequate. Procedural ethics failed to provide a sound, convincing method that would have allowed Miranda to employ students' photographs. School gatekeepers believed the photos, even when severely edited, would be too identifying. Although Miranda conversed with the ethics committee and her advisors thoroughly about how to maintain confidentiality, she still had difficulty during ethics in practice. Ultimately, Miranda was unable to convince school gatekeepers she would be able to maintain confidentiality, so the photo methodology was abandoned.

Gina studied how teachers used technology within classrooms. She was aware the school community she worked with was small and easily identifiable. Tolich (2004) explains maintaining confidentiality is complex when researching within small populations. Teachers within the area were very connected as they spent time together at interschool events, teacher training days, and other professional development courses, so Gina blurred and changed identifying details of participants and their school environments.

Gina: I tried to just blur the boundaries a bit more. I changed details. I rounded up the years of experience to the nearest five. Even the state of technology you can't put in, because you can tell which school from that...So you know that when the teachers, if they do read my thesis, they

won't say I know that person or I share an office with them because quite a few of the teachers were from the same school. So they would know exactly who said that. Or know it's that school, and a male, and only one male in the school, so we know who it is... you have to sort of either blur or leave out.

Like Kantrowitz (2004) suggested, Gina blurred details by using generalisations, like teaching experience, and altered details, such as gender, and school resources, to make it difficult to identify her participants and connected-people. Her procedural ethics planned to blur details but once in the field, Gina realised she needed to blur and mask more than she originally thought.

A concern for Gina was maintaining the external confidentiality of the school she was researching in. Tolich (2004, p. 101) argues "external confidentiality is traditional confidentiality where the researcher acknowledges they know what the person said but promises not to identify them in the final report." If the school could be identified, then so could her participants. Blurring important details, such as teachers' experience and available school resources, did mean Gina had difficulties fleshing out parts of her thesis such as how the types of technology varied within schools. However, she was unsure how else to manage internal and external confidentiality.

Gina and Lexi's approaches to maintaining confidentiality were similar. Lexi, studying Hindu women at university, had similar dilemmas with the limits of confidentiality. She described a situation where she needed to protect both her participant and a connected person: a university lecturer connected to her project. Lexi's research investigated Hindu women's experiences at New Zealand universities. She was part of a small university and had to be incredibly careful the lecturer and participant were not identifiable particularly because not all the information she received about her participant's experience teacher-assisting for

the lecturer was positive. Lexi acknowledged if the lecturer was identified, their professional reputation could be negatively affected.

Lexi: One of the issues was with my lecturer and it actually came up in the interviews that there was an issue in terms of teaching and the participant was talking about my lecturer. Our department is so small so I had to think how to represent that in a way that is safe for everybody. I sort of had this cagey chat with my lecturer about what to do and it was suggested that we could change identifiers to protect the person's identity. I switched genders and race of the lecturer being talked about. I didn't state disciplines; the person's first language was different from the country and they had lived in another country as well so I was very blurry about her actual ethnicity. Obviously I couldn't change the gender of the woman in the project because the project was all women but I could change the identity of the people she talked about.

Being vague or altering identifying details (Kantrowitz, 2004) such as gender, race, ethnicity, and study disciplines can offer confidentiality, both externally and internally. In this case, Lexi needed to ensure that academy members could not identify the participant, or lecturer, in the final publication. In other words, Lexi absolutely had to offer internal confidentiality. Had Lexi only altered the participant's name, insiders would have been able to identify the participant and connected-person, regardless of the detail change.

Mostly researchers were unprepared for the limits of confidentiality. Blurring details or leaving out data helped however researchers continued to underestimate the difficulties involved with maintaining confidentiality.

Boman and Jevne (2000) warn the practicalities of maintaining confidentiality are often greater than predicted. Nick's procedural ethics had not prepared him for the complexities posed by confidentiality. Originally Nick underestimated how difficult maintaining confidentiality would be. Getting along and practically maintaining internal confidentiality proved taxing.

Nick: I think initially I was too confident when I started. I did a research Masters for two years which is nearly the same as a PhD so I thought how

difficult could this be? But the amount of data I had to deal with this time was huge. When I did my Masters I did 20 one-hour interviews, one time. It was easy... and when I got in [to PhD] I thought what the fuck am I thinking?

While Nick did try to make participants' stories difficult to follow through, he soon realised maintaining confidentiality certainly had limits. The smallness of his community, combined with the large amount of data he received meant protecting participants' intimate secrets was complicated. Although Nick did have one research experience to draw on, his previous experience and procedural ethics inadequately prepared him for the limits confidentiality presented. His procedural ethics plan to not assign named pseudonyms was unproductive.

Overall, researchers found masking participants' details challenging. Nick and Wendy found not assigning pseudonyms had serious consequences for the realness of the data, but this technique was useful for protecting the wholeness of participants' stories. Miranda was unable to convince school gatekeepers that she could blur enough identifying details in the photographs of the school performance; subsequently she removed the photo data from her study completely. Lexi and Gina found blurring enough identifying details was extremely difficult, and at times, compromised the data they needed to present. Masking details to maintain confidentiality was costly.

The Price of Masking

Holloway and Wheeler (1995) claim working with small sample groups creates a dilemma, that is offering confidentiality and data integrity simultaneously is difficult. While Nick, Jules, Wendy, Gina, and Rachel all experienced this dilemma; Gina, Jules and Rachel's stories articulate this strongly.

Gina studied technology in schools. She did not know how to completely offer internal confidentiality without compromising the quality of publishable data. Unfortunately Gina was unable to blur all the identifying details of her participants so had to leave out and not discuss other aspects of the data as they were too revealing.

Gina: I left out what I just couldn't blur, which again, made it a lesser beast at the end. The sacrifices are the richness of research gets lost. Academics are paying a high price and I think the world is losing out because of it. It is a sad price to pay.

Gina: Even the state of technology you can't put in, because you can tell which school from that...some were still using dial up.

Swann (2002) claims the purpose of research is to contribute new knowledge. Sacrificing rich aspects of the research are sometimes necessary to maintain internal confidentiality, but Gina felt it was not just the academic community missing out because of limits of confidentiality. The world, specifically the research population, schools, misses out because the knowledge gathered cannot be shared; thus change cannot be made. Instead of dealing with internal confidentiality, knowledge is being compromised and not returned to the community it comes from. Gina dealt with internal confidentiality by not including any data in the analysis that may have identified her participants. As Gina put it, "it's a sad price to pay". Nevertheless Gina had to choose between maintaining confidentiality or contributing the knowledge she had gained.

Like Gina, Rachel, studying New Zealand farmers, found making big claims about her data whilst protecting the identities of particularly vulnerable participants, impossible. She explained one particular relationship between meat works and farmers that was incredibly exploitative. Whilst most farmers were being exploited, farmers in a young farming area were exploited more so than

other areas. This was incredibly valuable data in the greater scheme of the research, integral to Rachel's research goals. Yet, Rachel was still unsure how to make the claim while protecting the farmers' identities. Again sharing Gina's experience, even with hindsight and reflexivity Rachel was also unsure how she would completely manage internal confidentiality if she redid the project.

Rachel: It was something that came up for me several times because if I was to explain this relationship and leave off the fact that it was young farmers, it would lose some of the information that was really integral for the claims that I was making so it was all or nothing. I can't make the claims without this other information so I have to not make the claim at all or I couldn't [protect people]. I wish I could go back and interview a tonne of people that had the same characteristics. And then that would help I guess.

On one hand interviewing past saturation¹⁴ would help manage internal confidentiality. If more people said the same thing, then it would be harder to pinpoint exactly what story or criticism came from what farmer. On the other hand, interviewing past saturation is costly, both financially and time wise. The researcher would need to rely on recruiting enough participants, which is not always straightforward.

Rachel: I talked to a few farmers that found the meat works terrible in terms of the money they were making but some of them were really young and new farmers so they were so concerned about burning bridges and saying anything bad about the meat works. It was so interesting for my research because they were young farmers in these particular situations and were specific. I didn't know how, I still don't know how to publish anything about it that doesn't identify them.

Rachel explained how careful she had to be not to cause damage to the new farmers' relationships with their sellers. While the farmers were upset about this exploitative relationship, they were more concerned about maintaining trouble-free working relationships. Not only did Rachel have to water down her findings,

¹⁴ Data is at saturation when no new information is coming through in interviews (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

but also she was unable to publish them at all, which risked allowing exploitative farming practices to continue.

Similarly, Gina described how identifying raw data could be within a small community. In her PhD, Gina was criticised for not backing up her claims enough, but to offer internal confidentiality Gina had to omit certain statements, themes, and quotes.

Gina: I was criticised when I submitted my thesis. It actually compromised the depth of the thesis, of the written work, because so much had to be omitted. Adding it in would be like putting a target on the person's back. I have left out raw data that I would have loved to add in because it just made everything so much richer.

In omitting data, Gina compromised the quality of the research. Like Holloway and Wheeler (1995) Gina was unable to simultaneously offer internal confidentiality and fully substantiated claims. She could not share the knowledge in depth with the academic community or education sector.

Gina: I mean the whole point of doing this is adding to the body of knowledge and if other people who are working in the same area and there is a lot of them, want to access my thesis they have to go through online request or come in to the library. Yeah so again I am acting as a gatekeeper for my research [to protect participants]... And by doing so I am actually restricting my participation in the academic communities. Which is a sad price to pay. The intent is to get the research out there but because of this ethical issue I got to keep it locked down.

Confidentiality restricts how much a researcher can give back to the area they are researching. In this case, Gina wanted to encourage teachers to use technology in school classrooms but she was unable to share specific ways that her participants engaged with technology, fearing identifying participants.

Similarly, she could not share the knowledge gained with other researchers in her field. Thus, the information and knowledge of technology use in classroom stagnates. Once more, a researcher is caught between a rock and a hard place: it

appears researchers must prioritise either data integrity or internal confidentiality.

Cox (1996) asserts confidentiality limits increase when the research sample is small. Both Gina and Rachel have not been able to publish certain facts without disclosing the people that shared the information. Rachel felt the claims she wanted to make were useless without the information that is potentially identifying.

Rachel: there were times when I wanted to say something in articles I was writing but I couldn't because it was going to disclose the person...I still don't know how to publish anything about it that doesn't identify them...if I was to explain this relationship and leave the fact that it was young farmers, it would lose some of the information that was really integral for the claims that I was making so it was all or nothing. I can't make the claims without this other information so I have to not make the claim at all.

Even now as an experienced researcher, Rachel has not figured out how to deal with the limits confidentiality places on analysis.

One of the reasons Jules, Gina, Wendy, Nick, and Rachel could not offer internal confidentiality and complete data integrity, was due to the sheer size of their research sites. Jules studied racially disadvantaged children at school. She found even when she was returning summary sheets to her participants she had to be extra careful as comments or speech patterns would identify certain teachers.

Jules: Everybody wanted the summary and that is fine. But there were some problems and the school was not necessarily aware of the problems so I have to manage that. I had to make some decisions about that. There was one teacher that taught languages and she was ropey with some colleagues who were always consulting her on matters. People always wanted help so they can meet their professional development. I said I have to be careful with this because you have to go to work the next day and people will know who has said this. I had to reassure her I will not publish anything identifying or negative.

Part of researching within a small community meant Jules had to leave out some information otherwise internal confidentiality would be surrendered. Once more, procedural ethics did not prepare Jules for this dilemma. Neither she, nor the ethics committee, had identified how the smallness of Jules' community may increase the limits of confidentiality. In this case the school Jules researched in had only one languages teacher, thus if Jules quoted something about teaching languages it would have been very apparent to other school members who the quote had come from. Jules maintained internal confidentiality by being careful with the data and not publishing anything identifiable. At times, meaning data was excluded from the final publication. Like Gina and Rachel, Jules was unable to find a way to publish all data and offer internal confidentiality. Instead, she prioritised her participants' identities over the data and subsequent knowledge she had gained.

Summary

Overall, the researchers I interviewed found the ramifications and limitations of confidentiality were greater than procedural ethics had prepared them for. Seven of the ten researchers needed to negotiate unexpected issues related to confidentiality while they were in the field, or when they were analysing or writing up the data. Three main sub-themes about the limits and ramifications of confidentiality have been discussed. First, the researchers addressed the limits of confidentiality by ensuring their participants knew confidentiality was limited. Verbal disclaimers and caveat emptor (Tolich, 2009) prior to interviews helped participants recognise internal confidentiality consequences. Moreover, researchers required participants' help to manage internal confidentiality.

Allowing participants to choose interview times aided internal confidentiality. Additionally, responding to participants' confidentiality concerns helped participants feel confidentiality was assured.

Second, like Kantrowitz (2004) found, blurring or masking aspects of participants' identities maintained internal confidentiality. Blurring particulars decreased the likelihood of connected-people identifying participants: internal confidentiality was maintained.

But third, masking data came at a price. Holloway and Wheeler's (1995) claim was real for my participants. Blurring details to maintain internal confidentiality had extreme consequences for what data could be represented in publication. Researchers were forced to choose between not maintaining internal confidentiality and revealing all the data and knowledge collected for the projects. Each time researchers chose to uphold confidentiality, but not without compromising the depth of their research findings.

Overall, procedural ethics failed to adequately prepare these novice researchers for the issues surrounding the ramifications and limits of confidentiality and researchers faced a variety of ethics in practice dilemmas regarding confidentiality. The next chapter explores what other skills and values researchers drew on when procedural ethics did not provide an answer for ethically important moments.

6. Researching with Integrity

Chapters four and five have shown that procedural ethics inadequately prepares novice researchers for the ethical issues they routinely confront; the same can be said about the methodological training these PhD candidates gained in their education. Being ethical is not clear-cut; researching with complete integrity can be complicated as ethical decisions are complex. Macfarlane (2009, p. 2) argues “developing an understanding of what to do is always a more challenging prospect than issuing edicts about what is not right.” Unexpected issues arise in qualitative research when negotiating the research site and analysing the data, but often researchers must negotiate issues in the field without ethics committees’ advice. These issues test the researcher’s integrity.

This chapter documents some of these moments of integrity; for example, researchers said they used rapport to gain access to data, but they found it difficult to know how much information about themselves they should disclose with participants without generating a leading question and contaminating the data. Once created, rapport was at times difficult to undo, for example detaching themselves from these relationships when the researcher wanted to write up the results and the participants wanted to meet for coffee. A second discovery unearthed in this research was the difficulties some participants experienced when attempting to exit the research site. Those using a feminist epistemology spoke about this more than those who did not. A third set of ethical issues arose for those participants who were practitioners (counsellors, teachers) as at times their professional codes were at odds with their research goals.

The Ethics of Rapport

Duncombe and Jessop (2002, p. 107) write about “doing rapport and faking friendship”. This was a problem for my participants too when they were forced to calculate how much information they should give of themselves. Lexi, Wendy, Harry, and Edward believed that sharing and supporting their participants helped minimise any power imbalances. Yet this created integrity issues.

Lexi studied Hindu women’s experiences at university. Her project involved both prolonged participant observation at the Hindu women’s group, and in-depth interviews with many of the women. Ellis (2007) describes one problem with ‘faking friendship’. It can complicate things when the researcher needs to finish data collection. For Lexi, empowering the women in her project was integral to good personal ethics and central to her critical feminist ethnography.

Lexi: I saw it as all part of the reciprocity of the research that these women were sharing their lives with me and I was happy to support them as well so that was for me that was ethical practice.

Yet the actual on-going giving back proved difficult. Once the data collection ceased, Lexi’s participants wanted continuing communication with her.

Addressing and negotiating the practice of building and then maintaining rapport was complex. Lexi was unprepared for the aftermath of rapport.

Duncombe and Jessop (2002, p. 119) explain the power of rapport can really lead participants to believe they have “made a friend”. Defriending participants can be difficult. Getting out after building rapport proved difficult, as she did not have an exit strategy.

Lexi: Then women would email saying can we meet for coffee and I was trying to keep those relationships going but I was trying to write this

damn thing. So it was really difficult actually. And in hindsight I think I should have had an exit strategy right at the beginning.

In the end, Lexi explained to her participants she was too busy writing her PhD, so meeting up and maintaining the friendships did not happen. Lexi described her difficulties in managing the rapport she had built with participants during the withdrawal or getting out phase of her research. Oakley and Roberts (1981) caution researchers that when social distance is small between the participants and researchers, ethical concerns like rapport are highest. Her research had been “all-consuming” and breaking contact with her participants was challenging.

Procedural ethics did not prepare Lexi for the issues involved with building, and specifically ending, rapport; nor did her methodological training. Getting out proved difficult because participants treated Lexi as a friend, rather than a researcher. In this case, Lexi’s role as researcher and friend had blurred boundaries. Without creating rapport Lexi never would have been able to complete the project.

When data collection seized, Lexi faced a dilemma. Some of the women in the support group were still around and wanted the group to continue. Lexi handed the group over to the student association, but unfortunately the effort to sustain it was too vast. In the end Lexi made the call to stop the group completely.

Lexi: Some of the women were still here, so the group kept running for a year after I left and the student association took that on to their huge credit. But it was just too hard for them to sustain it. They didn’t have staff and I just couldn’t be there to keep momentum and I tried to go when I could. So that was really horrible having to sort of stand back and watch it burn out and I actually ended up saying to the advisors, I think it is probably better to stop it than to not be able to give it 100%.

Lexi withdrew from the group and eventually it fizzled out completely. This unpleasant experience was challenging. She distanced herself from the project and women in the group. Although the group did stop initially, years later it was resurrected by one of the original members. Lexi was not involved with the restarted group nor was she still in contact with her participants. Ultimately, Lexi was unable to resolve how to end the relationships with the women in her project. Procedural ethics failed to prepare her for cutting off rapport.

Lexi's story was not a one off. Wendy and Harry also became personally involved with their participants' stories and lives. Wendy, studying Filipinos in America shared parts of her own stories with her participants. (Hesse-Biber, 2013); Karnieli-Miller et al. (2009) explain feminist methodologies, like Wendy employed, expect researchers will attempt to minimise power imbalances between the researchers and researched. For Wendy, exchanging stories was essential to creating equal power relationships. Sharing aspects of her personal life and giving back to participants was part of the rapport building. It aided in normalising experiences and creating a non-judgemental research environment.

Wendy: I would tell them stories about things I had done, the interviews were more just chats we were having. I ended up becoming quite good friends with some of them, so it felt to me that there was something about the exchange, talking about boys and relationships, and it felt like that made things more equal. I don't know if it did or not but it felt more like I wasn't just digging around in their experiences because some of the stuff they had done, I'd done too.

Wendy: When I looked back at the interviews I was almost normalising things in a way. People wouldn't have talked to me if we didn't have that kind of rapport.

Wendy did successfully collect data, which indicates building rapport through normalising experiences probably worked. She built rapport through sharing mutual experiences with her participants. Yet, building rapport can complicate

getting out of the research site. Wendy's experiences getting out of the research sites in Texas the visiting site, and Chicago her hometown, are contrasting.

Wendy: I think the relationships I had with people in Texas weren't that close so that was fine and everyone knew I was only there from three months. One or two people I talked to in Texas I ended up seeing in Chicago. And getting out there? Well I still haven't done it. I'm still in contact with people I worked with on that project. I don't think you ever really completely get out.

Wendy was forthright with her Texan participants about how long she was going to be around for, which made getting out easy. However, she had the opposite experience with participants she interviewed who were from her hometown. So much so, that even years later she is still in contact with these participants.

Perhaps Wendy's personal integrity overtook that of her research integrity; maybe the rapport she developed in this project actually turned into friendship. Maybe sharing many of her own experiences created friendship more than rapport. Again, procedural ethics failed to prepare Wendy for the complexities around building and ending rapport in qualitative research when researching close to home.

Likewise Harry's study of migrant children's experiences at school involved building rapport with teachers, children, and children's parents.

Harry: If a parent is talking about having a child go through hospital and surgery that is something I can relate to. So if I feel I need to I can share that. That's rapport if you like and that's the reflexivity, you are using that awareness and participation. So knowing when to back off.

Harry: the rapport is not necessarily a personal rapport but can be that professional rapport that acknowledges them in a professional capacity... it all went well.

Harry built rapport successfully and acknowledged all his participants in a professional capacity, rather than a personal one. This made building and ending rapport easier. Perhaps professional rapport increases the social distance

between participant and researcher, so ethical dilemmas are minimised (Oakley & Roberts, 1981). In some ways, Harry was more like a relief teacher, or helper in the classroom, thus students were used to these people coming and going. Rather than being a friend, Harry was a professional, who was not expected to be around for a long time. Creating professional rapport made exiting the research project feasible. Building rapport was not addressed in procedural ethics. Instead, Harry's previous experience had prepared him for the complexities of building rapport. Harry learnt professional rapport was easier to manage than personal rapport; both rapps affected the data similarly.

Procedural ethics did not adequately prepare Harry, Lexi and Wendy for building rapport and they had to rely on personal ethics to fill in the gaps. Managing personal disclosures was something researchers were also unprepared for.

Conversely, Olive was thankful she had pre-empted a messy ending and was very clear with her participants when their contact would finish.

Olive: I began with the end in sight... what I requested to do was to check back in with them in 3 months and what they had thought of the project in hindsight and any further thoughts they had. So it was like coming to an end and then a hello, goodbye and it felt really clear and tidy.

Employing rapport was vital for Wendy, Lexi, Harry, and Olive's research, yet only Olive had pre-empted and planned how to manage ending the relationships she made with participants. Ellis (2007) warns researchers that sometimes participants forget the researcher is in fact researching, and not simply a friend. Cutting off relationships with participants who see the researchers as a friend, not just a researcher can be messy. Olive's extensive literature review had alerted her to the ethical dilemmas involved with creating rapport then exiting

the research. Olive was able to negotiate this quandary by reading about how other researchers had negotiated a similar dilemma.

Edward and Rachel found building rapport could be compromised when having to manage their own disclosures about who they were. They found this unexpectedly challenging. Edward and Rachel did not always want to identify or agree with their participants. These two researchers were unsure whether it was ethical or unethical to disclose certain aspects with the participants. Disclosing had two sides. It helped build rapport but it also immediately changed the interview structure. Researchers often research in areas that are meaningful or connected to their personal lives and Edward and Rachel had times during their research when they needed to decide whether or not to disclose something of themselves to participants. Procedural ethics had not prepared researchers for the issues around disclosing. Hellowell (2006) explains outsider knowledge is where researchers are not theoretically familiar with the research site, situation or participants. Yet outsiders cannot always access certain research sites and participants. When this is the case, anthropological strangeness can be useful, as Star (2010) and Slezak (1994) explain strangers who encounter new social settings can learn about the new environment with an open mind.

Edward had difficulty managing anthropological strangeness. He was unsure whether to disclose his sex work history to other sex workers. He was not ashamed of his sex work history but his concern was an insider/outsider problem. If Edward disclosed his experience with sex work he worried the participants would be unlikely to describe basic or commonplace ideas about their working lives, given that this information was well known to Edward. He

recognised how his own positioning and disclosures could build rapport with fellow sex workers but altered the quality of the data.

Edward: so for me it showed very clearly how those positions of where we are changed the way, what we get told. Because automatically what I was getting told in those interviews changed and transformed into a much different story. And so there also I think isn't enough awareness of how our own position actually affects the way that people relate to us. And it's a whole great big picture and it became an ethical issue for me because do I disclose or not?...as soon as I disclosed they were like oh you already get it...and I was like no not always I don't.

Mostly, Edward chose not to disclose his past life. Procedural ethics had not prepared Edward for the complexities involved with researcher disclosure.

Edward decided how to manage the disclosure on a case-by-case basis.

Edward: for some people I was like well actually you know me as, my sex worker name...sometimes I wouldn't tell them straight away and then as soon as I told them the whole interview changed straight away.

Edward did not have a compact solution for negotiating his disclosure. He made a decision during each interview as to whether or not he disclosed his previous position as a sex worker. There was no straightforward, predicted way for Edward to negotiate his insider/outsider dilemma. Procedural ethics had not prepared him managing his insider/outsider problem.

Like Edward, Rachel found disclosing personal matters affected how the interview played out. Khawaja and Mørck (2009, p. 28) argue researchers should be constantly aware and reflect "on the multiple ways in which one's positioning as a researcher influences the research process"; not only can a researchers' view of knowledge impact the research, but how participants' view the researcher will also impact the interviews. Technically Rachel's PhD was through an environmental sociology programme but she feared that many of her participants would try to up-play their environmentalism when they knew she

was an environmentalist. Environmentalism was not the focus of her research. She wanted information about the business aspects of farming yet farmers would lecture her about their environmentalist practice if she self-identified. However, when she identified as a sociologist the participants spoke less about their environmental practices and more about the business relationships involved in farming. Like Edward, Rachel's background affected the way her participants responded to her and she had to manage these identity politics.

Rachel: I realised they thought I was an environmentalist and would start talking about their environmental programs, giving me a spiel about it. And I had to say that's great that you're doing that but I'm not interested in that so I started saying I was a sociologist. But I started to think about how I was positioning myself and how that was influencing what was talked about. I definitely tried to play down that I was environmentalist and a liberal.

When Rachel downplayed her environmentalism she accessed more relevant information and data, however Rachel was conflicted, as she knew she was misleading her participants. The conflict was necessary, as Rachel wanted to remove her own subjectivity so her participants were not swayed by her own beliefs. Yet Rachel felt really uneasy about how her own position as a young, non-threatening woman may have led to a fake feeling of trust and rapport with participants. Like Khawaja and Mørck (2009) suggest, Rachel's participants' views of her impacted the interviews.

Rachel: Sometimes I don't think people understood I was going to say something was problematic or just that I would be making these claims I felt really unsure if I should tell the person in the interview that I really disagree with you. Sometimes I would think, I really disagree with you, but I just went along with people because I wanted them to talk more about it so there were times when I thought that because I am a very unthreatening person that they would maybe be more trusting without really realising that I was going to publish things that were potentially

really critical and so that was hard and I didn't know how to figure that... it was ... really hard ...to figure out how honest to be.

Achieving rapport by minimising social distance between the research and participants (Oakley & Roberts, 1981) is essential in qualitative research as people are unlikely to disclose data if they feel uncomfortable or as though their ideas will be critiqued.

If researchers take the role of a complete outsider they may not be able to access their participants and the data they collect may vary. Participants may be less open or present a version of them that they present to outsiders – the 'real' or inside version of an experience, job, or social setting may be hidden. Hallowell et al. (2004) describe an interview situation where a cancer researcher came out as a fellow smoker to a participant. After the researcher disclosed her smoker status the participant relaxed, all judgement was lifted, and "the floodgates opened" (Hallowell et al., 2004, p. 48). On one hand sometimes insider knowledge is essential for building rapport and uncovering the participants' 'true' ideas. In some interviews, Edward would not have received the knowledge he desired without disclosing his sex worker experience. On the other hand, if researchers disclosed their insider knowledge, some basic ideas may be assumed, and the participant may not fully explain aspects of their situations to the researcher. Like Edward experienced, participants might assume the researcher "already gets it".

Rachel and Edward's stories of disclosure are similar. They had to rely on personal judgement when deciding how to manage their own positions as researchers. This was never straightforward and required constant negotiation. Each interview had different dynamics so researchers responded separately –

there was no blanket rule on how to negotiate ethics in practice. Neither graduate school methods courses nor procedural ethics advised these researchers how to position their own stories when collecting data.

Giving Back

Feminist research values gave some of my participants an advantage. Oakley and Cocking (2001) express a key assumption of ethics of care stress reciprocity, and the need to give back information back to participants. Wendy, Lexi and Edward to some extent employed feminist methodologies. Thus they felt it was important to return the gathered information to the participants at the end of the project. Procedural ethics does not make this mandatory but Wendy and Edward's methodologies valued returning new knowledge participants helped contribute. For feminist researchers, giving back is ethical practice (Hesse-Biber, 2013).

Wendy turned her thesis into a book and sent copies to her participants. She was very clear about recognising how beneficial the participants' knowledge had been.

Wendy: I sent books to everyone who I thought would want one. There was no koha in my interviews so I think that was good. People gave so much and I got so much out of that. And at the end of the day, you can say all you want about giving back to the participants, and they have a chance to tell their stories, but they aren't the ones who get jobs in universities off the back of it, I'm the one with the job. I'm really aware of that fact and it's off what other people have done for me. I can't ever repay that.

Wendy felt indebted to her participants. At the end of it all, she wanted to honour her participants by giving something back. Edward also felt strongly that the oral histories he collected from sex workers should be returned to the community. While this was not a research ethics requirement, it was something Edward felt

personally was important. Francis (1990) argues virtue ethics and research ethics do not always align.

Edward: I am very clear, and I think this is something that ethics doesn't do, that the information is going back to the community.

Lexi's feminist training meant she was constantly thinking about ethics through her project. Like Wendy, this theoretical framework forced her to always consider how ethical issues were playing out.

Lexi: I was never in any danger of thinking yay I've ticked off ethics that's all I have to worry about I was too deeply enmeshed in discourse analysis and reflexivity and feminist theory.

Wendy: I think the ethical issues in this project was the thing I thought about the most. I probably didn't think about anything else as much as I thought about ethics.

Colnerud (2006) suggests being respectful can prevail when ethical codes fail. The "golden rule [is] do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Colnerud, 2006, p. 371). Wendy strongly believed if researchers acted respectfully then even if they did make mistakes, everything would be okay in the end.

Wendy: To some extent you just have to be the person you think you should be around it and check back with people. Even now when I'm doing stuff, I send stuff to people I worked with. I do try and check with people. I just think that is respectful. I don't know everything there is to know and I think that is the biggest thing. It's about ethics and being prepared and it is having respect for other people and at the end of the day if you are genuinely respectful of other people, even if you stuff up, it will be okay.

Being respectful, sensitive, and self-aware can help researchers. Wendy felt these three qualities of an ethics of care should be taught and explored by novice researchers.

Wendy: Have a very clear idea about why you are doing it. People asked me a lot and it wasn't a question I answered well. And be very, very sensitive and remember you are talking to people, they aren't just data,

they are people and some of them have had crappy lives and remember that. Think about how you would feel if people asked you the questions. Would you be prepared to reveal that about yourself? Learn about the culture and have some awareness... treat people how you'd like to be treated yourself really. It's not hard.

Wendy's moral compass ensured she undertook ethical research. Basic human morals and virtues such as cultural awareness, sensitivity, self-reflection, and kindness are qualities that make research ethical even if mistakes are made. A lesson from this is that perhaps novice researchers need to be given the time and resources to learn and practice using ethics of care in the graduate training.

Harry did not adopt a feminist perspective but he recognised how the practical experiences he gained in undergrad enabled him to practice his research ethically.

Harry: it is very difficult to teach that [personal ethics]. So how do you provide somebody with a set of experiences that will lead them to the point that they can make good judgement around what is happening...it comes down to the experiences. That's why I was saying that a long time ago I was able to develop some of that experience in undergrad and classes before I got to my masters and now I find that many students I was supervising didn't get that opportunity. So you can't have those discussions. So you let them know. So that's where the ethics process is not just about going through the ethics committee, that's just the start of the ethical process that you go through.

Harry signals here that being an ethical researcher requires so much more than getting ethics approval at the beginning of the project. Punch (1994) posits emerging researchers should be given opportunities to experience undertaking research, and the subsequent ethical dilemmas, more often. Having life experiences to draw on are useful for new researchers.

Lexi and Edward felt having professional qualifications to draw on would be useful when addressing ethics in practice. Lexi and Edward had social science qualifications but limited real life experience. Nor were they bound by any

professional code of ethics like teaching or counselling or social work. They both felt as non-professionally trained researchers they lacked the skills to deal with complex disclosures that came up in interviews. Perhaps Punch's (1994) suggestion that more practical training should be available for emerging researchers is still valid.

In hindsight, Lexi felt training could give researchers more skills about how to deal with building rapport, how much information to disclose and to warn about the unexpected issues likely to arise. For Lexi, procedural ethics was limited: it required her to have a 'help list' in place in case she needed to refer participants to counselling or women's refuge after interviews. While 'help lists' may be a good source of local support groups, researchers still have to deal with the issues when they arise during interviews. Lexi's participants described issues so complex and complicated she did not feel there were adequate organisations available to help her participants; nor was she qualified to deal with them.

Lexi: it is wonderful when students have a fire in their belly about an issue and they are researching around it but at the same time we need to learn a level of professional caution which is kind of just something that experience needs to guide you... the issues that came up were actually so much more complicated there was no help list for drunk students telling you to go home as they walk through town.

Lexi supported her participants the best she could but she wished her training had prepared her better. Similar to Lexi, Edward acknowledged novice researchers could benefit from having professional experience at times. Edward felt he was lucky he had previous volunteer experience in support and counselling work. While it was not his professional background, this experience helped him deal with disclosures about sexual abuse and drug use.

Edward: there were a number of stories of domestic violence of rape of drug abuse you name it was there in a number of interviews I did. And it

was past stuff so I wasn't needing to actually deal with it in terms of intervention stuff but at the same time we are not actually ever trained to deal with that. And so again the ethics form it doesn't set us up to be ethical researchers when it comes to dealing with people who are telling stories so there are a number of disclosures now I was lucky in the fact that while I had never had formal, formal training I had done... support work, I had been around enough to know the basics.

Edward's previous experience working with drug users, rape survivors, and families suffering domestic violence meant Edward had experiences to draw on when his participants disclosed similar stories. Like Lexi, Edward feels procedural ethics does not provide novice researchers with enough preparation for dealing with complex, serious disclosures. Perhaps researchers who have not learnt how to deal with disclosures should be educated in undergraduate training about how to respond. While professional experience may have aided Lexi and Edward, it may not have been as ethically simple as they imagined.

Practitioner-Research

Professional experience was not always a panacea. Two of my participants, Olive and Harry had professional experience and still encountered unexpected ethical problems. Olive was a registered counsellor studying teenage women's experiences with sexually transmitted infections (STIs). She had ample experience dealing with clients' experiences of sexual health and violence prior to commencing PhD study enabling her to respond to sexual violence disclosures, and sexual health distress appropriately. Yet, being a practitioner-researcher created unexpected tension. Research ethics agreements, and counselling (New Zealand Association of Counsellors Inc., 2002) conflicted at times. Olive constantly negotiated how to manage these two ethical codes.

Olive managed these contradicting ethical hats with two similar techniques: intervening during the research as little as possible, and not being the source of information when she needed to intervene. Olive was torn: she wanted to save and rescue participants from stress, but knew she needed to listen as a researcher, not as a counsellor. Her priority was not to offer support and counsel for her participants but to uncover their experiences with STIs. One technique Olive used to manage this conflict ensured prioritising benefit to the participant. She carefully chose when to intervene.

Olive: [when researching] we need to foreground being a researcher and background being a clinician... So that was quite tricky to manage. The extent to which as a researcher, it was very tricky managing the counsellor/researcher position...and sometimes I did intervene...I intervened when a teenage women had a bad experience with a therapist who didn't understand about sexual health and I gave her information about how to find someone else...because I felt compelled to as a counsellor ethically...another teenage women I was really horrified at the experience she had with the doctor and I encouraged to find another doctor. ... I made sure I wasn't the source of knowledge but...because this is my area of specialty and I have this weird little niche specialty ... I just felt that I had to say something.

Olive was ethically bound as a counsellor to pass on the information she had about the STIs women were diagnosed with. Thus, it was difficult to completely separate her roles as counsellor and researcher. In Olive's case, not passing on accurate information could have posed risks to her participants' health. Olive tried very hard to enable her participants to seek correct information, via another professional, website, or pamphlet, but not via herself.

Bell and Nutt (2002) describe deciding how and when to intervene is complex, particularly when the researcher is bound by practitioner ethics and research ethics. Olive intervened as little as possible, but when she saw a way to seriously reduce risk Olive felt ethically obligated to step in.

Olive: if a Maori teenage woman after I interview her is saying I haven't had an STI test for years do you think I should have one? I'm not going to say go and talk to your doctor about that, I am a researcher. I'm going to use my clinical expertise to know, alarm bells, alarm bells, Maori women have a higher morbidity, mortality rate and are much slower to have tests, so if I can empower a teenage women then I will do that.

Olive intervened by sharing knowledge when the participant was unlikely to seek further help or medical assistance. Perhaps Olive could argue not passing information on put the participants at risk. If Olive had chosen not to answer the teenage woman's question about STI testing the woman may not get tested or seek further help. The woman had established rapport with Olive already and obviously felt comfortable asking for advice. By declining to answer the question, Olive may actually discourage the woman from attaining more information. Olive's counsellor decision to educate and empower her research participants may be favourable to the participants' health; thus benefiting the participant in the long run.

A second technique Olive employed to manage conflicting ethics involved clear practitioner-researcher boundaries during the interview. Productively she foregrounded being a researcher and parked her counselling experiences and knowledge until the end of the interview.

Olive: what I do at the start of the interview...I will say to teenage women if anything stands out to me in the conversation where I think maybe I can let you know something that will be useful, to connect you to some useful information, how would it be if I passed that on at the end of the interview? Because I can't not be a registered counsellor. I am under a code of ethics and in any clinical research the person is always a client before they are a research participant, not that they are my client but I feel that ethical obligation to make sure people have access to accurate health information.

Olive's research journey required constant ethical negotiation. Interestingly, Bell and Nutt (2002) and Coy (2006) all privileged their practitioner roles over their

research role. Similarly, Olive's ethical obligations as a counsellor tend to be privileged over her ethical obligations as a researcher. It is noteworthy that nowhere in the interview did Olive declare she could not break her research ethics.

The constant struggle between being a researcher and a counsellor is complex; yet having professional experience to draw on was an essential reason for Olive's project's success.

Olive: I think that it was incredibly helpful that I had that clinical background because my supervisors were fabulous, I still wouldn't have got the data I got if I hadn't had my own background... [reading from her PhD journal] My learning edge currently was managing my role as a researcher rather than a counsellor. The experiences blur and my counselling training with 'B', is integral to my ability to respond to teenage women.

Unfortunately procedural ethics and research courses do not always prepare or teach novice researchers all the skills needed to build rapport and gain research data. Unlike Edward and Lexi who lacked practitioner skills, Olive was able to use her knowledge as a sexual health counsellor to her advantage in the research. She had numerous previous experiences dealing with sexual health related disclosures, such as stigmatisation and sexual abuse. The skills and experiences she acquired through the counselling were useful when dealing with disclosures in the interviews. Still, Olive had to be mindful of her competing roles and ethical responsibilities constantly when researching.

Like Olive, Harry managed multiple conflicting ethical codes. His teacher ethics and researcher ethics offered opposing advice at times. Harry's expertise and teaching skills enabled him to get into the research site and acquire quality research data. Harry studied migrant children's experiences in school

classrooms. Namely, his teaching expertise enabled him to get into the school and get along with classroom teachers.

Harry's two ethical hats appeared when teachers asked for Harry's expert opinion. As a researcher, his role was simply to observe, not advise. If Harry gave advice and offered to help, he was compromising how children normally reacted in the classroom, thus Harry's position would skew the data he collected. Like Olive, Harry worked hard to help teachers find the answers they required, but he did not want to be the source of information himself.

Harry: I wouldn't tell people what to do, but I might be working with them through the questions. So where to find that information out, that's part of the positioning, so I could draw on the fact that I had spent a lot of time in the classroom before as my background of training to be a teacher. I'm probably more a person who raises these issues as questions to be answered as opposed to here's the answer. I'm not going to give you that, especially because I consider them the experts in their classroom. But you know, you find those points and you work through them...whereas others might have a defined yes or no, so for me it was finding that position as a researcher and less expert.

Harry tried not to be the source of information but suggest places where teachers and parents may find the information they required. Harry chose not to act as a teacher might when he refused to share his teaching advice. It was not only Harry's advice that teachers and parents sought. Harry's help and teaching skills were seen as very beneficial and useful in the classroom. Teachers would constantly ask Harry to assist and take on a teacher aide type role in the classroom.

Harry did not want students to see him as a second teacher. He wanted to be a non-biased observer. If children saw him as another adult, or siding with the teachers, their actions and reactions may be censored when in Harry's presence. Although Harry tried really hard to be as unbiased and as objective as possible,

subjectivity is unavoidable in most qualitative research. Harry explained how he managed this bias: he did not intervene when a teacher or other adult might.

Harry: I still have this image of a student dancing on the desk. And I just came in and said “hi” you know...I was mindful of not wanting to be a person who was a second teacher so my threshold for intervention was quite high...if someone’s going to hurt themselves or hurt each other I’d do something. And I think there was an expectation of other adults that I would take that adult role.

Harry stepped into a teacher role when children were in a high-risk situation, but privileged his researcher role over teacher role whilst observing.

Once again like Bell and Nutt (2002) uncovered, Harry’s dual ethical codes also created an ethical dilemma for him. Harry’s presence in the classroom landed him in a sticky ethical situation at one point. Harry was asked to testify in a case of classroom bullying. As a teacher, his practitioner-ethics expected him to explain what he had seen and how the bullying was playing out.

Harry: you don’t always have another adult in the classroom. They aren’t overly familiar with researchers spending lots of time in the classroom. So that whole confidentiality. And I did get caught in another scenario that I didn’t anticipate and that was another student, parents complained they were being bullied so here’s Harry who is a researcher and been observing the classroom. Is all of a sudden being called upon to say....Is this person being bullied?...Yeah, and it wasn’t the student I was focusing on, it was another student. I did have a good sense of what was happening in the classroom. I suppose in that moment, I was able to reassure of what I had seen happening. I felt it was okay because I was able to demonstrate that it wasn’t as bad as they may have thought.

Harry privileged his teacher ethics over his research ethics, again echoing Coy’s (2006) and Bell and Nutt’s (2002) experiences. Teachers’ professional code means they are ethically expected to stop bullying from occurring but researchers are expected to maintain confidentiality. If Harry had witnessed bullying while observing the class, or through interviewing with participants, research ethics may have expected Harry to keep that information confidential.

As a researcher who is observing, this put Harry in a difficult position. Harry could have refused to be a witness to the classroom bullying because it may have broken his ethical confidentiality agreement and compromised his fly on the wall position: a verdict that may break the trust of the schoolteachers, principals and student's parents, which could have serious consequences for the remainder of his research.

While practitioner experience or ethical guidelines may counteract some of the shortfalls of research ethics, they certainly do not make research unproblematic. Contradicting ethical requirements force researchers to privilege either their researcher or practitioner position over the other. Similarly to Coy (2006) and Bell and Nutt's (2002) accounts of conflicting ethical codes, Olive and Harry found privileging both ethical hats trying. Coy argues researchers normally end up honouring one ethical code over the other and Bell and Nutt claim the solution to multiple ethical hats is not a one-size-fits-all rule; decisions must be made on a case-by-case situation. Mainly, Olive and Harry privileged their practitioner ethics over research ethics. Both researchers gave considerable ethical thought to their contradicting positions, yet still encountered difficulties. In any case, just making a decision about what to do was the right one: there was no obviously correct answer, just a messy array of possible responses (Ess, 2002). While these researchers managed to negotiate the complexities involved with double ethical codes, it certainly did not make their research process straightforward or easy. Ironically, Lexi and Edward suggested having practitioner experience or guidelines would make conducting ethical practice easier, but Harry and Olive would probably argue otherwise. Instead, different ethical dilemmas arise.

Summary

This chapter explored how researchers employed personal ethics to meet the shortcomings of research or procedural ethics. Mostly, personal ethics were utilised when procedural ethics failed to prepare researchers for unexpected issues involved in qualitative research. First, personal ethics had to be employed when researchers required rapport with participants. Namely qualitative researchers build rapport (Duncombe & Jessop, 2002) with participants to ensure a non-judgemental research environment. Thus, participants will share more and subsequently researchers gain more data. Yet, procedural ethics does not prepare researchers for the complexities around building rapport including ending relationships with participants, negotiating the researcher's position, and ensuring knowledge is given back in an appropriate way. Lexi, Edward, Rachel, and Wendy all employed personal ethics when engaging with rapport.

Second, researchers found treating participants with respect, and constantly considering ethics created a safe, ethical research environment. Employing respectful, reverential virtues ensured participants were less likely to be harmed by unsound ethics. Lexi, Wendy, and Harry went beyond procedural ethics requirements and used personal ethics to check their participants were always comfortable with the research goals.

Third, this chapter explored the contradicting ideas between academic-researchers and practitioner researchers. Lexi and Edward suggested having practitioner experience or ethical guidelines might improve novice researchers' abilities to negotiate unexpected issues. But, Olive and Harry explained having practitioner ethics could actually complicate the research process. Researchers may be forced to choose between their position as an academic or a practitioner

(Bell & Nutt, 2002; Coy, 2006), as sometimes researcher and practitioner ethics can contradict.

Overall, this chapter found procedural ethics could not account for all the issues that will arise in qualitative research. Personal ethics can help fill the gaps that procedural or research ethics leave open. Being respectful and employing the “golden rule...do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Colnerud, 2006, p. 371) can be good advice for novice researchers when ethical codes fall short. Research ethics are vital and expected for most qualitative researchers. Attaining procedural ethics approval is standard practice for researchers using human participants, yet negotiating unexpected ethical issues that arise after procedural ethics is increasingly commonplace for qualitative researchers. During qualitative research, the “array of ethical issues and possible (and sometimes conflicting) approaches to ethical decision-making are daunting, if not overwhelming” (Ess, 2002, p. 3) for many researchers. This research set out to explore if procedural ethics and ethics in practice differ in qualitative research, and what type of ethical issues arise unplanned for during ethics in practice. The research also sought to unpack how novice researchers dealt with these ethically important moments immediately and in due course. Guillemin and Gillam’s (2004) commentary on ethics in practice issues in qualitative research acknowledges that unexpected issues occur in qualitative research, yet these scholars do not explain how novice researchers negotiate, resolve, or answer these issues. Procedural ethics can rarely prepare qualitative researchers for all the issues that may arise during ethics in practice; thus researchers must find ways to negotiate unexpected ethical issues when they are collecting and analysing data. This research sought to answer two questions: 1. What

unexpected ethical issues arise in qualitative research? And; 2. How do novice researchers negotiate these unexpected ethical issues?

In the conclusion that follows I provide an analysis of what unexpected ethical issues novice researchers encountered, and how these unexpected ethical issues were or were not negotiated. Although my results are not generalisable to all novice qualitative researchers in social science disciplines, due to the limited sample numbers, many of my research findings are consistent with results found in other literature discussing qualitative research ethics. Throughout this chapter I note where similarities and differences lie in comparison to other literature conducted. I also recap some suggestions novice researchers have for negotiating unexpected ethical issues.

7. Conclusion

The goal of this thesis was to flesh out Sonia's story in Guillemin and Gillam's (2004) distinction between procedural ethics and ethics in practice. Sonia, described in the introduction, was the woman who was being researched about heart disease, but disclosed to the researcher her husband had been sexually abusing her daughter. What do researchers do when confronted with ethically important moments that procedural ethics did not warn them about? The ten researchers in this study all had ethically important moments. Some were resolved; others were left dangling. They experienced successful gatekeeping (Bell & Nutt, 2002), the limits of confidentiality that Sieber and Tolich (2013) discussed, and also got entangled in the ethics of doing rapport (Duncombe & Jessop, 2002) when entering and exiting a research site.

The main findings of this thesis are chapter specific and were reported within the respective results chapters: Chapter 4 - Negotiating Gatekeepers; Chapter 5 - Limits of Confidentiality; Chapter 6 - Researching with Integrity. The three main research questions were:

1. What unexpected ethical issues arise in qualitative research?
2. How do novice researchers negotiate these unexpected ethical issues?
3. Can more be done to prepare novice qualitative researchers?

Besides answering these research questions, this chapter ends by identifying some limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

What unexpected ethical issues arise in qualitative research?

This research set out to explore the unexpected ethical issues that arose in these ten researchers' qualitative PhDs. Issues around three main themes occurred. These were negotiating gatekeepers, managing confidentiality, and handling conflicting ethical codes, insider/outsider positions, and rapport. These issues were unexpected; procedural ethics did not prepare these novice researchers for negotiating unexpected issues related to getting in, getting along, and getting out.

How did novice researchers negotiate these unexpected ethical issues?

Researchers employed different techniques to manage each of the unexpected ethical issues. Getting past gatekeepers involved highlighting the benefit and legitimacy for them, or it forced researchers to change their methodologies, use facilitators to broker access, or at times circumvent the gatekeepers. To manage confidentiality researchers used disclaimers, blurred details, and privileged confidentiality dilemmas over contributing new knowledge. When managing rapport and conflicting ethical codes, researchers withdrew from research sites and cut off contact with participants, tried to redistribute the knowledge gained back to their research site, and privileged one ethical (i.e. teacher, counselling, or research ethics) code over another.

Negotiating Getting In

Three typologies of gatekeepers were identified. Institutional gatekeepers, like teachers and board of trustees (Coyne, 2010; Coyne et al., 2009) were mostly predictable, whereas non-institutional gatekeepers, including community leaders and powerful men, (Bell & Nutt, 2002), and ethics committees acting as gatekeepers, were less so.

Researchers negotiated getting into research sites past the gatekeepers with four main techniques. When getting into research sites researchers highlighted the benefit and legitimacy with gatekeepers, justifying why the project was valid, or beneficial to the participants, research site, or gatekeeper (Slack & Vigurs, 2006; Wanat, 2008). For example, to gain the principal's and teachers' approval, Harry offered his skills in the classroom, acting as a teacher aide whilst collecting data.

Other researchers including Gina, Nick, and Jules altered their pre-existing and ethically approved methodologies to better suit gatekeepers' methodological assumptions or expectations, making gatekeepers more likely to approve the research. Gina made her project less time-consuming for participants and gatekeepers. Nick adapted his findings to write a report for residence masters.

Less commonly, researchers used a facilitator as a bridge. Rachel's mutual friend introduced her to some Jersey cow farmers, and Harry's participants' parents introduced him to gatekeepers within school sites. Facilitators helped gatekeepers understand the researchers' projects.

The most preferred method of negotiating gatekeepers was circumventing them as much as possible (Wanat, 2008). Gina, Miranda, Nick, Wendy, and Jules purposely avoided parent gatekeepers. Gina and Nick's advice to emerging researchers was to circumvent gatekeepers where possible. Having said that the novice researchers in my sample hardly ever achieved this. Olive and Edward were the only researchers to successfully circumvent participant gatekeepers.

All gatekeepers were accomplished at preventing researchers from accessing participants or research sites. The participants' difficulty with gatekeepers was unexpected making it difficult for these researchers to access research sites and potential participants. This slowed down the research process (Turner & Webb, 2012) or forced researchers to change their research plan.

Negotiating Getting Along

Getting along in the research site required different techniques to getting in, which again were not predicted during procedural ethics. Researchers had to negotiate two types of confidentiality, both internal and external (Tolich, 2004). Dealing with the limits of confidentiality however proved challenging. All researchers removed or blurred categorising features, such as gender, location, and occupation of participants' identities (Kantrowitz, 2004). Sometimes masking details was inadequate for offering confidentiality. Wendy realised no amount of masking would protect her participants' identities so did not link participants' stories to pseudonyms.

Some researchers acknowledged the limits of confidentiality to participants using disclosures or the principle of caveat emptor (Tolich, 2009), putting the onus on participants and asking them to only participate with the limits in mind. Nick suggested his participants did not share their names or living situations with fellow focus group members. A few participants were unable to manage the ramifications of maintaining confidentiality. Gina could not control who her participants 'outed' themselves to, particularly when they chose to have the interviews in public places.

Furthermore, masking details came at a price to the integrity of the data. Rachel, Gina, and Jules were unable to contribute new knowledge because it would compromise participants' confidentiality (Holloway & Wheeler, 1995). Rachel was unsure how to represent all the data she had collected while maintaining confidentiality. Instead, she privileged confidentiality over contributing new knowledge by not publishing new, intriguing data in the final publication. Thus maintaining confidentiality came at a high price to the research field.

Negotiating Getting Along with Self

Researchers had to make some hard calls when both ending rapport (Duncombe & Jessop, 2002; Ellis, 2007) with participants, and about how much of their insider knowledge to disclose (Khawaja & Mörck, 2009). Lexi decided to decline meeting participants for coffee once data collection was complete. Wendy explained she still has on-going relationships with her participants.

Those with a feminist methodology had a set of obligations they felt compelled by including minimising power imbalances (Hesse-Biber, 2013). Wendy, Lexi, and Harry shared parts of their own lives with participants, for example Wendy shared experiences from her past relationships to remove judgement. Researchers made these decisions on a case-to-case basis depending on how open their participants were about their life experiences. Edward's decision to disclose, or not disclose, his sex work experience was made during each interview.

At times research ethics clashed with virtue or practitioner ethics (Francis, 1990) forcing researchers to favour either their practitioner or

research ethics (Bell & Nutt, 2002; Coy, 2006). Harry privileged his teacher ethics and testified to the classroom bullying. Olive prioritised being a researcher during the interview, but once it was complete, she counselled her participants, answering their sexual health questions.

Wendy relied on virtue ethics when research ethics failed her, treating participants with respect, or treating participants the way the researcher would like to be treated (Colnerud, 2006). She treated her participants with respect. For example, at the end of her research Wendy checked back in with participants to make sure they were comfortable with the information she was publishing. Likewise, Edward checked participants' working details were still correct before he submitted his thesis. Researching with integrity also required an array of techniques and proved challenging for these ten researchers.

Can more be done to prepare novice qualitative researchers?

Like many of my participants, I found my procedural ethics were unable to prepare me for all the ethical issues I would face during my research journey. My procedural ethics alerted me to certain confidentiality issues, such as protecting my participants' participants, yet I was unaware how limiting and challenging confidentiality can be. Changing enough details to offer confidentiality was complex. I blurred details (Kantrowitz, 2004) such as PhD topic, work place, gender, age, and institution studied at. This seemed the only way to conduct this research confidentially. Yet, completely maintaining confidentiality and representing all the data I found was unfeasible (Holloway & Wheeler, 1995). At the end of my research, I was in contact with one of my participants and shared some of my findings with her, including aspects of her ethical issues. At first, she

did not recognise her own story. She was surprised how much I had blurred her features, partly because her recognisable topic more generally caused many ethical issues. Yet, at the same time, because her participants were highly identifiable, my participant acknowledged she did not know how else the data from her interview could be used. The data I presented and discussed was limited by confidentiality. While I knew confidentiality issues would arise for me during this thesis, the limitations that confidentiality did bring were far greater than I could have predicted. So I end this thesis with a new question: how can novice researchers be better prepared for unexpected ethical issues? I make three suggestions: write more, educate more, and create reference groups.

Punch (1994) claims that one hardly ever hears of ethical failures in qualitative research. Yet, novice researchers can learn from other researchers' mistakes, however, these mistakes need to be owned, reflected on, and then explained, so emerging researchers do not have to make the same ones. For example, Olive avoided a messy ending when exiting the research because other researchers had published about their difficulties ending rapport (Duncombe & Jessop, 2002). Learning how to get in, along, and out of research before beginning can be beneficial. If researchers wrote about their experiences as these ten researchers have shared, emerging researchers could read and be aware of the possible problems they may encounter. While unexpected issues will arise, the researchers may begin to expect unexpected issues and feel less alone when dealing with them. Having a collective bank of knowledge about what to expect when you begin researching would enable researchers to explore how other researchers negotiated their ethics in practice. A great example is the book 'Ethics in Qualitative Research' by Miller et al. (2002). As social scientists,

we can learn from each others' successes and mistakes, creating a platform to discuss difficult dilemmas, and positive and negative solutions to ethically important moments.

How to respond to unexpected issues in the field is unique. There is no 'correct' response to many particular issues. So a place to practice negotiating hypothetical ethical dilemmas is needed. Emerging researchers already undergo research methods classes, but more education or warning about unanticipated ethical issues could mean researchers prepare themselves for unexpected ethical issues when researching. Lexi and Edward remarked they felt less prepared than their practitioner-researcher colleagues because they lacked practical experience. Research method classes could allow emerging researchers to role-play or practice different responses to ethical dilemmas in a safe, educational environment. Duska's (1998) recommendation is adept; students in qualitative research should aim to find at least three responses to complex ethical dilemmas. Discussing and responding to hypothetical ethical dilemmas will normalise ethics in practice.

Reference groups may be useful forums for negotiating ethics in practice. Each week I met with fellow postgraduate students to discuss our research journey. Those weekly meetings, combined with on-going communicate with my two supervisors, created a useful reference group. My participant Lexi noted social scientists tend to work alone, or only with one other person, often an advisor. This is different to physical and medical sciences that often work in teams. Thus, when dilemmas do arise, biomedical scientists usually have a team of people to negotiate the dilemma with, rather than having to nut it out alone. Yet, qualitative researchers lack forums to discuss ethical issues, partly because

procedural ethics confidentiality requirements usually involve not discussing the research with other people. My procedural ethics stipulated the few people I could discuss the transcript with. When meeting with fellow postgraduates the ethical dilemmas I experienced were discussed in general terms, as I could not disclose details from transcripts that would identify my participants. Batchelor and Briggs (1994) also recommend collaborating with advisors when deciding whether or not to use data that is ethically problematic. Perhaps, qualitative researchers would benefit from reference groups with colleagues and graduate students to help them find long-term solutions to ethical dilemmas that occur post procedural ethics.

Guillemin and Gillam (2004) were right. Acknowledging that ethically important moments do occur in qualitative research could be a good way to start preparing novice researchers to expect the unexpected. Constantly reminding researchers when dealing with ethics in practice that employing the 'golden rule' (Colnerud, 2006), to treat people with respect, may be a good place to turn when all other skills and resources fall short.

Further Research

Throughout this research, some areas that could use further exploration became apparent. Literature (Coyne, 2010; Coyne et al., 2009; Tilley et al., 2009) warns that parents and teachers act as gatekeepers to children, yet this did not come out in the participants' stories whom I interviewed; partly because the researchers I interviewed did not conduct research that involved gaining parental consent. Only one of my participants, Harry, researched with children under 16, meaning parental permission was required (National Ethics Advisory

Committee, 2010). Harry's experience accessing children for research was unproblematic. Yet a number of my participants explicitly stated they avoided using under 16 year olds as participants because the thought of attaining parental permission was too daunting. In New Zealand, 16 year olds are capable of giving consent, so researchers do not have to gain parental permission for participants aged 16 and over (National Ethics Advisory Committee, 2010).

Many of the other researchers purposely designed their research to involve only participants over the aged of 16, thus circumventing the obstacles involved with gaining parental consent. For example, Miranda only observed the senior students' school performance to ensure all participants were over 16. Nick researched final year secondary school students to avoid inviting minors to participate. And, Gina explained her procedural ethics were straightforward because she "wasn't working with children". These researchers designed research proposals to circumvent parental gatekeepers.

More research exploring what unexpected issues arise when gaining parental permission for researching children could be useful. If gaining parental permission is less problematic than novice researchers assume more researchers may feel prepared to undertake research with children.

Additionally, a number of participants signalled they desired more training for dealing with sensitive issues or disclosures from participants during qualitative interviewing. More research could explore what issues novice researchers feel unprepared for, and what training they desire to make them feel more prepared.

In summary, this thesis did flesh out Sonia's story, affirming novice researchers will have an array of unexpected ethical issues arise after procedural

ethics. The techniques researchers employ to negotiate these issues vary, as does the success of the techniques. Unexpected issues may arise at any time: from getting through ethics approval, to getting in, along, and out of the research site. Although, more research needs to be conducted to explore how novice researchers can come to expect unexpected ethical issues when embarking on their research journeys. Had my participants encountered Sonia, they would have relied on their own moral compasses and apprehensively done well negotiating such an ethically important moment.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Letter to Organisations

[Reference Number 14017]

[07/02/2014]

PHD Graduates Reflect on Ethics in Practice

I am recruiting participants who have recently (last 7 years) finished a qualitative PHD in the social sciences. Participants will be asked to take part in one 60-90 minute interview about their PHD, particularly the ethical processes that their PHD entailed. The interview will be either on Skype or face-to-face.

My thesis is investigating the ethical processes that are involved when completing a PHD that employs qualitative or emergent research methodologies. I am particularly interested in two dimensions of research ethics: procedural ethics, the ethical planning that occurs prior to entering the field such as ethics applications; and ethics in practice, the ethically important moments that occur in the field that may not have been anticipated or planned for.

If you are interested in participating, please do not hesitate to contact my supervisors or myself.

Thank you,
Amber Chambers
Department of Sociology

and

Dr. Melanie Beres
Department of Sociology
University Number: 479

8736



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Appendix 2: Final Information Sheet for Participants

[Reference Number 14017]

[07/02/2014]

PHD Graduates reflect on Ethics in Practice

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

The aim of the research is to investigate how PHD students deal with unexpected ethical issues when they are in the field. Due to the nature of qualitative, inductive research, sometimes the research focus can shift and researchers can be faced with ethical issues in the field that were not considered prior to field work beginning or in the ethics application. In qualitative research it is impossible to precede every ethical situation that may arise in the field; thus, ethics in practice and ethically important moments are unavoidable. This research project aims to explore how PHD students managed ethics in practice and dealt with or reacted to ethically important moments.

What Type of Participants are being sought?

All people who have completed data collection of a qualitative PHD three or more months ago, or people who have completed a qualitative PHD within the last 7 years.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to take part in one 30- 90 min semi-structured interview and describe your PHD project. The focus will particularly be around the ethical processes and issues that arose during your PHD.

The interviews will occur either on Skype or face-to-face at a location and time that is convenient for you.

Likely questions include tell me about your PHD process. What did your ethical application entail? Did your procedural ethics match up with the ethics in the field? Did you have any ethically important or challenging moments during your PHD? How did you/did you not deal with unexpected ethical moments? If you did the project again would you do anything differently? Why/why not? What would have made your ethical journey easier? What went well or not so well ethically? How did reflexivity play out in your ethical process?

The interview will be transcribed. If you choose a paper or pdf copy will be returned to you. You may highlight any information that you do not want to be directly quoted in the thesis or subsequent publications or remove anything in the interview that you do not want to be included as data. This is optional. If you do not wish to have the transcript returned to you it will not be.

As the interview will be discussing your experiences during your PHD research there is a possibility that your participants may come up in conversation. In order to maintain the confidentiality of these participants I will ask to leave all participants nameless. If you choose to have the transcript returned to you, you can remove any information that you do not want quoted or included as data in this project.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

The interviews will be audiotaped, transcribed and coded to gain a better understanding of how the formal procedural ethics can differ from the ethics in practice and ethically important moments that occur in the field. Only the researcher and their two supervisors will have access to the transcribed data.

The information gathered, including audiotapes and transcripts, will be kept in a locked storage cabinet or password protected computer at the office of one of the supervisors in the Department of Sociology. The researcher and supervisors will be the only people who have the key for this locked storage cabinet or the password for the computer. If the researcher is concerned about the safety of the participant or people around the participant then the researcher may need to inform an appropriate person.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned below will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for **at least 5 years** in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants such as audiotapes after they have been transcribed, may be destroyed at the completion of the research even though the data derived from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer.

The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve your confidentiality.

This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes questions around the ethical issues and practices that occurred during your PHD. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. Consequently, although the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used.

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and also that you may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Amber Chambers

Department of Sociology

chaam165@student.otago.ac.nz

OR

Dr. Melanie Beres

Department of Sociology

University Telephone Number:

479 8736

melanie.beres@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.



Appendix 3: Consent Form For Participants

[Reference Number 14017]

[07/02/2014]

PHD Graduates Reflect on Ethics in Practice

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;
3. Personal identifying information on the audio recordings will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;
4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes the ethical process that occurred whilst undertaking your PHD. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.
5. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my confidentiality.
6. I will protect the confidentiality of my participants during the interview by not using their names, original pseudonyms, or other identifying information.
7. If I wish to have the transcript returned to me, I will provide a mailing address or email address. This address will only be used to return the transcript to me. This is completely optional.

I agree to take part in this project.

..... (Signature of participant)

..... (Printed Name)

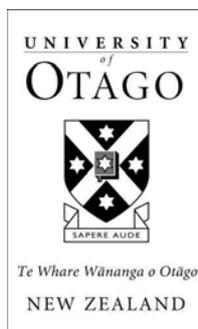
Do you wish to have the transcript returned to you? Yes/No

..... (Date)

If yes, please provide an email or mailing address below

.....
.....

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.



Appendix 4: First Amendment Request to the Ethics Committee

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OR AMENDMENT TO A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED STUDY

If the nature, content, location, procedure (including recruitment of participants) or personnel (including student investigators) of an application approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee or University of Otago Human Ethics Committee (Health) changes, applicants are responsible for informing the Committee of those changes.

Application Reference number (e.g H13/011, 13/131, D13/001):	14017	Name of University of Otago staff member responsible for the project:	Dr Melanie Beres
Title of Project:	PHD Graduates reflect on Ethics in Practice		

Please detail the amendment(s) you would like to make to your approved proposal, the reasons for the change(s), and any additional ethical considerations:

I would like to change the participant inclusion criteria. Currently, I have been recruiting “people who have completed a qualitative PHD in New Zealand in the social sciences within the last 7 years”.

I would like to amend this to “people who have completed data collection of a qualitative PHD in New Zealand three or more months ago, or people who have completed a qualitative PHD in New Zealand within the last 7 years.”

This change will make recruiting participants easier. People who have finished data collection three or more months ago can reflect on the data collection process and any ethical issues that arose while they were collecting data. I have allowed a three-month period to allow some time for PhD candidates to reflect on ethical issues that did arise in the field.

I have attached the amended Participant Information Sheet.

Please email your completed form, together with your amended Information Sheet(s), Consent Form(s), Survey(s)/Questionnaires, or any other relevant documents, as appropriate, to :

Gary Witte (Manager, Academic Committees) gary.witte@otago.ac.nz, or

Jane Hinkley (Academic Committees Administrator), jane.hinkley@otago.ac.nz

or

Jo Farron de Diaz (Research Ethics Administrator), jo.farronediaz@otago.ac.nz .

Researchers can normally expect a response within a week of submitting their request.

Appendix 5: Second Amendment Request to the Ethics Committee

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OR AMENDMENT TO A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED STUDY

If the nature, content, location, procedure (including recruitment of participants) or personnel (including student investigators) of an application approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee or University of Otago Human Ethics Committee (Health) changes,

Application Reference number (e.g H13/011, 13/131, D13/001):	14017	Name of University of Otago staff member responsible for the project:	Dr Melanie Beres
Title of Project:	PHD Graduates reflect on Ethics in Practice		

applicants are responsible for informing the Committee of those changes.

Please detail the amendment(s) you would like to make to your approved proposal, the reasons for the change(s), and any additional ethical considerations:

I would like to change the participant inclusion criteria. Currently, I have been recruiting “people who have completed data collection of a qualitative PHD in New Zealand three or more months ago, or people who have completed a qualitative PHD in New Zealand within the last 7 years.”

I would like to amend this to “people who have completed data collection of a qualitative PHD three or more months ago, or people who have completed a qualitative PHD within the last 7 years.”

This change will make recruiting participants easier. Currently, I am having difficulty recruiting participants that did not do their PhD through the University of Otago. By including participants that studied overseas, I will be able to recruit participants quicker. Also, internal confidentiality becomes easier to manage. Also, the research will not be seen as just a critique of the ethics process at University of Otago.

I have attached the amended Participant Information Sheet.

Please email your completed form, together with your amended Information Sheet(s), Consent Form(s), Survey(s)/Questionnaires, or any other relevant documents, as appropriate, to :

Gary Witte (Manager, Academic Committees) gary.witte@otago.ac.nz, or

Jane Hinkley (Academic Committees Administrator), jane.hinkley@otago.ac.nz

or

Jo Farron de Diaz (Research Ethics Administrator), jo.farronediaz@otago.ac.nz.

Researchers can normally expect a response within a week of submitting their request.

Appendix 6: First Interview Guide

In doing this research I really want to respect the confidentiality of your participants so it's really important to me that you understand I'm not asking for identifying things about your participants. In order to do this I've tried to come up with way to ensure your participants' confidentiality is maintained perhaps leaving your participants nameless or calling them all Bob or Jill, or just a participant etc. Also, remember that you can have the transcript back or ask me not to use data or not to quote it or not to transcribe it. Is that okay with you?

1. Thank you for providing me with your information sheet from your PHD. So, I understand the original project was about _____.
2. Can you tell me a bit more about the project? What did you set out to do?
3. Did this plan change as you went along?
4. Tell me about the ethical process involved in your PHD.
5. What did your ethical application entail?
6. What unexpected ethical issues arose during your PHD?
7. Did you have any ethically important or challenging moments during your PHD?
8. How did you deal with unexpected ethical issues?
9. Why do you think these unexpected ethical issues arose?
10. How could you have been better prepared?
11. Is there anything you would have done differently?
12. Would you change anything if you did it again?
What/Why/why not?
13. What would have made your ethical journey easier?
14. How did reflexivity play out in your ethical process?
15. Do you think your procedural ethics match up with the ethics in the field?

Further Probes

Could you tell me more about that?

Why do you think that happened?

Rephrase a question

Allow silence, listen, and allow participant to narrate for a considerable amount of time (Galletta, 2013)

Rephrase what the participants have said back to them

Appendix 7: Second Interview Guide

In doing this research I really want to respect the confidentiality of your participants so it's really important to me that you understand I'm not asking for identifying things about your participants. In order to do this I've tried to come up with way to ensure your participants' confidentiality is maintained perhaps leaving your participants nameless or calling them all Bob or Jill, or just a participant etc. Also, remember that you can have the transcript back or ask me not to use data or not to quote it or not to transcribe it. Is that okay with you?

1. What was your PHD project about?
Methodology?
Number of participants?
2. Tell me about the ethical process involved in your PHD.
What did your ethical application entail?
3. Did you have any unpredictable moments during your PHD?
4. How did you deal with unexpected ethical issues?
5. Could they have been avoided?
6. Did anything ethically happen that you felt was out of your control?
7. How could you have been better prepared/Is there anything you would have done differently?
Would you change anything if you did it again?
What/Why/why not?
8. Any advice for someone who was going to do your project again?
9. Looking back, do you think your procedural ethics match up with the ethics in the field?

Appendix 8: Third Interview Guide

Thanks for meeting with me

Could you tell me a bit more about your PhD topic?

- a. Methodology?
 - b. Number of participants?
-
1. Tell me about the ethical process involved in your PHD.
 - a. What did your ethical application entail?
 - b. Informed consent
 - c. Information sheets
 2. How did you get to your participants?
 3. What were the biggest challenges?
 4. Did you have any unpredictable moments during your PHD?
 - a. Any ethical issues relating to them?
 5. How did you deal with unexpected ethical issues?
 6. How could you have been better prepared/Is there anything you would have done differently?
 - a. Would you change anything if you did it again?
 - b. What/Why/why not?
 7. Any advice for someone who was going to do your project again?
 8. How do you prepare your students?