

Policy on Audio and Videotaping

General Comments

The use of audio and videotaping has increased enormously in research due to the popularity of interpretative phenomenology as a tool to gain access to the individual participant's world, that is, the context within which one perceives self, others, and events which the principal investigator is exploring. In order to fully grasp the participant's "story" the investigator will employ audio or video taping of the interview for the purpose of recording the multi-levels (verbal and non-verbal) of information that is being conveyed by the participant which the investigator may have missed despite one's best efforts of active listening and note taking in the original session. In addition, reviewing the tapes may lend itself to follow-up questions that will further plumb the "world" of the participant. Finally, taping lends itself to enhancing the credibility and accuracy of the data obtained by means of member checking, that is, affording the participants an opportunity to review the tapes themselves or their text transcriptions to assure the information conveyed was adequately and comprehensively documented by the principal investigator.

Despite the research advantages of audio and video taping, the investigators must carefully structure their consent forms so they pass muster under the heightened scrutiny of review by the IRB. Due to post 9-11 security issues and the development of voice identification and facial recognition technologies, we have come to appreciate how the speech patterns are as unique to one's person as fingerprints and the face is no less uniquely structured where points between key characteristics such as eyes, nose, mouth, angles of the jaw and forehead are all measurable in creating an identifying template known as a biometric. Because both audio and videotaping record such identifying characteristics in a permanent and readily available fashion, they should be treated utmost respect for the participant's privacy by the principal investigator. The IRB is commissioned to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the human subject's data as well as minimize the participant from a variety of harms. In this regard the employment of audio or videotaping of participant's by investigators should come under full IRB review. Exempt status should not be requested by the principal investigator if he/she is utilizing a taping format as part of the research due to the fact that potential breaches of privacy (violating the principle of the participant's right to control the extent, timing, and circumstances of sharing oneself with another) and confidentiality (treatment of information that a participant has disclosed to others in ways that are inconsistent with the understanding of the original disclosure without permission) may occur. For example, many university IRBs require the following warning be placed in the consent form noting the heightened risk of this format: "Because your image and/or voice will be potentially identifiable by anyone who sees or hears the tape, your confidentiality for things you say on the tape cannot be guaranteed although the researcher will try to limit access to the tape as described above."

Essentially, privacy and confidentiality risks are increased by the very nature of the methodology that often lends itself to the taping format - interpretative phenomenology. In-depth interviewing often characterized by broad explorative open-ended questions can easily enter into areas unintentionally by the researcher to be sure, but nonetheless are precluded from exempt categorization. The use of broad open-ended questions encourages the participant a free-rein exploration into his/her contextual world - a world full of relationships which, *inter alia*, includes naming others, describing their behaviors, and the participant's reactions to such behaviors. Hence, the participant may inadvertently reveal information about self or others who populate his/her world and whose behaviors may be one of the enumerated activities that federal regulations would automatically preclude the approval under exempt status.

Finally, the Federal *IRB Guidebook Chapter 3 Section E* stipulates "studies involving adults, current regulations require IRB review only for the most risky observational investigations, that is, those in which two conditions

exist: (1) the observations are recorded in a manner that allows the subjects to be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to them; and (2) the observations recorded, if they became known outside the research, could reasonably place the subject either at risk of criminal or civil liability or cause damage to the subject's financial standing, employability, or reputation.” Videotaping obviously negates this intent and audio taping likewise possesses the proclivity toward identification of the participant just by the innocent referring to relatives, employers, or household members of the participant which, taken collectively, lead to identify the participant.
HENCE A CONSENT FORM SHOULD BE EMPLOYED WHEN TAPING

Guidelines for Use of Audio and Videotaping.

Introduction

Videotaping for non-research purposes are not be included in the following, For example, video use in training in order to obtain feedback and perfecting a student's technique/skill generally does not constitute "research." But even in this context, instructor must be careful to create a positive atmosphere of analysis and not an embarrassing one.

Participants who volunteer to be video or audio recorded, should given an understanding who will have access to the recordings and for what purposes they will be used. Ideally, subjects should have the right to not participate at all, or to participate in only portions of the recording. Investigators who wish to use the tapes for other purposes than the one described in the Consent form, must obtain a separate consent to do so. For example, you may want to say, in the separate consent form

I, (principal investigator) may wish to present some of the tapes derived from this particular study at educational conferences or scientific conventions. Please sign the permission statement below if you are willing to allow me to do so with your taped session.

"I hereby give permission for the video (audio) tape made for this research study to be also used for educational purposes."

John Smith.

Consent Form Guidelines for Video and Audio Taping

Guideline	Sample Consent Form Statement (Below sentences are only suggestive and not required <i>verbatim</i> . However, the directives found in the guidelines are to be adhered and constructed accordingly in the Consent Form).
1. Participants should be informed that they will be recorded, who will have access to the recordings, and for what purposes	<i>1. You will be videotaped (audiotaped) during the interview by myself (my associate) for purposes of gathering any additional information I may have missed due to one reason or another e.g., my own lapses of attention, diversion by focusing upon note taking, or distractions during the session.</i>
2.a. Prospective participants have a right not to participate in the research project due to the nature of the taping itself OR 2 b. If prospective subjects agree to participate in the study project, they should have a right to refuse to answer any questions or to have the taping interrupted when responding to a particular question (privacy right).	<i>2 a. Because taping is so integral to the method employed in collecting data you have a right not to participate in the study entirely. Your refusal to participate will not adversely affect your employment (grades) etc.</i> OR <i>2 b. You have a right to refuse to answer any of the questions presented to you or not answer the question(s) posed unless the taping is paused and resumed at your discretion.</i>
3. Participant has a right to know who will have access to the tapes, when they will be transcribed, and erased or destroyed.	<i>The tapes will be held in a secure file cabinet and be available only to me and/or (my associate) who will be doing the transcription into text. Upon completion of the transcription the tapes will be erased (destroyed).</i> If member checking is employed then the following: If no transcription of tapes. <i>The tapes will be held in a secure file cabinet and upon a mutually convenient time you will be asked to return to review my notes and your taped session for accuracy purposes. Upon the completion of this task, the tapes will be erased .</i> OR If there is transcription of tapes. <i>Upon completion of the interview, the tapes will placed in a secure file cabinet , separate from other data and the consent form so there can be no identifying linkages between them. The tapes will be transcribed by me (my associate) into text and sent to you for your review and commentary [and you can meet with me at a mutually convenient time to review the transcription] Please feel free to address any statements that you believe merit changes. If I do not hear from you within a reasonable time I can assume that the transcriptions are accurate and complete. All data including the tapes will be destroyed at the completion of this study</i>
4. Participant is entitled to a confidentiality statement and time specific indication when the tapes will be destroyed. In short, the amount of personal data stored by the investigator should be kept to the minimum necessary to achieve the purpose of the research. In addition the cassettes (audio or video) will be coded so that no personally identifying information is visible on them; Indefinite holding of tapes is not permitted.	<i>No names will not be attached to the videotapes or audio tapes, nor to the search results and logs - only code labels. This data will be available only to me and/or the researchers on this project who have signed a confidentiality agreement.. The tapes will be placed in a secure file cabinet , separate from other data and the consent form so there can be no identifying linkages between them. The tapes will remain confidential and be destroyed _____.</i> <i>(when this study has been completed, when my dissertation has been awarded as a result of this study, within a year after the study's submission, etc.)</i>