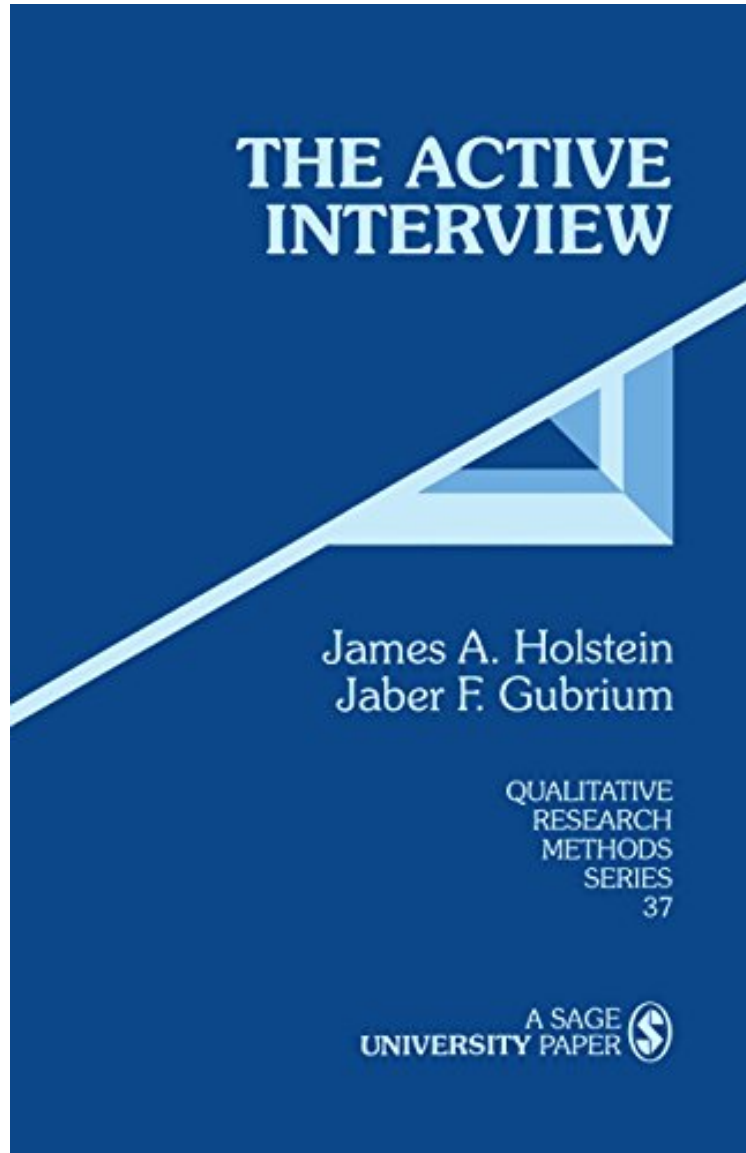


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The Active Interview

James A. Holstein, Jaber F. Gubrium
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Interviews were once regarded as the pipeline through which information was transmitted from a passive subject to an omniscient researcher. However the new "active interview" considers interviewers and interviewees as equal partners in constructing meaning around an interview. This interpretation changes a range of elements in the interview process - from the way of conceiving a sample to the ways in which the interview may be conducted and the results analyzed. In this guide, the authors outline the differences between active and traditional interviews and give novice researchers clear guidelines on conducting a successful interview.

About the Author James A. Holstein is professor of sociology in the Department of Social and Cultural Sciences at Marquette University. His research and writing projects have addressed social problems, deviance and social control, mental health and illness, family, and the self, all approached from an ethnomethodologically- informed, constructionist perspective. Jaber F. Gubrium is professor and chair of sociology at the University of Missouri. He has an extensive record of research on the social organization of care in human service institutions. His publications include numerous books and articles on aging, family, the life course, medicalization, and representational practice in therapeutic context.