Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to announce the launch of Stage 2 of the Qualitative Transparency Deliberations and invite you to take part.

Sponsored by American Political Science Association's organized section for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, the QTD is an inclusive process through which political scientists are gaining a better understanding of the meaning, costs, benefits, and practicalities of transparency in qualitative research. Following an agenda-setting process last spring, the QTD is now moving into a phase of intensive and differentiated deliberations on a wide range of topics, led by a set of specialized Working Groups.

The QTD Working Groups now seek your views, ideas, and suggestions via their discussion fora on the QTD website. On this site, you can join a conversation about the meaning, merits, drawbacks, and practice of transparency for the particular kinds of qualitative inquiry in which you engage. You can also take part in a broad discussion of the ethics, epistemology, or politics of research openness. **You will find below a list of the QTD Working Groups** and a link to the discussion forum for each.

All political scientists, located in any country, are welcome to contribute to this open process. There is no need to be a member of the APSA. To participate "on the record," please click on "Register" or "Login" in the top righthand corner of the **QTD homepage**. Alternatively, you can contribute anonymously by simply posting without registering or logging in. If you prefer, you can also offer your input in private by emailing a Working Group member directly (membership listed on the site).

The Groups' discussion fora will be open **until December 1.** We very much look forward to hearing from you. Broad participation is vital to making this deliberative effort a success.

All the best,
Alan Jacobs and Tim Büthe
On behalf of the QTD Steering Committee and Working Groups

QTD WORKING GROUPS

CLUSTER I. FUNDAMENTALS

I.1 Epistemological and Ontological Foundations
www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=13
Working Group 1 invites discussion on how the notion of transparency in research relates in epistemological terms to potentially broader or alternative notions of research integrity. We frame this issue in terms of three topics: 1) the comparative merits of competing epistemological assumptions about research integrity; 2) placing DA-RT criteria in the context of knowledge production that extends beyond conventional hypothesis testing; 3) imagining specific criteria for journal publications.

I.2 Research Ethics: Human Subjects and Research Openness

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=14

We'd like to initiate a discussion about the tensions and dilemmas between the pursuit of two principles: the ethical principle to protect human subjects and the principle of research openness. What are some of the tensions and dilemmas between these principles that have occurred in conducting and publishing your research?

I.3 Power and Institutionalization

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=15

What are the advantages and disadvantages of different ways of promoting transparency, such as rules with more or less enforcement vs. norms with empowering capacity-building or enabling pedagogy? How do different ways of advancing research explicitness interact with power and resource differentials among scholars? What is the likely effectiveness of different practices for authors, given reviewers' and journals' existing or emergent expectations for the transparency of the qualitative elements of scholarly work? And who should make judgments about trading off transparency against other intellectual, social, or ethical goals, including innovation and respecting the diversity of political science methodologies and approaches?

CLUSTER II. FORMS OF EVIDENCE

II.1 Text-Based Sources

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=17

The working group on text-based sources seeks to understand and recognize current practices regarding the documentation of written and non-written forms of evidence used by scholars in the discipline. The group will also examine and compare technologies and infrastructure that might aid scholars wishing to cite and share documentary data, and will consider the costs and benefits of each of these approaches.

II.2 Evidence from Researcher Interactions with Human Participants

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=18

Transparency in human subjects research is one of the most sensitive questions raised by the QTD. Research process transparency and especially data access place considerable demands on scholars and intersect in complex ways with other values, including the ethics of research. The Working Group on Evidence from Research with Human Participants invites a broad range of research communities to deliberate about the costs and benefits, to scholars and to the profession, of transparency in human subjects research.

CLUSTER III. ANALYTICAL APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

III.1 Comparative Methods and Process Tracing

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=20

Process tracing and comparative historical analysis are among the core methods of qualitative research. How might the way such work is conducted, and the way it is presented to readers throughout the discipline, change with increased attention to research transparency and data access? We hope for broad participation as this critical discussion moves forward.

III.2 Interpretive Methods

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=21

Scholars working within an Interpretive frame have long been attuned to the politics of representation. Whether drawing insights from critical theory, hermeneutics, existential phenomenology, genealogy, ethnography, structuralism , deconstruction, decolonial or postcolonial analysis, interpretivists have analyzed how concepts, definitions, measurements, and methodologies are structured by power. Drawing insights from these rich and varied traditions of inquiry, Working Group III.2 invites discussion of the complex issues raised by transparency discourses for interpretive scholarship.

III.3 Ethnography and Participant Observation

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=22

Discussions of transparency and data access in the discipline have caused consternation for some ethnographers with a range of concerns from protecting human subjects to the potential legal consequences of sharing field notes. Yet various types of transparency are consistently part of ethnographic practice. We invite ethnographers to participate in an open deliberation about transparency practices - how we are or could be transparent about how we do research, what the limitations of transparency practices should be, and how the kinds of transparency that ethnographers engage in could inform the discipline more broadly.

III.4 Algorithmic Analytic Approaches

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=23

This working group will consider transparency in the use of algorithmic forms of analysis of qualitative data. This working group will focus, in particular, on two broad sets of approaches: set-theoretic comparative methods and computer-assisted text analysis, though it may also consider algorithmic approaches to the analysis of qualitative data more broadly. Why and under what conditions is transparency valuable for scholars using algorithmic approaches? How can and should scholars be transparent in their use of such methods? What are the costs, challenges, and limits of such transparency?

III.5 Content Analysis (Non-automated)

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=24

Many of us collect and analyze hand-coded data about text. But what is the transparent analyst of such data to do with the source material and any coded data derived from it? Join us to discuss!

CLUSTER IV. RESEARCH SETTINGS/TOPICS

IV.1 Authoritarian/Repressive Political Regimes

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=26

This working group will consider distinctive transparency issues that arise for research conducted in/on authoritarian or repressive political regimes. What are the particular challenges and risks of research openness in authoritarian and repressive contexts? What are current and best practices for pursuing transparency in such contexts?

IV.2 Settings of Political Violence

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=27

The study of political violence has blossomed over the past decade with scholars making substantive advances around an array of important subjects. These advances have relied on a variety of methodological approaches including qualitative studies that deploy archival research, interviews, ethnography, participant observation and other methods. This forum is dedicated to discussing the meaning and significance of transparency for scholars engaged in research on political violence. Of particular concern are the tradeoffs that arise between the demands for transparency and the need for sensitivity regarding research subjects in high risk locales.

IV.3 Research with Vulnerable and Marginalized Populations

www.qualtd.net/viewforum.php?f=28

Discussions about transparency and data access in political science presume that researchers will not have to share data about vulnerable and marginalized research participants. However, which populations are considered vulnerable and marginalized is contentious: these population classifications are not static in the course of conducting and publishing research. Therefore, our working group solicits your perspective on and experience with notions of marginalization, vulnerability, and transparency in research. Your expertise will be essential for crafting transparency and data access for authors, editors, reviewers, and graduate students in Political Science.

QTD Steering Committee

Tim Büthe, Duke University and Hochschule für Politik, Munich (Co-Chair)

Alan M. Jacobs, University of British Columbia (Co-Chair)

Andrew Bennett, Georgetown University

Erik Bleich, Middlebury College

Mary Hawkesworth, Rutgers University

Kimberley S. Johnson, Barnard College

Kimberly J. Morgan, George Washington University

Sarah Elizabeth Parkinson, Johns Hopkins University

Edward Schatz, University of Toronto

Deborah J. Yashar, Princeton University