Lorenz, L. S. (2006, September). *Using Narrative Analysis of a Patient's Photographs and Interview Text to Understand Living with Traumatic Brain Injury from the Patient's Perspective.* Paper presented to the European Sociological Association, Qualitative Methods Research Network, 3rd Mid-Term Conference, Advances in Qualitative Research Practice, Cardiff University, Wales, UK.

Abstract: Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a serious problem affecting not only injured individuals but also their families and communities. The lived experience of people with TBI can inform peers, families, providers, and policymakers of issues related to living with this injury and facilitators and barriers to recovery from the patient's perspective. In an exploratory study intended to inform a dissertation proposal, an individual with TBI took photographs of living with her injury and the people and circumstances that have helped and slowed her recovery, and discussed her photographs with the researcher. The analysis of her photographs and interview text involved using three types of narrative analysis—looking at the details of an individual photograph, as suggested by Howard S. Becker (1986); structuring the accompanying narrative into its discourse units, as modeled by James Paul Gee (1991); and grouping her series of photographs into plot categories representing problem, action, and resolution, as proposed by Elliot G. Mishler (2004). These analyses provide a glimpse of the impact of a traumatic brain injury on an individual's perceptions of self and her feelings of connection (and disconnection). Structuring the interview text into its discourse units appears to hint at the usefulness of the photographic image in helping the patient to articulate living with a brain injury and to sum up her experience. Grouping the study photographs and their text excerpts into plot categories brings out movement in the participant's healing over time and reveals her hopes for the future—information that was not gleaned by analyzing a single photograph and its interview data.