

SOCIOLOGY 585-01P: INTRODUCTION to QUALITATIVE METHODS

Fall Semester 2007 Thursday 4pm-7pm

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course begins with a brief introduction to the use of qualitative methods in sociological research and the differing approaches to qualitative methods within sociology. E.g.: What types of research questions are best answered using qualitative methods? What is the link between theory and research when using qualitative methods? What are the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to qualitative methods?

After this introduction, we move into “doing” qualitative research. We will explore research design issues including developing research questions, selecting methods, and the ethics of research. We will then examine the collection, analysis, and presentation of qualitative data (focusing on in-depth interviews, observation, and document research), using exercises and your own research projects to illustrate these processes. We will be concerned with practical issues that arise at different stages of the research process.

The best way to learn qualitative methods is to “do” them. Thus, the majority of this course involves doing qualitative research and discussing research issues and questions with each other. As outlined below (and in the separate Soc585-01P Assignments document), the requirements for this course revolve around conducting a research project on a topic of interest to you.

There is a **Blackboard** site devoted to this course (Soc585-01P: Qualitative Methods - Fall 2007). This site will include all materials that we hand out in class (the syllabus, instructions for written assignments, etc.). Any important announcements will also be posted on this site.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (See separate Soc 585-01P Assignments document)

7 Short Assignments (many of these will contribute to your final paper):	35%
Class Participation	15%
Final Research Paper	50%

REQUIRED READING

Required texts – available at the Emory University Bookstore:

- Howard S. Becker. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists*, 2d edition. Univ of Chicago Press.
- R. M. Emerson, ed. 2001. *Contemporary Field Research: Perspectives and Formulations*, 2d edition. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.
- John Lofland, David Snow, Leon Anderson, Lyn Lofland. 2005. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, 4th edition. Wadsworth Publishing.
- Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman. 1994. *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 2d edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Robert S. Weiss. 1994. *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*. New York: Free Press.

Reserve Readings

PLEASE NOTE: A number of the individual readings listed in the syllabus come from this report (abbreviated: *NSF Report*), which is uploaded as one PDF file:

National Science Foundation. 2004. *Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Research*. Report prepared by: Charles C. Ragin, Joane Nage, Patricia White for the National Science Foundation: Sociology Program; Methodology, Measurement & Statistics Program; Directorate for Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences.

Various articles.

These additional **required** readings will be on the LIBRARY's electronic RESERVES DIRECT site. They will also be available as PDF files on our BLACKBOARD site.

The Reserve Readings are marked with an asterisk () in the Class Schedule below.*

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 (Sept 6): What is Qualitative Research?

What is Qualitative Research?

- **NSF Report* 2004, pp. 9-16.
- *Joel Best. 2004. Defining Qualitative Research. Pp. 53-54 in the *NSF Report*.
- *Sudhir Venkatesh. 2004. A Note on Science and Qualitative Research. Pp. 141-144 in the *NSF Report*.

Distinctions between Qualitative and Quantitative Research

- Howard Becker. 1996. "The Epistemology of Qualitative Research." Pp. 317-330 in Emerson.
- *David Collier, Jason Seawright, and Henry E. Brady. 2004. Qualitative versus Quantitative: What Might This Distinction Mean? Pp. 71-76 in the *NSF Report*.
- *Charles Ragin. 2004. Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Research. Pp. 109-115 in the *NSF Report*.
- *Robert Courtney Smith. 2004. Complementary Articulation: Matching Qualitative Data and Quantitative Methods. Pp. 127-132 in the *NSF Report*.

Theory and Research

- Howard Becker. 1989. Tricks of the Trade. Pp. 353-360 in Emerson.
- *Andrew Bennett. 2004. "Testing Theories and Explaining Cases." Pp. 49-51 in the *NSF Report*.
- *Gary Alan Fine. 2004. "The When of Theory." Pp. 81-82 in the *NSF Report*.
- *Gary Alan Fine. 2003. "Towards a Peopled Ethnography: Developing Theory from Group Life." *Ethnography* 4: 41-60.

WEEK 2 (Sept 13): Different Qualitative Approaches

Approaches to Ethnography & Fieldwork

- Robert M. Emerson, 2001. "Introduction: The Development of Ethnographic Field Research." Pp. 1-54 in Emerson. SKIM
- Barbara Sherman Heyl. 2002. Ethnographic Interviewing. Pp. 369-383 in *Handbook of Ethnography*, ed. Paul Atkinson, Amanda Coffey, Sara Delamont, John Lofland, and Lyn Lofland. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
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- Clifford Geertz, 2001 (1973). "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." Pp. 55-75 in Emerson.
- *Mary Jo Deegan, 2001. "The Chicago School of Ethnography." Pp. 11-25 in *Handbook of Ethnography*, ed. Paul Atkinson, et. al. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Kathy Charmaz, 2001 (1995). "Grounded Theory." Pp. 335-352 in Emerson.
- *Michael Buroway et al., 1991. Chapters 1, 2, & 13 in *Ethnography Unbound*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Pp. 1-28 and 271-290).
- *Snow, David A; Morrill, Calvin; Anderson, Leon. 2003. Elaborating Analytic Ethnography: Linking Fieldwork and Theory. *Ethnography* 4 (2): 181-200.

Assignment 1: Class presentations on different ethnographic approaches

WEEK 3 (Sept 20): Qualitative Research Design; Ethics of Qualitative Research

Qualitative Research Design

*NSF Report 2004, pp. 9-20.

*Susan Silbey. 2004. "Designing Qualitative Research Projects." Pp121-125 in *NSF Report*.

Researcher Roles and Ethical Issues in Qualitative Research

Maxine Baca Zinn. 1979. Insider Field Research in Minority Communities. Chapter 6 in Emerson.

Carol A. B. Warren. 2001. Gender and Fieldwork Relations. Chapter 8 in Emerson.

*Laud Humphreys. 1970. The Sociologist as Voyeur. Chapter 2 in *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co.

*Katherine S. Newman, 2002. "Qualitative Research on the Frontlines of Controversy." *Sociological Methods and Research* 31 (2): 123-130.

*American Sociological Association. *Code of Ethics*. SKIM

WEEK 4 (Sept 27): Qualitative Practices: Fieldwork and Interviewing

Fieldwork: Choosing a Research Site and Gaining Entry

Lofland, Snow, Anderson, and Lofland, Chapters 1-5.

Robert M. Emerson. 2001. Fieldwork Practice: Issues in Participant Observation. Pp. 113-151 in Emerson.

Erving Goffman. 1989. On Fieldwork. Chapter 5 in Emerson.

Mitchell Duneier. 1994. On the Evolution of *Sidewalk*. Chapter 7 in Emerson.

Interviewing: Sampling and Developing Interview Instruments

Miles and Huberman. Chapter 2, pp. 16-39.

Weiss. Chapters 1-5.

Assignment 2: Research Design and Outline (sampling included)

WEEK 5 (Oct 4): Qualitative Practices: Focus Groups; Text/Archival Data

On focus group research:

*Jocelyn A. Hollander. 2004. The Social Context of Focus Groups. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 33:602-637.

On Text and Historical Materials:

*Viviana Zelizer. 1994. The Domestic Production of Monies. Chapter 2 in *The Social Meaning of Money*. Harper Collins.

*Emily Martin. 1991. "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has Constructed a Romance based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles." *Signs* 16(3):485-501.

*Ronald N. Jacobs. 1996. Civil Society and Crisis: Culture, Discourse and the Rodney King Beating. *American Journal of Sociology* 101:1238-1267.

WEEK 6 (Oct 11): Data Collection: Sampling and Instrument Development

Review readings from weeks 4 & 5

Draft of Assignment 3 due

Discussion of Assignment 3: IRB forms and Interview Instruments

Assignment 3: IRB, Recruiting Strategy, Data Collection Instruments

WEEK 7 (Oct 18): Data Collection: In class exercises/discussion

Lofland et al. Chapters 6-8 - SKIM

Interview conducted in class

Discussion of the Interview

WEEK 8 (Oct 25): Data Collection: Interviewing/Observing

*Michelle Lamont. 1992. Appendix III: Research Procedures, pp. 217-224 in *Money, Morals, and Manners: The Culture of the French and the American Upper-Middle Class*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*Michelle Lamont. 2000. Appendix A: Methods and Analysis, pp. 251-257 in *The Dignity of Working Men: Morality and the Boundaries of Race, Class, and Immigration*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation and Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

*Annette Lareau. 2003. Appendix A: Methodology: Enduring Dilemmas in Fieldwork, pp. in *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

*Karyn Lacy. 2007. Appendix A: A recipe for studying the Black Middle Class, pp. 227-234 in *Blue Chip Black: Race, Class, and Status in the New Black Middle Class*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Class presentations and discussion about your interview or observation (Assignment 4)

Assignment 4: Interview or Observation Summary

WEEK 9 (Nov 1): Analyzing Qualitative Data: Thematic Analysis and Coding

Introduction to Analysis

*Howard Becker. 2004. "The Problems of Analysis." Pp. 45-47 in the *NSF Report*.

*James Mahoney. 2004. "The Distinctive Contributions of Qualitative Data Analysis." Pp. 95-99 in the *NSF Report*.

*Eben A. Weitzman. 2004. Advancing the Scientific Basis of Qualitative Research. Pp. 145-148 in the *NSF Report*.

Doing Data Analysis: Coding and Memos

Lofland, Snow, Anderson, and Lofland. Chapter 9.

Miles and Huberman. Chapter 4; Chapter 5A (pp. 90-101) and 5E (pp. 127-141); Chapter 7A (172-177).

Weiss. Chapter 6: Analysis of Data.

Doing Data Analysis: Strategy and Verification

Miles and Huberman. Chapter 10.

WEEK 10 (Nov 8) Analyzing Qualitative Data: Continued

Workshop on the use of MAXqda for coding, sorting, and analyzing qualitative data

Assignment 5: Developing Initial Coding Key

WEEK 11 (Nov 15) Analyzing Qualitative Data: Continued

Assignment 6: Analyzing and Coding – 1st document

Nov 22: THANKSGIVING

WEEK 12 (Nov 29): Validity, Reliability, and the Insider/Outsider Problem

Miles and Huberman. Chapter 10.

*Wendy D. Roth and Jal D. Mehta, 2002. “The Rashomon Effect. Combining Positivist and Interpretivist Approaches in the Analysis of Contested Events.” *Sociological Methods and Research* 31 (2): 131-173.

*Wendy Luttrell, 2000. “Good Enough Methods for Ethnographic Research.” *Harvard Educational Review*. 70 (4): 499-523.

Assignment 7: Analyzing and Coding – 2nd document

WEEK 13 (Dec 6): Writing

Weiss. Chapter 7: Writing the Report

Howard Becker, 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book or Article*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

December 19: Final Paper Due