

CCS 504: Methodology and Research

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Office Hours: Tues. 2-4 pm and by appointment

Course Description

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the range of qualitative research methods associated with cultural studies. As such, the course covers a spectrum of methodological tools, including narrative inquiry, interviewing, ethnography, participant observation and oral history. Over the course of the semester, we will:

- * Produce and fine-tune our research questions
- * Conceptualize their scholarly field
- * Develop suitable methodological strategies
- * Decide on a system and rationale for analyzing data

Throughout, we will think through the controversies and challenges that surround each methodology, drawing attention to our own positionality and the ethics of research.

Materials

All of the course readings are gathered in a single packet, available at xxx

Requirements

The goal of this course is to accompany students through the small-scale research project that they will conduct during the semester. The evaluation criteria outlined below is meant to reflect the various stages along this process.

Participation & Discussion Questions (15 points)

Attendance and participation are a must for this course, as each week's readings will be situated and analyzed through classroom discussions. To facilitate this process, each student will be responsible for developing one discussion question in reaction to each week's readings. These questions will be emailed to the group by Monday midnight, and the day's discussion will begin with these questions. Students may be also asked to lead class discussion on selected readings.

Revised Version of Research Questions (10 points)

Revision of the student's preliminary (ungraded) research question.

Preliminary Literature Review (15 points)

This 5-page paper will be a preliminary paper that outlines the scholarly literature relevant to the student's research question.

Preliminary Method Statement (15 points)

This 5-page paper will be a preliminary method statement that outlines the manner in which the student will collect data and the rationale behind this choice.

Preliminary Data Analysis (15 points)

This 5-page paper will be a preliminary attempt at analyzing the data that the student has amassed.

Final Paper (30 points)

This 20-page paper will consist of the compilation and further development of each of the previous sections, further refining the research's questions, its "field", methods and analysis.

Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1 *Introduction*

Tu, Feb 6th Introduction to Cultural Studies & Qualitative Research

Week 2 *Practicalities I: Research Design*

Tu, Feb 13th Pickering, "Experience and the Social World"
Booth, Colomb and Williams, *The Craft of Research* (Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4)
Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research* (Ch. 3)
*** Bring Preliminary Version of Research Questions to Class**

Week 3 *Orality, Speech and Discourse*

Tu, Feb 20 Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (Excerpts)
Austin, *How to do Things with Words* (Excerpts)
Goffman, "On Face-Work"
Students' summary of discourse analysis

Week 4 *Narrativity and Personal Narrative*

Tu, Feb 27 Lawler "Stories and the Social World"
Langellier, "Personal Narratives: Perspectives on Theory and Research"
Scott, "Experience"
Laub, "Bearing Witness or the Vicissitudes of Listening"
*** Bring Second Version of Research Questions to Class**

Week 5 *Practicalities II: Interviewing*

Tu, March 6th Seidman, *Interviewing as Qualitative Research* (Ch. 2, 6, 7, 8)
Briggs, *Learning How to Ask* (Ch. 3, 5)
Ruth First: *The Barrel of a Gun: Political Power in Africa and the Coup D'état* excerpts

Week 6	<u><i>The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography</i></u>
Tu, March 13 th	Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture” Clifford, “Partial Truths” Pratt, “On Fieldwork in Common Places” Kandiyoti “Pink Card Blues: Trouble and Strife at the Crossroads of Gender”
Week 7	<u><i>Positionality and the Ethnographer</i></u>
Tu, March 20 th	Abu-Lughod, “Writing Against Culture” Rosaldo, “The Use and Abuse of Anthropology” Narayan, “How Native is a Native Anthropologist?” * Bring Preliminary Literature Review to Class
Week 8	<u><i>Practicalities III: Participant Observation</i></u>
Tu, March 27 th	O’Reilly, “Participating and Observing” Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, <i>Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes</i> (Ch. 1, 2) Edmondson, ““Saving Whiteface” in Tanzania” Nightingale “Why Observing Matters” (Chapter 6 in Pickering)
Week 9	<u><i>History and Memory</i></u>
Tu, April 3 rd	Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” Nora, “Between History and Memory” Connerton, “Bodily Practices”
Week 10	<u><i>Oral History: Conflicts and Challenges</i></u>
Tu, April 10 th	Portelli, “The Death of Luigi Trastulli: Memory and Event” Borland, “That’s Not What I Said” Leyla Neizi “Exploring Memory through Oral history in Turkey” or “Oral History and Memory Studies in Turkey” *Bring Preliminary Method Statement to Class
Week 11	SPRING BREAK
Week 12	<u><i>Practicalities IV: Data Analysis and Ethics</i></u>
Tu, April 24	Alasuutari, <i>Researching Culture</i> (Ch. 11, 12, 13) Fine, “Ten Lies of Ethnography” Deacon “Why Counting Counts” (Pickering chapter 5)
Week 13	Work on data collection

Tu, May 1st

Week 14

Thinking About Cultural Criticism

Tu, May 8th

Foucault, "What is Critique?"
Hall, "Cultural Studies: Two Paradigms"
De Certeau, "Walking in the City"
Abu-Lughod, "The Romance with Resistance"

Make-up class

Reaching for Terms: Resistance, Agency and Freedom

To be scheduled

Foucault, "The Subject and Power"
Butler, "Implicit Censorship and Discursive Agency"
Mahmood, "The Subject of Freedom"
***Bring Preliminary Data Analysis to Class**

Final Paper Due: TBA