

Please note that this syllabus should be regarded as only a general guide to the course. The instructor may have changed specific course content and requirements subsequent to posting this syllabus. Last Modified: 18:42:40 01/17/2012

VI. Special Problems of Field Research 2/22

HANDOUT MID-TERM

politics and ideology; inference and proof; reliability and validity, bias; ethics

Readings: Buravoy, chs. 2, 4, 7; Corbin, ch. 16**Recommended:**"Whose Side Are We On?" Howard Becker," "A Comment on Disguised Observation," Kai Erikson (in *Social Problems* v. 14 - 1967)"On Telling Secrets to a Stranger," Diane Vaughan, *Uncoupling*"Postscript: A Question of Ethics," Laud Humphreys, *Tearoom Trade*

VII. Action Research 2/29

MIDTERM IS DUE**Readings:** Stringer, all; Buravoy, ch 9**Recommended:**

"Managing to Learn: Action Inquiry in City Hall," Robert Krim

"Validity in Co-operative Inquiry," John Heron

(. . .both in *Human Inquiry in Action*, ed. by Peter Reason)

VACATION

VIII. Post Modern Views 3/14

Readings: Gubrium & Holstein, chs. 3-9

IX. Qualitative Evaluation Research 3/21

Readings: "Influencing the Policy Process with Qualitative Research," Ray Rist
(in Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*)**Recommended:**

"The Nature of Qualitative Data," "The Strategy of Qualitative Methods,"

"Evaluation Research Strategies Using Qualitative Methods"

(in Michael. Q. Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*)

X. Computers and Qualitative Analysis 3/28

Readings: Each student reports on a qualitative data program.

XI. Writing Reports and Leaving the Field 4/4

Readings: Lofland et al, Ch. 10

XII. 4/11 REPORTS ON STUDENT FIELD PROJECTS

XIII. 4/18 " " "

XIV . 4/25 " " "

XV. Conclusions 5/2

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2012 - FINAL PROJECTS ARE DUE

CALENDAR

Please have all readings and assignments completed by the dates shown.

I. Ethnography - An Introduction 1/18

definitions; history; limitations and strengths of fieldwork; course goals and requirements

Readings: Lofland et al., Introduction and Ch. 1, and pp. 63-64; Buravoy, ch. I; Gubrium & Holstein, pp. vii, viii, and ch. 1

II. The Fieldwork Process - An Overview 1/25

choosing problems and research sites; gaining access and taking a role; note taking; formulating an analysis

Readings: Lofland et al., Ch. 2, 3, 4, 5; Gubrium & Holstein, ch. 2

Recommended:

- "The Ambiguities of Fieldwork," Rosalie H. Wax
(in Robert Emerson, *Contemporary Field Research*)
- "Exchange and Access in Field Work," Paul S. Gray (*Urban Life* v. 9 #3 - 1980)
- "How Do You Know If the Informant Is Telling the Truth?" John P. Dean and W.F. Whyte
- "Diagnosing Defenses Against the Outsider," Chris Argyris
(. . .both in *Issues in Participant Observation*, by McCall & Simmons)
- "The Internal Noise of Anger and Anxiety," and "Devious Behavior in the Field"
(in Shulamit Reinharz, *Becoming a Social Scientist*)

III. Theorizing in Qualitative Studies 2/1

theoretical assumptions and research models; relationship of theory to data; grounded theory and analytic induction; case studies and generalization

Readings: Corbin and Strauss, chs. 1-14; Lofland et al., Ch. 9; Buravoy, ch. 11

Recommended:

- "Thick Description," Clifford Geertz
- "The Grounded Theory Method . . .," Kathy Charmaz
(. . . both in Robert Emerson, *Contemporary Field Research*)

IV. Conceptualization 2/8

Readings: Lofland et al., chs. 6,7, 8; Buravoy, chs. 3, 6,10

V. Interviewing, 2/15

in-depth interviewing, life histories;

Readings: Lofland et al. Ch. 7; Weiss, all

Recommended:

- "Interviewing Women: a Contradiction in Terms," Ann Oakley
(in *Doing Feminist Research*, by Helen Roberts)
- "Asking Descriptive Questions," and "Analyzing Ethnographic Interviews"
(in James Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview*)

SC 511 Ethnography and Field Research
Dr. Paul S. Gray

Spr. 2012
Wed, 12-2::30 p.m
McGuinn 415

. Please call for an appointment if you need to see me, 552-4140. E-Mail : < gray@bc.edu >

a The person who cannot abide feeling awkward or out of place, who feels crushed whenever (s)he makes mistake - embarrassing or otherwise - who is psychologically unable to endure being, and being treated like, a fool not only for a day or week but for months on end, ought to think twice before s(he) decides to become a participant observer.

Rosalie Wax, *Doing Field Work*

We advocate neither distance nor immersion but dialogue. The purpose of field work is not to strip ourselves of biases, for that is an illusory goal, nor to celebrate these biases as the authorial voice of the ethnographer, but rather to discover and perhaps change our biases through interaction with others.

Michael Buravoy, *Ethnography Unbound*

Required Books:

M. Buravoy et al, GLOBAL ETHNOGRAPHY

J. Gubrium & J. Holstein, THE NEW LANGUAGE OF QUALITATIVE METHOD

J. Lofland et al., ANALYZING SOCIAL SETTINGS, 4th ed.

J. Corbin & Anselm Strauss, BASICS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH, 3rd ed.

Ernest Stringer, ACTION RESEARCH, 3rd ed.

Robert S. Weiss, LEARNING FROM STRANGERS

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the underlying logic of ethnographic fieldwork and other qualitative methods. Attention will also be given to the practical issues associated with ethnographic research. These include: gaining access, taking a research role, keeping field notes, maintaining rapport with respondents in the field, ethical and political considerations, and generating theory from data.

Because fieldwork is learned best by doing research, students will be asked to reflect upon their own observations, access issues, in-depth interviewing experiences, and theory building dilemmas.

The class will be conducted as a seminar, in which lecturing will be combined with students' sharing of their experiences and ideas. My goal is to help create an atmosphere of mutual trust and support.

GRADES will be determined as follows: Mid-Term 20%; Final Project 60%; Class Participation, 20%.