

**INTERMEDIATE QUALITATIVE METHODS
SOC254H1S
WINTER 2018**

Instructor:	Jaime Nikolaou	Class:	Thursdays, 6-9pm
Office Hours:	Thursdays, 4-5pm Room 225, Sociology 725 Spadina Avenue		SS2111, Sidney Smith Hall 100 St George St.
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“Doing ethnography is like trying to read ... a manuscript—foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behavior” (Geertz 1973: 10).

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course, we ask what it means to examine the social world in a scientific but non-statistical way. We will answer this question by reading texts that expose us to the guiding principles of qualitative inquiry. You will apply this methodological insight to your own ethnographic fieldwork, since the primary goal of this course is to give undergraduates experience doing qualitative research.

What is ethnography? Ethnography was born in anthropology but is now a staple method in sociology. In essence, it is a method of participation. Ethnographers get close to the people they study. They hang out and do the range of things that “natives” or “locals” of particular social worlds do. Ethnographers jot down what they see and hear in the field, which they later expand into thick description—description that Geertz poetically forewarns is “full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries” about social life. Ethnography is also conceptualized as an umbrella method, since it utilizes many more qualitative tools than participant observation. Ethnographers interview the people they observe, and they analyze a host of cultural artifacts that illuminate the broader historical conditions in which they live. Ultimately then, ethnographers aim to understand social life from locals’ perspectives and tap into sense-making and social processes that may be unconscious to them (though sensible once explained).

In this course, you will conduct qualitative fieldwork on a social movement—a specific kind of social world—that interests you. You will do this over the semester and with peers, which will give you scaffolded and collaborative experience with participant observation, in-depth interviewing, textual analysis, and critical self-reflexivity. After leaving this course, you will thus be equipped to take upper-year courses that ask you to conduct a qualitative research project from start to finish.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Discuss the major principles and approaches underlying qualitative inquiry.
- Glean methodological insight when reading empirical studies.
- Differentiate between the utility of observational, interview, and textual data.
- Engage in ethnographic data collection, analysis, and critical reflexivity.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

- **Prompts (20%)**
- **Labs (20%)**
- **Fieldwork (60%, each small assignment below is worth 15%)**
 - o Fieldsite Observations
 - o Interview Transcript
 - o Reflexive Report
 - o Analytic Memo

Each week, we will meet for two to three hours. Although tutorial is technically scheduled after lecture, lecture and lab will interweave. Lectures will deepen your understanding of methodological concepts, techniques, and debates in the field of qualitative inquiry, which you will then apply to your field research in labs. Given this hybrid format, your active participation is expected.

PROMPTS (20%)

At the end of each lecture, I will ask a simple, methodologically-oriented question to structure your reading for the following week. For Week 4, for example, I might ask: “What is reflexivity and how is Barrie Thorne (1996) a reflexive observer?”. Prompts should be 200-300 words long, posted to Blackboard by 6pm the following Wednesday, and you will gain 2% for each you submit.

LAB (20%)

Labs will be geared around your Fieldwork projects. Eleven labs are scheduled, and you will gain 2% for each you attend and submit work for (not exceeding 20%). Labs will consist of whole-group workshopping and in-class writing, which will deepen your understanding of the technical aspects of qualitative data collection and analysis. While lab work will only be graded for completion, we will issue community feedback on how students approached each week’s methodological exercise as a whole. If you would like individualized feedback on any of your lab work, please email me.

FIELDWORK (60%)

The main goal of this course is to give undergraduates hands-on qualitative research experience. To this end, you will collect and analyze data on a social movement that interests you. Ethnographers study all kinds of social spheres (e.g., the family, the state), and the activist sphere is no exception. Analogously, students can acquire qualitative research skills by studying protest activity. Social movement studies is a vibrant field in sociology, and much of its rich empirical work is qualitative. We will read and glean methodological insight from these studies, which you will apply to your own Fieldwork. Consider any substantive insight you gain about social movements to be value-added!

You may conduct your Fieldwork in small groups or on your own, noting that all term work will be graded individually. If you study the same fieldsite with others, you will have similarly-situated peers to bounce fieldwork experiences off, and more data to base your Analytic Memo on. Toward this end, and in keeping with ethnography’s goal of long-term immersion, I encourage you collect as much qualitative data as you can in this course. Conducting extra observations, interviews and online research will produce a fuller dataset, which will ultimately make later analysis easier.

COURSE SCHEDULE

In this course you will read a variety of empirical studies and book chapters about qualitative fieldwork. All of these texts are digital and posted on Blackboard.

Please note that while every effort will be made to follow this schedule, it is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

WEEK 1 (4 January) – Ethnography as an Umbrella Method

- **Lab:** none
- **Readings:**
 - o Hammersley, Martyn and Paul Atkinson. 2007. “What is Ethnography” (pp. 1-19) in *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* (3rd ed). Routledge.
 - o Goodwin, Jeff and James M. Jasper. 2015. “Editors’ Introduction” (pp. 3-7) in *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts* (3rd ed). Wiley-Blackwell.
 - o Taylor, Verta, Leila J. Rupp, and Joshua Gamson. 2004. “Performing Protest: Drag Shows as Tactical Repertoire of the Gay and Lesbian Movement”. *Authority in Contention* 25: 105-137.

WEEK 2 (11 January) – Ethnography’s Warrants

- **Lab:** brainstorm activist fieldsites / thick description exercise
- **Readings:**
 - o Pascoe, CJ. 2005. “‘Dude, You’re a Fag’: Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse”. *Sexualities* 8(3): 329-46.
 - o Stein, Arlene. 2005. Make Room for Daddy: Anxious Masculinities and Emergent Homophobias in Neopatriarchal Politics. *Gender & Society* 19(5): 601-620.

WEEK 3 (18 January) – Participant Observation

- **Lab:** thick description exercise
- **Readings:**
 - o Uldam, Julie and Patrick McCurdy. 2013. “Studying Social Movements: Challenges and Opportunities for Participant Observation”. *Sociology Compass* 7(11): 941-951.
 - o Tracey, Sarah J. 2013. “Chapter 6: Field Roles, Fieldnotes, and Field Focus” and “Appendix A” (pp. 105-129; 315-316) in *Qualitative Research Methods: Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact*. Wiley-Blackwell.
 - o Taylor, Judith. 1998. “Feminist Tactics and Friendly Fire in the Irish Women's Movement.” *Gender & Society*, 12(6), 674-691.
- **Assignment:**
 - o Fieldsite Observations due Wednesday, 24 January, 6pm
 - o Drop-In Session 1 on Monday, 22 January, 2-4pm in Rm. 225, Sociology
 - o Detailed instructions for each of the four Fieldwork assignments will be provided closer to the due dates.

WEEK 4 (25 January) – Observer Reflexivity

- **Lab:** reflexive writing exercise
- **Readings:**
 - o Schwalbe, Michael. 1996. “The Mirrors in Men’s Faces”. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 25(1): 58-82.
 - o Thorne, Barrie. 1979. “Political Activist as Participant Observer: Conflicts of Commitment in a Study of the Draft Resistance Movement of the 1960s.” *Symbolic Interaction* 2(1): 73-88.

WEEK 5 (1 February) – Interviews

- **Lab:** workshop Fieldsite Observations / recruit interviewees
- **Readings:**
 - o Blee, Kathleen M. and Verta Taylor. “Semi-Structured Interviewing in Social Movement Research” (pp. 92-113) in *Methods of Social Movement Research*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
 - o Broad, KL. 2011. “Coming Out for Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays: From Support Group Grieving to Love Advocacy”. *Sexualities*, 14(4).

WEEK 6 (8 February) – Interviews

- **Lab:** generate interview guide / mock interviews
- **Readings:**
 - o Tracey, Sarah J. 2013. “Chapter 7: Interview Planning and Design” and “Appendix C” (pp. 143-156; 321-324) in *Qualitative Research Methods: Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact*. Wiley-Blackwell.
 - o Aronson, Pamela. 2003. “Feminists or Postfeminists?: Young Women’s Attitudes Toward Feminism and Gender Relations”. *Gender & Society* 17(6): 903-922.
 - o Taylor, Judith, Johnston Josee, and Krista Whitehead. 2016. “A Corporation in Feminist Clothing? Young Women Discuss the Dove ‘Real Beauty’ Campaign”. *Critical Sociology* 42(1): 123-144.
- **Assignment:**
 - o Interview Transcript due Wednesday, 14 February, 6pm
 - o Drop-In Session 2 on Monday, 12 February, 2-4pm in Rm. 225, Sociology

WEEK 7 (15 February) – Interviewer Reflexivity

- **Lab:** workshop Interview Transcripts / reflexive writing exercise
- **Readings:**
 - o Rupp, Leila J., and Verta Taylor. 2011. “Going Back and Giving Back: The Ethics of Staying in the Field.” *Qualitative Sociology* 34(3): 483.
 - o Krieger, Susan. 1985. “Beyond ‘Subjectivity’: The Use of Self in Social Science”. *Qualitative Sociology* 8(4): 309-24.
 - o Blee, Kathleen M. 1998. “White-Knuckle Research: Emotional Dynamics in Fieldwork with Racist Activists”. *Qualitative Sociology* 21(4): 381-399.

READING WEEK (19-23 February) – No Class

WEEK 8 (1 March) – Online Data

- **Lab:** research online presence of activist fieldsite
- **Readings:**
 - Kidd, Dustin and Keith McIntosh. 2016. “Social Media and Social Movements”. *Sociology Compass*: 785-794.
 - Whitehead, Krista. 2010. “‘Hunger Hurts but Starving Works’: A Case Study of Gendered Practices in the Online Pro-Eating-Disorder Community”. *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 35(4): 595-626.
 - Bonilla, Yarimar and Jonathan Rosa. 2015. “#Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States”. *American Ethnologist*.
- **Assignment:**
 - Reflexive Report due Wednesday, 7 March, 6pm
 - Drop-In Session 3 on Monday, 5 March, 2-4pm in Rm. 225, Sociology

WEEK 9 (8 March) – Photographs and News Media

- **Lab:** research media coverage of activist fieldsite
- **Readings:**
 - Amenta, Edwin et al. 2017. “From Bias to Coverage: What Explains How News Organizations Treat Social Movements”. *Sociology Compass* 11: e12460.
 - Corrigan-Brown, Catherine and Rima Wilkes. 2011. “Picturing Protest: The Visual Framing of Collective Action by First Nations in Canada”. *American Behavioural Scientist* 56(2): 223-243.
 - Stoddart, Mark C.J., Howard Ramos, and David B. Tindall. “Environmentalists’ Mediawork for Jumbo Pass and the Tobeatic Wilderness, Canada: Combining Text-Centered and Activist-Centered Approaches to News Media and Social Movements” *Social Movement Studies* 14(1): 75-91.

WEEK 10 (15 March) – Analyzing Qualitative Data

- **Lab:** code qualitative datasets
- **Readings:**
 - Charmaz, Kathy. 2012. “The Power and Potential of Grounded Theory.” *Medical Sociology Online* 6(3): 1-15.
 - Tracey, Sarah J. 2013. “Chapter 9: Data Analysis Basics: A Pragmatic Iterative Approach” (pp. 182-202) in *Qualitative Research Methods: Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact*. Wiley-Blackwell.

WEEK 11 (22 March) – Analyzing Qualitative Data

- **Lab:** search the literature for sensitizing concepts / student presentation prep
- **Readings:**
 - Smartt-Guillion, Jessica. 2016. “Chapter 30: Integrating the Literature” (pp. 113-115) in *Writing Ethnography*. Sense Publishers.
 - Twine, France Winddance. 2004. “A White Side of Black Britain: The Concept of Racial Literacy”. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 27(6): 878-907.

WEEK 12 (29 March) – Ethnographic Insights

- **Lab:** student presentations
- **Readings:**
 - o Kleinman, Sherryl, Martha A. Copp, and Karla A. Henderson. 1997. “Qualitatively Different: Teaching Fieldwork to Graduate Students.” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 25(4): 469-99.
 - o Hammersley, Martyn and Paul Atkinson. 2007. “Epilogue: A Distinctive Analytic Mentality” (pp. 230-236) in *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* (3rd ed). Routledge.
- **Assignment:**
 - o Analytic Memo due Wednesday, 4 April, 6pm
 - o Drop-In Session 4 on Monday, 2 April, 2-4pm in Rm. 225, Sociology

COURSE POLICIES

PREREQUISITES

The prerequisite to take this course is SOC204H. Be cautioned that students without prerequisites will be removed from SOC254H without notice.

COMMUNICATION

Please check Blackboard and your UTMail+ regularly for important course information, noting that all the mass emails I send will be mirrored in the “Announcements” tab on Blackboard.

Individual queries are best addressed with me during office hours or via email. If you email, please use SOC254 in the subject line and expect a reply within 48 hours (excluding weekends).

USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN CLASS

I want to make this course as paperless as possible. All term work should therefore be uploaded to Blackboard versus submitted in hard copy form. As a digital platform, Blackboard acts as a repository for all submitted work; helps the TA and I monitor due dates; reduces the time it takes us to grade and return assignments; and reduces our ecological footprint.

Lab work and Fieldwork assignments must be uploaded to Portal in .doc format only so we make in-text comments and return graded work via Blackboard. Please name all digital files accordingly:

Fieldsite Observations	Surname_FO.doc
Interview Transcript	Surname_IT.doc
Reflexive Report	Surname_RR.doc
Analytic Memo	Surname_AM.doc

If you have a laptop, please bring it to class to take lecture notes, submit lab work, and conduct online research. If you do not own a laptop, please borrow one from a UofT library each week.

Please turn off your cell phone during class, and only use your laptop for course work—not email or social media. Unauthorized audio/video recording is strictly prohibited.

ACCESSIBILITY & EQUITY

UofT is committed to accessibility and students with diverse learning styles are welcome in SOC254. If you have a disability or health consideration that requires accommodation, please approach me and/or Accessibility Services (<http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>) early in the course.

If you are concerned about your writing ability and/or literacy skills, there are a variety of resources available to you through the UofT Writing Centre: <http://writing.utoronto.ca/>. If you are an ESL student, please consult: <http://writing.utoronto.ca/support/english-language-support/>.

REFERENCING

In this syllabus, I cite texts using American Sociological Association format. Please use ASA format when submitting term work for this course:

http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/quick_tips_for_asa_style.pdf.

LATE WORK & EXTENSIONS

Extensions for missed prompts and labs will not be granted, except in cases of documented religious observance.

If you are unable to submit one of the four Fieldwork assignments on time, 5% will be deducted for each day (including weekends) the assignment is late. If a medical or personal emergency prevents you from meeting a deadline, please follow these steps:

- In cases of illness, supply a duly completed Verification of Student Illness or Injury Form: <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php>
- In cases of personal or family crisis, you must get a letter from your College Registrar.
- After obtaining said documentation, please scan and email it to me, along with your extension request.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will not be tolerated. Academic integrity is vital to the well-being of the university and broader academic community, and penalties for misconduct can be severe. I encourage you to read UofT's policies on academic integrity. To get a better sense of how nuanced plagiarism can be and what its consequences are, please consult:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>.