

*“Anthropology is the most scientific of the humanities,
the most humanistic of the sciences” (Eric Wolf 1964)*

A Course on Research Methods

Qualitative research in anthropology involves tools and techniques, time-management and other forms of self-discipline, bureaucracies and bureaucrats, and passion, vision and creativity. This course is designed to provide a venue for exploring, practicing and experiencing these aspects of research method. The course will provide students three streams of learning experience: by means of designing and implementing your own project, by the book (readings), and in the give and take among participants in the seminar. Practical information and guidance will be provided (e.g., proposal writing, designing, managing and conducting qualitative research, IRB, publishing) especially as these relate to student projects. Students will also explore ethical dilemmas, the politics of representation, and narrative strategies for writing and presenting results.

Each student will develop an ethnographic research project which may include other qualitative research techniques, including focus groups. Students will define a research question, develop and implement the research plan, analyze and write up results. The class will come together weekly to discuss various and ongoing aspects of each student’s project.

The course is divided into three main parts. Part I, From Vision to Project, will result in a research proposal. The first set of readings is designed to facilitate thinking about your own project. Part II on Tools and Techniques takes you into the field. During the five weeks of Part II (into Part III), you will engage in fieldwork, gathering fieldnotes. During this period, fieldnotes must be submitted weekly for review. Readings correspond with the research process. You will also need to frame your own particular project within the literature related to your topic (for the purposes of this course, you will not be expected to complete a thorough “review of the literature,” but get a good start on this aspect). In Part III, Towards Analysis and Write Up, we will shift from the field to focusing on analyzing and interpreting research results, working towards a final paper of 20-25 pages based on your project.

PART ONE: FROM VISION TO PROJECT

I. Introductions

II. From Idea to Proposal

Burawoy, Michael. 1991. *Introduction and Reconstructing Social Theories and The Extended Case Method and Teaching Participant Observation*. In Ethnography Unbound: Power and Resistance in the Modern Metropolis. Michael Burawoy, et al, eds. Berkeley: University of California: 1-27; 271-300.

Merton, Robert K. 1959. *Introduction. Notes on Problem-Finding in Sociology*. In Sociology Today: Problems and Prospects. Robert K. Merton, Leonard Broom, and Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., eds. New York: Basic Books: ix-xxxiv.

Behar, Ruth. 1996. *The Vulnerable Observer*. In The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart. Boston: Beacon Press: 1-33.

Institute of International Studies, UC Berkeley. 2001. *Dissertation Proposal Workshop (online)*: <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/DissPropWorkshop/>

III. Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Research on Human Subjects and AAA Code of Ethics

Computer Based Training (CBT) Programs for Research with Human Subjects:
<http://inside.gc.cuny.edu/orup/humansubjects/CBT.pdf>
<http://www.rfcuny.org/ResConduct/CBT>

AAA Ethics: <http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethics.htm>

AAA Code of Ethics: <http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>

Committee on Ethics Briefing Papers on Common Dilemmas Faced by Anthropologists Conducting Research in Field Situations:
<http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/bp.htm>

Clark, Lauren and Ann Kingsolver. Briefing Paper on Informed Consent:
<http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/bp5.htm>

Kancelbaum, Barbara. 2002. *Social Scientists and Institutional Review Boards. Items & Issues: Newsletter of the Social Science Research Council 3: 1-2 (Spring)*:
http://www.ssrc.org/programs/publications_editors/publications/items/ItemsSpring02Final.pdf

Gunsalus, C.K. 2002. *Rethinking Protections for Human Subjects*. Chronicle of Higher Education, Section 2, November 15: B24.

PART TWO: TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

IV. In the Field

Levi-Strauss, Claude. 1973 (orig. 1955). *Setting Out, On Board Ship, The West Indies, The Quest for Power, Looking Back, and The Making of an Anthropologist*. In Triste Tropiques. New York: Pocket Books: 3-53.

Rabinow, Paul. 1977. Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Whyte, William Foote. 1996 (1981). *On the Evolution of Street Corner Society*. In Journeys Through Ethnography. Annette Lareau and Jeffrey Shultz, eds. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press: 9-73.

Kornblum, William. 1989. *Introduction*. In In the Field: Readings on the Field Research Experience. Carolyn D. Smith and William Kornblum, eds. New York: Praeger: 1-6.

V. In the Field

Agar, Michael H. 1996 (1980). *Ethnography Reconstructed: The Professional Stranger at Fifteen, The Concept of Fieldwork, Beginning Fieldwork*. In The Professional Stranger. An Informal Introduction to Ethnography. New York: Academic Press: 1-72; 133-166.

Cook, Ian and Mike Crang. Doing Ethnographies
<http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/DissPropWorkshop/resources/ethnography.pdf>

Sanjek, Roger, ed. 1990. *Preface*. In Fieldnotes. The Makings of Anthropology. Ithaca: Cornell University Press: xi-xviii.

Jackson, Jean E. 1990. *"I am a Fieldnote": Fieldnotes as a Symbol of Professional Identity*. In Fieldnotes. The Makings of Anthropology. Roger Sanjek, ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press: 3-33.

Examples of Fieldnotes. In Fieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology. Roger Sanjek, ed. Cornell University Press: 123-135.

Crane, Julia G. and Michael V. Angrosino. 1992. *Interviewing Informants, Participant Observation, Collecting Life Histories*. Field Projects in Anthropology. A Student Handbook, 3rd Edition. Prospect Heights: Waveland Press: 53-87.

VI. Focus Groups

Krueger, Richard A. 1994. *Preface, Group and Focus Groups, Asking Questions in a Focus Group*. In Focus Groups. A Practical Guide for Applied Research. 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage: vii-xi; 1-15; 53-73.

Agar, Michael and James MacDonald. 1995. *Focus Groups and Ethnography*. Human Organization Vol. 54. No. 1:78-86

PART THREE: TOWARDS ANALYSIS AND WRITE UP

VII. Ethical Dilemmas and the Politics of Representation

Obbo, Christine. 1990. *Adventures with Fieldnotes*. In Fieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology. Roger Sanjek, ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press:290-302.

Bretell, Caroline B. 1993. *Introduction: Fieldwork, Text and Audience*. In When They Read What We Write. The Politics of Ethnography. Caroline B. Bretell, ed. Westport: Bergin and Garvey: 1-23.

Williams, Terry. 1989. *Exploring the Cocaine Culture*. In In the Field: Readings on the Field Research Experience. Carolyn D. Smith and William Kornblum, eds. New York: Praeger: 27-32.

**Committee on Ethics Briefing Papers on Common Dilemmas Faced by Anthropologists Conducting Research in Field Situations:
<http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/bp.htm>**

VIII. Ethical Dilemmas and the Politics of Representation, continued

Hopper, Kim. 2003. *This Business of Taking Stock and Limits to Witnessing: From Ethnography to Engagement*. In Reckoning with Homelessness. Ithaca: Cornell University Press: 3-24; 204-218.

Wolf, Diane L. 1996. *Situating Feminist Dilemmas*. In Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork. Diane L. Wolf, ed. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press: 1-55.

IX. Writing & Analysis

Sanjek, Roger. 1990. *On Ethnographic Validity*. In Fieldnotes. The Makings of Anthropology. Roger Sanjek, ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press: 385-418.

Jorgensen, Danny L. 1989. *Analyzing and Theorizing, Leaving the Field and Communicating Results*. In Participant Observation. A Methodology for Human Studies. Newbury Park: Sage Publications: 107-123.

Lutkehaus, Nancy. 1990. *Refractions of Reality: On the Use of Other Ethnographer's Fieldnotes*. In Fieldnotes. The Makings of Anthropology. Roger Sanjek, ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press: 303-323.

X. Writing & Analysis, continued

Behar, Ruth. 1995. *Introduction: Out of Exile*. In Women Writing Culture. Ruth Behar and Deborah A. Gordon, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press: 1-29.

Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1993. *Preface and Introduction*. In Writing Women's Worlds. Bedouin Stories. Berkeley: University of California Press: xi-xviii; 1-42.

Clifford, James. 1986. *On Ethnographic Allegory*. In Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. James Clifford and George E. Marcus, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press: 98-121.

Waterston, Alisse. 1999. *Prologue: An Urban Ethnography for Our Times*. In Love, Sorrow and Rage: Destitute Women in a Manhattan Residence. Philadelphia: Temple University Press: 1-24.

XI. Next Steps: Dissertation and Publishing

**Przeworski, Adam and Frank Salomon. 1988. *On the Art of Writing Research Proposals*." New York: Social Science Research Council:
http://www.ssrc.org/publications/for-fellows/art_of_writing_proposals.page**

**Institute of International Studies, UC Berkeley. 2001. *Dissertation Proposal Workshop: Examples* (online)
<http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/DissPropWorkshop/examples/>**

**Proposal to Fulbright: Manufacturing Identities in Lowland Bolivia by Nancy Postero [~114k pdf]
Commentary by Nancy Postero**

**Proposal to the NSF: A "New" Environmentalism or Agribusiness as Usual by Julie Guthman [~195k pdf]
Commentary by Julie Guthman**

**Proposal to the NSF: Putting Networks in their Place: Local Linkages, National Networks and Land Reform in Brazil by Wendy Wolford [~41k pdf]
Commentary by Wendy Wolford**

**Proposal to Fulbright: Decentralization and Citizen Participation in Latin America: Deepening or Dooming Democracy? by Benjamin Goldfrank [~266k pdf]
Commentary by Benjamin Goldfrank**

**Proposal to the NSF: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: The Political Economy of the Wise Use Movement by James McCarthy [~63k pdf]
Commentary by James McCarthy**

**Examples of Successful Proposals to the NSF:
<http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/bcs/anthro/samples/>**