

**Qualitative Research and Field Work (17.878)**  
**Mondays 5-7 PM, E51-385**  
Professor Chappell Lawson ([clawson@mit.edu](mailto:clawson@mit.edu))

**Target audience and auditing**

This course is designed for PhD students in the social sciences who will be conducting some form of fieldwork (interviews, observation, ethnography, focus groups, or archival research and historical case studies) for their dissertations. Although much of the material is from political science, doctoral students from other disciplines (Urban Studies and Planning, Management, Anthropology, Sociology, Economics, Public Health, etc.) should find the class valuable to their studies. MA students and advanced UGs whose theses involve a significant fieldwork component can also enroll with permission of the instructor, though it will be a challenging class.

Auditors are permitted. Auditors should do the bulk of the readings for the classes they attend, in order to be able to participate in class discussion, but do not need to do any other readings nor any of the assignments. [The readings expected of auditors are noted in brackets for each week in the header for “Readings”]. Which sessions auditors choose to attend is up to them, with the exception that all auditors must attend: (1) at least five classes total over the semester, (2) the first class on February 11, and (3) the third class, scheduled for February 25, which focuses on ethics in the field. However, I advise auditors to attend the first five sessions, especially if they want feedback on their project.

Given the natural progression of doctoral studies, it makes most sense for students to take this class in their second or third year; however, those students who have enough of an idea about their own research agenda to begin pilot fieldwork would benefit from taking it in their first year. Those who still have some fieldwork left to do but have not yet received formal training in field research methods are encouraged take (or audit) it in their N<sup>th</sup> year. Those who have taken the class for credit in previous years are welcome to return as auditors in subsequent for a refresher; they do not face the restrictions listed above about which sessions they must attend.

**Goals of the class**

The central goal of this class is to give students the tools to do fieldwork. This goal is accomplished in four ways:

1. *The readings*: Many of the readings provide practical lessons. There is a logic to the order in which the readings are listed for each week – generally speaking, overview followed by conceptual material followed by highly applied material. I recommend reading them in that sequence.
2. *Guest speakers*. You will hear from a number of speakers from other professions with experience in eliciting information from different sorts of people in different contexts. This year, the tentative list of outside speakers includes:
  - an investigative journalist;
  - a former federal prosecutor;
  - a senior management consultant, who will preside over mock interviews;
  - a professor at a peer institution who can provide advice on archival research;
  - a panel of doctoral students fresh from the field; and
  - a member of MIT’s professional staff with experience conducting focus groups.

You should be able to take away at least one lesson from each of the speakers, even though many are from non-academic fields – and ideally, more than one lesson. (Some of these speakers’ schedules are, for obvious reasons, subject to scheduling changes, and some may join by VTC.)

3. *Practice*. Some class sessions will include role-playing and simulation so that you can develop your interviewing skills. The goal here is to improve your technique and avoid costly blunders.
4. *Critique of your fieldwork technique, in a collegial, low-risk environment*. You will present examples of your interviewing (or other fieldwork) for comments from your classmates and the instructor.

How much you invest here is some choice in the syllabus (including the entirety of the last two weeks), so in total you will spend:

- Two to four sessions on unstructured and semi-structured interviewing;
- One or three sessions on archival research and historical case studies;
- One or three sessions on “site-intensive research”; and
- One or three sessions on focus groups.

For instance, if you wanted to concentrate on interviewing, you would spend four weeks learning about, practicing, conducting, and writing up interviews, as well as one week each on focus groups, site-intensive research, and archival work/historical case studies.

The class will only briefly touch on survey research (i.e., fully standardized and structured interviews consisting almost exclusively of closed-ended questions, conducted at arms-length, with a pre-set sampling frame that obeys statistical properties, and a large N) and field experiments (i.e., projects that attempt to measure the effect of a specific stimulus on people’s behavior in their natural habitat). These methods are already the subject of well-conceived courses at MIT.

In addition to practical skills acquisition, the class should also afford you insight into the theoretical issues and emerging debates in the field with regard to qualitative methods and fieldwork. Understanding of these issues and debates is necessary to evaluating the work of other scholars. It will also help you to design and justify your fieldwork plan, as well as to anticipate critiques of your own research.

Ethics in fieldwork is an essential component of the class. We will devote the third class session to a general discussion of the issues at stake, but we will also return to how these principles apply to specific situations in several other sessions. The third session itself includes a presentation by a representative from the Committee on the Use of Humans as Experimental Subjects (COUHES), MIT’s Institutional Review Board. As we will discuss in class, however, there are ethical requirements for field researchers that go beyond compliance with COUHES.

### **Assignments and grading**

Your written assignments and presentations constitute 75% of your grade; the longer assignments count more than the shorter ones. Assignments are due, posted on the Stellar site, by noon on the day of class, unless otherwise indicated.

Keep in mind that the target audience for presentations in class, when it is not self-improvement, is your fellow classmates rather than the instructor. Focus your presentation what they want and need to hear to be better researchers.

In addition to the formal presentations, participation in class discussion is a vital component of the course (25% of your grade). Participation includes giving helpful feedback to your colleagues, as well as analysis and commentary on the readings. You are expected to attend all class meetings, be conversant with the material assigned, and be prepared to discuss it. Unexcused absences will obviously affect your grade.

### **Accessing the readings**

Where Fair Use doctrine makes it impossible to have the readings available electronically, copies of the books will be on reserve in Dewey Library (E53). Because they might be scarce the week of class, you might consider buying one or all of the following books:

- Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. MacLean, and Benjamin L. Read. 2015. *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gary Goertz and James Mahoney. 2012. *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences*. Princeton University Press.
- Robert S. Weiss. 1994. *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*. New York: The Free Press.

**Note that there is reading due the first week of class.**

## Schedule

### 1. February 11: NOTE THAT THERE IS READING DUE THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASS

In class

- Introductions
- Student questions on the syllabus
- Why do fieldwork?
- Discussion of readings.
- Time permitting, discussion of student research projects (including case selection)

Readings [Auditors may skip the Van Maanen reading]

- This syllabus.
- Soledad Loaeza, Randy Stevenson, and Devra Moehler. 2005. "Symposium: should everyone do fieldwork?" *APSA-CP Newsletter*, 16 (2): 8–18.
- David A Freedman. 2008. "On types of scientific inquiry: The role of qualitative reasoning." In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, edited by Janet M. Box-Sheffenmeiser, Henry Brady and David Collier, 300-318. Oxford University Press.
- Kripa Ananthpur, Kabir Malik, and Vijayendra Rao. 2017. "The anatomy of failure: an ethnography of a randomized trial to deepen democracy in rural India." *World Development*, 99 (November): 481-97.
- John Van Maanen. 2011. *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). University of Chicago Press, pp. 13-23.

Recommended readings [Those in the field of public health or education should substitute this reading for the Van Maanen reading above]

- John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth. 2017. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design (International Student Edition): Choosing Among Five Approaches* (Fourth edition). Read only the sections on "Designing a Qualitative Study" (except part on ethics), overview of at least one of their five "approaches", and the example of a study that goes with that approach.

Assignment

- None

## 2. February 19 (note that this class falls on a Tuesday, in accordance with MIT's schedule)

### In class

- Discussion of “qualitative methods”, including (a) causes of effects versus effects of causes; (b) logic of inference, including necessity, sufficiency, and examples of INUS conditions; (c) within-case analysis (process tracing, path dependence, etc.); (d) concept measurement and contextualization; (e) sampling and “data” collection; and (f) interpretation of evidence.
- Critiques and solutions for methodological challenges in fieldwork
- Evolving standards of transparency.
- Discussion of field work plans.

### Readings [Auditors attending this session may skip the second half of Goertz and Mahoney (2012)]

- Gary Goertz and James Mahoney. 2012. *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences*. Princeton University Press, pp. 16-25, 32-36, 41-61, 93-110, 150-53, 177-81, 205-217.
- Svend Brinkmann. *Qualitative Interviewing*. 2013. Oxford University Press, pp. 140-52.
- Chappell Lawson. 2019. “Can Fieldwork Be “Scientific”? Ethnographic Research and the Professional Presumption”, unpublished paper.
- Mitchell Duneier. 2011. “How Not to Lie with Ethnography,” *Sociological Methodology*, 41: 1-11.
- *Comparative Politics Newsletter* Editorial Board. 2016. “Guidelines for Data Access and Research Transparency in Qualitative Research in Political Science,” *Comparative Politics Newsletter* 26 (1): 13-21. [http://charlescrabtree.com/files/newsletter\\_spring2016.pdf](http://charlescrabtree.com/files/newsletter_spring2016.pdf).
- Journal Editors’ Transparency Statement (JETS), Data Access and Research Transparency (DA-RT). 2014. (<https://www.dartstatement.org/2014-journal-editors-statement-jets>).
- Peter Hall. 2016. “Transparency, Research Integrity and Multiple Methods. *Comparative Politics Newsletter*, 26 (1): 28-31.

### Assignments

- Develop a fieldwork plan for your dissertation of at least 200 words. (It can considerably be longer if you wish.) This plan should include the outlines of where you will go, what you will do, and why. Post it on the Stellar site by noon on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Be prepared to briefly summarize it in class.

### 3. February 25: Ethics in the field

In class

- ADHD drivers and those who research them.
- Guest Speaker: Representative of COUHES and possible faculty guest speaker. (Who count as subjects? What does “informed consent” mean, and how can it be done in the context of ethnography? What to do *ex post* if a conversation later becomes the basis for research? What constitutes “harm”, and does it include re-traumatization? Do those hired to do things in the field (e.g., interviews) on behalf of the researcher need to have human subjects training, and of what sort? What kinds of guarantees about confidentiality can researchers offer? How does COUHES interpret the Belmont Commission concept of “beneficence”? Etc.)
- Summary of the cases from readings.
- Discussion of ethical issues, including: what can be promised in the way of confidentiality; “what’s in it” for the subjects and benefits to communities; gauging the “benefits to science”; representation; “positionality”; and relationships with informants. (As a group if possible, using breakout groups to identify issues if not.)

Readings [Auditors should do all the required readings]

- Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. MacLean, and Benjamin L. Read. 2015. *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 145-149.
- The National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research. 1979 (The “Belmont Commission”).  
<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html>.
- The National Science Foundation. “Frequently Asked Questions and Vignettes: Interpreting the Common Rule for the Protection of Human Subjects for Behavioral and Social Science Research.”  
<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/hsfaqs.jsp>.
- Kathleen Dewalt and Billie R. Dewalt. 2011. *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press. Chapter 11.
- Bruce L. Berg. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (Fourth Edition). Boston: Allyn and Bacon. pp. 147-150. [Beginning with the section entitled “Becoming Invisible”.]  
[http://repository.umpwr.ac.id:8080/bitstream/handle/123456789/3723/qualitative\\_research\\_methods\\_for\\_the\\_social\\_sciences.pdf?sequence=1](http://repository.umpwr.ac.id:8080/bitstream/handle/123456789/3723/qualitative_research_methods_for_the_social_sciences.pdf?sequence=1).
- John van Maanen. 1983. “On the Ethics of Fieldwork.” In *An Introduction to Social Research: A Handbook of Social Science Methods, Volume I*. Robert B. Smith, ed. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing Company. 1983. pp. 227-252.
- Read ONE of the following:
  1. Boston College papers case
    - Ted Palys and John Lowman. 2012. “Defending Research Confidentiality ‘To the Extent the Law Allows:’ Lessons from the Boston College Subpoenas,” *Journal of Academic Ethics* 10 (4): 271-297.
    - Read some of the news coverage of the case (you can choose specific articles, such as <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/jan/24/ira-gunmen-face-arrest-boston-college-belfast-project-tapes>).
    - Browse <http://bostoncollegesubpoena.wordpress.com/>.
  2. Conflict zones and trauma
    - Elisabeth Jean Wood. 2006. “The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones,” *Qualitative Sociology* 29: 373-386.

- K. Brounéus. 2008. "Truth-Telling as Talking Cure? Insecurity and Retraumatization in the Rwandan Gacaca Courts", *Security Dialogue*, 39(1): 55–76. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010607086823>
  - Mallery Jean Tenore. August 17, 2012. "10 ways to get traumatized sources to share their stories". <https://www.poynter.org/reporting-editing/2012/10-ways-to-get-traumatized-sources-to-share-their-stories/>.
  - Sherry Ricchiardi. "When interviewing trauma victims, proceed with caution and compassion". <https://ijnet.org/en/story/when-interviewing-trauma-victims-proceed-caution-and-compassion>.
3. Harvard Facebook case
- Marc Parry. 2011. "Harvard Researchers Accused of Breaching Students' Privacy." *Chronicle of Higher Education*. July 10. <http://chronicle.com/article/Harvards-Privacy-Meltdown/128166/>.
  - Michael Zimmer. 2010. "'But the Data Is Already Public': On the Ethics of Research in Facebook." *Ethics and Information Technology* 12(4): 313-325. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10676-010-9227-5>.
  - Other recent coverage of this case, of your choosing.
4. Alice Goffman case
- Material as appropriate to understand the case (e.g., read selections from Goffman's book *On the Run*, watch Goffman's TED talk, or both).
  - Jennifer Schuessler. 2014. "Fieldwork of Total Immersion: Alice Goffman's 'On the Run' Studies Policing in a Poor Urban Neighborhood". *New York Times*. April 29.
  - Alex Kotlowitz. 2014. "Deep Cover: Alice Goffman's 'Life on the Run'". *New York Times Sunday Book Review*. June 26.
  - Dwayne Betts. 2014. "The Stoop Isn't the Jungle: In her new book *On the Run*, Alice Goffman misses the larger truth about black urban communities—like the one I grew up in". *Slate*. July 10.
  - Steve Labet. 2015. "Did This Acclaimed Sociologist Drive the Getaway Car in a Murder Plot? The questionable ethics of Alice Goffman's *On the Run*". *New Republic*. May 27.
  - Gideon Lewis-Kraus. 2016. "The Trials of Alice Goffman", *New York Times Magazine*. January 12.
5. Venkatesh case
- Sudhir Venkatesh. 2008. *Gang Leader for a Day: A Rogue Sociologist Takes to the Streets*. New York: Penguin Press. Chapters 1, part of Chapter 2, and 6 (pp. 1-39 and 185-218).
  - Alisse Waterston. 2012. "Exoticizing the Other and the Author: Commentary on Gang Leader for a Day by Sudhir Venkatesh." *North American Dialogue* 15(1): 13-17.
6. Covert field work (by sociologists)
- Wayne Pacelle. 2013. "Inside the Slaughterhouse: My Interview with Timothy Pachirat", *A Human Nation: Kitty Block's Blog*. April 29. <https://blog.humanesociety.org/2013/04/timothy-pachirat-interview-undercover-slaughterhouse.html>.
  - BoingBoingNet. 2012. "Working Undercover in a Slaughterhouse: an interview with Timothy Pachirat", <https://boingboing.net/2012/03/08/working-undercover-in-a-slaugh.html>. March 8.
  - David Calvey. 2008. "The Art and Politics of Covert Research: Doing 'Situated Ethics' in the Field", *Sociology* 42(5): 905-918. <http://soc.sagepub.com/content/42/5/905.full.pdf+html>
  - Paul Spicker. 2011. "Ethical Covert Research", *Sociology* 45(1): 118-133.

## Assignments

- Complete IRB training: for MIT students, <http://couhes.mit.edu/training-research-involving-human-subjects>. Send me the certification email you receive from them before the start of class.

#### 4. March 4: Field work plans

In class

- Presentation and critique of field work plans.

Readings

- Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. MacLean, and Benjamin L. Read. 2015. *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 6 (“Interviews, oral histories, and focus groups”), pp. 190-233. [Non-political scientists should discuss with me alternative readings if appropriate.]

Assignments

- Develop a draft fieldwork plan for your dissertation of ~2,000 words. This plan should include where you will go and what you will do. Make sure your plan reflects the discussions from the previous three weeks (e.g., if you are doing interviews, how to select the interviewees). [If your plan exclusively involves historical case studies and archival work, with no interviews or site-intensive work, please discuss an alternative assignment with me ahead of time.]
- Summarize your field work plan in 2-3 slides for presentation and critique. The first slide should include the problem statement and background; the second should discuss your specific research plans. If you have a third slide, it should identify potential problems, ask for feedback on specific issues, tee up questions for class discussion, etc. The maximum length of your presentation should be 40 minutes divided by the number of people in the class. Thus, if there are 10 people, your presentation should be no more than 4 minutes. Load your slides onto the class website by noon on the 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Start preparing an interview guide.

## 5. March 11: Interviewing (I): Asking clear questions

- A discussion of interviewing techniques with Andrew Hruska (Partner, Special Matters and Investigations practice, King & Spalding, and former Assistant U.S. Attorney; see <https://www.kslaw.com/people/andrew-hruska>).
- A discussion with Jason Dearen (Associated Press; see <https://jasondearen.pressfolios.com/>; <https://ksj.mit.edu/dispatches/2018/10/17/ksj-fellow-jason-dearen/>)
- Review interview guides and practice interviews in class (in pairs).
- Discussion of lessons from preparing interview guides.

Readings [Auditors attending this session should do all readings]

- Brian C. Rathburn. 2008. "Interviewing and Qualitative Field Methods: Pragmatism and Practicalities." in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady, and David Collier, eds. New York: Oxford University Press. pp. 685-701.
- Svend Brinkman. 2013. *Qualitative Interviewing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 28-30.
- Robert S. Weiss. 1994. *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*. New York: The Free Press. pp. 39-131, 136-50. In the ebook on Stellar, this reading begins with the section on "From Substantive Frame to Interview Guide" in Chapter 3, including the rest of Chapter 3, Chapter 4, and Chapter 5.
- Michael H. Agar. 1980. *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*. Academic Press, pp. 93-100.
- Beth L. Leech. 2002. "Asking Questions: Techniques for Semistructured Interviews." *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 35(4): 665-668.
- Chappell Lawson. nd. "Hints on writing an interview guide".
- RECOMMENDED ONLY: Susan McKay, Gavin Rees and Drew Sullivan, "Dangerous Conversations: Interviewing people with a history of violence" (<https://dartcenter.org/media/dangerous-conversations-interviewing-people-history-violence>).

## Assignment

- Develop a draft interview guide for your fieldwork (after doing the reading). Rehearse it. (If this exercise takes you less than 5 hours, you haven't done it right. If it takes you more than 9 hours, stop at 9 and revise it next week.) **Post it to the Stellar site by noon on the 11<sup>th</sup>.**
- Conduct at least one pilot interview (e.g., on a friend or colleague), revising the guide afterward.
- If you think your interview guide is done and need no further feedback, submit your COUHES application (to COUHES and to me).

## 6. March 18: Interviewing (II): Technique

In class

- Discussion of interview techniques with Grant Freeland, Senior Partner, The Boston Consulting Group (see <https://www.bcg.com/about/people/experts/grant-freeland.aspx>)
- Interview role playing.
- Discussion of interview clips.

Readings: None.

Assignments

- Join one of your classmates on one of his or her interviews. **It's up to you to pick a partner in advance** (or to pick partners in round-robin style).
- Conduct at least three pilot interviews of your own, revising your interview guide and your overall proposal as appropriate. (If you have already submitted your COUHES application, these can be real interviews.) One of your classmates should join you on at least one of these interviews. but please contact me if that proves too challenging for whatever reason (e.g., no one else speaks the language of the interview you will conduct), so that we can work out an alternative arrangement for someone to observe your interview.
- Revise your fieldwork plan and interview guide, and submit your COUHES application (to COUHES and to me). Post the revised fieldwork plan, the revised interview guide and the COUHES application to the Stellar site.
- Record a clip of an interview you conducted (1-2 minutes), which you will present in class for critique. If you cannot record your interviewee for confidentiality reasons, just record your end of the conversation. Post the clip on to the Stellar site by noon on the 18th.

March 25: SPRING VACATION. No class

## 7. April 1: Focus groups and group interviews

### In class

- Focus group administered by Jennifer Greenleaf, Political Science and Social Science Librarian Liaison, MIT. (<https://libguides.mit.edu/profiles/jgleaf>) [You, the class, will be the subjects of this focus group.]
- Discussion of tips on focus groups (e.g., using a local facilitator) and finding ready-made groups.
- Brief discussion of Braithwaite et al. (2004) and Cyr (2016).
- Presentation and critique of focus group proposals.

### Readings [Auditors attending this session should do all of the readings]

- Jennifer Cyr. 2016. "The Pitfalls and Promise of Focus Groups as a Data Collection Mechanism", *Sociological Methods & Research* 45(2): 231-259.
- Jeffrey Braithwaite, et al. 2004. "How important are quality and safety for clinician managers? Evidence from triangulated studies", *Clinical Governance*, 9 (1): 34-41.
- Richard A. Krueger and M. A. Casey. 2000. *Focus groups: a practical guide for applied research* (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Nikki Gambles. "The do's and don'ts of using focus groups in prevention research" in *Preventing disease and ill health*, Blog of the Early Careers Forum of the European Society for Prevention Research (EUSPR): <https://euspr.hypotheses.org/620>.
- Richard A. Krueger. 2002. "Designing and Conducting Focus Group Interviews" (<http://www.eiu.edu/~ihec/Krueger-FocusGroupInterviews.pdf>).
- Eliot & Associates. 2005. "Guidelines for Conducting a Focus Group" [http://datainnovationproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/4\\_How\\_to\\_Conduct\\_a\\_Focus\\_Group-2-1.pdf](http://datainnovationproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/4_How_to_Conduct_a_Focus_Group-2-1.pdf).

### Recommended reading

- D. Walsh. 2012, "Doing ethnography", in C. Searle, ed. *Researching society and culture*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. London: Sage.

### Assignment

- Design a focus group and plan recruitment of 5-10 subjects. You may rely on joining existing groups that meet either formally or informally and turning them into your focus group, rather than on standard recruitment (see D. Walsh. 2012, "Doing ethnography", in C. Searle, ed. *Researching society and culture*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. London: Sage.); these could include student groups, informal labor markets, street-corner hangouts, church gatherings, regular tables at coffee shops, etc. The goal of the focus group is up to you: pre-testing potential materials for an experiment or survey, investigation of political narratives among a particular group of people, understanding how attitudes revealed in interviews might change in the context of an interactive conversation, etc. However, it should be related to your research.
- Be prepared to present your focus group plan in no more than two slides for critique in class. These slides should specify all the basic elements of a focus group discussed in the readings, but they should also provide context on how the focus group fit into your project. Post the slides to the Stellar site by noon on the 1<sup>st</sup>.

## 8. April 8: Archival research and comparative historical cases

### In class

- Discussion of archival research with Marika Landau-Wells (<http://www.marikalandau-wells.com/>): equipment, making appointments, uploading and transcription, hiring local RAs, other tradecraft.
- Brief discussion of lessons from *Trajectories* readings and Harrison (1992).
- Presentation on cases and critiques.
- Handling “evidence”, coding rules, “expanding” cases, etc.

### Readings [Auditors attending this session may skip Harrison (1992)]

- Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. MacLean, and Benjamin L. Read. 2015. *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 5, “Thinking outside the archive box: discovering data in the field” (pp. 178-89).
- Cameron G. Thies. 2002. “A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations.” *International Studies Perspectives* 3: 351-72.
- Victoria Johnson, Melissa Wilde, Simone Polillo, Amy Kate Bailey, Nathan Cermak, and Stewart E. Tolnay. 2008. Essays in “From the Archives: Innovative Use of Data in Comparative Historical Research.” *Trajectories: Newsletter of the Comparative Historical Section of the ASA*, 19 (2): 1-9.
- Hope M. Harrison. 1992. “Inside the SED Archives: A Researcher’s Diary.” *Bulletin of the Cold War International History Project*.
- Pick ONE of the following three cases:
  1. U.S. Congress (text analysis of interviews + other records)
    - Mary Hawkesworth. 2003. “Congressional Enactments of Race-Gender: Toward a Theory of Raced-Gendered Institutions”, *American Political Science Review*, 97 (4): 529-550; and
    - J. Tobin Grant. “Verifying Evidence of ‘Congressional Enactments of Race-Gender.’” MS. ([http://www.academia.edu/2837399/Verifying\\_Evidence\\_of\\_Congressional\\_Enactments\\_of\\_Race-Gender\\_](http://www.academia.edu/2837399/Verifying_Evidence_of_Congressional_Enactments_of_Race-Gender_))
  2. U.S. entry into the Vietnam War (interpreting historical, mainly primary, sources)
    - Fred I. Greenstein and Richard H. Immerman. 1992. “What Did Eisenhower Tell Kennedy About Indochina? The Politics of Misperception.” *Journal of American History*, 79(2): 568-87; and
    - Ian S. Lustick. 1996. “History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias,” *American Political Science Review*, 90 (3): 605-618. [Note that this reading is not directly relevant to this case.]
  3. The creation of the European Economic Community (weighing historical sources)
    - Andrew Moravcsik. 1998. *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell. pp. 10-17, 24, 28, 176-197, 473-479; and
    - Robert H. Lieshout, Mathieu L.L. Segers and Anna M. van der Vleuten. 2004. “The Choice for Europe: Soft Sources, Weak Evidence,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 6 (4): 89-139.

### Assignment

- Conduct either three interviews or four hours of primary-source research (or secondary source reading with prior approval), posting the notes to the Stellar site by noon on the 8th:
- Be prepared to present in class on the case you chose. You do not need to prepare a formal presentation, but if you will be using visual aids that you want to display in class, make sure to post it to the Stellar site by noon on the 8th. Remember as always that the audience is your classmates.

April 15: Patriot’s Day Holiday. No Class

## 9. April 22: Participant-observation and ethnography

### In class

- Central questions in ethnographic work
  - The role of immersive ethnography in the social sciences.
  - The interpretivist epistemology. Criteria for sound narrative analysis (“apparency”, “verisimilitude”, and “transferability” or “natural generalizability”, “trustworthiness” of researcher, etc.).
- Presentation and critiques of coding sheets for those doing site-intensive research.
- Class exercise in breakout groups: develop a coding sheet on attitudes of Berliners about Allied occupation in 1946. Then consider the challenges of systematically observing and coding the following 15-second scene: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5i9k7s9X\\_A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5i9k7s9X_A) (1:27-1:42).

Readings [Auditors attending this session may read one substantive chapter in Schatz ed. (1999) instead of 2+; they should still read pp. 25-43, 49-50, and 303-316. Non-political scientists should discuss possible substitute readings with me.]

- Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. MacLean, and Benjamin L. Read. 2015. *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 7 (“Site-Intensive Methods”), pp. 234-265.
- Edward Schatz, ed. 2009. *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. University of Chicago Press, pp. 25-43, 49-50, and 303-316, AND at least two chapters out of Chapters 2, 4-10. Do not pick chapters that summarize books you have already read.
- Bruce L. Berg. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (Fourth Edition). Boston: Allyn and Bacon. pp. 153-163. [Beginning with the section entitled “Watching, Listening, and Learning”.] [http://repository.umpwr.ac.id:8080/bitstream/handle/123456789/3723/qualitative\\_research\\_methods\\_for\\_the\\_social\\_sciences.pdf?sequence=1](http://repository.umpwr.ac.id:8080/bitstream/handle/123456789/3723/qualitative_research_methods_for_the_social_sciences.pdf?sequence=1)

### Assignment

- If you plan to do any “site-intensive” research for your dissertation, expand your previous fieldwork plan to incorporate a plan for “site-intensive” research and develop a coding sheet for observations. Be prepared to present your coding sheet in class for critique. If you do NOT plan to do any site-intensive research, conduct at least four interviews. (If you plan to do neither site-intensive field work nor interviews for your dissertation, discuss the assignment with me ahead of time.) Post your revised plan to the Stellar site by noon on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Be prepared to present your substantive chapter from Schatz (2009), ideally with a visual aid of some type. Your presentation should be no more than 30 minutes divided by the number of students in the class. (in other words, if there are 5 people in the class, your presentation should be no longer than 6 minutes.) As always, keep in mind that your audience is your fellow classmates, not the instructor; tell them what they need to know from this chapter that is useful in their own research. Post the visual aid you will present to the Stellar site by noon on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## 10. April 29: Tales of the Field

### In class

- Presentation of interviews (or other field work).
- Graduate student flash presentations (Elissa Matz Berwick, Tugba Bozcaga, Cullen Nutt, and Minh Duc Trinh). Each presentation will cover the following in 2-3 slides:
  - Description of research question and fieldwork plan
  - Positive lesson(s) learned
  - Negative lesson(s) learned
- Discussion with panel of practical challenges of adjustment in the field (making contacts, where to live, managing personal relationships, safety concerns, etc.).

### Readings [Auditors attending this session can skip Coffrey (1999)]

- Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. MacLean, and Benjamin L. Read. 2015. *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 85-99, 119-145.
- Annette Lareau. "Common Problems in Fieldwork: A Personal Essay," in *Journeys through Ethnography: Realistic Accounts of Fieldwork*. Annette Lareau and Jeffrey Schultz, eds. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. pp. 195-236.
- John Lofland, David Snow, Leon Anderson, and Lyn H. Lofland. 2006. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*. 4th edition. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth. Chapter 4: "Getting Along," pp. 54-79.
- Amanda Coffrey. 1999. *The Ethnographic Self: Fieldwork and the Representation of Identity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 39-58, 105-110.
- Center on the Politics of Development, University of California at Berkeley. nd. "Fieldwork Tips". <http://cpd.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/FieldworkTips-1.pdf>.
- Chappell Lawson, nd. "Preparing for the field" checklist.
- Material from at least one of the graduate students on the panel (see below).

### Assignments

- Conduct at least one interview and post your notes to the Stellar site by noon on the 29th.
- Review your notes and recordings from your interviews (or focus groups or archival work or "site-intensive" field work) so far, identify one place where you may have made a mistake or faced a difficult choice, and prepare to discuss it in class. If you are recording your interviews, post a short audio clip to the Stellar site by noon on the 29<sup>th</sup>. If you are not recording your interviews, post a single PowerPoint slide to the Stellar site by noon on the 29<sup>th</sup> with a transcript of the relevant segment of the interview. If your mistake or lesson involves a choice of whom to interview or how to interview that person, submit a single PowerPoint slide describing the situation to me by noon on the 29<sup>th</sup>. **Your presentation in class should be no more than two minutes; make sure to practice and time yourself before the class.**

## 11. May 6: Choice week

### In class

- Presentations. In your presentation, remember that the target audience is your fellow classmates; tailor your presentation to what they would want to know and keep it engaging. **Note that you will be unceremoniously cut off at the time limit. This maximum time limit is 60 minutes divided by the number of students in the class.**
- Time permitting, practice interviews.

### Readings

- Depends on assignment (see below).

### Assignment (PICK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING):

**Option 1: Focus Group.** Conduct a focus group or group interview related to your project of ~45-60 minutes, write up the results, and present your findings in class (see time limit above).

**Option 2: Interviews.** Conduct at least 6 hours of interviews. Present the results in class (see time limit above). You may wish to present on just a small part of what you have done (e.g., a single interview) or to summarize the entirety of your fieldwork so far. Also read the following:

- Svend Brinkmann. *Qualitative Interviewing*. 2013. Oxford U.P., pp. 70-72, 111-38.
- John Van Maanen. 2011. *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). University of Chicago Press, pp. 45-120.
- Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 2011 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. University of Chicago Press. Chapter 3 (pp. 45-87).

**Option 3: Archival or secondary source work.** Do archival work on a “mini” historical case (approximately 1,000 words), drawing on multiple primary and secondary sources that you have not already read. Present the results in class (see time limit above). Make sure you have accessed all the sources you find believe are relevant and assess the sources you will use. Also read the following:

- New standards for case studies (from Week 2) if you did not already read it.
- Stanley Lieberman. 1992. “Small N’s and Big Conclusions: An Examination of the Reasoning in Comparative Studies Based on a Small Number of Cases,” in Charles Ragin and Howard Becker, eds., *What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 105-118.
- Paul Pierson. 2000. “Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics.” *American Political Science Review* 94 (2): 251-67.
- Evan Lieberman. 2001. “Causal Inference in Historical Institutional Analysis: A Specification of Periodization Strategies.” *Comparative Political Studies* 34 (9): 1011-35.
- Nicholas Sambanis. 2004. Using Case Studies to Expand Economic Models of Civil War. *Perspectives on Politics*, 2 (2): 259-279. [As an example of the value of case-study work.]

**Option 4: Observation or participant-observation.** Do at least 6 hours of observation using your coding sheet and present the results in class (see time limit above). Your presentation may take any form or style you wish (an essay read aloud, a multimedia presentation, or whatever). You may wish to present on just a small part of what you have done (a scene, the findings from one salient interview, etc.) or to summarize the entirety of your fieldwork so far. Also, read the following:

- Kathleen Dewalt and Billie R. Dewalt. 2002. *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press. Chapters 7-9.

- Michael H. Agar. 1980. *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*. Academic Press, pp. 83-89.
- Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 2011 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 1-18.
- ONE of the following four articles:
  - Lee Ann Fujii. 2010. "Shades of Truth and Lies: Interpreting Testimonies of War and Violence", *Journal of Peace Research*, 47 (2): 231-241.
  - Sarah Elizabeth Parkinson. 2013. "Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War." *American Political Science Review* 107 (3): 418-432.
  - Christopher Blattman, Julian Jamison, Tricia Koroknay-Palicz, Katherine Rodrigues, and Margaret Sheridan. 2016. "Measuring the measurement error: A method to qualitatively validate survey data." *Journal of Development Economics* 120: 99-112.
  - Katherine Cramer Walsh. 2012. "Putting Inequality in Its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective", *American Political Science Review*, 106 (3): 517-532.
  - John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth. 2017. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design (International Student Edition): Choosing Among Five Approaches* (Fourth edition). Read chapters on "Data analysis and representation" and writing a qualitative study". [This reading is recommended for students in public health or education may replace the above with.]

**Option 5:** Do a book report and prepare a presentation on your book (see time limit above), focusing on (1) what the author did and found, (2) your assessment of the fieldwork or archival work, and (3) any practical lessons you learned. Feel free to address the issue of "field to publication" rather than just the fieldwork itself. As always, remember that the audience for your presentation is your fellow students. I recommend those listed below; however, you may choose another book that uses field work as its primary empirical material, with prior approval, as long as it is not something you have read in another class. For instance, if you have a regional interest, consider reading through the book reviews section of the leading regional journal to identify potential volumes. If you are thinking about your own field work appendix, consider option (e). Suggested readings include:

- a. Economic and political development
  - Richard Fenno. 1978. *Home Style: House Members and Their Districts*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. **Read the Appendix before you read the book and then re-read the Appendix again afterward.**
  - V. O. Key. 1949. *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. University of Tennessee Press. (esp. Chapters 2-11 and 22). **Be sure to also read Alexander Heard. 1950. "Interviewing Southern Politicians", *American Political Science Review*, 44 (4): 886-896.**
  - Edward C. Banfield. 1958. *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*. New York: Free Press.
  - James C. Scott. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. Yale University Press.
  - Jonathan Schlefer. 2008. *Palace Politics: How the Ruling Party Brought Crisis to Mexico*. University of Texas Press.
- b. More sociological, anthropological, and interpretivist
  - Jonathan Rieder. 1985. *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn against Liberalism*. Harvard University Press.
  - Kai Erikson. 1976. *Everything in Its Path: Destruction of Community in the Buffalo Creek Flood*. Simon & Schuster.
  - Lisa Wedeen. 1999. *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria*. University of Chicago Press. **OR** *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen* (2008). Chicago University Press.

- Elliot Liebow. 2003 [1967]. *Tally's Corner: A Study of Negro Streetcorner Men*. Rowman & Littlefield.
  - Elijah Anderson. 1981. *A Place on the Corner* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). University of Chicago Press.
  - Timothy Pachirat. 2011. *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight*. Yale University Press.
- c. Conflict
- Elisabeth Wood. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge University Press.
  - Severine Autessere. 2014. *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*. New York: Cambridge University Press. **OR** *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*. 2010. New York: Cambridge University Press.
  - Leslie E. Anderson. 1994. *The Political Ecology of the Modern Peasant: Calculation and Community*. Cambridge University Press.
  - Paul R. Brass. 1997. *Theft of an Idol: Text and Context in the Representation of Collective Violence*. Princeton University Press.
- d. Regional studies. Pick a prominent recent book in your area – ideally by a junior scholar – that relies heavily on field work, reading through the book reviews section of the leading regional journal to identify potential the right book if necessary. I recommend that you reach out to the author and begin a conversation about the research with her; in other words, use this as an opportunity to make a connection. Unless the book is mainly ethnographic, make sure you clear the choice with me.
- e. Grab-bag. Read five methodological appendices from different social science studies.

**Post your slides or other material to be presented to the Stellar site by noon on the 6<sup>th</sup>.**

## 12. May 13: Choice week

### In class

- Presentations. In your presentation, remember that the target audience is your fellow classmates; tailor your presentation to what they would want to know and keep it engaging. **Note that you will be unceremoniously cut off at the time limit. This maximum time limit is 90 minutes divided by the number of students in the class.**

### Readings

- Depends on assignment (see below).

### Assignment (PICK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING):

**Option 1: Focus Group.** Conduct a focus group or group interview of ~45-60 minutes, write up the results, and present your findings in class (see time limit above).

**Option 2: Interviews.** Conduct at least 7 hours of interviews. Present the results in class (see time limit above). You may wish to present on just a small part of what you have done (e.g., a single interview) or to summarize the entirety of your fieldwork so far.

**Option 3: Archival or secondary source work.** Do archival work on a “mini” historical case (approximately 1,000 words), drawing on multiple primary and secondary sources. Present the results in class (6-8 minutes). Make sure you have accessed all the sources you find believe are relevant and assess the sources you will use. Also, read at least one of the following:

- Marc Trachtenberg. 2006. *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method*. Princeton University Press. [Selections as appropriate.]
- Lindsay Prior. 2003. *Using Documents in Social Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- G. Elder Jr., E. Pavalko, et al. 1993. *Working with Archival Data: Studying Lives*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Michael R Hill. 1993. *Archival Strategies and Techniques*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Charles M. Judd, Eliot R. Smith, and Louise H. Kidder. 1991. *Research Methods in Social Relations*. Orlando: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, pp. 287-297.
- Lisa Martin. 1992. *Coercive Cooperation: Explaining Multilateral Economic Sanctions*. Princeton University Press. [Selections as appropriate.]
- Andrew Moravcsik. 1998. *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. [Selections as appropriate.]
- Another book of your choice, with prior approval.

**Option 4: Participant-observation.** Do at least 6 hours of observation using your coding sheet and present the results in class (see time limit above). Your presentation may take any form or style you wish (an essay read aloud, a multimedia presentation, or whatever); you may wish to present on just a small part of what you have done (e.g., a scene) or to summarize your fieldwork so far. Also, read other articles listed for last week that you did not already read.

**Option 5:** Do a book report and prepare a presentation on your book (see time limit above). For details and list of recommended books, see previous week.

**Option 6: Transparency debates in the discipline.** Read through the reports from the Qualitative Transparency Deliberations and other related sites (e.g., recent panels at APSA like <https://www.qualtd.net/>, <https://dialogueondart.org/perspectives-on-da-rt/>, various blogs, [http://comparativenewsletter.com/files/archived\\_newsletters/newsletter\\_spring2016.pdf](http://comparativenewsletter.com/files/archived_newsletters/newsletter_spring2016.pdf),

<https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/rethinking-research/benefits-and-challenges-making-qualitative-research-more-transparent>, <https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/cqrm/qmmr/>, [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2652097](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2652097)) and develop well-reasoned replies for submission to the section's leaders and working groups, or an essay of your own on this topic. Send these to me, and present your argument in class (see time limit above), ideally in the form of well-reasoned recommendations or pleas. You may also wish to contact some of those most involved in these debates. Please talk to me about it first if you want.

**Post your slides or other material to be presented to me to the Stellar site by noon on the 13<sup>th</sup>.**