

Social Science Qualitative Research Methods

FES 513a

Fall 2004

Important Information

Credit Hours: 3

Meets: Thursdays, 9:00-12:00 at 380 Edwards Street

Instructor: Dr. Amity Doolittle

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Texts

Textbook: Available at Book Haven, York Street, Phone #787-2848

Babbie, E. 2004. *The Practice of Social Research*. Belmont CA, Wadsworth.

Bernard, H.R. 2002. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 3rd Edition. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Russell, D. and C. Harshbarger. 2004. *Ground Work for Community-Based Conservation*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press

Course pack: Tyco, 262 Elm Street, Ph. 562-6256

We will use several chapters from both books throughout the course, and both are well worth purchasing for reference. Students who wish to buy only one of the books may do so, and can use copies of both books that the instructor will put on reserve at the Forestry library. The Babbie book is better for those more interested in quantitative methods (particularly sociological approaches) and the Bernard book is better on qualitative methods (particularly anthropological approaches).

Course Description

This course is designed to provide a broad introduction to issues of social sciences research methods and design. Consideration is given to both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research, although more emphasis is placed on qualitative methods. No prior knowledge of methodology or statistics is expected or assumed. The course is intended for both doctoral students who are in the beginning stage of their dissertation research, as well as for masters students developing methodologies or working on research proposals for their thesis projects.

The course differs from other courses on research design in that it is decidedly interdisciplinary in nature (including drawing on literature from anthropology, geography, political science and sociology) and it consciously address the unique nature of social science research within environmental studies. Two assertions are considered throughout the class. The first assertion is that some of the most important questions facing environmental studies have such complex answers that traditional positivist scientific approaches have difficulty being applied. Recent trends aimed at giving primacy to quantitative methods have exacerbated these difficulties, with the result that the big and really important questions are rarely posed, let alone answered. A second, and slightly opposing view, is that the growing nature of the environmental crisis facing the world's biosphere has led to frantic 'policy prescription' initiatives designed to address the problem, despite little or no evidence that such designs will actually accomplish their goals, or whether they may actually have perverse effects. According to this reasoning, scholars need to undertake more dispassionate, rigorous analysis to understand better what the causes of the problem really are, and better analyze potential effects of proposed policy alternatives. We seek to understand the validity of both claims, and if accurate, what their direct and indirect effects might be in shaping our choices over research designs and methods.

During the semester, we will explore three interrelated dimension of research, one focuses on the theoretical foundations of science and research, another focuses on the various methods available to researchers for data collection and analysis, and finally we will complete exercises in the practical application of various methods.

Course Objectives

- To understand better competing approaches to research design and methods, and their philosophical differences.
- To get better acquainted with specific research methodologies, including in person interviews, survey design, field observation, comparative political studies, and case studies.
- To facilitate students in making informed choices over research design and methodological choices for the questions they seek to answer, and to judge and evaluate the quality of projects and their methodologies.

Course Requirements

Class Participation

Every student is expected to have completed the readings prior to class and actively participate in class discussions

Field Assignments

Learn by doing. There will be three field assignments where you can spend time by doing participant observation, interviewing and surveying.

Short Essays

There will be four short essays designed to explore and critique the readings in detail.

Final Term Paper

One major term paper is required. This can be a 15-20 page research paper where you explore any one of the topics chosen from the array of methods listed on the syllabus. Alternatively you may design a 10-12 page research [proposal for funding for your summer research.

A short 1-2 page synopsis of the long paper will be due Oct. 21 and should focus on describing the research question, the methods to be explored, and what format the final paper will take. This short synopsis will enable the instructor to better assist students ahead of time with the longer paper, due in December.

Grading Details

Assignment	% of grade
Class participation	20
4 short essays	20
3 field assignments	20
Final term paper/research proposal	40

Course Policies

- Students who need any special accommodations should make an appointment to discuss with the instructor as soon as possible.
- Academic honesty: Students are expected to pursue their academic work with honesty and integrity. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.
- Communication in course: Verbal and written communication (including electronic) must be conducted in a way that treats others with respect and honesty. Criticism is encouraged that speaks to arguments and points, while recognizing the value of each individual.

Readings

Part I. Building Blocks and Foundations

Week 1, September 2.

Positioning Your Research: Theory and Paradigm in Social Science Research

Babbie, Ch. 2, "Paradigms, Theory, and Research" and Ch. 3, "The Idea of Causation in Social Research"

Heberlein, T.A. 1988. "Improving Interdisciplinary Research: Integrating the Social and Natural Sciences." *Society and Natural Resources* 1: 5-16.

Week 2, September 9

Explanation and Understanding in Social Science Research: The Qualitative - Quantitative and Other Divides

Russell, Ch. 10, "Organizing the Research".

Denzin, N.K. and Y.S. Lincoln. 1994. "Introduction: Entering the Field of Qualitative Research." In *The Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. p. 1-17.

Articles to compare for short essay assignment #1, due in class on September 9th

Kepe, T and I Scoones (1999) "Creating grasslands: Social institutions and environmental change in

Mkambati Area, South Africa." *Human Ecology* 27(1): 29-53.

Shively, G.E. (1997). "Poverty, technology, and wildlife hunting in Palawan." *Environmental Conservation* 24(1):57-63.

Week 3, September 16

Formulating Research Questions and Testing Hypothesis

Babbie, Ch. 4, "Research Design"

Bernard, Ch. 2, "The Foundations of Social Research"

Eichler, Margrit. 1988. "Sexism in Research." In *Nonsexist Research Methods*. Winchester, MA: Allen and Unwin, p. 1-18.

Brosius, Peter and Diane Russell. 2003. "Conservation from Above: An Anthropogenic Perspective on Transboundary Protected Areas and Ecoregional Planning." *Journal of Sustainable Forestry* 17 (1/2): 39-65.

Article to critique for short essay assignment #2, due in class on September 23rd

(alternate articles can be found on week 6 [Lowe] and week 9 [Doolittle])

Tucker, C.M. 1999. "Private versus common property forests: Forest conditions and tenure in a Honduran community." *Human Ecology* 27(2): 201-230.

Week 4, September 23

Ways to Choose a Fieldsite/Study Subject & Research Ethics, Politics and Relationships with Communities Studied

Russell, Ch. 3, "Preparing for Research"

Barrett, CB and JW Cason (1997) "Identifying a Site and Funding Source". *Items* 51(2/3): 42-45.

Sieber, J.E. 1992. *Planning ethically responsible research: A guide for students and Internal Review Boards*. Sage Applied Social Research Methods Series, Vol. 31. London: Sage. p. 1-43.

Week 5, September 30
Sampling, Measurement, Validity and Reliability

Babbie Ch. 5, "Conceptualization, Operationalization and Measurement", Ch. 6, "Indexes, Scales and Typologies", and Ch. 7. "The Logic of Sampling"

Bernard, Ch. 6, "Sampling" and Ch. 8, "Nonprobability Sampling and Choosing Informants"

Davis, A. and J. R. Wagner (2003) "Who Knows? On the Importance of Identifying "Experts" When Researching Local Ecological Knowledge." *Human Ecology* 31(3)

PART II - Research Methods in Practice

Week 6, October 7
Participant Observation

Field Exercise #1:

Participant observation due in class on October 14th

"Guidelines for Field Notes and Journals"

Bernard, Ch. 13, "Participant Observation"

Babbie, Ch. 10, "Qualitative Field Research"

Russell, Ch. 13, "Ethnographic Approaches"

Burgess, R.G. 1984. "From Coral Garden to City Street: Field Research 'Comes Home'." In *In the Field: An introduction to field research*. Boston: George Allen & Unwin.

Emerson, RM, RJ Fretz and LL Shaw. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p 1-16.

Alternative article to critique for short essay assignment #2, due in class on September 23rd

Lowe, C. 1999. "Global Markets, Local Injustice in Southeast Asian Seas: The Live Fish Trade and Local Fishers in the Togeian Islands of Sulawesi." In *Plants, People and Justice*. C. Zerner, ed. New York: Columbia University Press, p 234-258.

Week 7, October 14
Case Study and Comparative Research Methods

Yin, R. K. 1994. Ch. 1 and 2 in *Case study research: design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stake, R.E. 1994. "Case Studies." In *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. NK Denzin and YS Lincoln, eds Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, p 361-376.

Cunningham, J. Barton (1997). "Case study principles for different types of cases." *Quality and Quantity* 31: 401-423.

Salafsky, N, et al. 2001. "A systematic test of an enterprise strategy for community-based biodiversity conservation." *Conservation Biology* 15(6): 1585-1595

Week 8, October 21
The Art of the Interview

Field Exercise #2:

Interviewing due in class on October 28th

Bernard, Ch. 9, "Interviewing: Unstructured and Semi-structured"

Russell, Ch. 12, "Interviewing"

Fontana, A. and JH Frey. 1994. "Interviewing: The Art of Science." In *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, NK Denzin and YS Lincoln, eds. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, p 361-376.

Bryman, A. 2001. "Asking Questions." In *Social Science Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p 141-157.

Lee, Raymond. 1993. "Asking sensitive questions: Interviewing." In *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*. London: Sage, p 97-118.

Zavaleta, E. 1999. "The emergence of waterfowl conservation among Yup'ik hunters in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Alaska." *Human Ecology* 27(2): 231-266.

Week 9, October 28
Other Qualitative Methods (Mapping, PRA, PAR, Oral History, Archival Research)

Short Essay #3:

Analyzing an interview due in class on November 4th. Interview transcripts are on reserve in the library.

Russell, Ch. 15, "Action Research"

Beebe, J. 1995. "Basic Concepts and Techniques of Rapid Appraisal." *Human Organization* 54(1): 42-51.

Chambers, R. 1991. "Shortcut and Participatory Methods for Gaining Social Information for Projects." In *Putting People First: Sociological Variables in Rural Development*, M. Cernea ed. New York: Oxford U. Press for the World Bank, pp.515-537

Gladwin, C. H. et al. 2002. "The Quality of Science in Participatory Research: A Case Study from Eastern Zambia." *World Development* 30 (4): 523-543.

Mosse, D. 1994. "Authority, Gender and Knowledge: Theoretical Reflections on the Practice of Participatory Appraisal." *Development and Change* 25: 497-526.

Carey, D. 2003. "Symbiotic research: A case for ethical scholarship." *Thought and Action Summer*: 99-114.

Fortman, L. 1996. "Gendered Knowledge: Rights and Space in Two Zimbabwe Villages: Reflections on Methods and Findings" in *Feminist Political Ecology*, D. Rouchleau, B. Thomas-Slayter and E. Wangari, eds. London: Routledge, p. 211-223.

Alternative article to critique for short essay assignment #2, due in class on September 23rd

Doolittle, Amity. 2003. "Colliding Discourses: Western Land Laws and Native Customary Rights in North Borneo". *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 34 (1): 97-126

Week 10, November 4

Field Exercise #3: Surveys due in class on November 11th

Surveys and Questionnaires

Babbie, Ch. 9, "Survey Research"

Bernard, Ch. 10, "Structured Interviewing: Questionnaires."

Russell, Ch. 14, "Surveys"

Fowler, FJ and TW Mangione. 1990. "The Role of Question Design in Standardized Interviewing." In Standardized Survey Interviewing: Minimizing Interviewer Related Error. London: Sage, p 77-95.

Fowler, F.J. 1998. "Design and Evaluation of Survey Questions." In Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods. L. Bickman and DJ Rog, eds. Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage.

Gillingham, S and P.C. Lee. 1999. "The impact of wildlife-related benefits on the conservation attitudes of local people around the Selous Game Reserve, Tanzania." Environmental Conservation 26(3): 218-228.

PART III. — Data Analysis and Writing Up

Week 11, November 11

Analysis of Qualitative Data and Ethnographic Writing

Bernard, Ch. 16, "Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis" and 17 "Qualitative Analysis - Text Analysis"

Babbie, Ch. 13, "Qualitative Data Analysis"

Emerson, R.M., et al. 1995. Ch 6 "Processing Fieldnotes: Coding and Memoing"- and Ch. 7 "Writing an Ethnography" in Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, p 142-210.

Taylor and Bogdan. 1998. "Working with Data: Data Analysis in Qualitative Research." In Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Short Essay #4: Analyzing Oral Histories due in class on December 2nd. Interview transcripts are on reserve in the library.

November 18: NO CLASS (IUCN Meeting in Bangkok)

November 25: NO MEETING (Thanksgiving)

Week 12, December 2

From Research Proposal to Publication

Taylor and Bogdan. 1998. "Writing and publishing qualitative studies." In Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods. NYC: John Wiley, p. 167-181

Przeworski, A. and F. Salomon. 1988. On the art of writing research proposals. New York: Social Science Research Council.

Geever, Jane and Patricia McNeill. 1997. "A Proposal-Writing Short-Course." Excerpt from The Foundation Center's Guide to Proposal-Writing, New York: The Foundation Center, <<http://fdncenter.org/learn/shortcourse/prop1.html>>.