

Ethnography and Archival Research: A Grounded Theory Approach

*******DRAFT*******

CCTP-783-01, Spring 2011

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Communication, Culture and Technology

Class: Mon 2:-430p

Office Hours: By Appointment (my office is by the rear elevator, 3rd floor)

Description:

This course invites you to conduct a research project on a topic of your choice. It is designed to give you an introductory opportunity to produce your own, original, grounded theory research. You will work on your own project by doing interviews, digging through archives or conducting ethnographic participant observation.

What is grounded theory? Put simply, it is an approach that insists that understanding be built "ground up" from your research site: you need not come to the course with a hypothesis or theory, we will build it up together.

This course is practical, hands-on and collaboratively oriented. In class we will help each other analyze the data you collect by coding, memoing and conceptualizing each others' research materials. You will get to know the basic characteristics of ethnography, archival research and grounded theory and their theoretical underpinnings, but everything in this course culminates in your writing up a piece of grounded theory in an area of interest to you.

Required Texts

There is only one required book for this class:

Charmaz, K. (2006). Constructing grounded theory :a practical guide through qualitative analysis. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

All other readings are available online on Blackboard. Part of the requirements of this class are to share readings relevant to your research with the class.

Expectations

All students are expected to:

come to class having finished the assigned readings and precirculated data;

come to class with questions, argument and viewpoints to contribute to the discussion of those readings and data;

participate fully in group discussions, neither dominating nor allowing others to carry the

intellectual load; RESPECT THE RESEARCH PROJECTS OF YOUR COLLEAGUES
(and their actors).

Requirements for all students:

One page on each of the readings in weeks 2 and 3. Please submit these through Dropbox by 8am on the day of class.

Each student will be required to circulate ‘raw’ **primary** research material, coded material, memos, and drafts. Dates will be negotiated in class. Such material must be posted in Dropbox by 5pm, the Friday before class.

Each student will be required to find **at least one** reading to share with the class, drawn from the grounded theory/symbolic interactionist tradition (or, if not possible, from a qualitative/historical/ethnographic perspective). Readings must be made available one week in advance of the date they will be discussed in class – place these in Dropbox.

Final Presentation: A 15 minute presentation on your research topic for the class.

Final project. Your final project will be a paper 3000-4000 words in length based on your research. The paper should have central objects, sensitizing concepts and substantive theoretical formulations. You should have attempted to reach theoretical saturation and point to the general utility of your theory and importance of your findings. Alternative formats for a final project can be discussed with the instructor, as is fitting with your data and goals.

The final version, edited, revised, and proofread, is due on TBD . Please submit by email.

Reading Summaries	5%
Discussion and Participation	35%
Final Presentation	20%
Term Paper	40 %

You will only receive a formal grade for the final paper and the overall course. You will receive regular feedback from the instructor.

Please note that no late assignments are accepted, unless you have a serious reason.

Breakdown of Weekly Meetings

Because this course is substantially informed by the interests its members, the following weekly breakdown is simply a skeleton for the class. In the first few weeks we will substantially fill out this syllabus with particular assignments and readings.

Week 1 – Introductions

No Readings. Come to class prepared to introduce yourself and your project.

Week 2 – What is ‘doing grounded theory’?

Charmaz, Chapter 1

Glaser, Barney G. and Anselm L. Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine. (Chapter 1, 3, 5, 8)

Glaser, B.G. and A.L. Strauss, *The Social Loss of Dying Patients*. *The American Journal of Nursing*, 1964. **64**(6): p. 119-121.

Week 3 – Approaches

Kelle, U. (2008) The Development of Categories: Different Approaches in Grounded Theory. In Bryant, A. and Charmaz, K. eds. *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*, SAGE, 191-213.

Becker, H. 1993. HYPERLINK "<http://webfiles.uci.edu/jpd/readings/Becker-Crock.pdf>" How I Learned What a Crock Was, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 22, 28-35.

DeWalt, K. and DeWalt, B. 2002. HYPERLINK "<http://webfiles.uci.edu/jpd/readings/DeWaltDeWalt-BecomingParticipant.pdf>" Becoming A Participant. From *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*.

DeWalt, K. and DeWalt, B. 2002. HYPERLINK "<http://webfiles.uci.edu/jpd/readings/DeWaltDeWalt-BecomingObserver.pdf>" Becoming An Observer. From *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*.

Emerson, R., Fretz, R., and Shaw, L. 1995. HYPERLINK "<http://webfiles.uci.edu/jpd/readings/EmersonFretzShaw-MembersMeanings.pdf>" Pursuing Member's Meanings. From *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*.

Week 4 – Gathering Data

Emerson, J. (1970). Behavior in private places: Sustaining definitions of reality in gynecological examinations. *Recent Sociology*.

Beaulieu, A. (2010) 'From co-location to co-presence: Shifts in the use of ethnography for the study of knowledge', *Social Studies of Science* 40/3: 453-70.

Charmaz Chapter 2

Week 5 - Coding

Star, S. L. (1999). "The Ethnography of Infrastructure." *American Behavioral Scientist* 43:

377-391.

Charmaz, Ch. 3

Week 6 – Memos

Charmaz, Ch. 4

Week 7 – NO CLASS

Week 8 – Sampling

Charmaz, Ch. 5

Week 9 – 'Theory'

Charmaz, Ch. 6

Week 10 – Writing

Charmaz, Ch.7

Week 11 – The Nature of Research

Charmaz, Ch.8

Week 12 – Projects I

Week 13 – Projects II