

Seminar in Interpretive Methods

Gerry Berk

PS 607, Fall 2015, Fridays 2-4:50

Office Hours: Mondays 12:30-3:30 in PLC 834

Email: gberk@uoregon.edu; phone 541-915-3301

Interpretive methods have made great strides in political science in recent years. Edited volumes on interpretive political science, interpretive method, and political ethnography have provided philosophical foundations, reviewed subfield research, and provided instruction in variety of methods, from discourse analysis and ethnography to visual analysis and natural language interviewing. A lively conference group (independent of the Qualitative Methods section of APSA) holds annual panels and a “Methods Café” at national and regional conferences; it also grants an annual book prize named for political theorist Charles Taylor. Sage Publications has introduced a series of short monographs on particular interpretive methods. And more. Tapping into this vibrant energy, this seminar trains graduate students in the philosophy, theory and practice of interpretive methods by engaging five methods: discourse analysis, genealogy, political ethnography, relational process/emergent causality, and actor-network theory. We will take some time with each approach, devoting a week or more to theory & method and an additional week to books and/or articles that put those methods to work (sometimes with the help of visiting faculty).

Course Requirements

This is a non-required, working seminar, in which we will study philosophies, theories and methods that ought to be *useful for your research*. I will work with you to design a research and writing project to address your particular needs. But, a commitment to interpretive methods in political science is also a collective project in two senses. First, although it has made great strides, interpretive methods still fall outside the mainstream of the field. So, in my experience, we have little choice but to help and support one another in our work. Second, interpretive methods raise challenging questions about social science foundations, which bind us together, regardless of exactly how we answer those questions or which methods we choose to deploy in our work. And so, as both an individual and a collective endeavor, this seminar necessitates a commitment to others as well as yourself. In that spirit, I ask you to consider all topics with equal openness and commitment. Please prepare for every class by reading all the required readings and writing a brief discussion question/comment and posting it on Canvas. Once in class, participate – ask questions of one another, clarify, go back to the readings, raise confusions, share insights. Both on-line and in-class activities will be part of your grade.

Seminar Participation (10%)

On-line Contributions. (10%) Pass/Fail (I will only let you know only in the event of a fail.)

On “Theory/Method” weeks, write one discussion question (with a specific citation to the readings) and post it on Canvas 24 hours before class.

On “At Work” weeks, identify a concrete insight from one of the work(s) under consideration that would be invisible or impossible in the absence of the method and sources used. Briefly, say why.

Post your questions/comments on CANVAS one hour before class. Be succinct!

A 15-20 Page Final Paper (80%)

In my ideal, you would take this seminar after completing the three-course methods sequence in Political Science and prior to writing a dissertation prospectus. Then the final project for everyone would be to write the methods section of your prospectus. But, students are at very different stages. So, I will work with you to tailor an appropriate project to your needs. To that end, the assignment must be completed in three stages.

- Meet with me during the first 5 weeks of class to work out a project.
- Turn in a one-page paper proposal with a bibliography and/or research strategy by Week 6.
- Turn in your final paper on December x (Wednesday of exam week).

Readings

All required readings will be posted on Canvas, except
Louise Phillips and Marianne W Jorgensen, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, which is available for purchase in the University of Oregon Bookstore, and
Joseph Lowndes, *From New Deal to New Right*, which you can purchase on-line or borrow.

You should also consider purchasing the following books from an on-line vendor:
Javier Auyero, *Patients of the State: The Politics of Waiting in Argentina*
Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*
William Connelly, *A World of Becoming*

READING AND WORK SCHEDULE

Week 1: Situating Interpretive Methods (read prior to the first class)

Read the following from Mark Bevir and R.A.W. Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science* (2016)

Bevir and Rhodes, “Interpretive Political Science: Mapping the Field,” 3-28

Bevir and Blakely, “Naturalism and Anti-Naturalism,” 31-44

If your major field is empirical read your chapter:

Cecelia Lynch, “International Relations,” 227-240

Joseph Lowndes, “American Politics,” 256-267

Lorraine Bayard de Volo, “Comparative Politics,” 241-255

If your major field is Political Theory, choose from chapters on “Idealist Legacies,” “Hermeneutics,” “Historicism,” “Pragmatist Interpretivism,” “Social Constructivism,” “Cultural Studies,” “Post-Marxism,” or “Governmentality.” (Let me know and I will make the chapter available).

If you have not taken *Qualitative Methods with Parsons*, you ought to read Yanow, “Thinking Interpretively,” 5-26; and Yanow, “Neither Rigorous or Objective? 67-88 in Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, eds., *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn* (available from me or one of the other students)

PART I. Language, History, Politics

Week 2: Discourse Analysis

Louise Phillips and Marianne W Jorgensen, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, entire
Ernesto Laclau, “Why do Empty Signifiers Matter to Politics,” 36-46
Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Social Strategy*, chapter 3 (which lays out their theorization of hegemony and how discourses are fixed, challenged, and changed over time)

Additional:

Hannah Pitkin, Wittgenstein and Justice, selections
Foucault, Michel. “Two Lectures” in *Power/Knowledge* (1980). 78-108.
David Howarth, Aletta Norval, Yannis Stavrakakis, eds., *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis* (Manchester, 2000).
Isabela Fairclough and Norman Fairclough, *Political Discourse Analysis*
Mark Bevir, “How Narratives Explain,” in Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, Chapter 15
Lisa Wedeen, “Acting “As If”: Symbolic Politics and Social Control in Syria,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 40(3), 1998: 503-523
Lisa Weeden, “Conceptualizing Culture,” *APSR* 96(4), 2002
Nelson Phillips and Cynthia Hardy, *Discourse Analysis: Investigating Processes of Social Construction*, skim entire (think of it as a resource)

Week 3: Discourse Analysis at Work

Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (Routledge, 2006), entire

Additional:

Charlotte Epstein, *The Power of Words in International Relations: Birth of an Anti-Whaling Discourse*. Cambridge University Press, 2008, chaps 1, 8-11
Victoria Hattam, *In the Shadow of Race: Jews, Latinos, and Immigrant Politics in the US*
Victoria Hattam and Joseph Lowndes, “From Birmingham to Baghdad: The Micropolitics of Partisan Identification, in Gerald Berk, Dennis Galvan and Victoria Hattam, eds., *Political Creativity: Reconfiguring Institutional Order and Change*,

Fred Schaeffer, *Democracy in Translation: Understanding Politics in an Unfamiliar Culture* (Cornell, 2000)

David Howarth, Aletta Norval, Yannis Stavrakakis, eds., *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities, Hegemonies, and Social Change* (Manchester, 2000)

Carol Cohn, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals," *Signs* 12:4 (Summer 1987), 687-718

Week 4: Genealogy

Michel Foucault, [1971] 1977. "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." In *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* edited by D. F. Bouchard.

Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pages 139-64.

Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, Vol 1, 51-131.

Mark Bevir (2008) "What is Genealogy?" *Journal of Philosophy of History* 2, 263-275

Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 104-125

Additional:

Colin Koopman, *Genealogy as Critique: Foucault and the Problems of Modernity*

Srdjan Vucetic. 2011. "Genealogy as a Research Tool in International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations*. 37(3):1295-1312.

Week 5: Genealogy & Discourse Analysis at Work (with Joe Lowndes's participation)

Joseph Lowndes, *From New Deal to New Right*, entire

Primary sources to be distributed

Additional:

Richard Price, "A Genealogy of the Chemical Weapons Taboo," *International Organization*, 49:1 (Winter 1995), 73-103

Somers, Margaret R. 2008. *Genealogies of Citizenship: Markets, Statelessness, and the Right to Have Rights*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mitchell, Timothy. 1991. "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics." *American Political Science Review* 85,1, 77-96.

PART II. Political Ethnography

Week 6: Political Ethnography

Lisa Wedeen, "Concepts and Commitments in the Study of Democracy," in I. Shapiro, R.M. Smith, and T.E. Masoud, eds. *Problems and Method in the Study of Politics*, 274-306

Edward Schatz, "Ethnographic Immersion and the Study of Politics," in E. Schatz, ed. *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power* (Chicago 2013), 1-22

Jan Kubik, "Ethnography of Politics: Foundations, Applications, Prospects," In in E. Schatz, ed. *Political Ethnography* (Chicago 2013), 25-52.

Ellen Prader, "Seeing with an Ethnographic Sensibility: Explorations Beneath the Surface of Public Policies," in Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, *Interpretation and Method*, 194-208
Richard Fenno, *Watching Politicians: Essays on Participant Observation*, Introduction and Chapter 3, "The Political Scientist as Participant Observer," 1-4, 55-94.
C.J. Churchill, "Ethnography as Translation," *Qualitative Sociology* 28:1 (Spring 2005), 3-24
R.M. Emerson, R.I Fretz, and L.L. Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Field Notes*, second edition, chapter 1, 2, and 5
Claudio Benzercri and Gianpaolo Baiocchi, "What is Political about Political Ethnography: On the Context of Discovery and Normalization of an Emergent Field"

Additional:

"Politics Under the Microscope": Two Special Issues of *Qualitative Sociology* on Political Ethnography, Volume 29, Issue 3 (September 2006) and Volume 29, Issue 4 (December 2006). See especially, introduction by Javier Auyero in September issue, 257-59 and Afterword by Charles Tilly in December issue, 409-12.

RAW Rhodes, "Ethnography," *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 171-86.

Samer Shehata, "Ethnography, Identity, and the Production of Knowledge," In Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, *Interpretation and Method*, 209-227

Clifford Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures* (Basic Books, 1973), chs 1 & 15

Wanda Vrsti, "The Strange Case of Ethnography and International Relations," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 37, 2008

Lorraine Bayard de Volo and Edward Schatz, "From the Inside Out: Ethnographic Methods in Political Research." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 37(2), 2004: 267-271

Michael Burawoy, ed., *Ethnography Unbound* (University of California Press, 1991).

Slerk Ybemea, Dvora Yanow, et al, *Organizational Ethnography*, London: Sage, 2009.

Week 7: Political Ethnography at Work (with Erin Beck's participation)

Javier Auyero, *Patients of the State: The Politics of Waiting in Argentina*, Duke 2012, Introduction, chaps 1, 3, 4

Erin Beck, *How Development Projects Persist: Everyday Negotiations with Guatemalan NGOs* (Duke University Press, forthcoming), selections

Field notes and correspondence with advisors to be distributed

Additional:

Severine Autesserre, *Peaceland: Conflict and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*, Cambridge, 2014, chaps 1 (20-45 only), Appendix, 5, (6)

Empirical Chapters in Schatz, ed., *Political Ethnography* and the special issues of *Qualitative Sociology*

David Mosse, "The Making and Marketing of Participatory Development"

S everine Autessere. 2010. *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*. Cambridge University Press. OR

Timothy Pachirat, *Every Twelve Seconds, Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight* (Yale, 2013)

Joe Soss, *Unwanted Claims: The Politics of Participation in the US Welfare System* (Michigan, 2002)
Faye Ginsburg, *Contested Lives: The Abortion Debate in an American Community* (U Cal, 1998)
C. Shore, *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration* (Routledge, 2000)

PART III. Interpretive Explanation: Naturalism Revisited

Week 8: Relational Process and Emergent Causality

For a comparison with mechanical causality (or positivist process tracing), read David Collier, "Understanding Process Tracing," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44, No. 4 (2011): 823-30
Mustafa Emirbayer, "A Manifesto for a Relational Sociology" *Theory and Society* 103:2 (September 1997), 281-317
William Connolly, *A World of Becoming*, pages 16-43, 68-83, 169-174
Andrew Abbott, "Temporality and Process in Social Life," Chapter 7 of *Time Matters: On Theory and Method* (Chicago, 2001), 209-239

Additional:

Andrew Abbott, "From Causes to Events," chapter 6 of *Time Matters*, 183-205
William Connolly "Method, Problem, Faith," in Ian Shapiro, Rogers Smith, and Tarek Masoud, *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*, 332-349
John F. Padgett and Walter W. Powell, *The Emergence of Organizations and Markets* (Princeton, 2012), Introduction.

Week 9: Actor Network Theory

Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, entire
Suggested and available on line or Canvas:
John Law and Vicky Singleton, "ANT and Politics: Working in and on the World," *Qualitative Sociology* (2013) 36: 485-502
John Law, "Actor Network Theory and Material Semiotics," Chapter 7 of Bryan S. Turner, *The New Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*. On line at <http://www.heterogeneities.net/publications/Law2007ANTandMaterialSemiotics.pdf>
Berk and Galvan, "How to Study Institutions as Relational Processes," Paper delivered at the Workshop Making Social Science Pragmatic, University of Oregon, May 22 & 23, 2015

Additional:

Gianpaolo Baiocchi, Diana Graizbord, Michael Rodriguez-Muniz, Introduction to special issue on ANT: "Actor-Network Theory and the ethnographic imagination: An Exercise in translation," *Qualitative Sociology* (2013) 36: 323-341

Week 10: Relational Process, Materiality and ANT at Work

Gerald Berk, "The Magnetron and the State: Practicing Technological Rivalry in World War II," under review at *Theory and Society*
Timothy Mitchell, "Can the Mosquito Speak?" chapter 2 of *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity*, U Cal Press 2002
Jane Bennett, "The Agency of Assemblages," Chapter 2 of *Vibrant Matter* – "The Agency of Assemblages and the North American Blackout," *Public Culture*, Fall 2005, 17:3, 445-466

Additional:

C.W. Anderson and Daniel Kreiss, "Black Boxes as Capacities for and Constraints on Action: Electoral Politics, Journalism and Devices of Representation," *Qualitative Sociology* (2013) 36: 365-382
Bruno Latour, *The Pasteurization of France*
Rafi Youatt, "Interspecies Relations, International Relations: Rethinking Anthropocentric Politics," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* (2014) 43(1) 207-223
Pamela Brandwein, "Studying the Careers of Knowledge Claims: A Guide," in Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, eds. *Interpretation and Method*, 284-299
Margaret Somers, "Narrativity, Narrative Identity and Social Action: Rethinking English Working-Class Formation," Geoffrey Roberts, ed., *The History and Narrative Reader*, Routledge, 354-374.