An Introduction to Qualitative Methods
Political Science 768

Ted Hopf

Winter 2008
Thursdays, 830-1115am
Denney 0213

Tuesdays 1-3pm

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This course is an introduction to qualitative methods in political science. After a review of the main competing epistemological approaches, we concentrate on the most prevalent qualitative method in political science: the comparative case-study. We then turn to interpretivism, ethnography, and discourse analysis, and their respective applications in political science.

Class Requirements: Three 10 page papers, as well as reaction memos to readings that you will then present in class. Papers will be on various topics: but one each on discourse analysis and ethnography as executed in one or more of the readings. One may be on your dissertation topic. One may be on a defense of epistemological choice/s. One may be a case-study research design, with concentration on conceptualization, operationalization, measurement, and case selection.

Books to Buy: (I have not ordered these, suspecting you have your favorite e-sites for book purchases)

Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* 3d ed. (Chicago 1996)
Paul Feyerabend, *Against Methodology* Revised ed. (Verso 1988)
Karl Popper, *Logic of Scientific Discovery* (Basic 1959)
Paul Rabinow and William M. Sullivan, ed. *Interpretive Social Science* (California 1987)
Lisa Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination* (Chicago, 1999)

3 January No Class (Making a virtue of necessity, it gives you an extra week to wade your way through 10 January’s demanding reading list)

10 January

**How we think we know what we think we know, or four competing epistemologies**


Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (ALL)

Paul Feyerabend, *Against Methodology* (ALL)

For those of you with no background in the philosophy of science, perhaps start with the following:

Alan F. Chalmers, *What is this thing called science?* (Queensland 1976), 1-145 or

17 January

**Case Studies I: What are they good for and how do we execute them?**

John Gerring, “What is a Case Study and what is it Good For?” *American Political Science Review* 98:2 (May 2004), 341-54


Henry Brady and David Collier, eds. *Rethinking Social Inquiry* (Rowman Littlefield 2005), 139-67, 229-66
James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge 2003), Chapters 10-11, 337-404

Recommended:


24 January

**Case Studies II: Conceptualizing a Variable, Democracy, for example**


Ido Oren, “Political Science as History: A Reflexive Approach,” in *Interpretation and Method*, 215-27


31 January

**Interpretivism**


Clifford Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures* (Basic 1973), 3-54, 311-26, 360-4

Paul Rabinow and William M. Sullivan, “The Interpretive Turn: A Second Look,” in Rabinow and Sullivan, ed. *Interpretive Social Science* (California 1987), 1-15

Charles Taylor, “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man,” in Rabinow and Sullivan, 33-81


Recommended:

Craig Calhoun, “Cultural Difference and Historical Specificity,” *Critical Social Theory*, 70-96


Steven Lukes, “On the Social Determination of Truth,” in Michael T. Gibbons,


E.H. Carr, *What is History?*, 3-35

Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Problem of Historical Consciousness,” in Rabinow and Sullivan, 82-140


Susan J. Hekman, *Hermeneutics and the Sociology of Knowledge* (Polity 1986), 91-159

7 February

**Ethnography**

Clifford Geertz, “Deep Play,” in Rabinow and Sullivan, 195-240, or 412-53 in *Interpretation of Cultures*

Joe Soss, “Talking our Way to Meaningful Explanations: A Practice-Centered View of Interviewing for Interpretive Research,” in *Interpretation and Method*, 127-49

Frederic Charles Schaffer, “Ordinary Language Interviewing,” in *Interpretation and Method*, 150-60

Steven Maynard-Moody and Michael Musheno, “Stories for Research,” in *Interpretation and Method*, 316-30

Samer Shehata, “Ethnography, Identity, and the Production of Knowledge,” in *Interpretation and Method*, 244-63

Recommended:


James Clifford, “On Ethnographic Allegory,” in *Writing Culture*, 98-121

George E. Marcus, “Contemporary Problems of Ethnography in the Modern World System,” in *Writing Culture*, 165-88

Loic J D Wacquant, “Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu,” *Sociological Theory*

Rogers Brubaker, “Rethinking Classical Social Theory,” *Theory and Society* 14:6 (November 1985), 745-75


Craig Calhoun, “Habitus, Field, and Capital,” in *Critical Social Theory*, 132-61


14 February

**Ethnography in American Politics**


Clarissa Hayward, *De-Facing Power* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2000) (Fernando Nunez)

21 February

**Ethnography in Comparative Politics**


28 February

**Discourse Analysis**


David Howarth and Jacob Torfing, eds., *Discourse Theory in European Politics* (Palgrave 2005) 1-32, 316-49

Recommended:

http://www.asu.edu/clas/polisci/cqrm/Newsletter/Newsletter2.1.pdf#page=31

Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago 1982)


6 March

**Discourse Analysis in Political Science**
Carol Cohn, “Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals,” *Signs* 12:4 (Summer 1987), 687-718 (Graham)


Ruth Wodak and Teun A. van Dijk, eds., *Racism at the Top: Parliamentary Discourses on Ethnic Issues in Six European States* (Klagenfurt, Austria: Drava Verlag, 2000), Ch 5 (Ryan)


Christopher Barnard, “Pearl Harbor in Japanese High School History Textbooks: The Grammar and Semantics of Responsibility,” in Martin and Wodak, pp. 247-71 (Pu)


Recommended: