

**17.878 Qualitative Research: Design and Methods**Instructor

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Tuesday, 3-5 PM

E53-438

Course Website: <http://stellar.mit.edu/S/course/17/sp13/17.878/>

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**Course Objectives:** This course aims to provide graduate students in political science and related disciplines with a theoretical and practical understanding of how to design and execute qualitative field research. It covers the basic techniques for collecting, interpreting, and analyzing qualitative data. Over the course of the term, we will consider theoretical questions such as: What is “qualitative” research? What kinds of questions is it suited for? Can it meet standards of scientific evidence? What is the difference between an “interpretation” and “explanation” in social science? What is a case study? We will also examine practical questions such as: How does one go about identifying a research question? How are research design and data collection connected? How does one conduct an interview? How does one maintain good field notes? What are the different ways of writing an ethnographic paper? While the course is meant primarily for students who intend to conduct qualitative field research, the principles and practical skills covered in the course can complement other approaches to research, including mixed-methods strategies. Readings and assignments draw from a wide body of literature, including political science, sociology, anthropology and urban studies. This course prepares students to conduct qualitative field research by:

1. Providing a critical understanding of how the choice of research methodology is tied to philosophical commitments, behavioral assumptions and broader conceptual issues in social science.
2. Familiarizing students with the nuts and bolts of the research design process, i.e. how to formulate research questions, construct hypotheses and design a research project.
3. Exposing them to a variety of research methods, including qualitative interviews, participant observation, ethnography, case studies, and the use of documentary/primary sources.
4. Providing practical, hands-on training on how to execute and write up a field research project.
5. Sensitizing students to the practical mechanics and ethical issues in doing field research, especially in developing country settings.

**Class Participation:** Class sessions involve a combination of lecture, discussion and hands-on demonstration. The success of each session depends crucially on student participation. Participation involves: (1) completing the assigned readings, (2) being prepared to ask and answer questions on the material, and (3) engaging one another in a constructive way. The goal is to work together to improve our collective understanding of qualitative research.

**Written Assignments**

The written assignments for this class include eight short response papers and a larger ethnographic research paper. The response papers involve answering a question about the readings and/or conducting and writing about a practical assignment. Each assignment is **due before class** on the date listed on the syllabus.

**Ethnographic Research Project**

To develop your knowledge and skills in qualitative research methods, the main assignment and learning tool of the course is an ethnographic research project. You will be asked to join an organization within the Cambridge, Massachusetts area, and to conduct an ethnographic study of it over the course of the term. You should aim early on in the term to identify an organization that seems new, unfamiliar or outright strange. You will assume the role of an ethnographer, perform fieldwork within this new organizational setting and record your experiences. The final assignment will be to write an ethnography (8,000-10,000 words) of the organization. The paper will consist of your first-hand account of “making sense” of the organization, your attempts to understand the “obvious” customs and rituals by which it operates and the (in)formal norms and hierarchies that structure social relations and behavior within in. More than anything else, the ethnography should center on a description of your attempts to become a competent “member” of the organization. More details on the assignment will be provided during the first session of the class. The paper is due on the last day of class—**5pm on Tuesday, May 14.**

**Grading:** Final grades for the course will be computed as follows: class participation (25%), response papers (25%) and the ethnographic research paper (50%).

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**Schedule Overview**

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<b>Session 1.</b>	<b>February 5</b>	Introduction and Course Rationale
<b>Session 2.</b>	<b>February 12</b>	Philosophy of Social Science
<b>Session 3.</b>	<b>February 26</b>	Designing Qualitative Research
<b>Session 4.</b>	<b>March 5</b>	Causality and Mechanisms
<b>Session 5.</b>	<b>March 12</b>	Case Studies
<b>Session 6.</b>	<b>March 19</b>	Ethnography and Participant Observation
<b>Session 7.</b>	<b>April 2</b>	Interviews and Focus Group Discussions
<b>Session 8</b>	<b>April 9</b>	Documents and Textual Analysis
<b>Session 9.</b>	<b>April 23</b>	Survey and Mixed Methods Research
<b>Session 10.</b>	<b>April 30</b>	Writing up Qualitative Research
<b>Session 11.</b>	<b>May 7</b>	Doing Field Research: Ethics and Mechanics
<b>Session 12.</b>	<b>May 14</b>	Research Proposals and Course Reflections

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## Readings

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Most of the required readings for this class are available in soft copy on the course website. In addition, the books required for the course are available for purchase at the MIT Coop and are also held on reserve in the Dewey Library for students to consult.

### Required

Abbott, A. (2004). *Methods of Discovery: Heuristics for the Social Sciences*. W.W. Norton and Company.

King, G., Keohane, R. and Verba, S. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

George, A. and Bennett, A. (2005). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge.

Rubin, H. and Rubin, I. (1995). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

### Recommended

Becker, H. S. (1998). *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While You're Doing It*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gerring, J. (2006). *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brady, H. and Collier, D. (eds.). (2004). *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Rowman and Littlefield.

Elster, J. (1989). *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*, Cambridge University Press.

Ragin, C. C. (2000). *Fuzzy-Set Social Science*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Marshall, C. and Rossman, G.B. (1999). Designing Qualitative Research. London: Sage.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yin, R.K. (2002) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods, 3rd Ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

**Session 1.****Introduction and Course Rationale****February 5**

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- Course overview and rationale
- Why do qualitative research?
- Research discovery
- Course assignment: Conducting an ethnography

**Required**

Morgan, G. and Smircich, L. (1980). "The Case for Qualitative Research." *Academy of Management Review*. 5 (4): 491-500.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge. [Ch. 1 and 2]

Abbott, A. (2004). *Methods of Discovery: Heuristics for the Social Sciences*. W.W. Norton and Company. [Ch. 1 and 2]

Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York: Basic Books.  
[Ch. 1 "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture."  
[Ch. 15. "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight."]

King, G., Keohane, R. and Verba, S. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.) [Ch. 2, pp. 34-49].

**Recommended**

Mills, C.W. (2000). [1959]. "On Intellectual Craftmanship." (in *The Sociological Imagination*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 195-228.)

**Class Discussion: Research Questions and Methodology**

Come to class prepared to discuss your own research questions. What are you interested in studying? Why? How? Where? What kinds of methods were you thinking of using? How do you think qualitative methods could enhance your overall project?

**Session 2.****Philosophy of Social Science****February 12**

- Scientific knowledge and progress
- Methodological falsification
- Behavioral assumptions and philosophical commitments
- Positivist and interpretivist approaches

**Required**

Kuhn, T. (1996). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Ch. 2, 3, 9,10].

Popper, K. (1965). "Normal Science and its Dangers." (in Lakatos, I. and Musgrave, A. (eds.), *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 51-59).

Lakatos, I. (1965). "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes" (in Lakatos, I. and Musgrave, A. (eds.), *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 91-138).

Burrell, G. and Morgan, G. (1979). *Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis*. Heinemann. [pp.1-9 and pp. 130-143].

Lincoln, Y.S. and Guba, E.G. "The One Generalization is: There is no Generalization" (Ch. 2 in Gomm, R., M. Hammersley, et al. (2000). Case Study Method: Key Issues, Key Texts. London, SAGE Publications.)

**Recommended**

Friedman, M. (1968). "The Methodology of Positive Economics" (in Brodbeck, M., ed., *Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, New York: Macmillan, pp. 508-29).

Piore, M. (2006). "Qualitative Research: Does it Fit in Economics?" *European Management Review*. 3: 17-23.

Sil, R. "Problems chasing methods or methods chasing problems? Research communities, constrained pluralism, and the role of eclecticism." (Ch. 14 in Shapiro, I., Smith, R.M. and Masoud, T.E., (2004) *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

**Assignment #1. Philosophical Commitments**

Write a memo (3-5 pages) on philosophical commitments regarding knowledge and human behavior that inform your own approach to research? How are the questions you ask, the kinds of data you aim to collect, and the "findings" you deem interesting shaped by these assumptions. (Where) do you place yourself on the positivist vs. interpretivist divide? Why?

**Session 3.****Designing Qualitative Research****February 26**

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- Methods of research discovery
- Alternative design templates
- Methodological pitfalls

**Required**

King, G., Keohane, R. and Verba, S. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.) [Ch. 1].

Brady, H. and Collier, D. (eds.). (2004). *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Rowman and Littlefield. [Ch. 1 and 10].

Collier, D. and Mahoney, J. (1996). "Insight and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research." *World Politics*. 49: 56-91.

Geddes, B. (2003). "How the Cases you Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias and Related Issues." (ch. 3 in *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.)

Varshney, A. (2001). "Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society: India and Beyond." *World Politics* 53: 362-398. [Focus on research design and case selection]

**Recommended**

Lijphart, A. (1971). "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review*." 65 (3): 682-93.

Ragin, C. C. (2000). *Fuzzy-Set Social Science*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. [Ch. 1-2]

**Assignment #2. Research Discovery and Design**

Write a memo (3 pages) describing the organization you have chosen to study. How did you "discover" this organization as a site for research? Describe the process of identification. What questions about the organization interest you most? How would you propose to design a research project for answering these questions?

**Session 4.****Causality and Mechanisms****March 5**

- What is causal explanation?
- Can qualitative research establish causality?
- How to construct a mechanism-based argument

**Required**

Mackie, J.L. "Causes and Conditions, *Metaphysics: An Anthology*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999, p. 413-427.

Cartwright, N. (2007). "Are RCTs the Gold Standard?" *BioSocieties* 2(01): 11-20.

Elster, J. (1989). *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*, Cambridge University Press. [Ch 1 and 4]

Tilly, C. (2001). "Mechanisms in Political Processes." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 4: 21-41.

Falleti, T. G. and J. F. Lynch (2009). "Context and Causal Mechanisms in Political Analysis." *Comparative Political Studies* 42(9): 1143-1166.

King, G., Keohane, R. and Verba, S. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.) [Ch. 3, pp. 75 – 87].

Petersen, R. D. (2001). *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe*. New York, Cambridge University Press. [Ch. 1]. [Focus on the mechanism-based argument].

**Recommended**

Elster, J. "A Plea for Mechanisms." (in Peter Hedstrom and Richard Swedberg, eds. *Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 45-73.)

Chandra, K. (2006). "Mechanisms vs. Outcomes." *Qualitative Methods Newsletter*, American Political Science Association, 4(1): 6-13.

Gerring, J. (2010). "Causal Mechanisms: Yes, But..." *Comparative Political Studies* 43(11): 1499-1526.

Deaton, A. (2010). "Understanding the Mechanisms of Economic Development." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 24(3): 3-16.

Przeworski, A. (2004), "The Last Chance: Are Institutions a Deeper Cause of Economic Development?" DRI Working Paper #11.



**Session 5.****Case Studies****March 12**

- What is a case study?
- Value of case study research
- Case selection and comparison

**Required**

Eckstein, H. (1975). "Case Study and Theory in Political Science," (in Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby, Handbook of Political Science, Vol. 7, pp. 79-137.)

George, A. and Bennett, A. (2005). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press. [Ch. 1, 4 and 5].

Gerring, J. (2004). "What Is a Case Study and What is it Good for?" *American Political Science Review*. 98 (2): 341-354.

Yin, R.K. (2002) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods, 3rd Ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [Ch. 1-2].

Bowen, J. and R. Petersen (1999). *Critical Comparisons in Politics and Culture*, Cambridge University Press.

Locke, R. and Thelen, K. (1995). "Apples and Oranges Revisited: Contextualized Comparisons and the Study of Comparative Labor Politics." *Politics and Society*, 23 (3): 337-367.

**Recommended**

Ragin, C. and Becker, H. (eds). (1992). *What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Intro. and Ch. 1]

Ragin, C. C. (2000). *Fuzzy-Set Social Science*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. [Ch. 3]

Van Evera, S. (1997). "What Are Case Studies? How Should They Be Performed?" (Ch. 2 in *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 49-76.)

Gerring, J. (2006). *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*, Cambridge University Press.

Geddes, B. (2003). "How the Cases you Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias and Related Issues." (ch. 3 in *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.)

**Assignment #3. Case Study**

Write a memo (3 pages) reexamining the organization you selected for ethnographic investigation. What is it a case of? How might you justify your case selection? (E.g. Is it a "crucial" case for testing a theory?) Could any generalizations be drawn from it? How would you define the relevant unit(s) of analysis? How might the choice of other cases or units change or help enhance the study?

**Session 6. Ethnography and Participant Observation****March 19**

- Ethnographic field methods
- What is “thick description”? How to use it for sociopolitical analysis?
- The role of participant observer

**Required**

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge. [Ch. 1 and 2]

Garfinkle, H. (1967). *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. [Ch. 1 and 2].

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City, NY, Doubleday. [Introduction]

Wedeen, L. (2010). “Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science.” *Annual Review of Political Science*, 13:255-72.

Chambers, R. (1994). "The origins and practice of participatory rural appraisal." *World Development* 22(7): 953-969.

Whyte, W.F. (1943). *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Introduction and Parts I and II].

**Recommended**

Maanen, J. V. (1979). “The Fact of Fiction in Organizational Ethnography.” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24(4): 539-550.

Aunger, R. (1995). On ethnography: Storytelling or science. *Current Anthropology* 36(1): 97-130.

Burroway, M., et al. (1991). *Ethnography Unbound*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Becker, H. (1963). *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. Free Press.

Scott, James C. (1976). *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

**Assignment #4. Participant Observation of a Meeting**

Attend a meeting in the organization you have joined and analyze it as a participant observer. Place common sense categories, rituals and behaviors under scrutiny. You may, for example, examine the social composition of the audience. Who attended the meeting and why? Who did not? Observe audience responses to the speakers. Who spoke and in what order? Who remained silent? What “frontstage” vs. “backstage” interactions took place? You may also construct a theme or metaphor for the interaction a la Geertz and the Balinese cockfight. What symbols were employed in the event? Also consider situating the meeting within a broader context. What sociopolitical purpose(s) might the meeting serve within the organization? Finally, think reflexively about your own presence in the meeting as a participant observer. Write a thick description of approximately 5 pages.

**Session 7.****Interviews and Focus Group Discussions****April 2**

- Interviews as social events
- Issues of language and power
- Managing a focus group discussion

**Required**

Denzin, N. K. (1989). "The Sociological Interview." (In *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods*. 3rd ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989, pp. 102-120.)

Rubin, H. and Rubin, I. (1995). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. [Ch. 1, 3, 4]

Weiner, M. (1964). "Political Interviewing." (Ch 6 in Ward, R.E., *Studying Politics Abroad*, Boston: Little, Brown.)

Morgan, D. L. (1996). "Focus Groups." *Annual Review of Sociology* 22: 129-152.

Swidler, A. (2003). *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Ch. 1 and Methodological Appendix]

**Recommended**

Rubin, H. and Rubin, I. (1995). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. [Ch. 5-9]

Leech, B.L. (2002). "Symposium: Interview Methods in Political Science."

Ewick, P. and Silbey, S. (2003). "Narrating Social Structure: Stories of Resistance to Legal Authority." *American Journal of Sociology*. 108 (6): 1328-1372.

**Assignment #5. Conducting Interviews**

Develop a specific research question regarding your organization that you would like to pursue. A few possible examples include: What motivates someone to join the organization? How does one move up the organizational hierarchy? What material or non-material benefits are there to being a member? Your assignment is to develop an interview questionnaire to answer the question and interview two people in the organization that (you suspect) differ along a relevant social dimension (e.g. age, gender and ethnicity). Write a memo (5 pages) describing your two interviews. How did you choose your interview subjects? How did you motivate them to provide you with the information you needed? How did you deal with stereotyped answers, evasiveness, lying? How did you interpret their responses? Did you adjust your interview style to each respondent? Were you able to triangulate responses across your interview subjects? Please attach your questionnaire to the memo. We will discuss your experiences and questionnaires in class.

**Session 8.****Documents and Textual Analysis****April 9**

- Interpreting documents
- Textual analysis
- Using documents for triangulation

**Required**

Macdonald, K. (2001). "Using Documents." (in Gilbert, N. (ed.) *Researching Social Life*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. London: Sage. pp. 194-210.)

Woolgar, S. (1981). 'Discovery: Logic and Sequence in a Scientific Text'. (in Knorr, K.D., Krohn, R. and Whitley, R. (eds.) *The Social process of Scientific Investigation*. Dordrecht: D. Reidel. p. 239-269.)

Bowen, Glenn A. (2009). "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method." *Qualitative Research Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp.27 – 40.

Smith, D. E. (1978). "'K is Mentally Ill' the Anatomy of a Factual Account." *Sociology* 12(1): 23-53.

**Recommended**

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge. [Ch. 6].

Marshall, C. and Rossman, G.B. (1999). Designing Qualitative Research. London: Sage Publications. [Ch. 4].

**Assignment #6. Analyzing an Organizational Text**

Conduct a textual analysis of a document available within the organization you have joined for the ethnographic study. Your task is to interpret the document—its provenance, form and contents—from an ethnographic lens. Was the document readily available? How were you able to obtain it? Situate the document within a broader social context. What "common-sense" ideas are required to make sense of the document's broader purpose? How do the terms, concepts and normative claims contained in the document help structure social reality, both for the reader and organization more broadly? What does the document omit? The idea is to reflect on the document not merely in terms of objective "data" but as a socially-constructed artifact. The document you select can be either in physical or website form. Write a memo (3-5 pages) and attach a copy of the document.

**Session 9.****Surveys and Mixed Methods Research****April 23**

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- What is “mixed-methods” research?
- How to combine qualitative methods with other approaches
- Conducting field surveys
- Guest: Professor Gabi Kruks-Wisner

**Required**

Lieberman, E. (2005). “Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research,” *American Political Science Review* 99(3): 435-452.

Bamberger, M., Rao, V. and Woolcock, M., “Using Mixed Methods in Monitoring and Evaluation: Experiences from International Development,” *Handbook of Mixed Methods Research* (A. Tashakkori and C. Teddlie, editors (2010) Sage Publishers.

Rao, V. and P. Sanyal (2010). "Dignity through Discourse: Poverty and the Culture of Deliberation in Indian Village Democracies." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 629(1): 146-172.

Ahmed, A. and R. Sil (2012). "When Multi-Method Research Subverts Methodological Pluralism—or, Why We Still Need Single-Method Research." *Perspectives on Politics* 10(04): 935-953.

**Recommended:**

Jha, S., V. Rao, et al. (2007). "Governance in the Gullies: Democratic Responsiveness and Leadership in Delhi’s Slums." *World Development* 35(2): 230-246.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [Ch. 11].

Aberbach, J., et. al. (1975). “Exploring Elite Political Attitudes: Some Methodological Lessons.” *Political Methodology*. 2:1-27.

**Session 10.****Writing up Qualitative Research****April 30**

- Maintaining field notes
- Writing in narrative form
- Analytic narratives?

**Required**

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge. [Ch. 3-4].

Emerson, R., Fretz, R. and Shaw, L. (1995). "Processing Fieldnotes: Coding and Memoing." (in *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 142-168.)

Van Maanen, J. (1988). *Tales of the Field*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Ch. 1-3].

Elster, J. (2000). "Rational Choice History." *American Political Science Review*. 94: 685-695.

Bates, R. (1998). "The International Coffee Organization: An International Institution." (Ch. 5 in Bates, R., et. al. *Analytical Narratives*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.)

Mangla, A. (2013). "Deliberative Norms and Primary Education in Himachal Pradesh." (in *Rights for the Voiceless: The State, Civil Society and Primary Education in Rural India*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology).

**Recommended:**

Rubin, H. and Rubin, I. (1995). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. [Ch. 10-11]

Read, B., MacLean, L.M. and Cammett, M. (Fall 2006) "Symposium: Field Research: How Rich? How Thick? How Participatory?" *Qualitative Methods*. 4(2) 9-18.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

**Assignment #7. Research Theme Write-up**

By now you should have identified several candidate themes within your organization. Your assignment is to write a memo (5 pages) about one of these themes in ethnographic form. In selecting a theme, consider the dominant metaphors that social actors deploy within your organization. As an example of a theme, consider MIT's motto "Mens et Manus," which translates from Latin into "Mind and Hand." How do social actors within MIT draw upon that motto to make sense of what they are (and/or ought to be) doing? One week prior to the class, you will be asked to form into small groups of approximately three people and share your write-ups with each other. During the class you will convene into your groups and discuss each other's written work. Our goal is to learn how to convert field notes into a compelling written product.

**Session 11.****Doing Field Research: Ethics and Mechanics****May 7**

- Access and field relations
- How much fieldwork is enough?
- Informed consent and confidentiality
- Managing ethical dilemmas

**Required**

Rabinow, P. (1977). *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*. Berkeley: University of California Press.  
[Ch. 4 and 5]

“Symposium: Field Research.” (Spring 2004). *Qualitative Methods Newsletter*, APSA 2(1): 2-15.

Hertel, S., Singer, M.M., Van Cott, D.L. (2009). “Field Research in Developing Countries: Hitting the Road Running.” *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 42(2): 305-309.

Barrett, C. and Cason, J.W. (1997). *Overseas Research: A Practical Guide*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press. [Ch. 5 and 6]

Read, B., MacLean, L.M. and Cammett, M. (Fall 2006) “Symposium: Field Research: How Rich? How Thick? How Participatory?” *Qualitative Methods Newsletter*, APSA 4(2) 9-18.

Van Maanen, J. (2001). [1983]. “The Moral Fix: On the Ethics of Field Work.” (in *Contemporary Field Research*, pp. 269-287).

Katz, Jack. 2006. “Ethical escape routes for underground ethnographers.” *American Ethnologist* 33, 4:499-506.

**Recommended:**

Chambers, E., and M. G. Trend. (1981). Fieldwork ethics in policy-oriented research. *American Anthropologist*. 83(3): 626-28.

Marshall, C. and G. B. Rossman (1999). *Designing Qualitative Research*. London, Sage Publications. [Ch. 4].

Rubin, H. and Rubin, I. (1995). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. [Ch. 10-11]

**Assignment #8**

Write a memo (3 pages) discussing any ethical concerns you may have encountered while conducting your organizational ethnography. What issues were at stake? Were you able to resolve them? How?

**Session 12****Research Proposals and Course Reflections****May 14**

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- Research proposal writing
- What have we learned?
- Additional resources for qualitative researchers

**Required**

Przeworski, A. and Salomon, F. (1988). "On the Art of Writing Proposals: Some Candid Suggestions for Applicants to Social Science Research Council Competitions."

Dalton, R. and Siverson, R. (1998). "Gee! I've Never Spent \$5.5 Million Before: The Six Fallacies of NSF Proposal Writing." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 31, 1 (March): 74-76.

Ragin, C., Nagel, J. and White, P. (2004). "Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Fieldwork." National Science Foundation.  
[Sections 1 and 2, pp. 8-19].

"Defending the Value and Logic of Qualitative Research," (Ch. 7 in Marshall, C. and G. B. Rossman (1999). *Designing Qualitative Research*. London, Sage Publications.)

Mangla, A., Proposal for NSEP David L. Boren Fellowship

**Recommended**

Ragin, C., Nagel, J. and White, P. (2004). "Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Fieldwork." National Science Foundation.

**FINAL PAPERS DUE BY 5PM.**