Go and sit in the lounges of the luxury hotels and on the doorsteps of the flophouses...Go get the seat of your pants dirty in real research. (Robert Park, 1915)

COURSE OVERVIEW AND ORGANIZATION
This graduate seminar focuses upon the method of data collection known as ethnography. Ethnography is distinct as a method insofar as: A) we as researchers generate data on the conduct of everyday affairs in the lived space and time of our subjects; we do not extract them from their homes or workplaces, we ourselves venture into their daily lifeworlds; and B) we as researchers participate in the social worlds of our subjects, standing not behind a one-way mirror (or survey instrument) in order to observe from afar, but taking part in the action.

Ethnography has been practiced in the academy for over a century now, and there has unsurprisingly emerged a multitude of research traditions and associated philosophies. The goals of this course are two-fold. On one hand, to discuss the merits and pitfalls, assumptions and implications, of many of these schools. On the other, to provide practical instruction in one, that of the “extended case method” (ECM). The essential characteristic of the ECM is an explicit, critical orientation to pre-existing research and theory. It is explicit because it demands that before entering the field, we make clear our assumptions and expectations. Good research is rarely if ever a “fishing expedition.” It is critical because it recognizes that no theory is perfect and so we endeavor to use our findings to build upon extant understandings of the social world. By being explicit and critical, we also assuage long-standing concerns regarding reflexivity in and the relevance of ethnographic research.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation: Grad seminars require an active not passive approach to learning, as we learn to be producers not consumers of knowledge. Showing up prepared and ready to speak is a fundamental requirement of this course.

-Leading class discussion. Students will pair up to lead one Thursday of discussion. The trick is to read closely all required readings before class, to prepare questions for the seminar, and to be prepared to moderate discussion.

-Research Proposal. Due on Thursday of week 4 (this requirement is paraphrased from one used by Michael Burawoy in his ethnography course): When they enter the field, ethnographers face a deluge of information. Without some guiding lens they quickly drown. The purpose of the proposal is to provide that initial lens. Two to three pages long, it should describe the site you want to
study, why you are interested in that site, and what you expect to find when you get there. The more precise and detailed are your expectations, the more likely you will be wrong and, therefore, the more quickly your site will become interesting. You will be forced to confront your own prejudices, erroneous assumptions, and ask how it was that you were so off the mark. You will already have a puzzle and a rationale for continuing the study. You may change your mind about what is interesting but at least the proposal will give you a point of departure. In short, with the proposal you will have the first draft of your final paper.

-Final paper. Because this is not a reading seminar but a practicum on field methods, all participants must identify a research site and conduct preliminary research of three sorts (participant observation; interviewing; and some other form of primary data analysis). The final paper for the course will then include the following:

1-A general statement of the topic/question/puzzle.
2-A short review of the relevant literature (especially past ethnographic research on the topic).
3-Preliminary results of data collection (fieldwork, interviews, and other primary data).

REQUIRED READINGS
The following books are required. All other readings will be available online through D2L.


In addition, I have ordered two books that are recommended but not required. These deal with issues of interviewing and qualitative data coding.


COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS
(A * denotes a class on which student-participants will facilitate discussion)

Week 1 (1/10 R): Introduction to Class

Week 2: Overview of Field Methods
1/15 T
  -Presentation on Ethnography and Stages of the Research Process

1/17 R
  -Rabinow. Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco (pp. 1-162)

Week 3: Introduction to the Extended Case Method
1/22 T
  -The Extended Case Method, Intro (From Manchester to Berkeley by Way of Chicago), and ch. 1 (The Extended Case Method).

1/24 R
  -no class

Week 4: Site Selection: Warranting your Ethnography
1/29 T
  -Sallaz. Labor of Luck. Preface and selection from Introduction (pp. xiii - 5).

1/31 R
  -no class. 2-3 page research proposal due.

Week 5: Entrée, Reflexivity, Gatekeepers, and Informants
2/5 T
  -Warren, Carol A.B. “Gender and Fieldwork Relations.” (D2L)

*2/7 R

Week 6: Writing I: Jotting, Fieldnotes, Analysis
2/12 T
  -Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, Ch. 1 and 2.

2/15 F, 12:00 (Alternative class time)
  -Sallaz. “Your Paper Has Been Outsourced: How to Follow Scientific Papers around the Globe” (D2L)
**Week 7: Writing II: Putting Rich Scenes on Page**
2/19 T
  - *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Ch. 3 and 4.

*2/21 R
  - Hoang, Kimberly Kay. 2011 “She’s Not a Low-Class Dirty Girl!: Sex Work in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 40(4): 367-396. (D2L)

**Week 8: Writing III: Indexing, Coding, Puzzles**
2/26 T
  - *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Ch. 5 and 6.

2/28 R
  - Sallaz, *Labor of Luck*, Ch. 2-4

**Week 9: Ethnography and Causal Arguments**
3/5 T

*3/7 R
  - Sallaz, *Labor of Luck*, Ch. 5-8.

**Week 10 (3/12 T, 3/14 R): Spring Break**

**Week 11: Ethnographic Interviewing and Sociological Biography**
3/19 T

* 3/21 R
  - “Two Feet Under” pp. 268-339 in *Death Without Weeping*.

**Week 12: Embodied and carnal ethnographies**
3/26 T

*3/28 R
  - Schepers-Hughes, *Death Without Weeping*, Ch. 4 “The Madness of Hunger.”
  - Symmes, Patrick. “Thirty Days as a Cuban.” *Harpers* (D2L)
Week 13: Archaeological Ethnography  
4/2 T  
- Haney, Lynne. “Global Discourses of Need: Mythologizing and Pathologizing Welfare in Hungary.” (D2L)  

*4/4 R  
- Hochschild, Arlie. *The Managed Heart*, ch. 3 “Managing Feeling”  

Week 14: Revisits and Comparisons  
4/9 T  

*4/11  

Week 15: Ethnography and Photography  
4/16 T, 4/18 R - Righteous Dopefiend, ch. 1 through 8

Week 16 (4/25 R=No class): Ethnography and its Aftermath  
4/23 T  

Week 17 (4/30 T)  
-Wrap-up