

ETHNOGRAPHY SOC 576 (Spring 2013)

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)

Professor Jeff Sallaz
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Class meets: Thursday 12:30-1:45

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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.

Bourgois, Philippe and Jeffrey Schonberg. 2009. *Righteous Dopefiend*. Berkeley: University of California Press

Burawoy, Michael. 2009. *The Extended Case Method: Four Countries, Four Decades, Four Great Transformations, and One Theoretical Tradition*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press.

Rabinow, Paul. 1977. *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*. Berkeley: U of California Press.

Sallaz, Jeffrey J. 2009. *The Labor of Luck*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 1993. *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wacquant, Loic. 2003. *Body and Soul*. New York: Oxford University Press.

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

Kvale, Steinar and Svend Brinkmann. 2008. *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Sage Publications.

Bernard, H. Russell and Gery W. Ryan. 2009. *Analyzing Qualitative Data: Systematic Approaches*. Sage Publications.

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

-Katz, Jack. 1997. "Ethnography's Warrants." *Sociological Methods and Research* 25(4): 391-423 (D2L).
-Sallaz. *Labor of Luck*. Preface and selection from Introduction (pp. xiii - 5).
-Wacquant, Loic. *Body & Soul*. "The Taste and Ache of Action." (vii-xii).

1/31 R

no class. 2-3 page research proposal due.

Week 5: Entrée, Reflexivity, Gatekeepers, and Informants

2/5 T

-Goffman, Erving. "On Field Work." (D2L).
-Warren, Carol A.B. "Gender and Fieldwork Relations." (D2L)

*2/7 R

-Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight." Selections ("The Raid," "Of Cocks and Men") Pp. 195-204 in *The Interpretation of Cultures*. NY: Basic Books. (D2L)
-Sallaz. *The Labor of Luck*. Ch. 1 ("Nevada: Learning to Deal") pp. 29-40.
-Scheper-Hughes. *Death Without Weeping*, "Introduction: Tropical Sadness." (pp. 1-30).

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

-Goffman, Alice. 2009. "On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto." *American Sociological Review* 74: 339-357. (D2L)

-Desmond, Matthew. 2006. "Becoming a Firefighter." *Ethnography*: 7(4): 387-421 (D2L)

-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

-Katz, Jack. 2001. "From How to Why: On Luminous Description and Causal Inference in Ethnography" (Parts I and II) *Ethnography*. (D2L)

*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

-Lamont, Michele. *Money, Morals, and Manners*. Selections (D2L).

-Weiss, Robert S. 1995. *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*, Ch. 1 (D2L).

* 3/21 R

-Forsy, Marting Gerard. 2010. "Ethnography as Participant Listening." *Ethnography* 11(4): 558-72 (D2L).

-"Two Feet Under" pp. 268-339 in *Death Without Weeping*.

Week 12: Embodied and carnal ethnographies

3/26 T

-Wacquant. *Body and Soul*. Pp. 58-149.

-Bourdieu, Pierre. 2004. "The Peasant and his Body." *Ethnography* 5(4): 579-99 (D2L)

*3/28 R

-Scheper-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)
- Vaughn, Diane. 2004. "Theorizing Disaster: Analogy, Historical Ethnography, and the Challenger Accident." *Ethnography* 5(3): 315-47.

*4/4 R

- Hochschild, Arlie. *The Managed Heart*, ch. 3 "Managing Feeling"
- Katz, *Seductions of Crime*. Introduction and Chapter 1, "Righteous Slaughter." (D2)

Week 14: Revisits and Comparisons

4/9 T

- Burawoy. *The Extended Case Method*. Ch 2: "The Ethnographic Revisit."

*4/11

- Haney, Lynne. "Homeboys, Babies, Men in Suits: The State and the Reproduction of Male Dominance." *American Sociological Review* 61: 759-778 (D2L).
- Lee, CK. 1995. "Engendering the Worlds of Labor." *American Sociological Review* 60: 378-97. (D2L)
- Sallaz, Jeffrey J. 2004. "Manufacturing Concessions: Attritionary Outsourcing at GM's Lordstown Assembly Plant." *Work, Employment and Society* 18(4): 687-708. (D2L)

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

- Steinmetz, George. 2004. "The Uncontrollable Afterlives of Ethnography: Lessons from 'salvage colonialism' in the German overseas empire." *Ethnography* 5: 251-288 (D2L)
- Nancy Scheper-Hughes. "Ire in Ireland" *Ethnography* July 2000 1: 117-140 (D2L)
- Burawoy. *The Extended Case Method*. "Epilogue: On Public Ethnography."

Week 17 (4/30 T)

-Wrap-up