

SO105 Researching Social Life

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Office Hours: By Appointment



Course Description

This module aims to introduce students to the methods that social researchers have developed to analyse their societies and to produce knowledge to richly describe and explain the social world. Students will develop core skills in methods of research through an introduction to the different theories undergirding those methods and more crucially through their practical use in research exercises. The methods explored (i.e. participant observation and interviewing) are introduced in relation to key topics and research traditions that are closely identified with them, thus allowing students to confront methods as real practices rather than abstractions. Among other topics and activities, students will hone their sociological imaginations with regular entries in their field notebooks, explore through readings and discussions the complex ethical entanglements of doing research, be assisted with formulating meaningful research questions and developing coherent research designs. Ultimately, the course aims to develop skills in the critical evaluation of qualitative research, to equip students with practical methods experience and inculcate a critical imagination for how knowledge is produced. In short, this skill set will enable the students to robustly engage with social research methods and methodologies in their final year dissertations.

Requirements

Readings

All key readings for the course will be made available through Google Classroom, which will be shared with the students at the beginning of the semester. Additional resources will be available in library and or accessible through the *Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin* (Potsdamerplatz). Also, at the circulation office you can find a reserve shelf containing some of the books available for in-library use. Students must regularly check Google Classroom in order to download and read course materials for each week. The instructor reserves the right to change any reading listed below depending on students' feedback on the degree of difficulty of assigned readings, as well as students' expressed interests throughout the semester.

Attendance and participation: 30%

You are to arrive on time and prepared, having read for the session and made notes for discussion and or questions for clarification. Your preparation, attendance, and participation in class are crucial both to the success of the group in creating a rich dialogic space as well as to your own success. Taken collectively the three above components total 30% of the final grade. Class participation also includes two specific tasks: (1) a 10 minute presentation of your own research proposal (see pages 3-5), (2) oral feedback and critical responses to the other student's research proposal, and (3) the preparation of a poster of your proposal during Week 13 (see Course schedule). The requirements and evaluation criteria for each of the above will be discussed at the beginning of the semester.

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation. Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences, whether excused or unexcused. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FALL 2021: Some students may need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructors should make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

Practical/Writing Assignments

There are 4 assignments:

- **Methods assignment 1: 10%**

Write field notes (ca. 500 words) based on the participant observation of a public space which will take place during our excursion on September 15. The deadline for submission is **September 20 at midnight.**

- **Methods assignment 2: 20 %**

Prepare an interview schedule of questions and conduct an interview (ca. 30 minutes). Write an interview report including: 1) the purpose and aim of the research 2) the schedule of questions, 3) the transcript of a part of the interview (10 min.) and 4) a brief account on the interview situation and the researcher's role (500 words). The deadline for submission is **October 15 at midnight**. This assignment will be discussed more in detail during the course.

- **Short presentation: 10%**

Prepare a 5-10 minute presentation at the opening of class on the assigned reading. A 500 word summary alongside discussion questions must also be submitted to the class one full day (Monday 15:45) before the schedule presentation. Please view the summary and discussion questions as a writing/thinking exercise and not as a camera-ready, finished product. In other words, use them to respond with your own questions, criticisms and to engage the new ideas which they might suggest. The presentations will be scheduled during the first class.

- **Research proposal: 30 %**

Develop a research proposal on a topic of your interest involving social life (2000 words), including: 1) a brief introduction to the topic and the research question, 2) your central research question/s, 3) method/methodology, 4) research timetable, 5)ethics, 6) literature review, 7)references and **optionally** 8) appendix. The assignment will be discussed more in detail during the course. The deadline for submission is **December 20th at midnight**.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Students who fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Assessment Specification: Research Proposal

Research Proposal due December 20th at midnight (30% of module mark)

Word Length 2,000 words (+/- 200 words) *the word count is exclusive of your bibliography*****

The dissertation proposal is a stand-alone piece of coursework. ***It is not of necessity the topic you will do for your dissertation.*** You may choose a different topic for your final year project. After receiving feedback on your proposal, you might also continue it forward as your dissertation. The choice is yours to make. Be sure to think hard about what you want to do as it will be the culmination of your degree. It's an exciting opportunity so take time to explore your idea/s on your own, with your peers and with the faculty.

Contents of your Research Proposal:

1. Proposed research question

Make sure you are posing an analytical, not a descriptive, question – 'why' and 'how', for example, are more analytical than 'what'. You should also have a title – You can be creative but do consider using a semi colon to indicate what your project does in a social scientific sense.

For example: Factories for Learning: Mapping new forms of inequality in a London Secondary Academy

2. Aim and Objectives

State your aims for the study: What do you intend to investigate? What specific thing are you exploring? (2 aims are sufficient)

List your objectives as bullet points (ie ‘To undertake a survey of full-time undergraduate students, to describe the patterns of unemployment amongst students at Bard College, etc.’) Your objectives should be tied into your aims, they should explain how you will reach your aims. You should have between 3 – 5 objectives

Make sure they are very concise and very clear (see p. 135 of Researching Society and Culture, 2004 ed.)

3. Method/ Methodology

How will your research be carried out? (sampling, recruitment of respondents, establishing access to the field etc.) Explain in this section how you will meet your aims and objectives. What sources will you consult, how and where will you do this? Will you do field work? What methods and why those methods? Reference relevant literature to strengthen your arguments (similar studies; and the ‘cookbooks’)

To achieve a higher mark make sure to engage with the philosophy behind your methods. Give a full account of the rationale informing your research decisions. For example, if you’re going to use grounded theory, why? Or if you are going to use a reflexive approach which examines how your own social identity might impact the research, why? If you intend to use mixed methods, how will you manage to ‘mix’ them?

4. Research timetable

Noting that the dissertation will need to be submitted next year, provide a timetable outlining when you will complete the various stages of your dissertation: e.g. the literature search, any fieldwork, each chapter, final draft, corrections, presentation, etc. This may be presented as a series of bullet points, or why not use a Gantt chart?

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
<i>Start</i>														
<i>Introduction</i>														
<i>Literature review</i>														
<i>Methodology</i>														
<i>Findings</i>														
<i>Discussion</i>														
<i>Evaluation</i>														
<i>Conclusion & Recommendations</i>														
<i>Submit dissertation</i>														

5. Ethics

You need to be able to explain how:

- you are ensuring quality and integrity of your research;
- you will seek informed consent;
- you will respect the confidentiality and anonymity of your research respondents
- you will ensure that your participants will participate in your study voluntarily
- you will avoid harm to your participants; and
- you can show that your research is independent and impartial.

Referencing studies that have encountered and negotiated similar ethical issues can help to create a higher mark

6. Literature Review

- Briefly review the relevant literature (ideally for methods and content)
- What has already been done?
- Describe the major research in the field (what does it contribute – ie its theory or analytical concepts? What also are its oversights?)
- How does it relate to your work?
- After describing the research show how your project will add to current knowledge

You might consider organising the literature according to themes that you've identified.

7. References

A list of references which is not part of your allotted word count. Every reference used in the report should appear in full in the reference list. Every reference in the reference list should appear in the report.

8. (OPTIONAL) Appendix (the appendix does not count towards your word count)

- May be useful to give your reader a fuller sense of how much thought and work you have put into your research project
- If you have field-notes, selections from your research diary, photos of the field site etc. these could also demonstrate the amount of preliminary research you have conducted
- This is also a useful way to increase the content and depth of your proposal without increasing your word count

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. If the acceptance of a late essay is agreed, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

Grade Breakdown

1. Class participation: 30%

2. Field notes: 10% // September 20th
3. Interview: 20% // October 15th
4. Presentation: 10% // tbc
5. Research Project: 30% // December 20th

Grading Criteria for the Final Research Proposal (a more detailed rubric will be shared during the course)

A = Extraordinary. The research proposal demonstrates that you have acquired full understanding of the logics underlying the development of a social scientific research project. All sections of the proposal are consistent and extensively fulfill the requirements: the research question is original, socially relevant and topical; the methods are explained and the methodology logically accounted for, the research timetable outlines a realistic and thought through planning, the proposal is alive to ethical considerations and where possible devises strategies for the minimization of issues, the literature review illustrates the main arguments developed by research; the references are consistent and correct. The writing is clear and of a high standard.

B = Good to Very good. The proposal demonstrates a good understanding of the logics underlying the development of research projects. However, one or two sections of the research proposal are less developed and present minor inconsistencies.

C = Acceptable. The proposal fulfills the minimum required by the assignment. It presents serious inconsistencies regarding numerous issues, e.g. the research design might not fit the research questions. At least two sections are sufficiently developed and show basic understanding of the object of the course.

D = Major deficiencies. The research question is neither original nor socially relevant, the structure of the research project is not balanced and lacks consistency between the sections. At least one section is sufficiently developed and meets the requirements. Writing is not clear.

F = Unacceptable. All sections of the proposal fail to follow the basic points of the assignment and/or fail to adhere to the academic standards as set out in the students' handbook.

Grading Criteria for Oral Presentations:

RESPONSE TO ASSIGNMENT:	ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:	ORGANIZATION:	SPEAKING SKILLS:	STYLE/FORM AND FORMAT:	CONCLUSIONS:
Oral presentations are expected to completely address the topic set forth in the text, offering a succinct and accurate summary of it.	Oral presentations are expected to provide an appropriate level of analysis, discussion and evaluation of the text/s.	Oral presentations are expected to be well-organized in overall structure, beginning with a clear statement of the problem and ending with a clear conclusion.	Presenters are expected to use an effective speaking style which exhibits enthusiasm, generates interest in the audience, and communicates the intended information.	Presentations are expected to be stylistically effective – that is, to consist of visual aids with well-chosen words and graphics which complement the speaker, and are consistent with the time limit of the presentation.	Presentations are expected to draw appropriate conclusions and recommendations based on its content.

Schedule

Module Structure

Week	Topic **Note: There are no class meetings during Fall Break – Oct 11^h – 15th**
1	Course Introduction & Overview
2	Why do 'we' do research?
3	The Craft of Knowledge: Using a Field Notebook
4	The Philosophy of Social Science – Natural and Social Models
5	Interviews
6	Formulating questions and the Art of listening
7	Social Science and Everyday Life: Explaining the World through a Sociological Imagination
8	How do Sociologists 'Tell Society' and Why This Matters? Philosophies and Data
9	How to Formulate a Sociological Problem: Writing a Research Question
10	How Do You Find the 'Right' Literature and Write Sociologically? (Library)
11	Ethical Dilemmas
12	What is Ethnography?
13	Where Do Ideas Come From? Grounded Theory
14	Digital Methods

15	Completion Week
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Lecture 1: Introduction & Overview

In this session I will explain how the module works, how to make the most of it and what is different about studying social research methods. We will discuss the thinking behind the module, and demonstrate, with examples, how researchers working from different methodological ideas and views can set about studying a topic, such as understanding a street market or why so many people are interested with the lives of celebrities. We will also run through the different methods of social research that you will be introduced to throughout the module.

Objectives:

1. To understand the rationale for the module and the consequences of different methodologies for the type of sociological knowledge produced.
2. To understand general principles that inform how research is designed.
3. To get you reading original empirical sociological research at the very outset of your studies.

Key Reading

Kelly, M. 'Research Design and Proposals' in Seale, C. (Ed.) (2004) *Researching Society and Culture*. London: Sage. Chapter 11.

Workshop Exercise

We are going to begin by diving right in and reading two short pieces of contemporary sociological research. Both are available online from the journal *Sociological Research Online*

1. Lyon, D. and Back, L. (2012) 'Fishmongers in A Global Economy: Craft and Social Relations on A London Market', *Sociological Research Online*, 17(2). Available at: <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/17/2/23.html>.
2. Beer, D. and Penfold-Mounce, R. (2009) 'Celebrity Gossip and the New Melodramatic Imagination', *Sociological Research Online*, 14(2). Available at: <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/14/2/2.html>.

We will consider these questions:

1. What are Lyon and Back researching? How are they researching it?
2. They use multisensory methods (sight and sound) how does this impact their research? What was your experience of reading an article with sound recordings and photos? What does the inclusion of such contribute?
3. What sociological concepts and ideas does their work connect to? How do they connect the local to the global?
4. How do Beer and Penfold-Mounce 'track' Miley Cyrus?
5. How is celebrity gossip sociologically significant for these authors? What makes something such as gossip which is seemingly unimportant, meaningful?
6. What does it tell us about how society works?
7. What role do 'consumers' play in celebrity gossip? How is their role and the internet significant?

Lecture 2: Why do we do research?

Social researchers explore almost all areas of human behavior to gain a greater understanding of individuals and societies — to describe and explain how and why things are the way they are. Anything from a question about a new trend to an age-old behavior can inspire new research. This lecture will explore why ‘we’ do research, what it means to do it and what it might contribute, what Mills calls the Promise of Sociology.

Key Readings:

Salsa Dancing, Chapter 1: Salsa Dancing? In the Social Sciences? & Appendix 1 What to Do If You Don't Have a Case

Mills, C. Wright. Chapter 1, “The Promise” in *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford [England] New York: Oxford University Press, 2000 [1959].

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. “Can Anthropology Save the World?” *Berkeley News*, May 24, 2016.

Workshop Exercise:

Write about what question concerning the social world you would like to investigate if you were absolutely guaranteed you would not fail. Be as ambitious and wide-ranging in your thinking as you want. Spelling and grammar do not count, and you should feel free to cross things out and rewrite as you go along. Save this document, because it has important clues in it, clues that you will want to come back to all through the book and, more important, throughout your research project (maybe even your entire research career). I like to keep a research journal (any old three ring binder will do), and I'd like to suggest that you do the same: this should be your first entry. (excerpted from *Salsa Dancing*)

Lecture 3: The Craft of Knowledge - using a field notebook

Many sociologists find the idea of ‘craft’ a good way to describe the process of doing research. C Wright Mills in his classic book *The Sociological Imagination* (1959) included an appendices on ‘On intellectual craftsmanship.’ This raises some important questions about the gendered dimensions of the idea of craft itself. The notion of craft itself has a complex and interesting relationship to the gendering of work and expertise. Whatever metaphor is best suited to describe what we do as researchers there is one thing that is clear - we are always working with words and we need to find a way to collect them. Research involves keeping a record of our ideas, noting what we are reading and also recording what we are noticing in the social world. This session focuses on how we go about the task working out our ideas on paper. We will introduce how to use a sociological fieldnote book and why we think this is a useful way to approach the craft of knowledge. Notebooks - in a digital age - do not have to be paper but they all need to provide a surface for the imprint and record of our ideas.

Objectives of the lecture:

1. Show you how to use a field notebook
2. Make distinctions and categories for your entries
3. Help you get started on your module assessments.

Key Reading

Back, L. (2013) *Take Your Reader There: Some Notes on Writing Qualitative Research*. Available at: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/writingacrossboundaries/writingonwriting/lesback/>.

This site has lots of wonderful pieces from sociologists and anthropologists reflecting on writing. The pieces are short and very readable. These two might also be of interest:

Alan MacFarlane: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/writingacrossboundaries/writingonwriting/alanmacfarlane/>
and Liz Stanley <https://www.dur.ac.uk/writingacrossboundaries/writingonwriting/lizstanley/>

Further Reading

Reinharz, S. (1979) *On Becoming A Social Scientist*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers. (Chapter 1)
Taussig, M. T. (2011) *I Swear I Saw This: Drawings in Fieldwork Notebooks, Namely My Own*. London: The University of Chicago Press.

Smart, C. (2013) 'Touching Lives: Writing The Sociological and The Personal', in *Writing Otherwise: Experiments in Cultural Criticism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 61–74.

Silverman, D. (2013) *Doing Qualitative Research*. London: Sage. (Chapter 3).

Motamedi-Fraser, M. (2012) 'Once Upon A Problem', in Back, L. and Puwar, N. (Eds) *Live Methods*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Reinharz, S. (2012) *Improving Your Writing If You Weren't Taught The Basic in High School*. *Writing Across Boundaries*. Available at:

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/writingacrossboundaries/writingonwriting/shulamitreinharz/>.

Lury, C. and Wakeford, N. (2012) *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social*. London: Routledge. pp. 1-24.

Workshop Exercise

For the workshop we want you to create a field notebook. This can be a physical notebook like the ones mentioned in the lecture, or it can be a digital one on your tablet or phablet. Regardless of what form you choose, we want you to make three short fieldnote entries before the workshop.

1. Make a note of the favourite pieces of sociological research you have read so far. What was it that you liked - its theoretical approach or the methods it used?
2. Make a note of the sociological methods that you would most like to experiment with. What is it about those methods that you find appealing and why would you want to use them yourself?
3. Make a note on what your current best guess is on the project you would like to design for the second module assessment which will feed into your third year dissertation

Lecture 4: The Philosophy of Social Science - Natural and Social Models of Science

This lecture examines the methodological claims of social science in relation to more general problems of scientific method. Debates concerning the 'scientific' status of social research have tended to question whether the models, methods and language of the natural sciences are appropriate for forms of social enquiry. An important strand of these debates, however, has examined these scientific models, methods and language in their own terms. The lecture takes up the philosophies of natural science offered by Popper, Kuhn and Feyerabend, and Runciman's methodological analysis of social theory, considering their implications for the practice of social science.

Key Readings:

Chalmers, A. (1982) *What is this thing called Science?* (2nd ed.) Milton Keynes: Open University Press. (Chapter 1).

Williams, M., and May, T. (1996) *Introduction to the Philosophy of Social Research*. London: UCL Press. (Chapter 2)

Popper, K. (1963) 'Science: conjectures and refutations' in *Conjectures & Refutations*. London:

Routledge and Kegan Paul. This is Popper's classic essay on the topic – difficult but rewarding. For the purpose of the class discussion, concentrate on sections 1-2. You may find the whole piece easier to manage following the lecture.

Further Reading:

Salsa Dancing, Chapter 3: An Ode to Canonical Social Science & Salsa Dancing
Chapter 4: What is This a Case Of?

Abu-Lughod, Lila. "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others." *American Anthropologist* 104, no. 3 (2002): 783–90. Little, Daniel. 2017. "Objectivity in the Social Sciences." Accessed August 31.

<http://understandingsociety.blogspot.com/2008/12/objectivity-in-social-sciences.html>.

Eidlin, Fred. 2011. "The Method of Problems versus the Method of Topics." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44 (4): 758–61. doi:10.2307/41319964.

Chalmers, A. (1982) *What is this thing called Science?* (2nd ed.) Milton Keynes: Open University Press. esp Chapters 3, 4, 6 (Popper); 8 (Kuhn); 10 (Feyerabend).

Feyerabend, P. (1978) *Against Method: outline of an anarchistic theory of knowledge*. London: Verso. Introduction and Chapter 18.

Feyerabend, P. (1978) *Science in a Free Society*. London: Verso. Part 2.

Hughes, J. (1990) *The Philosophy of Social Research*. (2nd edition) London: Longman. Chapters 2 & 4.

Kuhn, T. (1970) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (2nd edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lazar, D. (1998) 'Selected issues in the philosophy of social science', in C. Seale (ed) *Researching Society and Culture*. London: Sage. pp. 8-14.

Popper, K. (1979) *Objective Knowledge*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Appendix: 'The Bucket and the Searchlight'.

Workshop Exercise

We will use this workshop to have a lively debate tackling three enduring questions in the philosophy of social science:

1. Is sociology a science?
2. Should sociologists aim to be 'scientific'?
3. What arguments are made for and against objectivity in social science?

Lecture 5: Interviews

Interviewing is one of the staple methods of qualitative research. This lecture will examine qualitative interviewing in the different forms that it takes and explore the ways that it is used in social research. Beyond this, the lecture will lay out the basics of how to design and conduct qualitative interviews, focusing not only on the content of these, but also recognizing the importance of practical issues such as access, interview settings and sampling. It will also consider further issues within qualitative interviewing, for example ethics and the relationship between the interviewer and respondents.

Objective: To understand what qualitative interviews are and what they are good for.

Key Readings

Byrne, B. (2012) 'Chapter 12: Qualitative Interviewing', in Seale, C. (eds) *Researching Society and Culture*. London: SAGE (pp. 206-226).

Rubin, H. and Rubin, I. (2004)(2nd Edt.) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* California: Sage (Chapter 8: Designing main questions and probes).

You should also read at least one of the following articles, and reflect on the challenges these particular interview settings, researcher subjectivity, and the relationship between the researcher and the interviewee(s) place on the interview.

Figenschou, T. (2010) 'Young, female, Western researcher vs. senior, male, Al Jazeera officials: Critical reflections on accessing and interviewing media elites in authoritarian societies.' *Media, Culture & Society* 32(6), pp. 961–978.

Gailey, J. and Prohaska, A. (2011) 'Power and gender negotiations during interviews with men about sex and sexually degrading practices', *Qualitative Research* 11(4), pp. 365-380.

Lundgren, A. (2013) 'Doing age: methodological reflections on interviewing', *Qualitative Research* 13(6), pp. 668-684.

Mellor, J., Ingram, N., Abrahams, J. and Beedell, P. (2014) 'Class matters in the interview setting? Positionality, situatedness and class' *British Educational Research Journal*, 40(1), pp. 135-149.

Further Reading

Holstein, J. and Gubrium, J. (2011) 'The active interview', in Silverman, D. (ed.) *Qualitative research: issues of theory, method and practice*. London: SAGE, pp.140-161.

Kvale, S., and Brinkmann, S., (2008) *InterViews : Learning The Craft Of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. London: SAGE.

Marvasti, A., Holstein, J. and Gubrium, J. (2012) *The handbook of interview research*. London: SAGE.

Miller, J. and Glassner, B. (2011) 'The 'inside' and the 'outside': finding realities in interviews', in Silverman, D. (ed.) *Qualitative research: issues of theory, method and practice*. London: SAGE, pp. 125-139.

Rubin, H. and Rubin, I. (2004) (2nd Edt.) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, California: Sage. Warren, C. et al. (2003) 'After the interview', *Qualitative Sociology* 26(1): 93-110.

Workshop Exercise

The workshop will be focused on practicing and experiencing the qualitative interview. Students will work in groups of three. The aim of the exercise is to examine the interview process. The exercise is organized as follows:

1. Each group should draw up a list of 4-5 questions for a semi-structured interview with other students. These should be on the topic of students' experiences of studying, focusing on a particular aspect of that experience (e.g. reasons for coming to university; financial issues and problems; reactions to lectures or seminars).
2. Each person in the group will take on a role (a) interviewer, (b) respondent, and (c) observer
3. The interviewer should conduct the interview with the respondent. The observer should write down as much as they can of what the respondent says.
4. Change roles and repeat the process until all members of the group have had an opportunity to be interviewer, respondent and observer.
5. Compare notes and experiences of the interview process.

You can consider the following topics and questions to guide your discussion: (a) Consider the language used in the questions (b) What do the interview questions take for granted? (c) Were there times when the respondent offered more information than expected and how did you manage this?

(d) How far is the interviewer sharing understandings with the respondent? (e) What impact do you think the relationship between the interviewer and the respondent has on the interview process? (f) What about the setting? What kind of impact does that have on the interview process? (g) How could the interview be improved?

Lecture 6: So how do you plan for an interview? Formulating questions and the Art of listening At its most fundamental social research involves listening. However, the kind of listening that we develop as sociologists is far from an automatic faculty to be taken for granted. Rather, we have to train our attention and tune our senses differently. Also, sociology offers us a capacity to enhance our imagination as you will have already seen in the module and pay attention to the world differently. In this session we will explore how to develop listening skills through some fundamental steps in training a sociological attentiveness. This will lead on to how to start to think about formulating questions and preparing to ask them. It will be argued that these skills are not just methodological tools but also offers resources for living and relating to others differently.

Objectives:

1. introduce the idea of sociology as a listener's art
2. Explore how to turn our interests into sociological questions
3. Think about the relationship between our sociological imagination and what we are listening for

Key Reading

Back, L. (2014) Preface To The Art of Listening The Sociological Imagination. Available at: <http://sociologicalimagination.org/archives/15178>. This new preface was written for a Japanese translation but in it Back reflects on the 'listening lessons' contained in his book originally published in 2007.

Watching This Reading from 'The Art of Listening'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6qnuz4hf6m>.

Further Readings

Back, L. (2012) 'Tape Recorder', in Lury, C. and Wakeford, N. (Eds) *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social*. London: Routledge.

Doucet, A. (2008) "'From Her Side of the Gossamer Wall(s)": Reflexivity and Relational Knowing', *Qualitative Sociology*, 31(1), pp. 73–87. doi: 10.1007/S11133-007-9090-9.

Doucet, A. and Mauthner, N. S. (2008) 'What Can Be Known and How? Narrated Subjects and the Listening Guide', *Qualitative Research*, 8(3), pp. 399–409. doi: 10.1177/1468794106093636.

Gunaratnam, Y. (2009) 'Narrative interviews and Research', in *Narrative and Stories in Health Care: Illness, Dying, and Bereavement*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 47–62.

Gunaratnam, Y. (2012) 'Learning to Be Affected: Social Suffering and Total Pain at Life's Borders', in Back, L. and Puwar, N. (Eds) *Live Methods*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell. pp. 108-123.

Rapley, T. (2004) 'Analysing Conversation', in Seale, C. (Ed.) *Researching Society and Culture*. London: Sage.

Tonkiss, F. (2003) 'Aural Postcards', in Bull, M. and Back, L. (Eds) *The Auditory Culture Reader*. Oxford: Berg.

Welty, E. (1984) *One Writer's Beginnings*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. Chapter 1 and Chapter 2

Workshop Exercise

The workshop will take the form of a listening experiment. In preparation read the 2014 Preface for *The Art of Listening* and watch the YouTube reading. In the workshop divide into groups of three. Go out onto the campus and find a spot to do the listening experiment. You can choose anywhere on the campus or in the immediate surroundings. Once you have chosen a spot arrange yourself in a triangle, standing back to back.

The idea is to create a human multi-directional microphone. Take out your notebooks. Now listen carefully to your environment for 5 minutes - note everything you can hear. Only use your eyes to write down what you are hearing in your notebook. Once you have finished listening compare notes.

Did you note the same things? What were the dominant sounds? What do they suggest in terms of what they tell us about society? Are there any sociological issues that you could take from the listening experience? Did you notice anything that seemed like a larger problem? Then return to your workshop group. Nominate one member of each group to report back to the workshop as a whole in terms of: a) what you heard, b) any interesting variations or discrepancies in the group and c) what sociological issues came out of the experiment that invited further thought.

Lecture 7: Social Science and Everyday Life: Explaining the World through a Sociological Imagination

A key feature of the sociological imagination as a 'quality of mind' is that of making the familiar strange and of allowing us to grasp how individual lives (biography) fit into the bigger context of history. For Mills, this included moving beyond sociological bean counting ('administrative' scholarship), to imagining the social realities of others; making 'public issues' out of seemingly 'private troubles' ('critical' scholarship). These distinctions between administrative and critical scholarship were first made by Paul Lazarsfeld in 1941. Using our sociological imagination, as Mills saw it, means having a dual focus - we need to give critical attention to structural and historical issues, while at the same time investigating how these bigger issues affect human experiences and behaviour. In thinking about the nature, scope and aims of the discipline of sociology that Mills set out in 'The Sociological Imagination' we will look at examples of the sociological imagination at work in research projects and what these movements between the private and the public can look like. We will also think about the relationships between administrative and critical sociology and Mills' critique of turgid sociological writing. In many ways this session is about what sort of sociologist you would like to be.

Objectives:

1. To introduce key ideas about the 'sociological imagination'.
2. To use examples to show the sociological imagination at work in research studies

Key Reading

Mills, C. W. (1970/1959) *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 1.

Amadasun, D. O. (2013) "'Black People Don't Go to Galleries" – The Reproduction of Taste and Cultural Value'. *Media Diversified*. Available at:

<http://mediadiversified.org/2013/10/21/blackpeople-dont-go-to-galleries-the-reproduction-of-taste-and-cultural-value>. Web Page, Last Accessed July 2015

Key Watching Conley, D. (2012) A Successful Sociologist Makes the Familiar Strange. Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obt95kwnv04>.

Further Reading

- Bhambra, G. (2015) Reading across the 'Colour Line': Texts, Traditions, and Academic Solidarity, the Disorder of Things. Available at: <http://thedisorderofthings.com/2015/02/10/reading-acrossthe-colour-line-texts-traditions-and-academic-solidarity/#more-9714>. Web Page, Last Accessed July 2015.
- Becker, H. (1994) 'Professional Sociology: The Case of C. Wright Mills' in Rist, R. C. (Ed.) The Democratic Imagination: Dialogues on the Work of Irving Louis Horowitz. New Brunswick, N.J., U.S.A.: Transaction Publishers. pp. 175-187.
- Beer, D. and Burrows, R. (2010) 'The Sociological Imagination as Popular Culture', in Burnett et al. (Eds) New Social Connections: Sociology's Subjects and Objects. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Burawoy, M. (2005) 'For Public Sociology', The British Journal of Sociology, 56(2), pp. 259–294. doi: 10.1111/J.1468-4446.2005.00059.X.
- Denzin, N. K. (1989) 'Re-Reading the Sociological Imagination', The American Sociologist, 20(3), pp. 278–282. doi: 10.1007/BF02697833.
- Mills, C. W. (1963) 'IBM plus Reality plus Humanism = Sociology' in Power, Politics and People: The Collected Essays of C. Wright Mills. London: Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1954).
- Mills, K. and Mills, P. (Eds.) (2001) Letters and Autobiographical Writings. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Motamedi-Fraser, M. (2009) 'Experiencing Sociology', European Journal of Social Theory, 12(1), pp. 63–81. doi: 10.1177/1368431008099644.
- Roy, A. (2002) Shall We Leave It to the Experts? Outlook. Available at: <http://www.outlookindia.com/article/shall-we-leave-it-to-the-experts/214223>. Web Page, Last Accessed July 2015
- Scott, J. (2005) 'Who Will Speak, and Who Will Listen? Comments on Burawoy and Public Sociology', The British Journal of Sociology, 56(3), pp. 405–409. doi: 10.1111/J.1468-4446.2005.00073.X.
- Examples of Goldsmiths Research Projects and the Sociological Imagination
- Back, L and Lury, C. (2013) doing Real Time Research <http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/3157> Collaborative Research Project between Goldsmiths and Richard House Children's Hospice (2013), Every Minute of Every Day <http://everyminuteofeveryday.org.uk>
- Jones, H., Bhattacharyya, G., Forkert, K., Davies, W., Dhaliwal, S., Gunaratnam, Y., Jackson, E. and Saltus, R. (2014) Swamped By Anti-Immigration Communications? Discover society <http://www.discoversociety.org/2014/05/06/swamped-by-anti-immigrant-communications>

Workshop Exercise

We will re-read the Lyon and Back article, this time reading it for signs of the sociological imagination in the design of the study, the methods used and the writing. Questions:

1. Identify up to 3 relationships between the public and 'private' troubles in the Back and Lyon study
2. Focusing on 1 of these relationships, link it to a quote from Mill's "The Sociological Imagination' to back-up your belief that this aspect of the study is an example of the sociological imagination
3. Drawing on ideas from 2 above, draft a short representation about the social processes and/or relationships involved (and without using direct references to the Lyon and Back study e.g. do not use the words market, fish etc.). Choose a style of representation that you think best suits the sociological issues and make a note of your reasons

Lecture 8: How do Sociologists 'tell society' and why this matters? Philosophies and Data

There are many methods that sociologists can use to present research findings as 'stories' about a research problem. These stories can include statistical tables and charts, mathematical models, interview extracts, photographs, maps, built models, films, exhibits and theatre. In the book 'Telling about Society' Howard Becker has argued that 'there is no best way to tell a story' (2007, p.285) and that our choices as sociologists are not only about personal preferences but are also informed by the disciplinary standards through which our work will be judged. For example, how might statistics be valued as research findings, in comparison to a play or an interactive exhibit? Why are there differences? In this session we will consider how philosophical ideas about how the world works are very much a part of the methods that we use and also how we tell sociological stories.

Objectives

1. To understand different approaches to re/presenting sociological ideas and research.
2. To introduce the relationships between philosophy and methods

Key Reading

Becker, H. S. (2007) *Telling About Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1.

Further Reading

Dean, J. (2015) 'Drawing What Homelessness Looks Like: Using Creative Visual Methods as A tool of Critical Pedagogy', *Sociological Research Online*, 20(1). Available at:

<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/20/1/2.html>. Web Page, Last Accessed July 2015.

Duneier, M. and Back, L. (2006) 'Voices From The Sidewalk: Ethnography and Writing Race', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 29(3), pp. 543–565. doi: 10.1080/01419870600598113.

Duneier, M. and Carter, O. (2001) *Sidewalk*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Gunaratnam, Y. and Back, L. (2014) 'Every Minute of Every Day': Mobilities, Multiculture and Time', in *Digital Diversities: Social Media and Intercultural Experience*. Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 91–119.

Hammersley, M. (1993) *Social Research: Philosophy, Politics and Practice*. London: Sage.

Hollway, W. and Jefferson, T. (2000) *Doing Qualitative Research Differently: Free Association, Narrative and The Interview Method*. London: Sage. Chapter 2.

Lazar, D. (1998) 'Selected Issues in the Philosophy of Social Science', in Seale, C. (Ed.) *Researching Society and Culture*. London: SAGE. (Chapter 2 in the FIRST edition of the book, not the 2004 edition!)

Lury, C. and Wakeford, N. (2012) *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social*. London: Routledge. pp. 1-24.

May, T. (2011) *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*. Maidenhead: McGraw Hill/Open University Press.

Penfold-Mounce, R., Beer, D. and Burrows, R. (2011) 'The Wire as Social Science-Fiction?' *Sociology*, 45(1), pp. 152–167. doi: 10.1177/0038038510387199.

Plummer, K. (1995) *Telling Sexual Stories: Power, Change, and Social Worlds*. London: Routledge.

Portelli, A. (1981) 'The Peculiarities of Oral History', *History Workshop Journal*, 12(1), pp. 96–107. doi: 10.1093/hwj/12.1.96.

Sinha, S. (2012) *Khadija Is 18*. London: Oberon.

Workshop Exercise

Before the workshop re-read the Lyon and Back article (key reading) about a study conducted in South East London in Deptford market. During the first half of the seminar we will take a walk around the campus and record our own sensory impressions in our notebooks. I want to stress that this

should **not just be words**. These could include **notes, drawing, photographs of objects or buildings, recordings of the sounds and sights of the market or perhaps a Vine film** (Dean's article provides some interesting reflections and examples of drawing in research).

In the second hour we will discuss our data. I want us to consider:

1. How are your representations similar or different from Lyon and Back's from your course mates?
2. Why did you choose to represent your observations in the way that you did?
3. What might you do differently?
4. What did the photographs and sound recordings add to your understanding of the social space?
5. What connections can you make from this local case study to wider sociological issues (make a note of some examples)?

Lecture 9: How to formulate a sociological problem

Doing social research is both demanding and exciting; it is where the worlds of theory, ethics and practice collide and come alive, often with surprising and unpredictable effects. In this lecture we will cover the very beginnings of doing sociological research: identifying a sociological problem. We will discuss the ways in which we can turn the things that we care about or find interesting into sociological research. How might we turn issues into research questions? Using examples from research projects, the lecture will look at how to develop sociological questions and link these to sociological research methods and literature.

Objective:

1. To understand how to identify sociological problems and how to turn these problems into research questions

Key Reading

Becker, H. S. (1998) *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You're doing It*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press. pp. 1-9.

Goffman, A. (2015) *On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. pp. vii-xiv (Prologue and Preface).

Further Reading

Amadasun, D. O. (2013) "'Black People Don't Go to Galleries' – The Reproduction of Taste and Cultural Value'. *Media Diversified*. Available at:

<http://mediadiversified.org/2013/10/21/blackpeople-dont-go-to-galleries-the-reproduction-of-taste-and-cultural-value>. Web Page, Last Accessed July 2015

Back, L. and Puwar, N. (2012) 'A Manifesto for Live Methods: Provocations and Capacities', *The Sociological Review*, 60, pp. 6–17. doi: 10.1111/J.1467-954X.2012.02114.X.

Creswell, J. W. (2014) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Los Angeles, Calif: SAGE.

Kornblum, W. (2011) *Sociology in a Changing World*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. Chapter 2.

Motamedi-Fraser, M. (2009) 'Experiencing Sociology', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 12(1), pp. 63–81. doi: 10.1177/1368431008099644.

Motamedi-Fraser, M. (2012) 'Once Upon A Problem', *The Sociological Review*, 60, pp. 84–107. doi: 10.1111/J.1467-954X.2012.02118.X.

Ramazanoglu, C. and Holland, J. (2002) 'Choices and Decisions – doing a Feminist Research Project' in *Feminist Methodology: Challenges and Choices*. London: Sage. Chapter 8.

Robson, C. (2002) *Real World Research: A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner Researchers*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers. Chapter 3 and Chapter 4.

Workshop Exercise

Before the workshop, think of a topic that you would like to research. Brainstorm as many questions as you can think of about what really interests you about the topic. Write your ideas down, being as specific as possible.

In the session, we will form small groups and select one idea from your list and break the topic down into smaller and more specific areas so that you have a more focused set of research questions. If you need inspiration, think about the Lyon and Back (2012) study and how their interest in the 'big' questions of multiculturalism and globalization were explored through the very specific site of fish stalls in Deptford market; or think about how Alice Goffman has described 'stumbling upon' (p. xii) her project during her undergraduate degree.

In the session we will work in small groups to turn your idea into a researchable sociological problem, working through the following questions:

1. What interests or puzzles me?
2. What do I want to find out about these topics? (Your 'research questions')
3. How does my idea relate to sociological concepts and categories? Which ones?
4. If I researched this topic/s, how would I do it? (What methods would you use?)
5. Are these methods best suited to my research questions?
6. How realistic am I being, given my time and resources?
7. How might the findings of my research change the way sociologists think about my topic?
8. In what ways might my findings have relevance to the 'real world'?

Lecture 10: How do you find the 'right' literature and write sociologically?

In this lecture will look at some of the practical questions and methods involved in finding sociological literature using basic search techniques. Where do I begin? Why bother? What are the best ways of finding relevant material for my topic? We will also look at different schools of thought about sociological writing and representation, focusing on practical advice and techniques of methodological writing, including writing fieldnotes and essays.

Objectives:

1. To introduce methods of finding sociological literature.
2. To describe and discuss different ways of writing sociologically.

Key Reading

Kaufman, P. (2013) *Poetic Sociology*. Available at:

<http://www.everydaysociologyblog.com/2013/07/poetic-sociology.html>. Webpage, Last Accessed July 2015

Silverman, D *The 'Literature Review'*

Victor, L. (2008) 'Systematic Reviewing', *Social Research Update*, (54). Available at:

<http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/sru54.pdf>. Web Page, Last Accessed July 2015

Recommended Readings:

- Back, L. (2002) 'Dancing and Wrestling with Scholarship', *Sociological Research Online*, 7(4). Available at: <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/7/4/back.html>.
- Back, L. (2007) *The Art of Listening*. Oxford: Berg. 'Epilogue'.
- Becker, H. S. (1998) *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You're doing It*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 3.
- Clifford, J. and Marcus, G. E. (1986) *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Fevre, R. and Bancroft, A. (2010) *Dead White Men and Other Important People: Sociology's Big Ideas*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hart, C. (1998) *doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination*. London: Sage.
- Lather, P. and Smithies, C. (1997) *Troubling The Angels: Women Living with HIV/AIDS*. Boulder, Colo: Westview Press.
- Simpson, B. And Humphrey, R. (2008) 'Writing Across Boundaries: Explorations in Research, Writing and Rhetoric in Qualitative Research', *Qualitative Researcher*, (8). pp. 10-11.
- Smith, Z. (2011) *Changing My Mind: Occasional Essays*. London: Penguin Books. pp. 41-70.
- Stanley, L. 'It's A Craft and A Job and Requires Practice'. Available at: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/writingacrossboundaries/writingonwriting/lizstanley>.
- Tjora, A. H. (2006) 'Writing Small Discoveries: An Exploration of Fresh Observers' Observations', *Qualitative Research*, 6(4), pp. 429–451. doi: 10.1177/1468794106068012.
- Wolcott, H. F. (1990) *Writing Up Qualitative Research*. Los Angeles: Sage

Workshop Exercise

In preparation for the workshop, identify a research topic that you are interested in. Identify key words that can help you to do a literature search on your topic. Using your key words, locate and note up to 6 sociological resources directly related to your topic. Locate these resources in any way that you want to, but make comprehensive notes of what you did and why. Evaluate how successful you feel your method was. Write a short sociological poem using the literature that you have found (see key reading Kaufman for an example).

In place of normally scheduled seminars we will have a library research session hosted in the library. This session will train you on how to use academic search engines effectively and will introduce you to essential databases for creating an academically rigorous literature review. Attendance is monitored and is mandatory.

Lecture 11: Ethical Dilemmas

Research can bring up difficult issues. Researchers inevitably experience ethical issues in the process of conducting research. Sometimes these issues are anticipated and planned for and may form part of decision making about a project before it commences. However, often ethical challenges and dilemmas are unexpected and emerge as research unfolds. Doing ethical research is not merely a matter of ticking boxes, following formulas and guidelines to the letter. Ethics is more than a matter of gaining 'informed consent' or guaranteeing anonymity. Research ethics are also a question of how to carry out research that does not cause harm or distress to others. You will need to develop your own 'ethical approach' to how you work as researcher. Focusing on qualitative research, we will examine a number of case studies to demonstrate the challenges facing the sociologist in the 'field'. We will examine some of the ethical tensions in social research in order to encourage you to think

about your role responsibilities and vulnerability when researching in the social world qualitatively.

Objective: To introduce students to the ethical dilemmas facing social researchers.

Key Reading O'Brien (2010) "'Inside Doorwork' : Gendering the Security Gaze', in Ryan-Flood, R. and Gill, R. (Eds) *Secrecy and Silence in the Research Process: Feminist Reflections*. London: Routledge.
Humphreys, L. (1975) *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter. Chapter 1 and Chapter 2.

Further Reading

Babbie, E. (2004) 'Laud Humphreys and Research Ethics', *The International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 24(3-5), pp. 12–19.

Horowitz, I. L. and Rainwater, L. (2007) 'Sociological Snoopers and Journalistic Moralizers: An Exchange', in Norman K. Denzin (Ed.) *The Values of Social Science*. Aldine Publishing Company, 1970, pp. 151–164.

Humphreys, L. (1975) *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Stanley, L. and Wise, S. (2010) 'The ESRC's 2010 Framework for Research Ethics: Fit for Research Purpose?' *Sociological Research Online*, 15(4). Available at:

<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/4/12.html>.

Thorsby, K. and Gamlin, G. (2010) 'Critiquing Thinness and Wanting to Be Thin', in Ryan-Flood, R. and Gill, R. (Eds) *Secrecy and Silence in The Research Process: Feminist Reflections*. London: Routledge.

Realities Toolkit 06: After the Ethical Approval Form: Ethical Considerations for Research Teams.

Available at: <http://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/morgancentre/methods-andresources/toolkits/toolkit-6>.

The British Sociological Association (2002) Statement of Ethical Practice. Available at:

<http://www.britisoc.co.uk/about/equality/statement-of-ethical-practice.aspx>.

Workshop Exercise

Considering O'Brien's chapter discussing her ethnographic 'undercover' study of nightclub bouncers. Discuss in small groups: what were ethical dilemmas facing the author? What were the pros and cons of her approach to researching bouncers? Can covert research ever be justified? What were the advantages of this covert study? What were the dilemmas for the researcher engaging in activity which was at odds with her own values?

Workshop Exercise II

Working in small groups (2-3 students per group), select an issue from the following list:

- the education of children aged 5-8 at school
- working and living arrangements among undocumented migrants
- community responses to the regeneration of the local high street
- responses to being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in adults aged 65 and over
- attitudes towards graffiti

Each group should draft a brief proposal that outlines a research question and methods for researching the issue chosen, discuss any ethical issues with the research, and the procedures that will be put in place to address these. The group should then fill in an ethics application form (supplied in workshop) for the proposed project. Once completed, these should be swapped with an adjacent group.

1. You should discuss the ethics application that you have just received within your group. You will then have time to feedback to the group and receive their feedback in return. The purpose of the exercise is to critically appraise the ethics application and provide feedback to the other group, reflecting specifically on how they have dealt with the ethical issues relating to the research within the application and what additional considerations they might have overlooked and how they might have addressed these.

Lecture 12: What is ethnography?

This lecture presents ethnographic research as a methodology, reflecting on the history and development of the ethnographic research tradition. It examines ethnography as a research process that engages both a fieldwork method and a way of writing. It outlines the principles and practices of ethnographic research, in particular the commitment of ethnographic research to understanding everyday lives from the viewpoint and experience of those involved within them, its inductive and iterative approach to understanding social worlds and the development of 'thick description' in the interpretation of these.

Objective: To understand the distinctive characteristics of the ethnographic research traditions

Key Reading

Duneier, M. et al (eds.) (2014) *The Urban Ethnography Reader*. New York: Oxford University Press. Introductory Essay, 'An Invitation to Urban Ethnography' pp. 1-9.
Walsh, D. (2012) 'Doing Ethnography' in Seale, C. (Ed) *Researching Society and Culture*. London: Sage.

You should also select an article from the *Journal of Undergraduate Ethnography* [<http://undergraduateethnography.org>] to review in preparation for the seminar task.

Further Reading

Campbell, E. and Lassiter, L. E. (2015) *Doing Ethnography Today: Theories, Methods, Exercises*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. Introduction: Conceptualizing Ethnography. Forsey, M. G. (2010) 'Ethnography As Participant Listening', *Ethnography*, 11(4), pp. 558–572. doi: 10.1177/1466138110372587.
Hammersley, M. And Atkinson, P. (2007) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge. Chapter 1: What Is Ethnography?
Jones, J. S. And Watt, S. (2010) *Ethnography In Social Science Practice*. London: Routledge. pp. 13- 27.
O'Reilly, K. (2012) *Ethnographic Methods*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge. Chapter 4: Participating and Observing. pp. 1-16.
van Maanen, J. (2011) *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.

Workshop Exercise

The workshop will be focussed on doing and discussing (in small groups) your experiences of (a) doing participant observation and (b) writing fieldnotes. What did you document and what did you not document? On what basis did you make these selections? How did you feel in the process of doing participant observation? What did you observe and how can you interpret this? Did you approach your observation with particular assumptions? To what extent did your knowledge influence your observation? To what extent did your subject position influence your observation? What would you do differently if you conducted the observation again? What other research methods might have been valuable to you within this research setting?

Lecture 13: Where do ideas come from? Grounded Theory

This lecture will explore the crucial difference between using data to test a theory, and discovering theory from data. Historically, the discipline of sociology sought to imitate the natural science's tendency to use research and data in order to test the limits of existing hypotheses. The result was a discipline given to applying a very limited selection of meta-narratives, often ill-fitted to specific situations. What is lost in the impulse to test existing theories, was the development of theories and ideas that emerge out of sociological data, and which speak directly to the specific textures of the social world. Grounded theory is an approach to social research that offers researchers formulae for developing theory out of, and specific to, a given empirical situation. More than a methodological approach, grounded theory asks serious questions about the way in which both social scientific, and more generally scientific, questions are asked and answered are offered. Lecture Aims -To introduce the philosophical foundations of grounded theory -To examine the implications of a grounded approach for research design

Objective: To explore the social and political ramifications of a grounded approach

Key Reading

Glaser, Barney G., and Anselm L. Strauss (2009) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Transaction Publishers. 1-19

Recommended Reading

Gynnild, Astrid (2007) *Creative Cycling of News Professionals*. *The Grounded Theory Review: An International Journal*: 67.

Glaser, Barney G. (2008) *Conceptualization: On Theory and Theorizing Using Grounded Theory*. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 1(2): 23–38.

Merton, Robert King (1968) *Social Theory and Social Structure*. Simon and Schuster. 139-175

Workshop exercise

Get into pairs and to take 1 of the 3 transcripts. Each group will perform some 'open coding' on one or two pages of the transcript. At the first stage identify the key things that are being discussed in the transcript, summarising themes with brief words (income, taste, friends). After a pause and a brief group discussion, each group will then perform a second layer of coding, detailing how the codes from the open coding relate to each other (e.g. resentment, satisfaction, defines class by money). Finally, we will compare our codes with those of another pair who had a different transcript, comparing and contrasting, and to see if between them they can come up with any underlying pattern, or concepts that help to make sense of how people define and give meaning to social class. In this exercise we are aiming to consider the extent to which it might be possible to extract theory from data. What do you notice about the survey/interview structure? Is it trying to test an existing hypothesis? Do the methods deployed allow for the development of new concepts and ideas?

Lecture 14: Digital Methods

Digital sociology emerged as a response to a particular hype – in industry, news, media, government, and the university – about how 'new' digital data would transform ways of knowing society. But digital sociology also offers an alternative to narrow definitions of digital social research. Some define the new 'computational social science' as essentially a form of data analytics. By contrast, digital

sociologists are committed to investigating a far wider set of interactions between data, people, technologies – and much else besides – which overflow, exceed and do not “fit” inside the simple story about the new forms of data analysis taking the place of old social research methods, like surveys or fieldwork. This lecture will explore this ‘new’ landscape and the problems and opportunities it opens up (excerpted from Marres).

Key Readings:

Digital methods -why? Introduction, only through page xxii.

Cottom, Tressie McMillam. 2016. "Black Cyberfeminism: Ways Forward for Intersectionality and Digital Sociology"

Recuber, Timothy. 2016. "Digital Discourse Analysis: Finding Meaning in Small Online Spaces." In *Digital Sociologies*, edited by Jessie Daniels, Karen Gregory, and Tressie McMillan Cottom, Reprint edition. Bristol Chicago: Policy Press.

Further Reading:

Corey M., Jacqueline Joslyn, Katharine A. Rendle, Sarah B. Garrett, and Daniel Dohan. 2017. "The Promises of Computational Ethnography: Improving Transparency, Replicability, and Validity for Realist Approaches to Ethnographic Analysis." *Ethnography*, August.

Haber, Benjamin. 2016. "Queer Facebook? Digital Sociality and Queer Theory".

Williams, Apryl. 2016. "On Thursdays We Watch Scandal: Communal Viewing and Black Twitter" In *Digital Sociologies*, edited by Jessie Daniels, Karen Gregory, and Tressie McMillan Cottom, Reprint edition. Bristol Chicago:Policy Press

Orton-Johnson, Kate, Nick Prior, and Karen Gregory. 2017. "Sociological Imagination: Digital Sociology and the Future of the Discipline."

<https://www.thesociologicalreview.com/information/blog/sociological-imagination-digital-sociology-and-the-future-of-the-discipline.html.9/28>Digital Methods -how & examples Abramson,

Lecture 15 Completion Week Summary