

Sociology 107
FIELD RESEARCH METHODS
Professor Sánchez-Jankowski

This course is designed to provide training in using participant-observation methodology. The course is divided into two parts. The first part of the course is devoted to teaching: (1) the basic assumptions underlying the methodology; (2) the techniques internal to the operationalization of the methodology; (3) ethics of doing this type of research, the practical logistics required before entering the field; (4) and the preparations required to create a usable data set before data gathering has begun. During this period students will read technical materials covering these topics as well as examples of ethnographic research.

The second part of the course is designed around creating a research project that each student constructs and forms the basis of the final paper-project that is to be handed in at the end of the semester. The architecture of this research project will come from the class lectures and activities presented throughout the semester. At the end of semester students will have been introduced as to how to construct a research project using ethnographic methodology and what it will take to successfully execute it.

Requirements:

Because training will be going on each student will be required to attend all the course sessions during the semester. Each student will be required to have read all the required material before class sessions, and be ready to participate in the course discussions. Each student will be required to choose a topic they would like to research using ethnographic method and construct a formal research design. The contents of the design will be provided to each student as the course progresses. The formal research design will be basis for the final grade in the course. **Each student's formal research design will be due on April 28th.**

Books and Reader:

There are a number of books that will be used in this course. They are: (1) Corey Abramson and Neil Gong, *Beyond the Case: How Inequality Shapes Our Final Years* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2021); (2) Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Islands in the Street: Gangs and American Urban Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); (3) Michael Burawoy, *The Extended Case Method: Four Countries, Four Decades, Four Great Transformations, and One Theoretical Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); (4) Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (New York: Anchor Books, 1961); Corey Abramson, *The End Game: How Inequality Shapes Our Final Years* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2015).

Readings

Week 1 on January 24th : Overview of Course.

Week 2 on January 31st: Epistemology and Participant-Observational Approaches

READINGS: Corey Abramson and Neil Gong, eds., *Beyond the Case: Introduction and Conclusion*.

Week 3 on February 7th: Behavioralist Tradition

READINGS: Abramson and Gong, *Beyond the Case*: Chapters 1, 8

Week 4 on February 14th: Behavioralist Tradition Continued

READINGS: Sánchez-Jankowski, *Islands in the Street*: Whole book.

Week 5 on February 21st: Extended Case Method and Grounded Theory

READINGS: Michael Burawoy, *The Extended Case Method*, Chapters TBA; Barney Glasser and Anselm Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine Press, 1967), Chapters TBA.

Week 6 on February 28th: Extended Case Method and Grounded They Continued

READINGS Abramson and Gong, *Beyond the Case*: Chapters 5 and 7

Week 7 on March 7th: Symbolic Interaction Method

READINGS: Erving Goffman, *Asylums*, Chapters TBA.

Week 8 on March 14th: Symbolic Interaction Method Continued

READINGS: TBA

Week 9 on March 21st: Ethnomethodology/Phenomenological School

READINGS: Aaron Cicourel, "Basic and Normative Rules in the Negotiation of Status and Role," in Hans Peter Dreitzel, ed., *Recent Sociology No. 2* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970); 4-45; Joan P. Emerson, "Behavior in Private Places: Sustaining Definitions of Reality in Gynecological Examinations," in *Recent Sociology No. 2*, Pp.74-97.

Week 10 on March 28th: Ethnomethodology/Phenomenological School Continued

READINGS:.. Abramson and Gong, *Beyond the Case*, Chapters 3, 4.

Week 11 on April 4th: Question Development, Sampling, Gaining Access

READINGS: Abramson and Gong, *Beyond the Case*, Chapters 2 and 9; Sánchez-Jankowski, "Representation, Responsibility and Reliability in Participant-Observation," in Tim May, ed., *Qualitative Research in Action* (London: Sage Publications, 2002).

Week 12 on April 11th: Conducting Research: Observation, Reliability and Generalizability

READINGS: In Class Exercise

Week 13 on April 18th: Conducting Research Continued: Note Taking, Data Storage, and Analysis

READINGS: Abramson and Gong, *Beyond the Case*, Chapter 2, 8.

Week 14 on April 25th: Analyzing Data, Writing Up Results, and Presenting Evidence

READINGS: Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Islands in the Street*; Corey Abramson, *The End Game*. Chapters to be assigned from each book the week before.

Week May 4th: Final Drafts of Individual Research Proposals Due