

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 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) the preparations required to create a usable data set before data gathering has begun; (5) executing the research; (6) analyzing the data; and (7) presenting the data. During this period students will read technical materials covering these topics as well as examples of ethnographic research.

Requirements:

Each student will be required to have read all the required material thoroughly before class sessions, and be ready to participate in the course discussions through a question-and-answer format. There will be a final take-home exam. Your final grade will be determined on the grade for your final exam and in-class participation each week.

Books For the Course:

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, *Burning Dislike: Ethnic Violence in High Schools* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016); (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) Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine Press, 1967); (5) Kent L. Sandstrom, Daniel D. Martin, and Gary Allen Fine, *Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality: A Symbolic Interaction Approach to Sociology and Social Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); (6) Kenneth Liberman, *More Studies in Ethnomethodology* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2013).

Readings

Week 1 (January 18th): Overview of Course.

Week 2 (January 25th): Participant-Observational Approaches

READINGS:

Mario Small, “‘How Many Cases Do I Need?’: On Science and the Logic of Case Selection in Field-based Research,” *Ethnography*, Vol. 10, no. 1 (2009): **3-38**.
[Available on Line]

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

Week 3 (February 2nd) Behavioralist Approach: Principles**READINGS:**

Abramson and Gong, *Beyond the Case: Chapters 1, 2*

Week 4 (February 8th): Behavioralist Tradition: Example

READINGS: Sánchez-Jankowski, *Burning Dislike: Ethnic Violence in High Schools: Whole book*.

Week 5 (February 15th): Grounded Theory/ Extended Case Method: Principles**READINGS:**

Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine Press, 1967), **Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5**.

Michael Burawoy, *The Extended Case Method, Chapters 1, 2*

Week 6 (February 22nd): Extended Case Method and Grounded Theory—Examples**READINGS**

Michael Burawoy, *The Extended Case Method, Chapter 4*

Glaser and Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory, Chapter 6*

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

Week 7 (March 1st): Symbolic Interaction Method—Principles

READINGS:

Kent L. Sandstrom, Daniel D. Martin and Gary Alan Fine, *Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality*, **Chapters 1-6.**

Week 8 (March 8th): Symbolic Interaction Method—Examples

READINGS:

Kent L. Sandstrom, Daniel D. Martin and Gary Alan Fine, *Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality*, **Chapters 7, 8.**

Recommended:

Gary Alan Fine, *Kitchens: The Culture of Restaurant Work*. **Whole Book.**

Week 9 (March 15th): Ethnomethodology—Principles

READINGS:

Kenneth Liberman, *More Studies in Ethnomethodology*, **Introduction.**

Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, **Chapters 1.**

Week 10 (March 22nd): **SPRING BREAK**

Week 11 (April 5th): Ethnomethodology—Examples

READINGS:

Kenneth Liberman, *More Studies in Ethnomethodology* , **Chapters 1, 2, 3.**

Joan P. Emerson, "Behavior in Private Places: Sustaining Definitions of Reality in Gynecological Examinations," in Hans Peter Dreitzel, ed., *Recent Sociology No. 2*, Pp.74-97. **Handout**

Recommended:

Kenneth Liberman, *More Studies in Ethnomethodology* , **Chapter 8.**

Michael Lynch, ed., *Harold Garfinkel: Studies of Work in the Sciences* (New York: Routledge, 2022), **Part 1.**

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

Week 12 (April 12th): Question Development, Case(s) Selection(s), Access Issues

READINGS:

Daniel Dohan and Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, "Using Computers to Analyze Ethnographic Field Data: Theoretical and Practical Considerations," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1998, 24: 477-98. **Handout.**

Week 13 (April 19th): Conducting Research: Observation, Note Taking, Data Storage

READINGS: In Class Exercise

Week 14 (April 26th): Analysis

READINGS:

Sánchez-Jankowski, "Representation, Responsibility and Reliability in Participant-Observation," in Tim May, ed., *Qualitative Research in Action* (London: Sage Publications, 2002). **Handout.**

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

Final Exam Due on May 9