

Qualitative Research Methodologies and Methods For Planners and Policy Makers URBG 787.08

Summer 2009 – Term 1
Mondays and Wednesdays, 5:15 – 8:00 p.m.
Hunter College North Building, Room HW1639

Kevin Keenan
Office: TBA
Phone: (917) 816-0006

Email: kkeenan@hunter.cuny.edu
Office hours: By appointment

Course Description

This course introduces graduate students to both qualitative research methodologies and methods. Methodologies are the theories that underpin methods. Methods are the instruments or tools used for data collection to explore or answer social science research questions. As such, the course readings and class time are split equally between (1) evaluation of theoretical issues concerning implementation, use, interpretation, and representation of methods and the resulting data, and (2) learning the actual methods that can be used in research. The course begins by defining the ‘qualitative-ness’ of qualitative research and introducing the key scientific research design components of reliability, validity, and replicability within a qualitative framework. The course proceeds to introduce the history, ethical implications, questions, and issues of qualitative research, followed by an outline of several epistemological stances that inform qualitative approaches to knowledge and strategies for analyzing and writing up qualitative findings. Framed around specific qualitative research strategies (i.e. participant observation/ethnography, case study, interview, focus group, discourse analysis, life histories, and archival research), the course provides students with research knowledge and strategies that are transferable across the social science disciplines as well as to the workplace.

Objectives

Students successfully completing Qualitative Research Methodologies and Methods will be able to *define* qualitative research and *relate* several qualitative methodologies to their associated methods, and *explain* the issues surrounding knowledge created with these methods. Students will be able to *summarize* the selected qualitative methods and methodologies, and *identify* the core components of the methods. Finally, students will be able to *define* reliability, validity, and replicability, and *explain* their relevance for social science in general and qualitative research specifically.

Course Philosophy

The most important outcome of this course is the learning that students achieve. The course is designed for graduate students in the social sciences. The course is scaled to learning at two levels, and writing and discussion are the primary ways that students will communicate their learning within these levels. At its basic-level, the course introduces students to *factual knowledge* about qualitative research methods (e.g., how to conduct a focus group), but the course also requires that students *comprehend* the extent to which qualitative methods can produce reliable, valid, and replicable knowledge. At a higher-level of learning, the course encourages students to *apply* various methodological and epistemological frameworks in order to study the full range of limitations as well as possibilities regarding the creation and use of knowledge obtained with qualitative methods. As a graduate course, the course is underpinned by a teaching philosophy that emphasizes summary and evaluation, as reflected in the choice of assessments of student learning. The course is also designed to provide students with an applied analytical toolkit for subsequent use in both academic and commercial / governmental / non-profit research contexts.

Course Texts

There are no required textbooks for this course. All readings will be scanned and placed on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to download these readings.

Course Overview

Class #1 (1 June): Introduction; Situating & Defining Qualitative Research

Class #2 (3 June): Validity, Reliability, and Replicability in Social Science and Qualitative Research; Ethics

Class #3 (8 June): Feminism; Constructivism

Class #4 (10 June): Hermeneutics / Interpretivism; Post-Structuralism

Class #5 (15 June): Theory; Grounded Theory; Case Study

*Short Paper is due at the start of class #5 (16 June)

Class #6 (17 June): Nvivo Presentation; Data Analysis: Coding & Memo Writing

Class #7 (22 June): Analyzing Talk & Text

Class #8 (24 June): Life histories and archival research

Class #9 (29 June): Focus Groups

Class #10 (1 July): Interviews; Surveys

Class #11 (6 July): Ethnography; [Participant] Observation

Class #12 (8 July): Representing Qualitative Research

Thursday, 9 July: Coding project must be emailed to kkeenan@hunter.cuny.edu by noon.

Assignments & Evaluation

Short Paper – The short paper provides an opportunity for you to creatively evaluate qualitative research using the concepts of reliability, validity, and replicability (or its qualitatively derived counterparts - e.g. see Baxter and Eyles 1997). In your analysis, you may want to draw from the history of qualitative research in order to understand why these concepts receive heightened attention today by some scholars, and perhaps not so much by others. Further, you should select one or more of the epistemological stances (e.g. feminism, constructivism, hermeneutics / interpretivism, and post-structuralism) that inform qualitative research and discuss its / their relationship to the concepts of reliability, validity, and replicability. The purpose of this assignment is for you to evidence and hone your synthesis and evaluation skills as applied to the readings we've covered so far. The paper is short; your prose should be clear, direct, and succinct. The short paper will count towards **20% of your grade**. See Rubric #1: "Evaluating the Short Paper" for the specific guidelines that I will use to evaluate your work.

NOTE: The short paper is due on **Monday, June 15** in my email box kkeenan@hunter.cuny.edu by 5:15 p.m. (the start of class). There are no exceptions. If you fail to turn in your short paper on **Monday, June 15**, you will lose 3 points (out of 100) for each day late. The paper should be turned in as a Microsoft Word document so that I may use the track changes and comment functions.

Coding Project – Coding is an integral part of qualitative research, especially when using a grounded theory framework, and the coding project provides an opportunity for you to develop your skills in this area. I will post five semi-structured interviews from my research on Blackboard for you to code; you must use these interviews. The readings from Class #5 and Class #6 provide an overview of the coding and memo writing process. The Nvivo presentation will introduce you to the fundamentals of using that software for coding, and I will post on blackboard a scanned copy of an introduction to Nvivo that is an excellent beginner's reference. I am also available to help you get started with Nvivo. The Nvivo software is available in John Chin's office. Do not wait until the end of the semester to start the coding project as there is only one computer with the software on it, and it may be occupied by another student as the deadline gets closer. For this project, you are expected to work through a small grounded theory analysis of the data, starting with open coding, then axial coding, and concluding with selective coding. You must email me four things: (1) The coded Nvivo project; (2) a word document that explains your approach to this research in detail and the steps you took; (3)

a word document that lists the codes you used and a summary conclusion that integrates your ideas into a singular theoretical message that you take away; and (4) a memo that describes the development of a single code you have used. The coding project will count towards **30% of your grade**. See Rubric #2: “Evaluating the Coding Project” for the specific guidelines that I will use to evaluate your work. There is also information regarding how you might structure your summary conclusion, coding sheet, and memo.

Note: The coding project (Nvivo file and word documents) must be emailed to Kevin Keenan at kkeen@hunter.cuny.edu . by **12 noon on Thursday, 9 July**. There are no exceptions. If you fail to turn in your coding project by **12 noon on Thursday, 9 July** you will lose 3 points (out of 100) for each day late.

Presentations on selected readings – You are required to read all readings throughout the semester, but you will be responsible for presenting on one (and in some instances maybe two) each week. Presentations should reflect serious engagement with the reading. Students should be prepared to give a general, 5 minute overview of the assigned reading, and provide a 1 page handout that includes a summary of the overall message of the reading, the key points, and several questions for discussion. The questions can ask for clarification on a particular point, may draw comparisons between readings, or may simply present points for general discussion. The presentations will count towards **30% of your grade**. You are requested to post your handouts on the blackboard site in the appropriate forum by midnight preceding the class. This will give the other students and me some to review your materials before we meet for discussion. The collection of summary documents and questions will also become valuable study guides and references for you in the future; it is recommended that you save them. See Rubric #3: “Evaluating Presentations on the Readings” for the specific guidelines that I will use to evaluate your work.

In-class participation – The in-class participation grade will be determined by your attendance at each class, your engagement during the lectures, and your responses to questions and other students’ comments. Sleeping or putting one’s head down during the course will adversely affect the grade. Lateness—both at the beginning of the course and after the break—as well as early departures, will adversely affect the grade. The participation grade will also be determined by your willingness to speak up and share thoughts, questions, and concerns during the course. In class participation counts as **20% of your grade**. See Rubric #4: “Evaluating Students’ In-class participation” for the specific guidelines that I will use to evaluate your participation.

Your final grade for the course will be calculated using the following Hunter College undergraduate grade distribution (percentage of total score of all assignments).

A+ = 97.5 – 100 %
A = 92.5 – 97.4
A- = 90 – 92.4

B+ = 87.5 – 89.9
B = 82.5 – 87.4
B- = 80 – 82.4

C+ = 77.5 – 79.9
C = 70 – 77.4
D = 60 – 69.9

F = 0.0 – 59.9

General Policies and Procedures

- **Statement on Academic Integrity:** Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

Complete information on Hunter College's academic integrity policies is available through the Office of Student Services. Please see the following document, available online:

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/senate/assets/Documents/Hunter%20College%20Policy%20on%20Academic%20Integrity.pdf> .

- **Student Email:** Students are required to have a Hunter College email account and to check it at least once per day during the week. All notices regarding the course, including cancellations, will be sent to the Hunter College account.
- **Faculty Email:** The professor uses kkeenan@hunter.cuny.edu and will check it at least once per day. Immediate responses via email should not be expected, but can generally be expected within a 24-hour period.
- **Cell phones and pagers** must be turned off before the class starts.
- **Special needs or concerns:** Any students who have special learning needs or concerns are urged to speak with me during the first week of the semester if accommodations are needed. The Office of Student Services provides a comprehensive list of accessibility resources available at the College on the following website: <http://studentservices.hunter.cuny.edu/DSMAIN.html> .
- **Mutual respect for differing questions and ideas:** The College is a place for open inquiry and exchange of ideas. All members of the College should treat all other

members of the College and members of society with mutual respect and appreciation.

Course Schedule and Assigned Readings

All selections are presented in the order in which you should read them.

Part 1: Introducing Qualitative Research as Social Science

Class #1 (Monday, 1 June): Introduction; Situating & Defining Qualitative Research

- Denzin, Norman K. and Yvonna S. Lincoln. 2003. Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research. In *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, pgs. 1-46. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, John. 2007. Philosophical, Paradigm, and Interpretive Frameworks. In *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 15-34. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Crang, Michael. 2002: Qualitative methods: the new orthodoxy? *Progress in Human Geography* 26, 647–55.
- Bradshaw, Matt and Elaine Stratford. 2000. Qualitative Research Design and Rigour. In *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*, ed. Iain Hay, 37-49. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Class #2 (Wednesday, 3 June): Validity, Reliability, and Replicability in Social Science and Qualitative Research; Ethics

- Singleton, R. and B. Straits. 2005. “Replications Using the Same Research Strategy: Compliance without Pressure,” “Replications Using Different Research Strategies: Deterrent Effects of Arrest,” and “A Comparison of the Four Basic Approaches to Social Research.” *Approaches to Social Research, 4th Edition*, pp. 393-401. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Kirk, Jerome and Marc Miller. 1986. “Reliability and Validity” (pgs. 13-20), “The Problem of Validity” (pgs. 21-31) and “The Problem of Reliability” (pgs. 41-58). In *Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Baxter, Jamie and John Eyles. 1997. Evaluating qualitative research in social geography: establishing ‘rigour’ in interview analysis. *Trans Inst Br Geogr* 22: 505-25.
- Creswell, John W. 1998. Designing a Qualitative Study. In *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 13-26. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dowling, Robyn. 2005. Power, subjectivity, and ethics in qualitative research. In *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*, 19-29. New York: Oxford University Press.

Optional:

Boyatzis, Richard E. 1998. "Reliability is Consistency of Judgment." In *Transforming Qualitative Information*. Pgs. 144-59. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Part 2: Paradigms and Perspectives

Class #3 (Monday, 8 June): Feminism; Constructivism

Silverman, David. 2005. Using Theories. In *Doing Qualitative Research, 2nd Edition*, pgs. 95-108. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Harding, S. 1987. Introduction: Is there a feminist method? In *Feminism and Methodology*, ed. Susan Harding, 1-13. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

England K. 1994. Getting personal: reflexivity, positionality, and feminist research. *Professional Geographer* 46 80-89.

Flick, Uwe. 2004. Constructivism. In *A Companion to Qualitative Research*, eds. Uwe Flick, Ernst von Kardoff, and Ines Steinke, 88-94. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Class #4 (Wednesday, 10 June): Hermeneutics / Interpretivism; Post-Structuralism

Schwandt, Thomas. 2003. Three Epistemological Stances for Qualitative Inquiry: Interpretivism, Hermeneutics, and Social Constructionism. In *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, pgs. 292-331. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Geertz C. (1973) Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture, Chapter One in *Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-30.

Dixon, D. and Jones J. P. (1998) My dinner with Derrida. *Environment and Planning A* 30: 247-260.

Foucault, M (1970) Las Meninas, Chapter One, *The Order of Things*. NY: Random House, pp. 1-16. (Reading includes Foreword and Preface as well).

Class #5 (Monday, 15 June): Grounded Theory; Case Study

*Short Paper is due at the start of class (Week 3 Session 1)

- Charmaz, K. 2006. Chapter 1 “An Invitation to Grounded Theory” and Chapter 2 “Gathering Rich Data.” In *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*, 1-40. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Stake, Robert E. Case Studies. In *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, pgs. 134-65.
- Burawoy M (1991) The extended case method. In *Ethnography Unbound: Power and Resistance in the Modern Metropolis*, eds. Burawoy M *et al.*, 271-90. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Optional

- [Example of descriptive case] Yin, Robert K. 2003. A Case Study of a Neighborhood Organization. In *Applications of Case Study Research*, pgs. 31-52. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Class #6 (Wednesday, 17 June): Nvivo Presentation; Data Analysis: Coding & Memo Writing

- Boyatzis, Richard E. 1998. “The Search for a Codable Moment: A Way of Seeing.” In *Transforming Qualitative Information*. Pgs. 1-28. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cope, Meghan. 2003. Coding Transcripts and Diaries. In *Key Methods in Geography*, eds. Nicholas Clifford and Gill Valentine. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Charmaz, Kathy. 2006. “Coding in Grounded Theory Practice.” In *Constructing Grounded Theory*, pgs. 42-71. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Böhm, Andrea. 2004. Theoretical Coding: Text Analysis in Grounded Theory. In *A Companion to Qualitative Research*, eds. Uwe Flick, Ernst von Kardoff, and Ines Steinke, 27-5. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Class #7 (Monday, 22 June): Analyzing Talk & Text

- Hastings A. 1999. Discourse and urban change: Introduction to the Special Issue. *Urban Studies* 36(1): 7-12.
- Lees L. 2004. Urban geography: discourse analysis and urban research. *Progress in Human Geography* 28(1):101–107.
- Duneier M. 1999. Talking to Women. In *Sidewalk*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, pp.188-216, and notes.
- Kenny J (1992) Portland’s comprehensive plan as text: the Fred Meyer case and the politics of reading. In T Barnes and J S Duncan (eds) *Writing worlds: discourse, text and metaphor in the representation of landscape* (Routledge, London).

Brenner N. 2003. Stereotypes, archetypes, and prototypes: three uses of superlatives in urban studies. *City and Community* 2(3) 205-216.

Roberts S M and Schein R H. 1993. The entrepreneurial city: fabricating urban development in Syracuse, New York. *Professional Geographer* 45 21-32

Short J R and Kim Y-H .1998. Urban crises/urban representations: selling the city in difficult times. In Hall T and Hubbard P (eds) *The entrepreneurial city* (Wiley, London).

Class #8 (Wednesday, 24 June): Life histories and archival research

George, Karen and Elaine Strategord. 2005. Oral History and Human Geography. In Hay, pp. 106-15.

Perramond E. (2001) Oral histories and partial truths in Mexico. *The Geographical Review* 91 (1-2): 151-157.

Roche, M (2005) Historical research and archival sources. Ch. 9 in Hay, pp. 133-146.

Harris C. (2001) Archival fieldwork. *The Geographical Review* 91 (1-2): 328-334.

Optional:

Nagar R. (1997) Exploring methodological borderlands through oral narratives. In J.P. Jones, H. Nast and S. Roberts, eds. *Thresholds in Feminist Geography*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, pp. 203-224.

Class #9 (Monday, 29 June): Focus Groups

Wilkinson, Sue. 2004. "Focus Group Research." In *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*, ed. David Silverman, pgs. 177-99. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Special Issue of *Area* on focus groups:

- Goss, J. 1996. Introduction to focus groups. *Area* 28(2): 113-114.
- Goss, J. and Leinbach T. 1996. Focus groups as alternative research practice: experience with transmigrants in Indonesia. *Area* 28(2): 115-123.
- Zeigler, D, S. Brunn, and J. Johnson. 1996. Focusing on Hurricane Andrew through the eyes of the victims. *Area* 28(2): 124-129.
- Burgess, J. 1996. Focusing on fear: the use of focus groups in a project for the Community Forest Unit, Countryside Commission. *Area* 28(2): 130-135.
- Holbrook, B, and P. Jackson. 1996. Shopping around: focus group research in North London. *Area* 28(2): 136-142.

Class #10 (Wednesday, 1 July): Interviews; Surveys

- Holstein, James A. and Jaber F. Gubrium. 2004. The Active Interview. In *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*, ed. David Silverman, pgs. 140-61. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Elwood, S. and D. G. Martin (2000) 'Placing' Interviews: Location and scales of power in qualitative research. *Professional Geographer* 52(4): 649-657.
- Berg, B. L. 2006[1995]. A Dramaturgical Look at Interviewing. In *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, pgs. 29-67. Allyn and Bacon publishers.
- McGuirk, Pauline and Phillip O'Neill. 2005. Using Questionnaires in Qualitative Human Geography. Chapter 10 in Hay, pp. 147-61

Class #11 (Monday, 6 July): Ethnography; [Participant] Observation

- Katz C. 1992. All the world is staged: intellectuals and the projects of ethnography. *Environment and Planning D: society and space* 10 495-510.
- Sanjek R (2000) Keeping ethnography alive in an urbanizing world. *Human Organization* 59 280-288.
- Jackson P (1985) Urban ethnography. *Progress in Human Geography* 9 157-176
- Jorgensen, Danny L. 1989. Chapter 1 "The Methodology of Participant Observation." In *Participant Observation: A Methodology for Human Studies*, pgs. 12-25. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Duneier M. (1999) Introduction, Ch. 3, and Appendix, Sidewalk. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, pp. 3-14, 43-80, 333-357, notes. (*Pay careful attention the appendix, which focuses on methods*)

Class #12 (Wednesday, 8 July): Representing Qualitative Research

- Mike Crang, 1997, Ch. 11, "Analyzing qualitative materials," in Robin Flowerdew and David Martin, eds., 1997, *Methods in Human Geography: A guide for students doing a research project* (Essex, England: Addison Wesley Longman Ltd.), pp. 181-196.
- Hannal Avis, 2002, "Whose Voice is That? Making space for subjectivities in interviews," in Liz Bondi et. al., *Subjectivities, Knowledges, and Feminist Geographies* (Lanham and Boulder: Rowman and Littlefield), 191-207.
- Denzin, Norman K. 2003. "The Practice and Politics of Interpretation." In *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 458-98. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Fine, Michelle, Lois Weiss, Susan Weseen, and Loonmun Wong. "For whom? Qualitative Research, Representations, and Social Responsibilities." In *The*

Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues. Eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, pgs. 167-207. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Coding project (Nvivo file and word document) must be emailed to Kevin Keenan at kkeenan@hunter.cuny.edu by **12 noon on Thursday, 9 July**.