As in love, so in technique; Innocent confidence is weak.
-Richard Sennett

DRAFT - sample from last year

About

Day: Wednesday  
Time: 1:30-4:00  
Location: Saunders 329

Instructor: Alex Golub  
Phone: 956-6576  
Email: golub@hawaii.edu  
Office Hours: Friday, 1-3 pm, Saunders 313

This course provides students the concrete skills they need to carry out ethnographic fieldwork for a dissertation project. We will discuss topics ranging from storing and backing up your data to the specifics of where in Honolulu to purchase foot pedals for transcribing interviews. The main focus of the course is methodological: what specifically does ‘doing fieldwork’ consist of? And more generally, what does it mean to be ‘in the field’? In addition to generic issues such as keeping journals, conducting interviews, taking fieldnotes, and coding materials, the course touches on other methods such as case studies, discourse analysis, and collaborative and reflexive fieldwork. The overall assumption will be: now that you have a research project planned, how will you implement it through ethnographic methods?

Discussion of fieldwork inevitable require a discussion of the broader issues that surround ethnographic research. For this reason we will discuss the ethics of fieldwork, and its epistemological underpinnings of qualitative methods. We will also examine a series of descriptions of fieldwork as it was carried out by different people in different sorts of situations so that students can develop an ‘encyclopedia’ of fieldwork situations to compare their own to.

Substantively, much of the learning of the seminar will be through doing. Students will undertake individual projects in which they will organize and conduct their own ethnographic work. These projects will serve as pilots projects for students planning to conduct fieldwork for their dissertations, and these larger dissertation projects will be discussed in the course of the class as the ultimate ‘horizon’ against which student projects are undertaken.

Student Learning Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

• Comprehend the underlying theoretical and epistemological models which ground qualitative research
• Understand the ethical standards of our discipline and conduct themselves accordingly
• Plan and undertake a 1-2 month long fieldwork project
• Develop an ‘encyclopedia’ of others’ fieldwork which can be compared with their own experience
• Create and maintain written records of fieldwork, including scratch notes, fieldnotes, and a journal
• Learn to focus their research methodologically in order to address issues of validity and reliability
• Conduct interviews as a specialized field technique
• Deploy techniques such as autoethnography or collaborative ethnography in their next bout of fieldwork

**Grading**
Grades will be awarded on the basis of the following work:

**Performance in seminar**
Giving feedback, speaking in seminar, and participating in the class are absolutely key to your success. This category includes asking students to complete in-class exercises, carefully read class materials, and attend to other miscellaneous class matters.

**1 Page Description of Planned MA/Ph.D. Fieldwork**
Due on the first day of class, this paper describes the large-scale fieldwork you plan to carry out for your degree, after you finish this course.

**3 Page Autobiographical Statement**
An autobiographical statement that locates you in anthropological terms, and describes how your research project for this class and for your degree grows out of this sense of self.

**Initial Fieldwork Proposal**
This is a document which describes your in-class fieldwork project. It includes IRB materials, a timeline, and a narrative statement of your plan.

**Revised Fieldwork Proposal**
A revised version of the initial fieldwork proposal, incorporating what you have learned during the pilot portion of your project.

**Final Paper**
The final paper will include: 1) Problem statement with references to the literature 2) Description of field site 3) Description of method, ethical issues, and entrance 4) description of data gathering 5) Description of data analysis 6) statement of findings. The paper should not be longer than 20,000 words (unless you have good reason to make it longer) and should be suitable for submission to an anthropology journal.

**Textbooks**
The following books are at the bookstore and will be read in their entirety for class:

• Weiss, Learning from Strangers
• Briggs, Learning How To Ask
• Lofland, Analyzing Social Situations
• Emerson et. al. Fieldnotes
• Doing Qualitative Research Using Your Computer: A Practical Guide

**Schedule**
I. Preparing to do fieldwork

Introduction
Syllabus handout, discussion of class requirements
Reading: The Stranger, Simmel
Assignment: Come with 1 page description of your planned MA/Dissertation fieldwork
Fieldwork example: Terry Gross, “Fresh Air Interview with Gene Simmons”

Notes: Welcome and class
Go around the room -- ask people who they are and what they do
Me: Class is about fieldwork. The main project will be to do a small fieldwork project. This is based on main thing you do. Final report will be 10-12K words and publishable in journal.
But big picture is the work you will do for your diss work. this is what its about -- preparing Ph.D. students.
So let's talk briefly about books.
1) Lofland -- small, EXPENSIVE. Field-takeable. Good for review. Meant for more than just this class. Standard sociology text.
2) Emerson -- superb. cheap. Get it.
3) Weiss -- superb. Standard. cheap. get it. BUT not anthropological.
4) Doing Q Research: expensive. Extremely basic. Helps you if u don’t know computers
SO yeah. We will be reading all of all of these, which is a lot of reading at times. But a lot of it is light. 50 pages of Hahn is like ‘how to create new folders’. These are all field tested. All are citable in grant proposals to signal you are keyed in.
We will also be reading ‘fieldwork examples’ to give you a sense of what/how different people did research, and not just anthros. It is fun and exciting and I’m looking forward to it.
Qs?
I want to dive in with some ethnographic material. As you listen to this ask: “Is this a good interview?” and then start thinking the natural followup question: “What counts as a ‘good’ interview”. Try taking notes.

Discussion

Simmel -- here is how I want to run discussion in the seminar: we get out on the table what the point is. Then we discuss it, whether it is true, its implications. My goal is to maieutic -- widwifey.

Turning ‘life’ into ‘data’: Conceptual clarifications
Silverstein and Urban “Introduction” in Natural Histories of Discourse
Abbott, “Explanation” (34 pages)
Fieldwork example: Malinowski, “Argonauts of the Western Pacific”
II. Being “In The Field”: Pilot Projects

Starting Where You Are
Lofland, Intro, 1 and 2 (32 pages)
Emerson 1 (16 pages)
Gupta and Ferguson, “The Field as Site, Method, and Location” in Anthropological Locations (46 pages)
Assignment: 3 page autobiography
Fieldwork example: Styles, “Outsider/Insider: Researching Gay Baths” (21 pages)

Ethics
AAA code of ethics
AAA Principles of Responsibility
AAA Statement on IRBs
“Bureaucracies of Mass Deception”
Lederman, “Comparing Ethics”
Lederman, “IRB Advisor”
next time -- Lofland 3 ‘getting access’ etc.
Assignment: complete online human subjects training
Assignment: Explore world, come back with fieldwork project proposal
Fieldwork example: Goode, “Sexual Involvement and Social Research in a Fat Civil Rights Organization

Getting Into And Along In The Field
Lofland, chapters 3, and 4
Hahn chapters 1 and 2 (30 pages)
Fieldwork example: Joel Robbins, “When Do You Think The World Is Going To End?”
Assignment: Turn in informed consent sheet

Notes on projects -- view from 10,000 feet (significance), 1,000 feet (problem), weeds (method)

how many hours?

timelines that have 4 weeks of ‘participant observation/interview’ are not very good.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<td>6</td>
<td>27 Sep - 3 Oct</td>
<td><strong>III. Doing Fieldwork</strong></td>
<td><strong>Taking Fieldnotes</strong>&lt;br&gt;Emerson, “Fieldnotes” 2-5 (124 pages)&lt;br&gt;Lofland ch. 5 (38 pages)&lt;br&gt;Hahn ch. 5 (15 pages)&lt;br&gt;Assignment: do pilot project&lt;br&gt;Field example: TBA</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>4 Oct - 10 Oct</td>
<td><strong>Focusing, Sampling, Validity</strong></td>
<td>Gluckman, “Ethnographic Data in British Social Anthropology” (10 pages)&lt;br&gt;Small, “How Not To Make Research More Scientific”&lt;br&gt;Lofland 6-8 (73 pages)&lt;br&gt;Hahn 3 and 4 (38)&lt;br&gt;Weiss 1 and 2 (32)</td>
<td>Fieldwork Example: Humphries, Tearoom Trade&lt;br&gt;Assignment: Be done with pilot project, revise fieldwork project proposal, and begin real project.</td>
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<td>11 Oct - 17 Oct</td>
<td><strong>Special Methods: Interviewing</strong></td>
<td>Weiss, <em>Learning from Strangers</em> 3-5 (111 pages)&lt;br&gt;Interview schedules for Chen, Golub, and others</td>
<td>Assignment: Develop interview guide&lt;br&gt;Fieldwork Example: Fenno, “Homestyle”</td>
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<td>1 Nov - 7 Nov</td>
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12 8 Nov - 14 Nov  
**IV. Writing Up**  
Analyzing and Coding Data  
Emerson, “Fieldnotes” 6 (36 pages)  
Lofland ch. 9 (25 pages)  
Hahn 6, 7 or 8, 9  
*Fieldwork Example: Tengan, Unsettling Ethnographies*  

13 15 Nov - 21 Nov  
**Writing Up**  
Hahn 10  
Weiss 7  
Emerson 7 and 8  
Lofland 10  
*Fieldwork example: Greenberg, “When They Read What The Papers Say We Wrote”*  

14 22 Nov - 28 Nov  
**Special Issues: Anthropology as Wisdom, Rather Than Knowledge**  
*Discussion of research papers*  
Whitehead, “Post Human Anthropology”  
Erin O’Connor, “Hot Glass: The Calorific Imagination of Practice in Glassblowing”  

15 29 Nov - 5 Dec  
**Fun Day Off**  
T-Th 25-26 Thanksgiving  

16 6 Dec - 12 Dec  
**Conclusion: A Life in Ethnography**  
*Assignment: Papers due*  
Last day of Instruction Th 9 Dec  
Long Term Fieldwork  
*Fieldwork Example: Shahrani, “Honored Guest and Marginal Man”*