

SOCIOLOGICAL INQUIRY I • QUALITATIVE METHODS (Fall 2013)

SOCI 377A • T/Th 2:00-3:15 • Section 3 • 4 credit hours

Jeff Kidder

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INTRODUCTION

This course is an introduction to ethnography. The defining feature of ethnography is fieldwork. Unlike experimental researchers (who design laboratory tests), survey researchers (who devise questionnaires), or historical researchers (who analyze past events), the ethnographer personally enters into the field of social action. Through fieldwork, ethnographers gather data by making direct observations of what occurs “naturally” in social settings. Further, ethnographers attempt to participate in the actions being studied. As such, ethnography is a unique and essential method for understanding how individuals make sense of their social worlds. Throughout the semester you will read ethnographic work, reflect on qualitative methodology, and conduct a research project on gender norms at NIU.

COURSE READINGS

The following are required readings for this class:

- Articles posted to Blackboard (which *must* be printed and brought to class)
- Lofland, John, David Snow, Leon Anderson, Lyn H. Lofland. 2006. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis, 4th Edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Pascoe, C.J. 2007. *Dude, You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

GRADING

Your grade in this class will be derived from the following:

• Participation (quizzes, in-class assignments, etc.).....	10
• Exams.....	20
-Introduction to ethnography.....	5
-Gender articles.....	5
- <i>Analyzing Social Settings</i>	10
• Review Essay.....	10
• Research assignments.....	30
-Fieldwork write-ups (5 pts x 4).....	20
-Interview guide.....	2
-Interviews (4 pts x 2).....	8
• Research paper.....	30
-Outline.....	5
-Paper.....	25
TOTAL POINTS.....	100

Note: I use a standard 10-point scale and I do not round final grades up

COURSE INFORMATION

Email

I will use your school email account (whatever address is linked to Blackboard) to communicate extra-lecture information about the course (e.g., reading or assignment updates). I will always give at least 12 hours notice (usually much more) for any substantial variation to the syllabus. It is your responsibility to check your school email regularly.

Assessment

The criteria for all graded assignments in this course (aside from quizzes and in-class assignments) are detailed in an assignment rubric. This rubric and more information on how your grade for this course will be assessed (including writing guidelines and expectations) can be found on Blackboard.

Extra Credit

There are multiple extra credit opportunities in this class. See Blackboard for more information.

Academic Integrity

You are responsible for adhering to the university's policy on integrity of scholarship. Academic dishonesty (of any sort) will result in immediate course *failure* and the incident will be formally filed with the Sociology Department and NIU Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct. See Blackboard for more details.

Outstanding Papers

The Sociology Department provides awards for exceptional undergraduate papers. The final research paper in this course has the potential of becoming an award-winning paper. Students may nominate themselves or I may submit outstanding papers on their behalf. Contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies for more information.

Nomenclature

I am a doctor of philosophy in sociology and I hold the rank of assistant professor at Northern Illinois University. The formal method for addressing me is "Dr. Kidder" or "professor Kidder." Alternatively, you are welcome to call me by my first name. However, please do *not* call me "Mr. Kidder" (that is my father's name).

Note: more information about this course is available on Blackboard:

Syllabus and grading information > 377A additional course information.pdf

Syllabus and grading information > 377A assessment document.pdf

You will be quizzed on this syllabus and all the additional course information on the second day of class.

Note: readings must be completed on the date they are listed. Homework is assigned the day it is listed and must be completed by the following class. Not all homework or assignments entail something that must be turned in. Assignment that must be turned in for grading will be denoted by the phrase “Due:” on the date it is due.

SECTION ONE: LEARNING BY EXAMPLE

Week One: Introduction to Qualitative Research

08/27: Introduction to the course

Homework: familiarize yourself with the course requirements

08/29: Overview of the ethnographic method

Reading: course syllabus and supporting materials (available on Blackboard)

Quiz: course requirements, etc.

Homework: questions on Pascoe reading

Week Two: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School

09/03: Making masculinity

Reading: Pascoe pp. 1-24

Homework: questions on Pascoe reading

09/05: Becoming Mr. Cougar

Reading: Pascoe pp. 25-51

Homework: questions on Pascoe reading

Week Three: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School (continued)

09/10: Dude, you're a fag

Reading: Pascoe pp. 52-83

Homework: questions on Pascoe reading

09/12: Compulsive heterosexuality

Reading: Pascoe pp. 84-114

Homework: questions on Pascoe reading

Week Four: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School (continued)

09/17: Look at my masculinity

Reading: Pascoe pp. 115-155

Homework: study for exam; read Pascoe's appendix on fieldwork

09/19: Exam: introduction to ethnography

Homework: article questions (posted to Blackboard)

Week Five: More Ethnographies about Gender

09/24: Gendered sexuality

Reading: Hamilton and Armstrong “Gendered Sexuality...” (from Blackboard)

Homework: article questions (posted to Blackboard)

09/26: Gender in gyms

Reading: Leeds Craig and Liberti “Cause That's What Girls Do” (from Blackboard)

Homework: article questions (posted to Blackboard)

Week Six: More Ethnographies about Gender (continued)

10/01: Gender and food

Reading: Hesse-Biber et al. “A Longitudinal Study...” (from Blackboard)

Homework: study for exam; start writing review essay

10/03: Exam: gender articles

Homework: finish writing review essay

SECTION TWO: DOING ETHNOGRAPHY

Week Seven: Ethnographic Considerations

10/08: Getting started on research

Due: review essay

Reading: Lofland et al. pp. 1-32

10/10: Getting into the field site

Reading: Lofland et al. pp. 33-80

Quiz: *Analyzing Social Settings* (first four chapters)

Week Eight: Beginning Fieldwork

10/15: Logging data

Reading: Lofland et al. pp. 81-99, 108-117

Quiz: *Analyzing Social Settings*

10/17: Fieldwork at Rec. Center

Note: class will meet at the NIU Rec. Center (dress in proper workout attire); bring NIU OneCard, pen, and notebook for taking jotted notes

Homework: type up full field notes as soon as possible; fieldwork write-ups must be uploaded to SafeAssign no later than 10:00am Friday morning

Week Nine: Continuing Fieldwork

10/22: Basics of qualitative interviewing

Due: hardcopy of first fieldwork write-up

Reading: Lofland et al. pp. 99-108

Homework: develop an interview guide

10/24: Fieldwork at HSC

Note: class will meet at the Holmes Student Center; bring pen and notebook for taking jotted notes

Due: interview guide

Homework: type up full field notes as soon as possible; fieldwork write-ups must be uploaded to SafeAssign no later than 10:00am Friday morning

Week Ten: Finishing Fieldwork

10/29: Focusing data

Due: hardcopy of second fieldwork write-up

Reading: Lofland et al. pp. 119-143

Quiz: *Analyzing Social Settings*

Homework: conduct individual participant-observation at HSC; type up field notes and upload to SafeAssign; conduct first interview

10/31: Asking questions

Due: third fieldwork write-up (HSC)

Reading: Lofland et al. pp. 144-167

Quiz: *Analyzing Social Settings*

Homework: conduct individual participant-observation at the Rec. Center; type up field notes and upload to SafeAssign; conduct second interview

Week Eleven: From Fieldwork to Analysis

11/05: End of participant-observation

Due: fourth fieldwork write-up (Rec. Center); field notebooks (with notes from all participant-observations)

Reading: Lofland et al. pp. 168-192

Quiz: *Analyzing Social Settings*

Homework: transcribe interviews (note: transcription is *very* time consuming)

11/07: Interviews

Due: transcriptions of both interviews

SECTION THREE: WRITING ETHNOGRAPHY

Week Twelve: Developing Analysis

11/12: Thinking about codes

Reading: Lofland et al. pp. 195-219

Quiz: *Analyzing Social Settings*

Homework: think about possible coding categories for your data; combine all fieldwork into one computer file saved in plain text format (.txt); combine both interview transcripts into one computer file saved in plain text format (.txt)

11/14: Coding (part 1)

Note: Class will meet in SOCQRL (DuSable 222)

Homework: continuing coding

Week Thirteen: Coding and Analysis

11/19: Coding (part 2)

Note: class will meet in SOCQRL (DuSable 222)

Homework: finish coding; generate report in HyperResearch (see Blackboard)

11/21: Building an argument

Due: hardcopy of HyperResearch report

Homework: start working on an outline for your final paper

Week Fourteen: Structuring Your Research Paper

11/26: Building an argument (continued)

Reading: Lofland et al. pp. 220-240

Quiz: *Analyzing Social Settings*

Homework: continue working on an outline for your final paper

11/28: Thanksgiving break

Homework: finish the outline for your final paper

Week Fifteen: Finishing Your Research Project

12/03: Writing your research paper

Due: outline

Homework: study for exam; come to class prepared to ask any remaining questions about finishing your research paper

12/05: Exam: *Analyzing Social Settings*

Homework: finish research paper

Week Sixteen: Research Paper Due

* Your final research paper must be turned in no later than the end of the officially scheduled exam period; instructions for turning in papers can be found on Blackboard