

SOCO 5170 Qualitative Research Methods

Professor Lee Ching Kwan (ckl@ust.hk)

Spring 2021 Thursday 15:00 – 17:50pm
Office hours: Tuesday 14:00-15:00 Academic Building 3386

This course introduces post-graduate students to the theory and practice of qualitative methods -- participant observation and in-depth interviews. We begin by reading carefully and critically two qualitative studies which apply these two methods. We will then discuss the methodological and analytical strategies involved in designing and executing qualitative research by examining the logic of formulating research questions, sampling, casing, comparison, inter-subjectivity in interviews, concept formation, theoretical construction, ethical and political issues in doing ethnographic fieldwork. Students will choose a field site to conduct preliminary interviews and ethnographic fieldwork and learn to code, analyze, conceptualize and theorize from and with the data.

Requirements

1. Attend all class meetings and participate in discussion (20%)
2. Submit 2 questions for discussion (**due every Wednesday noon**) and serve as discussion leader for one week's readings (20%)
3. Conduct preliminary fieldwork for discussion (10%); 1-page project note **due February 26**
4. Research proposal due end of semester (50%) **due May 16**

Outline of Topics

Week One	Qualitative Methods: Why, What, How?
Week Two	Ethnography
Week Three	Comparative Qualitative Research
Week Four	The Extended Case Method: Micro-Macro Linkage
Week Five	Theoretical Sampling
Week Six	Comparative Analysis
Week Seven	Ethnographic Interviewing
Week Eight	Power, "Informed Consent" and Reflexivity
Week Nine	Writing, Editing, Analyzing Fieldnotes

Week Ten	Concept Formation and Theory Reconstruction
Week Eleven	“Casing” and Framing Research
Week Twelve	Project-based practicum
Week Thirteen	Project-based practicum

How to enroll? Non-UST students can look up the details on the UST website: <https://arr.ust.hk/reg/an/pgcourse.htm> and download the application form to submit to your home institution which will then forward your application for instructor approval. Have questions? Contact: ckl@ust.hk

About the instructor Professor C.K. Lee (李靜君) is Chair Professor at the Social Science Division, HKUST. Born and educated in Hong Kong, she obtained her PhD in Sociology at UC Berkeley. She was a faculty at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, before moving to UCLA more than a decade ago. Her research interests include political sociology, protests, labor, development, China, Hong Kong, global and comparative ethnography. She is the author of three award-winning monographs: *Gender and the South China Miracle: Two Worlds of Factory Women* (1998), *Against the Law: Labor Protests in China’s Rustbelt and Sunbelt* (2007), and *The Specter of Global China: Politics, Labor and Foreign Investment in Africa* (2017). Her articles have appeared in the *American Journal of Sociology*, *American Sociological Review*, *Theory and Society*, *New Left Review*, *the China Quarterly*, and *Journal of Asian Studies*. Her most recent co-edited volumes include *The Social Question in the 21st Century: a Global View* (University of California Press, 2019) and *Take Back Our Future: an Eventful Political Sociology of the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement* (Cornell University Press, 2019).

Visit her website for CV and publication downloads:
<https://sosc.ust.hk/blog/faculty/prof-ching-kwan-lee/>

General References

Howard Becker's *Writing for Social Scientists* (1986) and *Tricks of the Trade* (1998)

Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition, (2008)

Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967)

Robert Emerson et al., *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. (1995)

Bonnie Nardi, Tom Boellstorff, T. L. Taylor, Celia Pearce. *Ethnography and Virtual Worlds : A Handbook of Method* (2012)

Michael Burawoy et al., *Ethnography Unbound* (1991), *Global Ethnography* (2000), *Extended Case Method* (2009)

Journals: *Ethnography*; *Qualitative Sociology*; *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*

Readings

Week One Ethnography: Why, What, and How?

- Howard Becker, "How I Learned What a Crock Was" *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 22(1): 28-35.
- Colin Jerolmack and Shamus Khan, "Talk is Cheap: Ethnography and the Attitudinal Fallacy" *Sociological Methods and Research* 43(2): 178-209, 2014.

Week Two Chicago-School Urban Ethnography

- Forrest Stuart, *Down, Out and Under Arrest: Policing and Everyday Life in Skid Row*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016. (available online UST Library)

Recommended:

- Alice Goffman, "On the Run," *American Sociological Review* 74: 339-357, 2009
- Javier Auyero, "Patients of the State," *Latin America Research Review* 46: 1-29, 2011

Week Three Comparative Qualitative Research

- Michael Siciliano, *Creative Control: the Ambivalence of Work in the Culture Industries*. Columbia University Press, 2021

Recommended:

- Z. Fareen Parvez, *Politicizing Islam: the Islamic Revival in France and India*. Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Lynne Haney, *Offending Women: Power, Punishment and the Regulation of Desire*. (UC Press, 2010).
- Jeffrey J. Sallaz, *The Labor of Luck: Casino Capitalism in the United States and South Africa* (UC Press, 2009)
- Michael Burawoy, *Manufacturing Consent*. (Chicago, 1979)

Week Four Extended Case Method: Micro-Macro Linkages

- Michael Burawoy, "The Extended Case Method" in *Ethnography Unbound*. California, 1991.
- Ching Kwan Lee and Yonghong Zhang, "The Power of Instability: Unraveling the Microfoundation of China's Bargained Authoritarianism," *American Journal of Sociology* 118: 1475-1508, 2013.

Week Five Theoretical Sampling

- Barney Glaser and Anslem Strauss, "Theoretical Sampling" in *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1967.
- Mario Small, "How Many Cases Do I Need?" *Ethnography* 10(1): 5-38, 2009.

Week Six Comparative Analysis

- Charles Ragin, *The Comparative Method*. UC Press, 1987, Chapters 2,3,4.
- CK Lee, "An Ethnography of Comparative Ethnography: Pathways to Three Logics of Comparison" in *Beyond the Case*, eds. By Corey Abramson and Neil Gong. Oxford University Press, 2019.

Week Seven In-depth Interviews, Oral History

- Joseph C. Hermanowicz, "The Great Interview: 25 Strategies for Studying People in Bed," *Qualitative Sociology*, 25(4), 2002.

- Marcos Emilio Perez, "Life Histories and Political Commitment in a Poor People's Movement," *Qualitative Sociology* 41: 89-109, 2018.
- Elliot Mishler, "The Joint Construction of Meaning," in *Research Interviewing: Context and Narrative*. Harvard, 1986, pp. 52-65.
- Hesse-Biber, S., and P. Leavy. "Oral History: A Collaborative Method of (Auto) Biography Interview." *The Practice of Qualitative Research*. SAGE, 2005, pp.150-151.

Week Eight Power, "Informed Consent," Reflexivity in Fieldwork

- Troy Duster et al., "Field Work and the Protection of Human Subjects," *The American Sociologist* 14: 136-142, 1979.
- Philippe Bourgois, "Confronting Anthropological Ethics: Ethnographic Lessons from Central America," *Journal of Peace Research* 27(1): 43-54, 1990.
- Judith Stacey, "Can There be a Feminist Ethnography?" in Sherna Gluck and Daphne Patai (eds) *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*. Routledge, 111-119, 1991.

Recommended:

- David Tittensor, "Doing Political Ethnography in a Difficult Climate: a Turkish Case Study" *Ethnography* 17(2): 213-228, 2016.
- Paul Lichterman, "Interpretive Reflexivity in Ethnography," *Ethnography* 18(1):35-45, 2017.

Week Nine Writing, Editing, Analyzing Fieldnotes

- Robert Emerson et al., *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago, 1995. Chs 2-4.
- Robert Blauner, "Problems of Editing 'First-Person' Sociology," *Qualitative Sociology* 10(1): 46-64, 1987.
- Comments on each others' fieldnotes

Recommended:

- Michael Burawoy. 2001. "Critical Sociology: A Dialogue between Two Sciences" *Contemporary Sociology* 27(1): 12-20.
- Roger Sanjek, *Fieldnotes: the Makings of Anthropology*. Cornell U Press, 1990.

- John Van Maanen, *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*. Chicago, 1988.
- Robert Emerson, *Contemporary Field Research*, Part III, 1995.

Week Ten Concept Formation, Theory Reconstruction

- Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition, (2008) selection.
- Michael Burawoy, "Reconstruction of Social Theory" in *Ethnography Unbound*, 1991.

Week Eleven "Casing" and Framing Research

- John Walton, "Making the Theoretical Case," in Charles Ragin and Howard Becker (eds.) *What is A Case?* Cambridge, 1992, pp. 121-137.

Week Twelve Project Practicum

Week Thirteen Project Practicum