

Qualitative and Fieldwork Working Group: Provisional Seminar Syllabus

The Qualitative and Fieldwork Working Group organises this student-led seminar series to provide a complementary learning facility to the qualitative research methods courses offered at the EUI. In doing so we build upon the existing curriculum on offer but concentrate on specific aspects of qualitative research. We aim to provide a hands-on approach by inviting experienced speakers to present and answer questions about a particular approach or method.

The list of themes in this 'syllabus' is a work in progress and has been designed based on an initial feedback from some of 1st and 2nd year SPS researchers. The list will be adjusted following further comments received during the first Working Group meet up in December. In particular we welcome suggestions as to the speakers - from recent post-docs to established professors. Readings are not final and required readings will be limited to two texts per session. Dates and time of the session will also be decided following that session. We expect that when inviting guests, the time and date of each working group session may vary. We will notify all participants accordingly.

Meta Theory

1. Ethics with Dr. Luigi Achilli | Friday 22nd of January; 13:00 - 15:00

How to ethically approach your research? How to make ethics central to your research design? How to think ethically when designing your research approach? An open debate on how to think ethically when designing your research. Ethical considerations when approaching, working with and protecting your study participants.

Speaker: **Luigi Achilli (EUI)**

Required Readings:

1. Knott, E., 2019. Beyond the Field: Ethics after Fieldwork in Politically Dynamic Contexts. *Perspectives on Politics*, 17 (1), 140–153.
2. Hammersley, M., 2009. Against the ethicists: on the evils of ethical regulation. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12 (3), 211–225.
3. Allen, Charlotte. 1997. "Spies Like Us: When Sociologists Deceive Their Subjects." *Lingua Franca Nov.*, pp. 30-39.

Further reading:

4. Cronin-Furman, K. and Lake, M., 2018. Ethics Abroad: Fieldwork in Fragile and Violent Contexts. *Political Science & Politics*, 51 (3), 607–614.
5. Eck, K., and Cohen, D.K. (2019). "Ethics of Student Research on Political Violence: Starting a Dialogue." *Political Violence at a Glance* (blog). August 29, 2019

6. Kaplan, L., Kuhnt, J., & Steinert, J. I. (2020). "Do no harm? Field research in the Global South: Ethical Challenges Faced by Research Staff." *World Development*, 127.
7. Monson, J. (2020). "Ethics of Transregional Research and the Covid-19 Pandemic." *Items*.
8. Pittaway, E.; Bartolomei, L., & Hugman, R. (2010). "Stop Stealing Our Stories': The Ethics of Research with Vulnerable Groups." *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, 2(2), 229–251.
9. Subotić, J. (2020). "Ethics of Archival Research on Political Violence." *Journal of Peace Research*, 1–13.
10. Bourgois, P (2006) Foreward. In: Sanford, V, Angel-Ajani, A (eds) *Engaged Observer: Anthropology, Advocacy, and Activism*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, pp. ix–xii.
11. Abedi Dunia, O., Eriksson Baaz, M., Mwambari, D., Parashar, S., Toppo, A. O. M., & Vincent, J. B. M. (2020). "The Covid-19 Opportunity: Creating More Ethical and Sustainable Research Practices." *Items*.

2. Positionality with Dr Shannon Philip | Friday 5th of February; 13:00 - 15:00

An open debate on the importance of positionality in fieldwork. How did your gender, subjective identities, race, and religion, among other factors, affect your research, yourself, and the relationships between you and your participants? How are power and positionality connected? How can we address positionality in our research designs, during the fieldwork and in the analysis?

Speaker: **Dr Shannon Philip (University of Cambridge)**

Required Readings:

1. Ortobals, C. D., & Rincker, M. E. (2009). *Fieldwork, Identities, and Intersectionality: Negotiating Gender, Race, Class, Religion, Nationality, and Age in the Research Field Abroad: Editors' Introduction*. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 42(02), 287–290.
2. Alcalde, M. Cristina. 2007. "A Feminist Anthropologist's Reflections on Dilemmas of Power and Positionality in the Field." *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 7 (2): 143–62

Further Reading

3. Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. 1988. "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses." *Feminist Review* 30: 61–88.
4. *Queer methods and methodologies : intersecting queer theories and social science research* / edited by Kath Browne, Catherine J. Nash. Farnham ; Burlington, Vt. : Ashgate: 2010

5. Bressmer, J. (2020). "Reflections on Unlearning Whiteness during Research Fieldwork." *Africa at LSE* (blog). January 28.
6. Marchais, G. (2020). "Contemporary Research Must Stop Relying on Racial Inequalities." *Africa at LSE* (blog). January 30.
7. Mertens, C., Perazzone, S., & Laudati, A. (2020). "Ethics and Identity in Globally Unequal Structures of Research." *Africa at LSE* (blog). January 27
8. Roxburgh, S. (2017). "Read Black and White: Decolonizing African Studies in North America." *Research in Difficult Settings*.

3. Decolonising Fieldwork with Dr. Mayssoun Sukarieh | Friday 26th of February; 13:00 - 15:00

What are the colonial practices within fieldwork? When should Global North researchers refrain from fieldwork? How to understand and negotiate research fatigue and over-researching?

Speaker: **Dr. Mayssoun Sukarieh (King's College London)**

Required Readings:

1. Sukarieh, M. and Tannock, Stuart 2013. On the Problem of Over-researched Communities: The Case of the Shatila Palestinian Refugee Camp in Lebanon. *Sociology* 47 (3) , pp. 494-508.
2. Sukarieh, M. and Tannock, S., 2019. Subcontracting Academia: Alienation, Exploitation and Disillusionment in the UK Overseas Syrian Refugee Research Industry. *Antipode*, 51 (2), 664–680.
3. Middleton, T. and Pradhan, E., 2014. Dynamic duos: On partnership and the possibilities of postcolonial ethnography: *Ethnography*, 15 (3), 355–374.

Nuts and bolts

4. Mapping and Sampling the Field with Dr. Greta Semplici | Friday 19th of March; 13:00 - 17:00

How to identify a field that will help you answer your research questions? What are the appropriate sampling methods for your research question and how to begin your sampling. How to approach participants and 'collaborators' (from fixers to interlocutors to assistants)? Essentially - how to begin to think of your field site and recruiting participants. How and who to contact first?

Speaker: **Dr. Greta Semplici (EUI)**

Recommended reading:

- a. Guest, G., Bunce, A., and Johnson, L., 2006. How Many Interviews Are Enough?: An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability. *Field Methods*, 18 (1), 59–82.
- b. Eriksson Baaz, M., & Utas, M. (2019). Exploring the Backstage: Methodological and Ethical Issues Surrounding the Role of Research Brokers in Insecure Zones. *Civil Wars*, 21(2), 157–178.
- c. Small, M. (2009) 'How many cases do I need': On science and the logic of case selection in field-based research', *Ethnography* 10: 5-38.
- d. Collier, D. and Mahoney, J. (1996) 'Insights and pitfalls- Selection bias in qualitative work', *World Politics* 49- 59
- e. Marland, A., & Esselment, A. L. (2018). Negotiating with gatekeepers to get interviews with politicians: qualitative research recruitment in a digital media environment. *Qualitative Research*.
- f. Goldstein, K. (2002) 'Getting in the door- Sampling and completing interviews', *Political Science and Politics* 35- 669-672.
- g. Grandia, L. 2015. 'Slow ethnography: a hut with a view'. *Critique of Anthropology* 35:3. Eriksson Baaz, M., & Utas, M. (2019). Exploring the Backstage: Methodological

5. Rapport in the Field with Prof. Gordon Mathews | Friday 9th of April; 13:00 - 15:00

Building on the previous meet up, this session will concentrate on how to progress in an already established field. How to gain trust and continue to build a rapport? How to navigate the blurred lines of friendships and professional relations?

Speaker: **Prof. Gordon Mathews (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)**

Reading:

- a. Sherif, B. (2001). The Ambiguity of Boundaries in the Fieldwork Experience- Establishing Rapport and Negotiating Insider/Outsider Status. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(4), 436–447.
- b. Mathews, G. (2011). *Ghetto at the Centre of the World: Chungking Mansions Hong Kong*. Hong Kong University Press

Further Reading

- c. Khan, H., 2020. Friendships Built on (Dis)Trust: Navigating fragility during fieldwork [online]. *The New Ethnographer*. Available from: <https://www.thenewethnographer.org/the-new-ethnographer/2019/08/01/friendships-built-on-distrust-navigating-fragility-during-fieldwork>.
- d. Liebow, Elliot. 1967. "Appendix- A Field Experience in Retrospect," in Tally's Corner, pp. 232-256.

6. Focus Groups with Dr. Liam Stanley | Friday 7th of May; 13:00 - 15:00

How can we best implement the focus group method in political science research? What are the do's and don't's? What epistemological and theoretical consideration play a role when designing, conducting and analysing focus groups?

Speaker: **Dr. Liam Stanley (The University of Sheffield)**

Reading:

- a. Stanley, L. (2016). Using focus groups in political science and international relations. *Politics*, 36(3), 236–249.

Further Readings (TBC)

7. Encountering Adversal Opinions with Dr. Agnieszka Pasieka | Friday 21st of May; 13:00 - 15:00

Ethical and methodological considerations when researching sensitive topics and extremist groups. How to deal with people with extreme socio-political opinions? How to talk to and study people you disagree with?

Speaker: **Dr. Agnieszka Pasieka (The University of Vienna)**

Reading:

- a. Pasiëka, A. (2017). Taking Far-Right Claims Seriously and Literally- Anthropology and the Study of Right-Wing Radicalism. *Slavic Review*, 76(S1), S19–S29. doi-10.1017/slr.2017.154
- b. PASIEKA, A. (2019). Anthropology of the far right- What if we like the “unlikeable” others? *Anthropology Today*, 35(1), 3–6. doi-10.1111/1467-8322.12480
- c. Blee, K.M. (2007) ‘Ethnographies of the Far Right’, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 36: 119-128.

8. Physical Safety and Mental Health | Friday 11th of June; 13:00 - 15:00

What are the dangers of fieldwork for the researched and researchers? What are the Mental Health issues we should expect in fieldwork, and how can we prevent, or deal with them?

Speaker: Kevin Köhler (Leiden University)

Readings (TBC):

- a. Movie/Documentary: Giulio Regini: ‘9 days in Cairo’
- b. Hummel, C., & El Kurd, D. (2020). Mental Health and Fieldwork. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 1-5.
- c. Begley, L., 2009. The other side of fieldwork: experiences and challenges of conducting research in the border area of Rwanda/eastern Congo. *Anthropology Matters*, 11 (2).
- d. Sriram, Chandra, John C. King, Julie A. Mertus, Olga Martin-Ortega and Johanna Herman (eds.) (2009). *Surviving Field Research: Working in Violent and Difficult Situations*. New York: Routledge.
- e. Safer Field Research in the Social Sciences. A Guide to Human and Digital Security in Hostile Environments (2020) - Grimm, Koehler et al (eds)

Innovative Approaches

9. Online Fieldwork

How to create conditions of sociality online? The pros and cons of online interviews? The importance of online/digital ethnography in the Covid-19 world and beyond.

Speaker: TBC

Reading:

- a. Käihkö I. (2021) Conflict Ethnography Goes Online: Chatnography of the Ukrainian Volunteer Battalions. In: Mac Ginty R., Brett R., Vogel B. (eds) *The Companion to Peace and Conflict Fieldwork*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham

- b. Varis, P. (2014). *Digital ethnography*. (Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies; No. 104). Also in: Varis, P., 2016, *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Digital Communication* . Georgakopoulou, A. & Spilioti, T. (eds.). London : Routledge, p. 55-68
- c. Pink, S. (2016). Digital ethnography. *Innovative methods in media and communication research*, 161-165.