

GEO5934.03
Qualitative Geography
Spring 2013, Bellamy 317
Wednesday, 2:00-4:30

Dr. Joseph Pierce
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Office Hours: Mondays, 12:30-2:30pm / by appointment
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Course Description

This course is intended to introduce you to the theories and methods of qualitative geographic practice. At the end of the semester you should have sufficient knowledge and understanding of qualitative research, as it applies to geographic questions, to be able to begin to answer the following questions:

- 1) **What is qualitative research? How are qualitative interests expressed in geography?**
- 2) **What are the major theoretical approaches that incorporate qualitative methods?**
- 3) **How are commonly used qualitative methods practiced?**
- 4) **How can one evaluate the quality or usefulness of qualitative research?**

This course offers a mix of theory and practice. We will spend time reading and examining “exemplar” articles from the qualitative canon; we will read some qualitatively focused theory; and we will practice qualitative research techniques on each other. We will also talk about the practical issues involved in the design and implementation of qualitative research methods.

Required Readings

There is no required text for this course. Readings will often be made available via Blackboard; however, there will be assignments that I expect you to find for your own reading, and I will try to keep you apprised a couple of weeks in advance. **You are expected to act as scholars and find the appropriate cited texts via journal access and the library system.** (You may want to work together on collecting the readings for each week, but that is your business.)

Assignments and Grading

All written assignments should use the following format: 12 point Times New Roman, double spaced, 1 inch margins, with a single-spaced heading that includes the assignment name, date turned in, and your name on the first line, with the title of the piece on the second. Papers should be roughly 1000-1100 words, or about 4 full pages plus references.

Theory Papers: Theory Papers are due *before* class begins if you choose to turn one in—in other words, you should write the paper about the current week’s readings before we discuss them in class. **You owe me three of these during the semester.**

TP Grade: 30% (10% per paper)

Practice Papers: These are also due *the week after* a practice session, before class begins—in other words, you should write the paper about the previous week’s practice, typically outside of class. These papers are a reflection on your experience attempting to implement a research method in the context of the class; the things that were difficult for you as a proto-researcher; what you wish you understood better. **You owe me three of these during the semester.**

PP Grade: 30% (10% per paper)

Final Paper: Everyone owes me one final paper, about the same length as the interim papers (it might run a little longer as needed). This paper is a plan to use a qualitative approach to a question/problem you are interested in for your own research. *This is not a formal research proposal.* It is a scoping and planning document that might help you produce a research proposal, and is meant to give me a formal opportunity to engage with your evolving thoughts about your own research.

FP Grade: 10%

Ongoing Class Participation: Student participation in class discussions is critical to the function and success of this course. Being in class, on-time, prepared and in an appropriate head space to actively engage with your classmates is an important element of your evaluation. I expect you to have read all of the assigned readings each week; to have *opinions* about those readings beyond whether or not you liked them; regularly participate in discussion. **You cannot do well in this course if you do not participate productively and regularly in discussion.** Most weeks, a subgroup of students will be assigned to digest and present the readings for that session. I cannot stress enough that this does not change each student’s obligation to come to class prepared to discuss each and every reading.

Participation Grade: 30%

<p>A word about grading: As is true for many of my colleagues, I try to guide students regarding what qualifies as good without setting an outer bound for what is excellent. We will discuss in further detail what I am seeking in each of these assignments as they approach, but what I value most is your creative engagement with reading materials and the various assignments as a vehicle for learning. I urge you to make assignments your own by <i>discussing with me</i> outside of class whether your proposed approach will satisfy the requirements of the assignment.</p>

Numeric grades on assignments will translate to letter grades on the following scale:

92 to 100.0% = A	77 to 79 = C+
90 to 92 = A-	73 to 76 = C
87 to 89 = B+	70 to 72 = C-
83 to 86 = B	60 to 69 = D
80 to 82 = B-	0 to 59 = F

Note that a B is the minimum grade for credit within either the M.A. or Ph.D. program. If you do not earn a B or higher in the course, you will have to repeat it the following fall.

Class Policies

Classroom Ground Rules: Every student deserves an academic environment in which they are free to intellectually explore and participate in discussion safely and comfortably. All students are expected to abide by basic ground rules and avoid disparaging or inflammatory comments to their classmates.

Classroom Technology: Mobile phones, texting, email, messaging, facebook, etc.—any personal communication or use of technology for non-classroom purposes—is not permitted. I reserve the right to prohibit the use of laptops, tablets, etc. in the classroom if I have concerns regarding focus and attention to class activities. Classroom technology is a privilege! Don't ruin it for your classmates.

University Attendance Policy: Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not *arbitrarily* penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness. That noted, keep in mind that, as per university policy, the decision to evaluate and accept or decline documentation of illness or crisis ultimately remains the right of the instructor.

Assignment Submission: All assignments should be submitted electronically via Blackboard. **Assignments will not be accepted late**, where late means after the scheduled beginning of class for that week. Please do not test me on this. The point of the papers is for you to organize your thoughts without the prior benefit of class discussion; I simply will not accept them after the discussion begins.

Late Work: Timely submission of assignments is key to the smooth functioning of the class. If a catastrophic injury (falling pianos, aftermath of being tied to railroad tracks, etc.) forces your absence from class, I may consider your late assignment with substantial penalty *at my discretion*. Grade disputes must be addressed to the instructor *within two weeks* of the grade being posted online; you are responsible for keeping up with your grades as they are posted to the course website.

Academic Honor Policy: The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “. . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm>.)

Free Tutoring from FSU: For tutoring and writing help in any course at Florida State University, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services’ comprehensive list of tutoring options - see <http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring> or contact tutor@fsu.edu for more information. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

Americans With Disabilities Act: Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice), (850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu <http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

Syllabus Change Policy: Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

Syllabus continues with course schedule on the following page.

Course Schedule for Qualitative Geography

Each week we meet once except as interrupted by holidays. You are expected to have read all of the assigned material before that class session; any written assignments are due *before* the beginning of the session unless otherwise noted. In other words, if you turn in a TP for week three, you must submit it on paper before I begin addressing the class on the Wednesday of that week.

Most sessions, some students will be assigned responsibility to present specific readings or groups of readings. *Everyone* must still *complete and be prepared to discuss* all assigned readings.

SEGMENT ONE: Big Theoretical Stories

Week One: Introduction (Jan 9)

Key Questions: What is on the syllabus? What is qualitative research? What is the big picture here?

Week Two: Naming the Qualitative in Geography (Jan 16)

Key Questions: What do geographers think qualitative geography is?

Readings:

- Creswell, J. (2007) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. Chapter 2 “Philosophical ... Frameworks” pp. 15-34.
- Denzin N. and Lincoln Y. (2000) Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 1-28.
- Hill M. (1981) Positivism: A ‘hidden’ philosophy in geography. In M. Harvey and B. Hollis, eds. *Themes in Geographic Thought*. London: Croom Helm, pp. 38-60.
- Dixon, D. and Jones J. P. (1998) My dinner with Derrida. *Environment and Planning A* 30: 247-260.

Week Three: Ethical Concerns (Jan 23)

Key Questions: With what special ethical concerns must qualitative geographers grapple?

Readings:

- Hay, I. (2006) Ethical practice in geographical research. In N. Clifford and G. Valentine, eds. *Key Methods in Geography*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. 37-53.
- Martin, D. G. (2007) Bureaucratization of Ethics: Institutional Review Boards and Participatory Research. *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* 6(3): 319-328.

- Duneier M. (1999) Introduction, Ch. 3, and Appendix, Sidewalk. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, pp. 3-14, 43-80, 333-357, notes. (*Skim chap 3, focus on appendix, which focuses on methods*)
- Hasan H. (1999). Afterword, in Duneier M.. Sidewalk. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, pp. 319-330.

(Jan 30 class will be postponed to finals week; exact time TBD in interaction with your own finals schedules)

Week Four: Epistemic Stances (Feb 6)

Key Questions: What kind of knowledge are we talking about?

Readings:

- Schwandt T. (2000) Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: interpretivism, hermeneutics, and constructionism. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, eds. Handbook of Qualitative Research. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. 189-213.
- Geertz C. (1973) Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture, Chapter One in Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-30.
- Foucault, M (1970) Las Meninas, Chapter One, The Order of Things. NY: Random House, pp. 1-16. (Reading includes Foreword and Preface as well).
- Del Casino V., Grimes A., Hanna S. and Jones J.P. (2000) Methodological frameworks for the geography of organizations. Geoforum 31: 523-538.
- Harding, S (1987) Introduction: Is there a feminist method? In S. Harding, ed., Feminism and Methodology. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, pp. 1-13.
- Rose, D (1993) On feminism, method and methods in human geography: an idiosyncratic overview. Canadian Geographer 37(1): 57-61.
- Miller, G., Fox K. (2004) Building bridges: the possibility of analytic dialogue between ethnography, conversation analysis and Foucault. Ch 3 in D. Silverman, ed., Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Pp. 35-55.

SEGMENT TWO: Methods

Week Five: The So-called “Archive” (Feb 13)

Key Questions: What is archival research in an electronic age?

Readings:

- Creswell, J. (2007) Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. Chapter 4 “Five qualitative approaches to inquiry” pp. 53-84.
- Perramond E. (2001) Oral histories and partial truths in Mexico. The Geographical Review 91 (1-2): 151-157.
- Harris C. (2001) Archival fieldwork. The Geographical Review 91 (1- 2): 328-334.
- Boyer, K. (2004) Feminist geography in the archive: practice and method. In Women and Geography Study Group, Ed. Geography and Gender Reconsidered. Institute of British Geographers, pp. 169-174.

- Martin, D. G. (2006) Constructing place identities through community documents and print media. Paper presented at the Social Science History Association Conference, Minneapolis, MN, Nov 2006.
- Lee. How is a political public space made?—The birth of Tiananmen Square and the May Fourth Movement. *Political Geography* (2008)

Week Six: Surveys and Highly Structured Interviews (Feb 20)

Key Questions: What can a survey measure? What are the benefits and drawbacks of working with a straitjacket?

Readings:

- Maxwell, (2004) *Qualitative Research Design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. Chapters 5 “Methods” and 6 “Validity” pp. 63-98.
- Segal et al. Reliability of the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-III-R: An Evaluative Review. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (July/August), 1994: pp 316-327
- Phellas, Bloch and Seale. Chap 11, *Structured Methods: Interviews, Questionnaires and Observation*
- Bravo, Canino, Rubio-Stipec, and Woodbury-Farina. 1991. A cross-cultural adaptation of a psychiatric epidemiologic instrument: The diagnostic interview schedule's adaptation in Puerto Rico. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 15(1)1-18.

Week Seven: Agonizing Over the Qualitative (Feb 27)

Key Questions: We reflect on the position of the qualitative.

Readings:

- Crang. Qualitative methods: the new orthodoxy?. *Progress in Human Geography* (2002)
- Guba. Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Technology Research and Development* (1981) vol. 29 (2) pp. 75-91
- Moles. A Walk in Thirdspace: Place, Methods and Walking. *SOCIOL RES ONLINE* (2008) vol. 13 (4) pp. 1-12
- Morse et al. Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research. *International journal of qualitative methods* (2008) vol. 1 (2) pp. 13-22
- Onwuegbuzie and Leech. A call for qualitative power analyses. *Quality and Quantity* (2007) vol. 41 (1) pp. 105-121

Week Eight: Focus Groups (Mar 6)

Key Questions: What does a group know that the group of individuals does not?

Readings:

- 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.
- Secor, A. (2002) The Veil and Urban Space in Istanbul: women's dress, mobility and Islamic knowledge. *Gender, Place and Culture* 9(1): 5-22.

Spring Break. Enjoy Yourself.

Week Nine: Semi-structured Interviews (Mar 20)

Key Questions: How semi is the structure? (Or, what won't raise eyebrows?)

Readings:

- Berg, B. L. (1995) *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (current, 6th edition is 2006). Allyn and Bacon publishers. Ch 3, "A Dramaturgical Look at Interviewing" pp. 29-67.
- Elwood, S. and D. G. Martin (2000) 'Placing' Interviews: Location and scales of power in qualitative research. *Professional Geographer* 52(4): 649-657.
- Duncan J. and Duncan N (2001) Theory in the field. *The Geographical Review* 91(1-2): 399-406.
- Duncan J. and Duncan N (2001) Sense of place as a positional good: locating Bedford in space and time. In P. Adams, S. Hoelscher, K. Till, eds., *Textures of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. Pp. 41-54.

Week Ten: Mental Mapping (Mar 27)

Key Questions: Oh, right, the spatial: what do we do about that?

Readings:

- Guo. Mind the map! The impact of transit maps on path choice in public transit. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice* (2011)
- Gould, P. On Mental Maps. Michigan Inter-University Community of Mathematical Geographers, Discussion Paper 9, 1966.
- Brown. Queering the Map: The Productive Tensions of Colliding Epistemologies. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* (2008)
- Gould and White. *Mental Maps*. 1974.

April 3 will be a hiatus.

Week Eleven: Ethnography (April 10)

Key Questions: What is the ethnographic instrument?

Readings:

- Stewart, A. 1998. *The Ethnographer's Method*. QRMS, Sage. (Skim)
- 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.
- Herbert, Steve. 2000. For ethnography. *Progress in Human Geography* 24(4): 550–568.
- Whyte, William F. (1996) On the evolution of *Street Corner Society* In A. Lareau and J. Shultz, eds., *Journeys Through Ethnography* Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pp. 9-73.
- Abu-Lughod L. (1999[1986]) Preface to 2nd Edition, and Chapter One Guest and Daughter, in *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. xi-xxix and 1-35.
- Kondo D. (1990) The Eye, Chapter One in *Crafting Selves: Power, Gender, and Discourses of Identity in a Japanese Workplace*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 3-48.
- Kondo D. (1990) Company as Family? Chapter Six in *Crafting Selves: Power, Gender, and Discourses of Identity in a Japanese Workplace*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 199-125.

Week Twelve: Qualitative/Critical GIS (April 17)

Key Questions: How can digital data be qualitative? Isn't that ridiculous?

Readings:

- Elwood. Critical issues in participatory GIS: Deconstructions, reconstructions, and new research directions. *Transactions in GIS* (2006)
- Kwan and Knigge.... Doing qualitative research using GIS: an oxymoronic endeavor?. *Environment and Planning A* (2006)
- Elwood and Leitner. GIS and Spatial Knowledge Production for Neighborhood Revitalization: Negotiating State Priorities *Journal of Urban Affairs* (2003)
- Knigge and Cope. Grounded visualization: integrating the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data through *Environment and Planning A* (2006)

SEGMENT FOUR: Reflection and Reflexivity

Week Thirteen: Mixing Your Methods Productively (April 24)

Key Questions: How do you mix methods without subjugating the qualitative?

Readings:

- Pratt, G. in collaboration with the Philippine Women Centre of B.C. and Ugnayan ng Kabataang Pilipino sa Canada/Filipino-Canadian Youth Alliance (2007) Working with Migrant Communities: Collaborating with the Kalayaan Centre in Vancouver, Canada, in Sara Kindon, Rachel Pain and Mike Kesby, eds, *Participatory Action Research Approaches and Methods: Connecting People, Participation and Place*. London: Routledge. Pp. 95-103
- Maxey, I (1999) Beyond boundaries? Activism, academia, reflexivity and research. *Area* 31(3): 199-208.

- Elwood. MULTIPLE REPRESENTATIONS, SIGNIFICATIONS AND EPISTEMOLOGIES IN COMMUNITY-BASED GIS (Chap 4) *Qualitative GIS*. (2009) pp. 1-18
- Wai-chung Yeung. Practicing New Economic Geographies: A Methodological Examination. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* (2003)

Week Fourteen: The Self-conscious Qualitative Researcher (Date TBD, week of finals)

Key Questions: What is the Turnerian thesis of disciplinary prestige for geography?
What are the dissents, retorts, and objections?

Readings:

- Perä kylä , A (2004) Reliability and validity in research based on naturally occurring social interaction, ch. 15 in D. Silverman, ed. *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 283-304.
- McLean and Leibing eds, Intro, Chaps 1, 2, in *The Shadow Side of Fieldwork: Exploring the Blurred Borders between Ethnography and Life*.
- Bailey, C, C. White and R. Pain (1999) Evaluating qualitative research: dealing with the tension between 'science' and 'creativity'. *Area* 31(2): 169-178.
- Baxter, J and J Eyles (1999) Prescription for research practice? Grounded theory in qualitative evaluation. *Area* 31(2): 179-181
- Bailey, C, C. White and R. Pain (1999) Response. *Area* 31(2): 182-183.