



Boston College
The Carolyn A. and Peter S. Lynch School of Education

EDUC/APSY 9864: ADVANCED QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
FALL 2017

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Classes: Wednesday, 4:30-6:50pm

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Office Hours: By appointment

Doing violence to those we seek to represent comes with the territory. Misrepresentation is part of telling stories about people's lives, our own included. The issue is whether to skirt or to face head on such complicities.

Patti Lather

We don't see the world as it is; we see it as we are.

Anais Nin

A changed approach is precisely the goal for the journey ahead: to discover new ways of seeing, to open spaces for possibilities, and to find "fresh methods" for animating and awakening. It is essential to note that this need not be achieved only by such heroic efforts as winged sandals (or stallion). Rather, it is, as Calvino noted, about finding different perspectives, and this begins in thinking about seeing...

Nick Sousanis

Course Description & Goals

This course is designed to provide advanced graduate students with both theoretical and practical opportunities to explore qualitative research across the social sciences. The course focuses first on (not) defining and unwinding the knotty articulations of epistemology, ontology, social theory, and method/ology, while simultaneously engaging with the politics of inquiry.

As a class, Advanced Qualitative Research is largely dependent upon a discursive/recursive inquiry process. Given the seminar format, the course is also designed to be a collaborative and supportive learning space for everyone involved. As such, your participation not only as an emerging researcher but also as a member of this learning community is crucial to individual and collective growth. You will have the opportunity to engage in several specific simulations and applications as well as work to produce a (somewhat) final report of your work. This is a reading and writing intensive course, in which writing is expected and shared each week. Hence, weekly participation is equally substantive in the course requirements.

Broadly speaking, Advanced Qualitative Research will provide students with grounded opportunities to:

- Think-with-theory to distinguish and understand the interrelationships of method/ology, epistemology, and ontology
- Interrogate the potentials, tensions, and issues that cut across quantitative and qualitative social science research
- Distinguish between select qualitative research methodologies
- Develop/construct/continue a research project that coherently addresses theory, method/ology, and audience
- Analyze a set of data through multiple lenses, working with existing data or immediately collecting new data as part of the course
- Situate research methodologies within genealogies and histories of power
- Create/produce a potentially empirical research paper

Outside of the more formal constraints of the course, I also want to encourage you to use this class as an experience, a springboard to unlearn some of the particular (and might I add constraining!) logics ingrained in you from your own histories of participation with schooling and the institution of education. As such, I challenge you to:

- Be moved to tears by something you read
- Discover intuitive connections between your aspirations and your work
- Become freer than you ever thought possible
- Unlearn at least one thing that's been getting in your way
- Try on an idea that you previously rejected out of hand
- Cultivate tolerance of ambiguity
- Face your fears
- Choose your own adventure

General Policies

BC Students with a Disability or Suspected Disability:

If you are a student with a documented disability seeking reasonable accommodations in this course, please contact Kathy Duggan (617) 552-8093, at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities, or Paulette Durrett, (617) 552-3943, in the Disability Services Office regarding all other types of disabilities. *Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.*

BC Academic Integrity

The pursuit of knowledge can proceed only when scholars take responsibility and receive credit for their work. Recognition of individual contributions to knowledge and of the intellectual property of others builds trust within the University and encourages the sharing of ideas that is essential to scholarship. Similarly, the educational process requires that individuals present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique, and eventual reformation. Presentation of others' work as one's own is not only intellectual dishonesty, but also undermines the education process.

Plagiarism, that is, failure to properly acknowledge sources written or electronic, used for verbatim quotations or ideas, is a violation of academic integrity. Each student is responsible for learning and using proper methods of paraphrasing and footnoting, quotation, and other forms of citation, to ensure that the original author, speaker, illustrator, or course of the material used is clearly acknowledged. See the following link for additional details about Academic Integrity: <http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity.html>.

Required and Supplementary Readings

Required Texts:

- Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2011). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Sousanis, N. (2015). *Unflattening*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Other Readings:

You will have a variety of other readings due for the course. They are or will be listed on the session-by-session schedule for the course or will be assigned on a case-by-case basis by your colleagues. All of these reading will be made available either online, through BC libraries, or as PDF files posted on Canvas.

Course Requirements & Assignment Descriptions

Participation (10%)

You are expected to attend all class meetings. Your active engagement in this course will only maximize your learning and the learning of the entire group. I expect you to be prepared for every class, ready to make thoughtful contributions to discussion of the course readings. You are also expected to take an active role in group work and use in-class cooperative learning time productively.

Entering the Conversation / Lead Presenter (10%)

You (and perhaps a partner?) will be responsible for leading a discussion during our seminar. As our discussion moderator, these weeks you will keep our class session on track, bringing us back to central questions, core readings, and concepts. Although not necessary, you may find it useful to provide some background on the articles, its author/s, and/or the “state of the field” during its release (afterall, much of qualitative inquiry is a response to or a rebuttal of). For example, you may inquire: what are/were some of the “big ideas” the reading addresses? How does it relate to contemporary questions concerning qualitative research? Prior to your week, please plan to meet with Wargo to set up an agenda and preview the scope and sequence of the class session.

“Hanging Around” and Thinking with Theory (40%)

Given that “thinking-with-theory” in qualitative research is one of the overarching outcomes and goals for the course, you will be required to engage in an activity entitled “Hanging Around...” Adapted from Dr. Mindy Blaise (Victoria University), “Hanging Around...” asks groups of researchers to plan, observe, and analyze a “site.” In other words, to do some of the more grounded work, we as qualitative researchers actively engage in/with/through. In the first part of “Hanging Around...” you will analyze data through a research question, interrogating how a plan of inquiry and question helps/hinders/informs your understanding and analysis of data. In the second part of the assignment, groups will be asked to perform this research cycle again, however this time through the lens of a concept/theory. More details will be forthcoming.

-----“THE PLAN;” OR, CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE-----

THE UNFAMILIAR GENRE PROJECT: NaED SPENCER (40%)

Imagine and design a pilot or dissertation-length study that incorporates qualitative research methods. Thinking-with-theory, write a proposal to obtain funding for this project. This assignment, which follows partial specifications for the Spencer Foundation Dissertation Fellowship competition (<http://www.spencer.org/programs/index.htm>), should include the following:

- a) 200-word abstract, summarizing the substantive focus and research design of the study and its contribution to education;
- b) 2000-word (or less) narrative describing the proposed project and *written for a generalist audience*. Include the goals of the project, its contribution to the field, and the significance of the work, especially as it relates to education.

In the narrative...

- Place the project in context and outline the theoretical grounding and the relevant literature. Describe the research questions and the research design, the methods of gathering and analyzing data, and interpretation techniques. This narrative discussion should not exceed 2000 words or ten double-spaced typed pages. An additional one-page single-spaced bibliography (using the citation style most relevant to your field of interest) of the sources most important to your research should be appended. Works cited in the narrative discussion should be included in this bibliography.
- General criteria by which this proposal will be evaluated for purposes of this class include: a) importance of the research question to education, b) quality of the research approach and theoretical approach, and c) quality of writing.

More specific questions that will be used to evaluate your proposal include these:

- To what extent does the narrative display an adequate grounding in qualitative research and the politics of inquiry, more broadly?
- To what extent are the design and the methods appropriate to answer the research question(s)?
- To what extent is the study’s argued relevance to education convincing? To what extent is the study likely to yield new knowledge about an important educational pertaining to identity, access, power and culture?
- To what extent does the narrative discussion display strong authorship skills, with a clear organization and structure?

Book Review (40%)

The book review essay project focuses your work toward two guiding goals for the class: to engage in-depth with a scholarly inquiry area in the field of qualitative research and to situate our scholarly interpretations of specific works in relation to the broader field. The book review essay should be 5000-10,000 words in length, including paper text, figures, tables, references, etc. You may use either APA or MLA style. The final version should be of publishable quality (e.g., something you could submit to a venue such as *Education Review: A Journal of Book Reviews*, *Harvard Educational Review*, or *Educational Researcher*). The project should be a single-authored piece of scholarly work. Selecting recent books (you may choose two) will increase the odds of eventually publishing your piece.

Research Manuscript (40%)

Using empirical data analyzed throughout the course of the semester and/or as part of an independent project, compose a publishable research manuscript. This paper should be one that addresses a key area of your research, reflects the essential components of a purposeful and integrated research project, and is well targeted for a publishing outlet in your field of scholarship. The paper will be assessed on its reflection of your learning in the course and its cogent treatment of the research focus. These papers should be 6000-10,000 words (inclusive of references).

Critical Keywords in Qualitative Research: (40%)

Compose an entry for an imaginary text entitled *Keywords for Qualitative Research*. As Raymond Williams wrote in his *Keywords* (1976, 1983): keywords "involve ideas and values" and get used in "interesting or difficult ways." Your definition should offer a scholarly account of the word's origins, but should also focus on a particular interpretation of the word's significance for the study of qualitative research. Please look at the relevant entry or entries from the Oxford English Dictionary, and (when possible) other relevant material. You can access the Oxford English Dictionary online.

- As you begin to compose, survey the history of the keyword itself. From there, move into the controversies in which this keyword is enmeshed.
- To quote New *Keywords*' editors, your entry "should offer concrete examples of usage." Those examples should come from empirical research (primarily) but can certainly include more conceptual and humanities oriented perspectives.
- Following Burgett and Handler's *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, address the following questions as each relates to the study of qualitative research: What kind of projects does your keyword enable? What are the genealogies of the term and how do these genealogies affect its use today? Are there ways of thinking that are occluded or obstructed by the use of this term? With which other keywords is your keyword in conversation?

Critique as Method, Methods Critique (40%)

For this assignment, you should select a dissertation and, using what we have learned in the course, provide a critique of its methodology. By critique, I do not mean mere criticism (finding what is "bad") but rather a way to explore – conduct a critical conversation with – the politics of knowledge production in the dissertation. How did the researcher go about producing and making claims to knowledge? What methods did the researcher use? Do you believe those methods were conducive to answer the study's particular questions and make its particular claim to knowledge and knowing? If so, how? If not, why? To what degree do you believe the methods used in this study matched/enhanced/contradicted the epistemological understandings underlying the topic being studied (in other words, did the study produce a methodology or merely a set of methods)? What did you learn from this critique about conducting qualitative research? How much this knowledge direct you in thinking about your own study? What are some of the absences and silences in this study? On what is this study's methodology silent? Why? With what consequences? How, if at all, does this study deal with ethical issues and those pertaining to power?

NOTE: Incompletes will turn to an "F" by March 1, 2018

COURSE SCHEDULE AND WEEK-BY-WEEK OVERVIEW*

**LEARNING AND TEACHING ARE FLEXIBLE, AS IS THIS SYLLABUS. AS WE ENGAGE IN DISCUSSION, AND I ASSESS LEARNING OUTCOMES/TRAJECTORY, I MAY NEED TO MOVE THINGS AROUND AND/OR ADD/DELETE ITEMS. I WILL ALWAYS LET YOU KNOW AHEAD OF TIME, VIA EMAIL AND IN CLASS ANNOUNCEMENTS, OF ANY ADDENDUMS TO THIS DOCUMENT*

Week / Day	Course Theme & Readings	Assignments Due:
Week 1 August 30	<p>Unflattening Inquiry: Introduction to Course and Qualitative Research</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sousanis, N. (2015). <i>Unflattening</i>. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 	
Week 2 September 6	<p>Paradigms, Rigor, and Purpose: Locating our Moment in Qualitative Inquiry</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lather, P. (2006). Paradigm proliferation as a good thing to think with: Teaching research in education as a wild profusion. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education</i>, 19(1), 35-57. • Sandelowski, M. (1993). Rigor or rigor mortis: The problem of rigor in qualitative research revisited. <i>Advances in Nursing Science</i>, 16(2), 1-8. • Donmoyer, R. (2006). Take my paradigm...please! The legacy of Kuhn's construct in educational research. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education</i>, 19(1), 11-34. 	
Week 3 September 13	<p>Thinking-with-Theory in Qualitative Research: Part I</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Springgay, S. & Truman, S. (2017). On the Need for Methods beyond proceduralism: Speculative middles, intensions, and response-ability in research • Jackson, A. & Mazzei, L. (2012). Introduction (pp. vii-xv) and Plugging one text into another (pp. 1- 14). In. A. Jackson & L. Mazzei (Eds.), <i>Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives</i>. New York, NY: Routledge 	

Week 4 September 20	<h2>Getting our Grounding: Nuancing Differences in Ethnography and Case Study Research</h2> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stake, R. E. (2005). Case studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), <i>Handbook of qualitative research</i> (3rd ed., pp. 443-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Tedlock, B. (2003). Ethnography and ethnographic representation. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), <i>Strategies of qualitative inquiry</i> (2nd ed., pp. 165-213). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Oliveira, G. (2017). Between Mexico and New York City: Mexican Maternal Migration's Influences on Separated Siblings' Social and Educational Lives. <i>Anthropology & Education Quarterly</i>, 48(2), 159-175. Calabrese-Barton, A., Tan, E., & Rivet, A. (2008). Creating hybrid spaces for engaging school science among middle school girls. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i>, 45(1), pp. 68-103. 	
Week 5 September 27	<h2>Data Collection & Analysis – On D/discourse, Language, and Interviewing</h2> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Johnstone, B. (2008). Chapter 1: Introduction. In. B. Johnstone, <i>Discourse Analysis</i>. Malden, MA: Blackwell publishing. Gee, J. (1991). A linguistic approach to narrative. <i>Journal of Narrative and Life History</i> 1(1), 15-39. <p>Jigsaw Readings (Choose one):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. <i>Qualitative Research Journal</i>, 9(2), 27-40. Mishler, E. (1991). Representing discourse: The rhetoric of transcription. <i>Journal of Narrative and Life History</i>, 1(4), 255-280. Juzwik, M. M. (2004). What rhetoric can contribute to an ethnopoetics of narrative performance in teaching: The significance of parallelism in one teacher's narrative. <i>Linguistics & Education</i>, 14(4), 359-386 Mehan, H. (1996). The construction of an LD student: A case study in the politic of representation. (In Silverstein & Urban) pp. 253-276 	

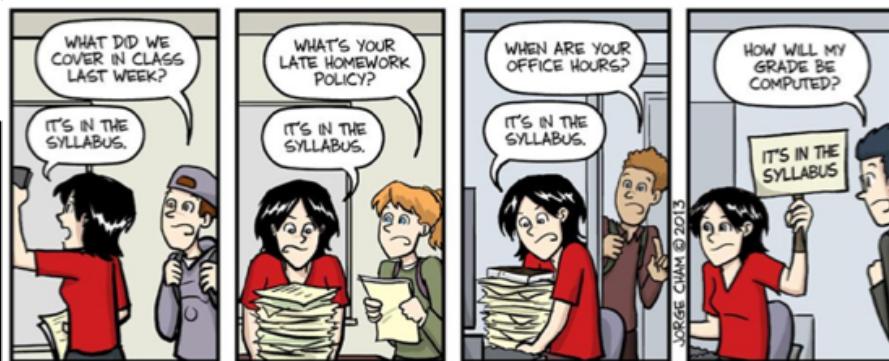
	<p>Data Collection & Analysis – Observation Or, Is Seeing Believing?</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saldana, J. (2009). An introduction to codes and coding. In J. Saldana (ed.), <i>The coding manual for qualitative researchers</i>, 1-31. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. • Charmaz, K. (2006). Coding in grounded theory practice Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis (pp. 42-71). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. • Nespor, J. (2006). Finding patterns with field notes. In J.L. Green, G. Camilli, & P.B. Elmore (Eds.), <i>Handbook of complementary methods in education research</i>, 297-308. Mahwah, NY: Erlbaum. 	<p>Hanging Around Part I Due</p>
<p>Week 6 October 4</p>	<p>Data Collection & Analysis – Cross-case Analysis and Looking for ‘Grows’</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Pierre, E. A., & Jackson, A. Y. (2014). Qualitative data analysis after coding. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i>, 20(6), 715-719. • Miles, M. & Huberman, A.M. (1994). “Chapter 4: Early steps in analysis” in <i>Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook</i>, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. • MacLure, M. (2013). Researching without representation: Language and materiality in post qualitative methodology. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education</i>, 658-667. 	
<p>Week 7 October 11</p>	<p>On Writing and Reporting Qualitative Research</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richardson & St. Pierre – Writing – a Method of Inquiry • Smagorinsky, P. (2008). The method section as conceptual epicenter in constructing social science research reports. <i>Written Communication</i>, 25(3), 389-411. • Ulmer, J. B. (2015). Embodied writing: choreographic composition as methodology. <i>Research in Dance Education</i>, 16(1), 33-50. 	

Week 9 October 25	<p>Inquiry: For whom/what?</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine, M., Weiss, L. Weseen, S. & Wong, L. (2000). For whom? Qualitative research, representations, and social responsibilities • Patel (2016). Decolonizing educational research: From ownership to answerability (pp. 11-28). • Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2014). R-words: Refusing research. In. D. Paris & M. Winn (Eds.), <i>Humanizing research: Decolonizing qualitative inquiry with youth and communities</i>, pp. 223-248. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE 	
Week 10 November 1	<p>Quality in Qualitative Research?</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainor, A. A., & Graue, E. (2012). Reviewing qualitative research in the social sciences (pp. 1-10). New York: Routledge. • Toma, J. D. (2006). Approaching rigor in applied qualitative research In C. F. Conrad & R. C. Serlin (Eds.), <i>The SAGE handbook for research in education: Engaging ideas and enriching inquiry</i> (pp. 405-423). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. • Freeman, M., deMarrais, K., Preissle, J., Roulston, K., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2007). Standards of evidence in qualitative research: An incitement to discourse. <i>Educational Researcher</i>, 36(1), 25-32. 	
Week 11 November 8	<p>Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research: Part II</p> <p>Jigsaw Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose two chapters / theorists (e.g., Foucault, Butler, Deleuze, Barad) from the Jackson & Mazzei text 	
Week 12 November 15	<p>Ethics of Participation / Positionality / Boundaries</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorne, B. (2004). "You still takin' note?" Fieldwork and problems of informed consent. In S. Hebble-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), <i>Approaches to qualitative research: A reader on theory and practice</i> (pp. 159-176). New York: Oxford University Press • Paris, D. (2011). 'A friend who understand fully': notes on humanizing research in a multiethnic youth community. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education</i>, 24(2), 137-149. • Pillow (2003). Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. 	Hanging Around Part II Due

Week 13 November 29	Writing Research, Researching Qualitative Writing? Peer-Review & Writer's Workshop (Online Class)	
	Readings: None	
Week 14 December 6	Moving Forward, Locating Our Moment in Qualitative Inquiry	
	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denzin, N. K. (2017). Critical qualitative inquiry. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i>, 23(1), 8-16. 	
FINALS WEEK		
End of Semester meeting with Wargo and Submit Final projects		

A Final Caveat about Writing for this Course...

This is a writing and reading intensive course. As such, as you begin to work through your ideas for course papers and final projects it is important that you recognize the tenets and criteria that I look for when grading and assessing student work. In general, I consider the following: **rigor** (Are you pushing past surface level and summary oriented observations about the text? Are you engaging with theoretical meaning rather than summarizing?); **engagement** (Does your work build on and/or extend class discussion and insight?); **rhetorical argumentation** (Do you have a “main” claim? Do you use evidence and provide warrants for your claim?); **originality** (Are your thoughts unique to your read? Are you engaging in the text and developing an argument grounded in helping you understand your own experience of reading?); **organization/structure** (Is the paper organized? Can I, as a reader, engage with the writing in a manageable way?); **clarity** (Is your writing tight? Are elements of style and prose clean? Is your paper free from typos? [i.e. have you spell-checked and/or grammar-checked your paper?])



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