Graduate Seminar: READINGS IN ETHNOGRAPHY

Javier Auyero

This reading-intensive seminar has four major objectives: 1) to become familiar with some classic and contemporary ethnographies, 2) to acquaint students with the methodological tenets of ethnography, 3) to consider theoretical and epistemological issues in ethnographic research, 4) to discuss narrative strategies in ethnographic writing.

Throughout the semester will we read ethnographic texts that study different objects from a variety of theoretical perspectives. We will submit these works to a *generative reading*, that is, we will take the analytic, epistemological, and methodological tools these ethnographies provide to think about our own research objects.

After the first two introductory sessions, each class will be organized around a set of questions. *To each text we will ask*: What theory or theories are being used/refined/extended? Is the ethnographic study warranted? Is the ethnographic warrant clearly established? Are the methodological tools well delineated? Is the puzzle/enigma clearly defined? How strong/weak are the links between theoretical claims and empirical evidence? How well is the ‘native’s point of view’ captured/reconstructed? How well is the narrative organized? How is the balance between data gathered from interviews and from observations? How lively or engaging is the narrative? How do you feel as a reader?

**Evaluation**: Seminar participants are required to write a final paper (10 pages max. 1,5 space) on topic to be discussed.

**WEEK ONE**

Philippe Bourgois. *In Search of Respect.*

**Supplementary readings:**

Randol Contreras. *The Stick-up Kids.*

Piri Thomas. *Down these Mean Streets.*

Ernesto Quiñonez. *Bodega Dreams.*

**WEEK TWO**

Clifford Geertz. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Chapter 1

Annette Lareau and Aliya Hamid Rao. “It’s About the Depth of your Data.”

Jack Katz. “Ethnography’s Warrants.” *Sociological Methods and Research* 25(4):391-423.

**Supplementary readings:**

Clifford Geertz “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight.”

Robert Darnton “Workers Revolt: The Great Cat Massacre of the Rue Saint-Severin.”

**WEEK THREE**

Nancy Scheper-Hughes. *Death without Weeping.*

**Supplementary readings:**

Paul Farmer. *Infections and Inequalities*.

**WEEK FOUR**

Jorge Luis Borges. “Funes, his Memory.”

David Snow, Calvin Morrill and Leon Anderson. “Analytic Ethnography” *Ethnography* 4 (2).

Clifford Geertz. *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*. [Chapter 3].

Selections from *Approaches to Ethnography* (Introduction by Jerolmack and Khan, Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 8)

**Supplementary readings**:

Robert Alford. *The Craft of Inquiry*. [Introduction, Chapters 1-3, 5].

Walton, John. "Making the Theoretical Case," in *What is a Case?* By Charles Ragin and H. Becker.

Harper, Douglas. “Small N’s and Community Case Studies,” in *What is a Case?* By Charles Ragin and H. Becker.

Diane Vaughan. “Theorizing Disaster. Analogy, Historical Ethnography, and the Challenger Accident.” *Ethnography* 5 (3).

**WEEK FIVE**

Matthew Desmond. *On the Fireline*.

**Supplementary readings:**

Loïc Wacquant. *Body and Soul.*

**WEEK SIX**

Megan Comfort. *Doing Time Together*. *Love and Family in the Shadow of the Prison.*

**Supplementary readings:**

Javier Auyero. *Patients of the State*.

**WEEK SEVEN**

Forrest Stuart. *Down, Out, and Under Arrest.*

**Supplementary readings:**

Philippe Bourgois and ‎[Jeffrey Schonberg](https://www.google.com/search?safe=strict&hl=en&tbm=bks&tbm=bks&q=inauthor:%22Jeffrey+Schonberg%22&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi0_e_mq5DaAhXQmq0KHS4WCaoQ9AgILDAA). *Righteous Dopefiend*.

### Teresa Gowan. [*Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders: Homeless in San Francisco*](https://books.google.com/books?id=Gpf3DwSwxZcC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Teresa+gowan+book&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjpuayGrJDaAhVFA6wKHSgsD5YQ6AEIKTAA)

**WEEK EIGHT: Ethnographies in article form**

Gretchen Purser and Brain Hennigan. “Work us unto the Lord: Enhancing Employability in an Evangelical Job-Readiness Program.” Qualitative Sociology.

Loïc Wacquant. “The Pugilistic Point of View. How do Boxers Think and Feel about Their Trade.” Theory and Society

Javier Auyero. “From the Client’s Points of View.” Theory and Society

**Supplementary readings:**

Steven Lopez. “Efficiency and the Fix Revisited: Informal Relations and Mock Routinization in a Nonprofit Nursing Home.” Qualitative Sociology

Michael Walker. “Race Making in a Penal Institution” American Journal of Sociology

**WEEK NINE**

Lauren Rivera. *Pedigree.*

**Supplementary readings:**

Shamus Khan. *Privilege*.

**WEEK TEN**

Jason de León. *The Land of Open Graves.*

**Supplementary readings:**

Seth Holmes. *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies.*

Katherine Boo. *Behind the Beautiful Forevers.*

**WEEK ELEVEN**

Esther Sullivan.  *Manufactured Insecurity*.

**Supplementary readings:**

Matthew Desmond. *Evicted*.

**WEEK TWELVE**

Javier Auyero (ed.). *Invisible in Austin* (chapters TBA)

**Supplementary readings:**

Pierre Bourdieu (ed.) *The Weight of the World.*

**WEEK THIRTEEN**

Ben Penglase. *Living with Insecurity in a Brazilian Favela*.

**Supplementary readings:**

Erika Robb Larkins. Spectacular Favela. Violence in Modern Brazil.

Desmond Arias. *Drugs and Democracy in Rio de Janeiro: Trafficking, Social Networks, and Public Security.*