

**Government 62: Research Practice in Qualitative Methods**  
**Spring 2016**  
**CGIS K354, Wednesday 2-4**

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The primary objective of this seminar is to introduce students to the basic principles and tools of qualitative research in the social sciences. A second objective of the course is to prepare students to undertake original research for their senior thesis projects. The course will therefore focus on issues of qualitative research design and methodological application in comparative social science. The various methodological issues covered in this course include causal inference, theoretical generalizability, measurement and conceptualization, comparative research design and selection bias, case study design, and mixing methods. In addition to discussing the methodological obstacles and dilemmas in qualitative research, the course also introduces students to the principal tools of qualitative research—i.e. process tracing, analytic narratives, natural experiments, archival research, interviews, and ethnography. In order to better understand how to craft a good research design and how to effectively apply the methods covered in the course, each week students will read at least one empirical study that exemplifies the method or research design under discussion for that week. Lastly, students will write a research prospectus of their own, incorporating the lessons and tools covered in the course, which they will present to the class at the end of the semester.

***Course requirements and Grading:***

- 1) ***Class and section participation.*** There will be weekly class meetings from 2 to 4 on Wednesdays and weekly sections, day and time TBD. Students are expected to come to both class and section having done the reading for that week, and ready to participate in discussions (*20% of the grade*).  
***Your weekly lecture & section participation grade will be based out of 2 points.*** If you attend class and participate actively and thoughtfully, you will receive 2/2 points for the week. If you attend but do not participate, you will receive 1/2 points. If you do not attend you will receive 0/2 points for the week.
- 2) ***Four Reading Responses.*** For four of the nine weeks that include exemplary works (Weeks 3-11), we would like you to submit a short memo (no more than 700 words) that uses at least one of the methods readings to assess or critique one of the exemplary works

assigned for that week. The goal of these memos is to reflect upon how the author's research design dealt with the concerns raised in the methods readings and other possible concerns with the design that were not (but perhaps should have been) addressed in these readings. You may also reference readings from previous weeks, but the focus should be on the readings for the current week. Lastly, we would like to see at least a sentence or two suggesting possible improvements to the research design or even alternative designs that you would employ if you had to do a similar study. To receive full credit, the memos must be submitted to us via the course Dropbox no later than noon before our Wednesday seminar meetings (*Each reading response counts toward 5% of the grade; memos together constitute 20% of the grade*).

- 3) ***Four Short Papers.*** There will be four short papers designed to help students practice the basics of research design and methods, as well as to develop their final research prospectus (described below).

The first exercise will require students to frame a puzzle, ask a specific research question, and provide a theory and guiding hypotheses (no more than 500 words, due by 5pm on Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup>) (4% of grade).

The second exercise will require students to consider the concepts they will use in their prospectus and how they plan to measure them (no more than 500 words, due by 5PM on Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>) (4% of the grade).

The third short paper will require students to propose a research design for their study, drawing from one or more of the designs presented in the course (no more than 500 words, due by 5 PM on Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>) (6% of grade).

In the fourth short paper, students should select one of the methods discussed in the previous weeks as the principle method for their projects. In this exercise, please discuss briefly that method's advantages and disadvantages for addressing your research question, and some of the specific ways you propose to use this method to address your research question – for example, whom will you interview? Or which judicial rulings or newspaper archives will you consult? (no more than 500 words, due by 5 PM on Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>) (6% of grade).

Please see the final pages of this syllabus for further instructions on these exercises.

- 4) ***Student research workshops.*** As currently planned, we will devote two class sessions at the end of the semester to “workshops” for student research projects. (If necessary, we will schedule an extra session so that there is adequate time for all projects). Students should prepare to circulate to the entire class, three days in advance of the class session, a two-page (single-spaced) statement in which they will present the basics of their research prospectus. This statement should include an abstract, a statement of the question to be addressed, the guiding hypotheses, and a preliminary discussion of results.

Students will read each other's synopses prior to the workshops and post comments on the course homepage. Every student is required to post at least one comment on each classmate's proposal. Authors will then review the comments they've received prior to their prospectus session, and be prepared to lead the discussion of their work. Students will be expected to give a minute and a half framing of their research and discuss any revisions to their plans in light of the feedback they received (*10% of the grade*).

- 5) **Research Prospectus.** Students will write a 12-14 page prospectus for their research project (due by 9 AM on Monday, May 9th), that builds on the four short papers described above. We will arrange individual meetings with all students to discuss their research interests in advance of this assignment, and the final two pages of this syllabus **provide** guidelines on how to write a research prospectus. We would also like you to attach to your prospectus a three-page **research appendix** that provides more detail on your proposed method of gathering evidence. E.g., if you choose to conduct interviews, please submit a list of 8-10 questions that you will ask respondents, along with a brief description of the procedure by which you will identify and contact interviewees and how you would conduct the first part of the interviews. If you choose to use archival data, please provide two pieces of evidence (e.g. newspaper articles, government documents, selections from memoirs, etc.) and how you would use this evidence to evaluate your hypotheses. See the final two pages of this syllabus for further instructions (*30% of the grade*).

### ***Late Policy:***

Reading responses must be deposited in the course Dropbox by noon before class in order to receive credit. They will not be read or receive credit if turned in after noon. All other assignments will be graded down by 1/3 of a letter grade for every 24-hour period in which they are turned in late. Exceptions and extensions will be granted only for medical or personal emergencies, which must be certified by a doctor or a resident dean.

### ***Course website:***

The course website (accessible through Canvas: [canvas.harvard.edu/courses/9839](https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/9839)) will include a copy of the course syllabus, the course readings, and helpful information for course assignments.

### ***Course readings:***

- Expectations for required and suggested reading:
  - Students are expected to do all the readings listed as required. Suggested reading on a given topic is recommended for students wishing to acquire deeper background on that topic and *strongly* recommended for students writing a prospectus that will utilize the methods explored therein.

- All course readings, except for assignments from the books listed below, will be available on the course website, under “Files”, or, if noted, through the Harvard Libraries website.
- There are four course books available for purchase at the Coop. Readings from these books will *not* be available on the course website:
  - Brady, Henry and David Collier, eds. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010.
  - King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
  - Mosley, Layna, ed., *Interview Research in Political Science*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013.
  - Dunning, Thad. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design-Based Approach*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- The required books will also be available on reserve at Lamont Library (LRES).
- We will also assign selections from a recent Ph.D. Dissertation in Government, Alisha Holland, *Forbearance as Redistribution: Enforcement Politics in Urban Latin America* (2014) during appropriate weeks.

***Academic Integrity and Collaboration:***

For all written work in this class, students’ ideas must be their own. Students may read each other’s papers and memos and offer feedback to each other. However, all idea generation and writing for handed-in assignments must be done individually. Students that peer review each other’s work must be sure that their ideas and composition reflect their own individual effort. Students must also adhere to standard citation practices in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped them with their work. Students should adhere to their Houses’ dual submission policies if they plan to turn in papers this semester that substantially overlap with each other (usually because they are all related to the students’ proposed thesis topics).

***Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:***

Students needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a documented disability should present their Faculty Letter from the [Accessible Education Office](#) (AEO) and speak with the Professor within the first three weeks of class meetings. All discussions will remain confidential.

## *Outline of Readings*

### **Part I: Introduction: Framing Puzzles and Drawing Inferences**

**Week 1, January 27: Course Introduction; Asking Questions, Framing Puzzles; Funding**

***Required Reading:***

Grofman, Bernard. *Political Science as Puzzle Solving*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001. Chapter 1 “Introduction,” pp. 1-11.

Mills, C. Wright. “On Intellectual Craftsmanship,” in *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Pp. 195-227.

***If you have not taken Gov 50 or any other courses in research methods, please consult:***

Gerring, John. *Social Science Methodology: A Criterial Framework*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Chapter 8 “Research Design: General Criteria,” pp. 155-199.

***If you are preparing a grant proposal for research funding, the following readings are strongly suggested:***

Barrett, Christopher B. and Jeffrey W. Cason. *Overseas Research: A Practical Guide*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997. Chapter 2 “Identifying a Site and Funding Source,” pp. 6-26.

Przeworski, Adam and Frank Salomon. “The Art of Writing Proposals: Some Candid Suggestions for Applicants to Social Science Research Council Competitions.” *Social Science Research Council* (1988, 1995): 1-8. Available online at:

[http://www.ssrc.org/workspace/images/crm/new\\_publication\\_3/%7B7a9cb4f4-815f-de11-bd80-001cc477ec70%7D.pdf](http://www.ssrc.org/workspace/images/crm/new_publication_3/%7B7a9cb4f4-815f-de11-bd80-001cc477ec70%7D.pdf)

Brooks, Sarah M. “The Ethical Treatment of Human Subjects and the Institutional Review Board Process,” Chapter 2 (pp.45-66) in Mosley, Interview Research in Political Science.

## **Week 2, February 3: The Logic of Inference in the Social Sciences and the Strengths and Limits of Quantitative Methods**

### ***Required Reading:***

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. Chapter 1 “The Science in Social Science,” pp. 3-33, and pp. 99-114 of Chapter 3 “Causality and Causal Inference.”

Collier, David, Henry Brady, and Jason Seawright. “Sources of Leverage in Causal Inference: Toward an Alternative View of Methodology,” in Henry Brady and David Collier, eds. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010. Pp. 169-199.

Hall, Peter. “Aligning Ontology and Methodology,” in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Pp. 373-391. (NB: Do not read beyond p. 391, as pp. 391-404 will be assigned in the process-tracing week.)

### ***Suggested Reading:***

Gerring, John. *Social Science Methodology: A Unified Framework*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Chapters 8-11. [Available online through Harvard Libraries website.]

### ***Additional Sources:***

Goldthorpe, John H. “Causation, Statistics and Sociology.” *European Sociological Review* 17.1 (2001): 1-20.

***Short Paper 1 due by 5 PM on Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup>.***

**Weeks of February 1-5 and 8-12: Make individual appointments with instructors via poll on course website to discuss research projects**

## **Part II: The Elements, Dilemmas, and Opportunities of Research Design**

### **Week 3, February 10: Middle-Range Theory, Conceptualization, and Measurement**

#### ***Required Reading:***

Gerring, John. *Social Science Methodology: A Unified Framework*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Chapter 3 “Arguments,” pp. 58-73. [Available online through Harvard Libraries website.]

Ziblatt, Daniel. “Of Course Generalize, But How? Returning to Middle Range Theory in Comparative Politics.” *American Political Science Association–Comparative Politics Newsletter* 17.2 (2006): 8-11.

Sartori, Giovanni. “Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics.” *American Political Science Review* 64 (1970): 1033-1053.

Adcock, Robert and David Collier. “Measurement Validity: Toward a Shared Framework for Qualitative and Quantitative Research.” *American Political Science Review* (September 2001): 529-546.

#### ***Exemplary Work(s):***

Putnam, Robert D. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. Chapter 3 “Measuring Institutional Performance,” pp. 63-82, and Chapter 4 “Explaining Institutional Performance,” pp. 83-120.

#### ***Suggested Reading:***

Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War (Problems of International Politics)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, Chapter 1, “Introduction,” pp. 3-36 and Appendix I, Measuring “Competitive Authoritarianism and Authoritarian Stability,” pp. 365-371.

Holland, Alisha. *Forbearance as Redistribution: Enforcement Politics in Urban Latin America (2014)*, pp. 1-17 (you may skim pp. 4-10, although this section is a good model for literature reviews)

Gerring, John. *Social Science Methodology: A Unified Framework*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Chapter 5 “Concepts,” pp. 107-140, and Chapter 7 “Measurements,” pp. 155-194. [Available online through Harvard Libraries website.]

## **Week 4, February 17: Comparative Designs and Selection Bias**

### ***Required Reading:***

Lijphart, Arend. "The Comparable Cases Strategy in Comparative Research." *Comparative Political Studies* (July 1975): 158-177.

Skocpol, Theda and M. Somers. "The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 65 (1980): 174-197.

Geddes, Barbara. "How the Cases you Choose Affect the Answers You Get." *Political Analysis* 2 (1990): 131-149.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. Chapter 4 "Determining What to Observe," pp. 115-149.

Collier, David, James Mahoney, and Jason Seawright. "Claiming Too Much: Warnings about Selection Bias," in Henry Brady and David Collier, eds. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. 1st ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004. Pp. 85-102.

### ***Exemplary Work(s):***

Wood, Elisabeth Jean. *Forging democracy from below: Insurgent transitions in South Africa and El Salvador*. Cambridge University Press, 2000, Chapter 1 "From Civil War to Democracy," pp.3-22.

Varshney, Ashutosh. *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002. Chapter 1 "Introduction," pp. 3-22.

### ***Suggested Reading:***

Lijphart, Arend. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review* (September 1971): 682-93.

Seawright, Jason and John Gerring. "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research." *Political Research Quarterly* 61.2 (June 2008): 294-308.

Dion, Douglas. "Evidence and Inference in the Comparative Case Study." *Comparative Politics* 30.2 (1998): 127-45.

Snyder, Richard. "Scaling Down: The Subnational Comparative Method." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36:1 (Spring 2001): 93-110.

## **Week 5, February 24: Case Study Design**

### ***Required Reading:***

Gerring, John. "The Case Study: What It is and What It Does," in Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. Pp. 90-122.

Eckstein, Harry. "Case-Study and Theory in Political Science" in Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby, eds. *Handbook of Political Science*. Vol. 7. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1975. Read only pp. 113-132.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. Chapter 6 "Increasing the Number of Observations," pp. 208-230.

### ***Exemplary Work(s):***

Berman, Sheri. "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic," *World Politics* 49 (April 1997), pp. 401-429.

James Patrick Biblarz, *There is No Magic: Law, Policy, and the Resegregation of American Schools*, Senior Thesis, Harvard College, 2014, pp. 1-12, 30-50, 152-164.

### ***Suggested Reading:***

Rueschemeyer, Dietrich. "Can One or a Few Cases Yield Theoretical Gains?" in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Pp. 305-336

### ***Additional Sources:***

Mahoney, James. "Nominal, Ordinal and Narrative Appraisal in Macrocausal Analysis." *American Journal of Sociology* 104.4 (January 1999): 1154-96.

George, Alexander L. and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005. Chapter 1 "Case Studies and Theory Development," pp. 3-36.

***Short Paper 2 due by 5 PM on Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>.***

## **Week 6, March 2: Natural Experiments**

### ***Required Reading:***

Dunning, Thad. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: Design-Based Inference*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Chapters 1 (“Introduction: Why Natural Experiments?”), 3 (“Regression-discontinuity designs”) and 7 (“The central role of qualitative evidence”), pp.1-38, 63-86, 208-232.

Sekhon, Jasjeet S. and Rocio Titiunik. “When Natural Experiments Are Neither Natural nor Experiments.” *American Political Science Review* 106.1 (February 2012): 35-57.

### ***Exemplary Work(s):***

Posner, Daniel. “The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi.” *American Political Science Review* 98.4 (November 2004): 529-545.

Lerman, Amy. *The Modern Prison Paradox: Politics, Punishment and Social Community*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Chapter 4 (“The Culture and Consequence of Prison”), pp.68-94.

### ***Suggested Reading:***

Gerber, Alan S. and Donald P. Green. “Field Experiments and Natural Experiments,” in Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady and David Collier, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. 357-384.

Dell, Melissa. “The Persistent Effects of Peru’s Ming Mita”. *Econometrica* 78.2 (November 2010) [Illustrates the logic of a geographical RDD. Look only at pages 1863 to 1879]

*If students plan to incorporate an experiment into their thesis, we strongly urged you to read all of Dunning, *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design-Based Approach*.*

## **Week 7, March 9: Mixed Methods and Further Thoughts Considerations on Research Design**

### ***Required Reading:***

Lieberman, Evan. "Nested Analysis as a Mixed Method Strategy for Comparative Research." *American Political Science Review* 99.3 (August 2005): 435-52.

Rohlfing, Ingo. "What You See and What You Get: Pitfalls and Principles of Nested Analysis in Comparative Research." *Comparative Political Studies* 41.11 (Nov 2008): 1492-1541.

Slater, Dan and Daniel Ziblatt. "The Enduring Indispensability of Controlled Comparison." *Comparative Political Studies* 46.10 (2013): 1301-1327.

### ***Exemplary Work(s):***

Tsai, Lily. "Solidary Groups, Informal Accountability, and Local Public Goods Provision in Rural China." *American Political Science Review* 101.2 (May 2007): 355-372.

Ziblatt, Daniel. "Shaping Democratic Practice and the Causes of Electoral Fraud: The Case of Nineteenth-Century Germany." *American Political Science Review* 103.1 (February 2009): 1-21.

Nicole Paulet Piedra, *Legislative Hurdles to Agrarian Reform: The Role of the Bancada Ruralista in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies, 1995-2006*, Senior Thesis, Harvard College, 2013, Introduction, pp. 1-10, Chapter 2, "The Root of the Legislative Hurdles: The *Bancada Ruralista*, pp. 41-45, 56-81 (interested students may skim pp. 45-56 for a fuller picture of how the quantitative and qualitative analyses [including that to come in Week 9] complement one another).

Alisha Holland, *Forbearance as Redistribution: Enforcement Politics in Urban Latin America*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Government, Harvard University, 2014, pp.17- 54 (note the research design is discussed on pp. 39-54; pp. 17-38 present the argument and the propositions that the research design will test)

### ***Suggested Reading:***

Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin. "Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Methods." in Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady and David Collier, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. 756-777.

Small, Mario Luis. "How to Conduct a Mixed Methods Study: Recent Trends in a Rapidly Growing Literature." *Annual Review of Sociology* 37 (2011): 57-86.

***Short Paper 3 due by 5pm on Friday, March 11.***

**No Class, March 16<sup>th</sup> – Spring Break.**

### **Part III: Qualitative Tools and Approaches**

#### **Week 8, March 23: Sequencing, Path Dependence, and Historical Institutionalism**

##### ***Required Reading:***

Pierson, Paul. *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004. Chapter 1 “Positive Feedback and Path Dependence” pp. 17-53. [Available online through Harvard Libraries website]

Lieberman, Evan S. "Causal Inference in Historical Institutional Analysis: A Specification of Periodization Strategies." *Comparative Political Studies* 34.9 (2001): 1011–1035.

##### ***Exemplary Work(s):***

Hacker, Jacob. “The Historical Logic of National Health Insurance: Structure and Sequence in the Development of British, Canadian, and U.S. Medical Policy.” *Studies in American Political Development* (1998): 57-130.

Hannah Mullen, *Shifting Scales of Justice: Military Justice Reform in the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States*, Senior Thesis, Harvard College, 2015, pp. 1-31, and choose one empirical chapter on either the United Kingdom (pp. 32-59), Canada (60-92), or the United States (93-119). Also pay attention to the primary sources consulted (summarized on pp. 130-135 of the bibliography).

##### ***Suggested Reading:***

North, Douglass C. *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990. Chapters 10 and 11.

##### ***Additional Sources:***

Hall, Peter A. “Politics as a Process Structured in Space and Time.” Paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 2010.

Skocpol, Theda. “Doubly Engaged Social Science: The Promise of Comparative Historical Analysis,” in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Pp. 407-429.

Tilly, Charles. "To Explain Political Processes." *American Journal of Sociology* 100.6 (1995): 1594-1610.

**Weeks of March 21-25 and March 28-April 1: Make individual appointments with instructors to discuss research projects**

## **Week 9, March 30. Process Tracing and Archival Research**

### ***Required Reading:***

Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel, eds., *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2015), Chapters 1, “Process tracing: from philosophical roots to best practices” (pp. 3-37) 4, “Efficient process tracing: analyzing the causal mechanisms of European integration,” (pp. 98-108 only), and 5, “What makes process tracing good? Causal mechanisms, causal inference, and the completeness standard in comparative politics” (pp. 126-152).

Hall, Peter. “Aligning Ontology and Methodology,” in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Read only pp. 391-404.

Ian S. Lustick, “History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias.” *American Political Science Review* 90, no. 3 (1996): 605-618.

Howell, Martha and Walter Prevenier. 2001. *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press. Chapter 1 (“The Source”), pp.17-34.

Bates, Robert H., Avner Greif, Margaret Levi, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, and Barry R. Weingast. *Analytic Narratives*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. “Introduction,” pp. 3-22, and “Conclusion,” pp. 231-238.

### ***Exemplary Work(s):***

Alisha Holland, *Forbearance as Redistribution: Enforcement Politics in Urban Latin America*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Government, Harvard University, 2014, Chapter 3, “Housing the Poor,” pp. 111-115, 129-135, 157-162, 186-192, 207-210, and Chapter 4, “Employing the Poor,” pp. 215-217, 218-232, and Appendix C, pp. 423-426.

Nicole Paulet Piedra, *Legislative Hurdles to Agrarian Reform: The Role of the Bancada Ruralista in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies, 1995-2006*. Chapter 3, “Winning Club Goods from Agrarian Reform: Case Studies of BR Negotiation,” pp. 82-125 (you may skim pp. 82-91)

Layne, Christopher. “Kant or Cant: The Myth of the Democratic Peace.” *International Security* 19.2 (Fall 1994): 5-49.

### ***Suggested Readings***

Hall, Peter A. “Systematic Process Analysis: When and How to Use It.” *European Management Review* 3.1 (Spring 2006): 24-31.

### ***Additional Sources:***

Collier, David. "Understanding Process Tracing." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44.4 (October 2011): 823-30.

George, Alexander L. and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005. Chapter 10 "Process-Tracing and Historical Explanation," pp. 205-232.

James Patrick Biblarz, *There is No Magic: Law, Policy, and the Resegregation of American Schools*, Senior Thesis, Harvard College, 2014, pp. 88-129, 182-199.

Students who plan to choose Option 3 (process tracing involving primary documents) for the Research Prospectus Appendix should consult **Tasha Fairfield, "Going Where the Money Is: Strategies for Taxing Economic Elites in Unequal Democracies," *World Development* 47, 42-57 (2013)** for a model of explaining how your evidence will enable you to test your hypotheses.

## **Week 10, April 6: Interviews**

### ***Required Reading:***

Martin, Cathie Joe. "Crafting Interviews to Capture Cause and Effect," Chapter 5 (pp. 109-124) in Mosley, *Interview Research in Political Science*.

Beckmann, Matthew N. and Richard L. Hall, "Elite Interviewing in Washington, DC," Chapter 10 (pp. 196-208) in Mosley, *Interview Research in Political Science*.

Leech, Beth I., Frank R. Baumgartner, Jeffrey M. Berry, Marie Hojnacki, and David C. Kimball, "Lessons from the 'Lobbying and Political Change' Project," Chapter 111 (pp.209-224) in Mosley, *Interview Research in Political Science*.

Schwedler, Jillian. "The Third Gender: Western Female Researchers in the Middle East." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 39.3 (July 2006): 425-428.

### ***Exemplary Work(s):***

Johnston, Alastair Ian. *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980-2000*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008. Preface and Chapter 4 "Persuasion," pp. xiii-xxvii, 155-96.

Hochschild, Jennifer L. *What's Fair? American Beliefs about Distributive Justice*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981. Chapter 1, "Why There Is No Socialism in the United States," and Chapter 7, "Alternative Patterns of Belief," pp. 1, 17-26, 192-237.

James Patrick Biblarz, *There is No Magic: Law, Policy, and the Resegregation of American Schools*, Senior Thesis, Harvard College, 2014, pp. 51-87, 165-177.

### ***Additional Sources:***

Gray, Paul S., John B. Williamson, David A. Karp, and John R. Dalphin. *The Research Imagination: An Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Chapter 8 "Intensive Interviewing," pp. 151-178.

Wood, Elisabeth. "The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones." *Qualitative Sociology* 29.3 (2006): 307-341.

Rathbun, Brian C. "Interviewing and Qualitative Field Methods: Pragmatism and Practicalities," in Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady and David Collier, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. 685-701.

Salganik, Matthew J. and Douglas D. Heckathorn. "Sampling and Estimation in Hidden Populations Using Respondent-Driven Sampling." *Social Methodology* 34 (2004): 193-239.

***Short Paper 4 due by 5PM on Friday April 8<sup>th</sup>.***

## **Week 11, April 13: Ethnography and Cultural Analysis**

### ***Required Reading:***

Kubik, Jan. "Ethnography of Politics: Foundations, Applications, Prospects," in Edward Schatz, ed. *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. Pp. 25-52.

Wedeen, Lisa. "Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science," *American Political Science Review* 96.4 (December 2002): 713-28.

Fenno, Richard F. *Home style: House members in their districts*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1978. Appendix.

### ***Exemplary Work(s):***

Scott, James. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985. Chapter 2 "Normal Exploitation, Normal Resistance," pp. 28-47, and Chapter 5 "History According to Winners and Losers," pp. 138-183. [Available on Harvard Libraries website.]

Parkinson, Sarah Elizabeth. "Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War." *American Political Science Review* 107.03 (2013): 418-432.

Walsh, Katherine Cramer. "Putting Inequality in Its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective." *American Political Science Review* 106.03 (2012): 517-532.

### ***Suggested Reading:***

Swidler, Ann, "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies," *American Sociological Review* 51 (April 1986): 273-286.

### ***Additional Sources:***

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, 1973. Chapter 1 "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" pp. 3-30; Chapter 15 "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight," pp. 412-453.

Taylor, Charles. "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man." *Review of Metaphysics* 25.1 (September 1971): 3-51.

Weber, Max. "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality' in Sociology and Economics," and "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy," in Max Weber. *Methodology of the Social Sciences*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2011. Pp. 1-47; 51-85.

## **PART V: PRESENTATION OF STUDENT WORK**

**Week 12, April 20: Student Research Workshop  
(Two-page synopses due April 17; peer comments due April 19)**

**Week 13, April 27: Student Research Workshop  
(Two-page synopses due April 24; peer comments due April 26)**

*Final Research Prospectus due by 9AM on Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup>.*

## **Explanation of Short Papers and Guidelines for the Research Prospectus/Appendix**

### **Short Paper 1: Framing a Puzzle, Asking a Question, and Generating Hypotheses**

**500 words, due by 5 PM on Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup>**

This assignment asks you to outline briefly the basics of a preliminary research question. You will need to present a topic, articulate a research question, frame a puzzle, identify an outcome of interest, provide a theory, and propose a few hypotheses derived from that theory. Please use the Grofman (2001) and Gerring (2001) readings from Week 1 as references for this assignment.

1. Begin by identifying the topic, question, puzzle, and outcome to be explained.
  - a. A puzzle should refer to something that appears counterintuitive or inexplicable at first glance.
2. What is your theory? Following from your theory, what will your hypotheses be?
  - a. Your theory should follow from the literature on your topic. It is best to state your theory in the most general terms possible.
  - b. Your hypotheses should be testable statements about the relationship between an explanatory variable and the outcome of interest, and they should follow logically from your theory.
  - c. You should also consider alternate explanations by including one or two competing hypotheses.

### **Short Paper 2: Stating Your Concept and its Measurement**

**500 words, due by 5 PM on Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>**

This assignment asks you to specify a central concept you will address in your research—which can be either the outcome you seek to explain or the idea you hope to use to explain an outcome of interest—and how you will measure it. Please use Week 3 readings as a reference for this assignment.

1. Start by explaining what big idea you seek to address in your research. What, generally, is your research about?
  - a. In Short Paper 1, what big concept was your research question, puzzle or outcome about, or what big concept did you propose to explain your puzzle or outcome?
2. Explain how you will define and operationalize this concept for the purposes of your research.
  - a. For example, if the concept is democracy, will you define it by the staging of regular, free, and fair elections (the Schumpeterian definition)? Or will you add more to this definition, such as the guarantee of various freedoms (a la Dahl)? What *specific* indicators of your concept will you use?
3. How will you measure the indicators that you laid out in the second paragraph? Justify that your measurement adequately measures the presence of your concept. (For example, two of Putnam's indicators of civic community were the existence of associational life and political participation and he measured this by counting the number of associations and comparing turnout to referenda.)
  - a. How will you identify the concept empirically?

- b. How many categories will your variable have and why? For example, will you treat it as dichotomous or continuous, or will you allow for intermediate categories? Will you measure it on an ordinal, nominal, or some other scale, and why?

### **Short Paper 3: Research Design**

**500-750 words, due by 5pm on Friday, March 11th**

This assignment asks you to give some thought to the research design you will propose for your research project, and to sketch out your preliminary ideas. Please be sure to defend your choices, explaining how they will allow you to test your hypotheses. Specifically,

1. Will you rely heavily on a comparative or case-study approach, a natural experiment, a nested analysis, or some other combination of methods? What advantages will such an approach give you over the alternatives? Be sure to be explicit about how this particular approach would help you better answer your research question?
2. What specific cases will you choose?
  - a. If you choose a comparative design, what causal leverage will these cases give you? If you choose a case study, what makes it a particularly compelling choice?
  - b. If you choose a nested analysis, by what logic will you choose your cases to supplement your large-N analysis?
  - c. If you have an idea for a natural experiment, explain how you identified it and what makes it particularly appropriate to answer the question you are interested in?

### **Short Paper 4: Methods Application**

**500 words, due by 5pm on Friday, April 8th**

This assignment asks you to discuss how you might apply one of the methods discussed in Weeks 8 to 11 (e.g., process tracing, interviews, ethnography) to your own project. This exercise will help you continue to develop your final prospectus. If your project does not involve any of the methods from these weeks, you should instead discuss the methods you *will* use in detail and explain how these methods will help you evaluate your main hypotheses and research question.

1. Begin by identifying which of the methods you want to apply to your research question.
  - a. Why are you considering this method over others? What might be the advantages to using this particular method for addressing your research question and adjudicating among your hypotheses? What might be some of the disadvantages? Reference readings from Weeks 8, 9 or 10 in your discussion.
2. Explain some of the specific ways in which you would use this method to address your research question.
  - a. E.g., if you are proposing to conduct interviews, whom will you try to interview and why is that your population of interest? How will you contact them? What sorts of questions will you ask, and why?
  - b. E.g., if you are proposing to conduct archival research, what types of documents will you consult? Why might those documents give you clues that will help you adjudicate among your hypotheses? How will you evaluate the credibility of the information in these documents?

### **Guidelines for the Research Prospectus**

**12-14 pages double-spaced, due by 5 PM on Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**

A prospectus for a research paper is a serious endeavor. It is the key to being adequately prepared to design and conduct the research necessary to address the question or questions that have inspired your research. Recognizing that most students in the course will never have attempted such a prospectus before, we have tried to provide a few guidelines below.

1. Don't be fooled by the brevity of the assignment. Although it is "only" a twelve-to-fourteen page paper, including bibliography, preparing a good prospectus requires a great deal of thought, and reading, and planning. It means that you must actually begin researching a topic before you are committed to writing a paper on the subject.
2. You must frame a question. It is not enough to have a topic. Good papers begin with questions that beg for an answer, and remember that every researcher must draw in his or her reader by persuading them of the intellectual and practical significance of their work.
3. How have others approached the problem? It is important to show how others have answered or not answered the question you have posed in order to set up how your efforts will contribute to the debate, and advance the state of knowledge. Your literature review should not merely summarize readings in a list. Try to group different authors under two or three categories of approaches to the problem, give the reader just a brief summary of their positions, and tell the reader what is right and wrong, or incomplete, about their efforts. You will then need to situate your own work within this debate, and explain what you are bringing to the table. What can you answer that others could not?
4. What are your theoretical expectations about your problem? What, at this stage, is your best guess or hunch about what you expect to happen, and why? Your theory should be logical, and from your theoretical expectations should follow observable implications and testable propositions.
5. Now is the time to frame your working hypothesis(es). A hypothesis is not a contract. You can find your initial instincts about a problem to have been misguided. (Much good social science does). But by at least beginning with a hypothesis, you give yourself a guide for proceeding with the research. It is far easier to reformulate an argument than to grope through mounds of data without a clue as to what you are looking for.
6. Think about the design of your research. What policy area or areas does it make sense to study? Will you conduct a large-N analysis, or case studies, or both? If you do choose to analyze some cases, which two or three movements or provinces or time periods will you examine? How are your cases similar or different, and what do you expect those similarities and differences to show?
7. Discuss the type of evidence to be examined. How will you "measure" your dependent variable (the outcome to be explained) and your independent variable(s) (the factor that

explains that outcome). Be as specific here as you can for, for your sake and ours. Think about what you feel you would need to know to answer your question, and to determine how accurate your guess is. Don't just say, "I will look at newspaper accounts of protest activity." Say, "I will examine the *Latin American Weekly Report* for reports of land occupations between 2002 and 2006.

8. Provide a working bibliography. If you give us a sense of what you have looked at, or are looking for, we can help. We will comment on what might be particularly useful for you, or something that you might have missed.

Writing a research prospectus can be somewhat frustrating; it is a lot harder to formulate questions and hypotheses about a subject you have not previously studied than to write a largely descriptive paper for a course. But it is worth the investment of time, not just to apply the concepts you will have learned in this course, but also for future internal and external grant and fellowship competitions, as well as, of course, your senior theses.

### **Guidelines for the Research Prospectus Appendix**

**3 pages double-spaced, due with the prospectus by 5 PM on Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**

We would like you to also attach to your prospectus an appendix that goes into greater detail about the specific methods and data you will use to assess your hypotheses, building on Short Paper 4. The appendix should be no more than 3 pages double-spaced and attached to the end of your prospectus. How you structure your appendix will depend specifically on the kinds of methods and data that you employ:

1. If you plan on conducting elite-informant interviews, we would like you to propose two sets of questions for two different types of elite informants (for example, a civil society leader and a politician). How will you prepare for these interviews? What will be your strategies for winning their trust? How will you handle your obligations to Harvard protocols on the use of human subjects in research?
2. If you plan on conducting semi-structured interviews, we would like for you to design 8-10 questions that you will ask potential respondents. We would also like to see your plan for how you will systematically analyze the answers you gather. In addition, you should detail how you plan on finding these contacts, how you will contact them, how you will frame the interview at the outset, and how you will take notes or record your interview. See the readings in Week 10 for further guidance.
3. If you plan on employing historical analysis through process tracing involving primary documents, you should attach two pieces of evidence (e.g. newspaper articles, government documents, or other forms of primary-source documentation) to your prospectus. Next, you should discuss in your appendix how you will use these pieces of evidence to evaluate your hypotheses. For example, you may wish to show how these pieces of evidence demonstrate sequencing, provide "smoking gun" evidence, or otherwise explicate a relationship between your independent and dependent variables.