

THE UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

**ERES 845.3 (01) QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Term 1, 2008**

**Tuesday 7:00 pm – 9:50pm**

**Room 2001, Education Building**

---

**Instructor: Debbie Pushor, PhD**  
**Room: 3038, Education Building**  
**Office Hours: By appointment**

**Voices in the Research**

*This is NOT a chronicle where we as researchers record events as unobtrusively as possible. The book is laid out so that, rather than only “giving voice” to the stories of others, this is also a book about researchers both getting out of the way and getting in the way. As filters for the stories that we heard, we have written a book that is about others who both are and are not like ourselves, as we give testimony to what are our own stories and larger than our own lives. Telling of a loss beyond naming where we try to know from the inside what is our outside, a threshold between what we know and what is beyond our knowing, this book, then, is about the limits of what can be said and known about the lives of others. Doing this work as both a service and a learning, our challenge has been to risk the necessary invasions and misuses of telling other people’s stories in order to bear witness with fierce but unsentimental conviction that such stories can transfix, overwhelm, linger, and compel in taking readers to the place where this research has brought us, a place where we can see all the “truth” that we can handle and be grateful for it.*

Lather and Smithies, *Troubling the Angels*

**Course Description**

This course offers the opportunity to learn and practice inquiry processes for conducting qualitative research. We will consider the role of the researcher and the ways this influences selection of the methodology used in research. We will explore selected methodologies to understand the range of qualitative research. Research design elements will be examined applicable to all qualitative research methodologies.

### **Course Objectives**

To develop an understanding of:

- the general nature of qualitative research
- similarities and differences in qualitative methodologies
- researcher roles and ethical issues particular to qualitative research
- selected procedures for generating and analyzing data
- characteristics of exemplary qualitative research

### **Course Readings**

Selected readings are available in a course pack and online through the Education Library Course Resource Page for ERES 845 or through our ERES 845 Course Homepage under Library Resources.

### **Proposed Class Schedule**

#### **September 9 – Introductory Class**

- Introductions
- Course syllabus
- Qualitative research and attention to understanding experience
- The landscape of qualitative research

#### **September 16 – Qualitative Research Overview**

- Qualitative research and attention to understanding experience
- The landscape of qualitative research
- The process of qualitative research
- The language and intention of qualitative research
  - Resonance, authenticity, verisimilitude, trustworthiness, transferability
- Methodologies/methods
  - What is the difference in the words?

#### *Reading:*

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2003). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (pp. 1-45). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

#### *In class reference only:*

Lather, P. (2006, January-February). Paradigm proliferation as a good thing to think with: Teaching research in education as a wild profusion. *International Journal of qualitative Studies in Education*, 19(1), 35-57.

### September 23 – Qualitative Research Methodologies

- What are types of methodology commonly used in education?
  - Narrative inquiry, action research, case study, arts based research, feminist methodology
- Why the different types?
  - Epistemology, ontology, theory, analysis
- Narrative inquiry

#### *Readings on narrative inquiry:*

Clandinin, D. J., Pushor, D., & Murray Orr, A. (2007). Navigating sites for narrative inquiry. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 58(1), 21-35.

Clandinin, D. J., Huber, J., Huber, M., Murphy, M. S., Pearce, M., Murray-Orr, A., et al. (2006). *Composing diverse identities: Narrative inquiries into the interwoven lives of children and teachers*. London: Routledge.

Hollingsworth, S., & Dybdahl, M. (2007). Talking to learn: The critical role of conversation in narrative inquiry. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 146-176). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

\* Response to Articles due today

### September 30 – Qualitative Research Methodologies

- Action research
- Case study research

#### *Readings on action research:*

Robertson, J. (2000). The three rs of action research methodology: Reciprocity, reflexivity and reflection-on-reality. *Educational Action Research*, 8(2), 307-326.

McNiff, J. (2001). *Action research and the professional learning of teachers*. Paper presented at the Qattan Foundation. Retrieved September 6, 2007, from <http://www.jeanmcniff.com/writings.html>

#### *Readings on case study research:*

Mabry, L. (2007). Case study in social research. In L. Bickman, J. Brannen & P. Alasuutari (Eds.), *Handbook of social research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Van Ingen, C., & Halas, J. (2006). Claiming space: Aboriginal students within school landscapes. *Children's Geographies*, 4(3), 379 - 398.

\*Works in Progress group time today.

### October 7 – Qualitative Research Methodologies

- Feminist methodology
- Arts based research (Guest speaker – Tentative)

*Readings on feminist methodology:*

Fonow, M.M., & Cook, J.A. (2005). Feminist methodology: New applications in the academy and public policy. *Signs*, 30(4), 2211. Retrieved September 30, 2008, from the EBSCOhost Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection.

Raghuram, P., Madge, C., & Skelton, T. (1998). Feminist research methodologies and student projects in geography. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 22(1), 35-48. Retrieved September 30, 2008, from the ProQuest Education Journals database.

*Readings on arts based research:*

Conrad, D. (2004). Exploring risky youth experiences: Popular theatre as a participatory, performative research method. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3(1), 1-24.

Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. (2005). A/r/tography as living inquiry through art and text. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11(6), 897-912.

Vaughan, K. (2005). Pieced together: Collage as an artist's method for interdisciplinary research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 4(1), 1-21.

\* Response to Articles due today

**October 14 – The Researcher**

- Who is the researcher?
  - The researcher as multiple
  - Objectivity/subjectivity
  - Understanding bias
  
- Negotiating research relationships and sites
  - Mutuality/reciprocity
  - Living alongside

*Readings:*

Pushor, D. (2001). *A storied photo album of parents' positioning and the landscape of schools*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta.

Hill, M. L. (2006). Representin(g): Negotiating multiple roles and identities in the field and behind the desk. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(5), 926-949.

Brimfield, R. M. B., Roderick, J. A., & Yamamoto, K. (1983). Persons as researchers: Observations of the participants. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 13(1), 5-21.

Schulz, R. (1997). *Interpreting teacher practice-- two continuing stories*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Behar, R. (1996). *The vulnerable observer: Anthropology that breaks your heart*. Boston: Beacon Press.

\* Works in Progress group time today.

### **October 21 – Methods/Field Text**

- Field text types
  - Field notes
  - Taped conversations
  - Video
  - Photographs
  - Artifacts
  - Journals
  - Etc

#### *Reading:*

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1994). Personal experience methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 413-427). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

\* Response to Articles due today

\* Bring 2-3 artifacts today to share with a colleague. Be prepared to share a narrative for each artifact, telling the story that surrounds it. Why is it significant to you? What important or shaping moment or memory does it represent for you?

With your partner, you will play roles of participant and researcher in this exercise, first one and then the other. The research question you will be addressing is, “How is an individual’s identity shaped?”

As researcher, you will record your participant’s conversation and take it home to transcribe for next week’s class.

### **October 28 – Presentations of Researcher Conversations/Interim Field Texts**

- Making sense of field texts
- Beginning to use field texts
- Research texts on the horizon

#### *Readings:*

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass.

\* Be prepared to share your transcription with your research participant, and to add, delete and change your transcript in response to your conversation. You may have further questions or

points of clarification you would like to pursue with your participant this week to add to your field text.

As researcher, you will take your revised/enhanced field text home to analyze and interpret for next week's class.

### **November 4 – Research Texts**

- Theorizing experience
- What does the text look like... who is your audience (Guest speaker – tentative)
- Representation of field text...making the empirical nature of your work explicit
- Techniques of writing... metaphor to fonts
- Using APA

#### *Readings:*

Koro-Ljungberg, M. (2001). Metaphors as a way to explore qualitative data. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education (QSE)*, 14(3), 367-379.

Richardson, L. (2000). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 923-948). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Lather, P. & Smithies, C. (1997). *Troubling the angels: Women living with HIV/AIDS*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Butler-Kisber, L. (2005). Inquiry through poetry: The genesis of self-study. In C. Mitchell, S. Weber & K. O'Reilly-Scanlon (Eds.), *Just who do we think we are? : Methodologies for autobiography and self-study in teaching* (pp. 95-110). London: RoutledgeFalmer.

\* Response to Articles due today

\* Be prepared to share and discuss your research analysis and interpretation with your participant tonight, and possibly to negotiate understandings.

### **November 18 – Ethics**

- Considerations
  - Mutuality/reciprocity
- Dilemmas
- Relationships
- Relationships with children

#### *Readings:*

Clark, M. C., & Sharf, B. F. (2007). The dark side of truth(s): Ethical dilemmas in researching the personal. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13(3), 399-416.

Etherington, K. (2007). Ethical research in reflexive relationships. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13(5), 599-616.

Huber, J., & Clandinin, D. J. (2002). Ethical dilemmas in relational narrative inquiry with children, *Qualitative inquiry*, 8(6), 785-803.

\* Works in Progress group time today.

**November 25 – Ethics/Sharing Synthesis Papers** September 23 -

**December 2 –Culminating Class**

\*Synthesis Papers due today.

### Course Assignments

To arrive at a final mark, students must attend and participate in classes, and complete the course requirements as outlined in this syllabus. Descriptors provided by the College of Graduate Studies and Research will be used to assess the nature of your work (<http://www.usask.ca/calendar/gradstudies/additional/grading/>).

*Response to Articles* (30 %) – Individual Assignment

(Four submissions over term – September 23, October 7 & 21, November 4)

- What is the author saying...
- How is that speaking to you or your work....
- What are places of tension or non-tension for you...

*Conversation with a Researcher* (30%) – Shared Assignment – October 28

- Read some of the researcher's work (e.g. proposal, thesis, published articles)
- Discuss the work with your partner(s)
- Determine points of conversation
- Connect with the researcher (e.g. in person, conference call)
- Present to the class:
  - Overview of researcher
  - Methodology used (explanation of) that supports the research puzzle/question
  - Evidence of methods (transitions from field text to research text)
  - Ethical considerations
  - Empirical nature of the work

*Synthesis Paper* (40%) – Individual Assignment – Oral presentation on November 25

## Written paper – December 2

- Proposal
- Methodology paper
- Project description (research/inquiry with supporting theory)
- Portfolio rationale (reflection/inquiry and supporting theory)
- Reading/understanding qualitative research