Honors in Sociology
01:920:497 and 498
Lucy Stone B105 (fall)

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1-2, Wednesday 3:00 – 4:00, and by appointment
Class webpage:  www.rci.rutgers.edu/~judithjf/Honors.htm
Class listserv:  Honors_in_Sociology@email.rutgers.edu

Honors in Sociology is a two-semester course for students writing a Senior Honors Thesis in Sociology. Each student designs and carries out an original research project, guided by two faculty advisors. I organize the course around the steps and the skills needed to complete a great project.

This may be the first time you have done an independent project. If so, you probably think that you have all the time that you possibly could need. You don't. You have enough time -- if you start now and work steadily through early April. If you fall behind, it will be difficult, perhaps impossible, to catch up. Thus I have identified a set of common tasks, and I have set deadlines for you and for your other advisor.

Readings
Once you select a topic, one of your first tasks is developing a reading list on this topic. In addition, everyone will read much of Wayne Booth, Gregory Colomb, and Joseph Williams’ The Craft of Research, Eviatar Zerubavel’s, The Clockwork Muse: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses, Dissertations, Jane Miller’s The Chicago Guide to Writing about Numbers, plus short selections from C. Wright Mill’s Sociological Imagination, and a few other items. Mills and other short readings are on electronic reserve.

Your Research Methods text will be important also, especially while you design the methodology for your project. Specialized methodology books are on reserve at Kilmer Library. If you do unstructured interviews, consider buying Robert Weiss, 1994, Learning from Strangers: the art and method of qualitative interview studies. This reading list has a list of books on reserve and a list of useful books NOT on reserve. I have most of these books in my office.

Classes, Office Hours, Conferences
The first classes provide basic information that you need to get started -- e.g., suggestions about how to find and approach an advisor, new library indexes and changes in old ones, the process of (and reasons for) IRB approval, and kinds of data that you can use, but might not think about.

Discussion starts right away, since one of the hardest tasks you face is identifying a research topic that is both fascinating and feasible. Describing your initial ideas to others is one of the best ways to clarify these ideas.

Later classes will focus on a problem or issue that many of you face at that time. You can bring problems and questions to class and get suggestions from everyone. The class will discuss methods you are not using; think of it also as an advanced methodology class.

You must attend class and participate.

Class meets just once a week, in part to leave time for conferences. You also will meet with me, and you will meet with the individual advisor that you select. My office hours are Tuesday 1-2 and Wednesday after class. You can reach me at jfriedman@sociology.rutgers.edu almost any time. Make sure that you and your advisor find a convenient time to meet during the week. Much of the year -- and especially at the beginning  -- plan to meet with your advisor once a week. Some weeks, especially in the second semester, I will schedule conferences rather than class.
Progress Reports

It is easy -- and dangerous -- to fall behind. To help you keep up, I require a written report nearly every week during the first semester. Give me a copy, and give your advisor a copy. Sometimes you will need copies for the class. You can e-mail class reports to the class list-serve [Honors_in_Sociology@email.rutgers.edu], or you can put them in mailboxes located in the department mailroom.

IRB Review and Certification

If you use "human subjects," you must get approval from Rutgers' Institutional Review Board (IRB). For background, go to orsp.rutgers.edu/Human.asp. Print and read these sections:

- IRB Frequently Asked Questions
- Human Subjects Certification Program
- Examples of Projects that Do and Do Not Require IRB Review; Categories of research that may potentially qualify for exempt status

Annual Memo: Federal Regulations and University Procedures concerning Protection of Human Subjects in Research

Under "Human Subject Research Resources,"
- ORSP Examples, IRB Review 
- (this will help you decide whether or not you have human subjects)
- Human Subject Research Resources
- Informed Consent guidance
- Informed Consent Process; read through page 8, and then skip to see examples of consent forms

This website has the form that you fill out to request exemption or approval for your research. Look at the bottom of the Human Subject Research home page. You can download the form you need, and fill it out on your computer. This form emphasizes methodology, plus any possible risks to those you study. Thus the form is the first draft for your methodology chapter.

The deadline, if you need approval (not exemption), is the 12th of each month. For Honors, this means having the form ready October 12! Exemption requests can go in at any time.

HSCP: Anyone using human subjects must be certified. This means reading more about the ethics of human research at this website and passing a multiple-choice test. Do it NOW. Your advisor also needs certification.

Grades and Level of Honors

In April, after your project is complete, I discuss your work with your advisor, and we grade you for Fall and for Spring. Until we do this, your Fall grade is H (for Honors). Each project also gets a level of Honors: Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors.

Sending drafts or messages to me or to the class

You have a mailbox in the Sociology Department mailroom, next to the FAX machine. Since you do not have a key to this room, plan to use the mailboxes between 8:30 and 4:30. You can e-mail short reports to me (one or two pages). Send them as text. I do not open attachments at home.

Class Website

The class webpage is part of my website, www.rci.rutgers.edu/~judithjf/Honors.htm. I will post short articles, some of the information presented in class, and so forth.

Resources and Information on Websites

Planning your project:
- orsp.rutgers.edu/Human.asp
- sociology.rutgers.edu/

- “Faculty” provides information about each professor’s interests.
- Go to "Undergraduate" and "Honors" for a list of past Honors Projects.

Data sources for secondary analysis
- http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/scchome/index.htm
- Data sources available at Rutgers
Data on the web, including the General Social Survey (GSS). You can analyze GSS data on your own computer now, using statistical software at this website.

Also see the list on my website: [www.rci.rutgers.edu/~judithjf/?DoingResearch.html](http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~judithjf/?DoingResearch.html)

Useful information at the American Sociological Association website: [www.asanet.org](http://www.asanet.org)


Information for students [http://www.asanet.org/page.ww?section=Students&name=Students+3-column](http://www.asanet.org/page.ww?section=Students&name=Students+3-column)

**Literature Review**

[www.icpsr.umich.edu/GSS](http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/GSS)

Each chapter reviews the literature on a topic. Enter through the Rutgers’ Library website; this is a periodical.

Indexes at Rutgers’ Library. The most important indexes are: ingenta, Academic Search Premier (EBSCO), and one of these: Sociofile or CSA’s “Sociological Abstracts” or EBSCO’s SocIndex. [The librarians are still deciding on a replacement for SocioFile.]

If you start with a journal reference, go to IRIS. “Details” for the journal include any links to websites with articles in full-text (or just abstracts) available through Rutgers. There are MANY possible links now, including some publishers’ websites.

Current research (not yet published). For recent (August 2004, August 2005) papers presented at the American Sociological Association Conference, go to [www.asanet.org](http://www.asanet.org). Click on Conference and Program, and enter a key word. If a paper looks important for your project, you can locate the author’s e-mail address and request a copy.

**Methodology**

Oral History and various unobtrusive methods [http://historymatters.gmu.edu/browse/makesense](http://historymatters.gmu.edu/browse/makesense)

Brief articles on how to “make sense of” oral history, films, maps, and letters and diaries, political cartoons, song lyrics, photographs. Examples.


Content analysis

J. Friedman, Content Analysis Bibliography [www.rci.rutgers.edu/~judithjf/Honors.htm/DoingResearch.html](http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~judithjf/Honors.htm/DoingResearch.html)

[Academic.csuohio.edu/kneuendorf/content](http://Academic.csuohio.edu/kneuendorf/content/) many kinds of information and links

Writing

Barry Wellman on writing. Link to “Guidelines” at [www.rci.rutgers.edu/~judithjf/DoingResearch.html](http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~judithjf/DoingResearch.html)

Purdue Writing Center, [owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/) Handouts on topics, such as references, punctuation.

Colorado State University writing center, [http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/](http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/)


**Books on Reserve at Kilmer Library**

[I have these -- and other books listed below -- in my office.]

Berg, Bruce, 2001, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*


Emmison, Michael, 2005, *Researching the Visual: images, objects, contexts, and interactions in social and cultural inquiry*

Lofland, Lyn and John Lofland, 1995, *Analyzing Social Settings*
Lee, Raymon, 2000, *Unobtrusive Methods in Social Research*
Mills, C. Wright, 1959, *The Sociological Imagination* (especially pp. 3-15 and "On Intellectual Craftsmanship," pp. 195-226; these pages also are on electronic reserve)
Warren, Carol, 2004, *Discovering Qualitative Methods: field research, interviews, and analysis*
Weiss, Robert, 1994, *Learning From Strangers: The art and method of qualitative interview studies*

**Chapters and articles on electronic reserve**

Keyton, Joan, 2001, “Content Analysis,” pp. 251-260 in *Communications Research*

**Other books that you may find useful (not on reserve)**

How research projects actually got done


More on Writing

Strunk, William, Jr. and E.B. White, 1959, *The Elements of Style*

Methods

Darren, George and Paul Mallery, 2001 or later, *SPSS for Windows: step by step*
Rose, Gillian, 2001, *Visual Methodologies*
Gesse-Biber, Sharlene and Michelle Yaiser (eds.), 2004, *Feminist Perspectives on Social Research*
Gesse-Biber, Sharlene and Patricia Leavy, 2004, *Approaches to Qualitative Research: A reader on theory and practice*
Webb, Eugene and others, 1966 or later edition, *Unobtrusive Measures: Non-reactive research in the social sciences*
## Preliminary Schedule and Deadlines, Fall 2005

You will get more information about each report in class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topics</th>
<th>Due In Class (or before)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 7</td>
<td>Selecting a Topic, Finding an Advisor, Possible kinds of Data and Data Collection Methods</td>
<td>One page statement on project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 14</td>
<td>Finding sources on your topic. Meet in A339.</td>
<td>Revised statement on project; include question, population, way(s) to collect data. For class. Read Mills, Zerubavel c. 1, Booth cs. 1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 21</td>
<td>IRB review</td>
<td>Two pages on methodology and possible risk to subjects. Complete certification.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 28</td>
<td>Refining a topic; more on methodology and risk</td>
<td>Methodology and Risk; draft of IRB proposal Read Zerubavel c. 2, Booth c. 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 29</td>
<td>Data collection: common issues</td>
<td>Data collection instrument Read Becker, c. 2, 3, 8, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 5</td>
<td>Data collection: pretests and approaching people</td>
<td>At least 10 screened sources. Read Suchar, and Booth cs. 5-6. Full IRB: proposal Oct. 10 for me and for advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue, Oct. 12</td>
<td><strong>IRB proposal due, if you need full review.</strong></td>
<td>Finish exemption proposals by Oct. 20.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 19</td>
<td>Back to sources and their use</td>
<td>Final data collection instrument</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 26</td>
<td>Preparing for basic data analysis. Meet in A339.</td>
<td>Annotated bibliography (first draft of literature review)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 2</td>
<td>Writing a report</td>
<td>Draft of chapter on data collection and methods of data analysis. Read Booth c. 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 9</td>
<td>Organize informal interview assignment</td>
<td>Drafts of 3 chapters: introduction (new), literature review, methods (revised). Read Wellman (listed under “writing”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 16</td>
<td>Discuss the informal interviews and analysis.</td>
<td>Do the informal interviews before class, and bring your notes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 23</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Vacation -- no class. Individual meetings Monday and Tuesday.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 30</td>
<td>Final collection issues. Plans for analysis.</td>
<td>Each of you will bring issues that are coming up as you collect your own data and begin to think about analysis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>and Dec. 7</td>
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### Spring 2006 -- major deadlines

- Finish data collection: mid- January
- Finish data analysis and draft; chapter on Findings: early February
- Draft Summary and Conclusions: mid-February
- Complete draft of final project **(including all revisions)**: end of February
- Final written report: Monday, March 27
- Oral reports to class, faculty, relatives, friends: Wednesday March 29 and April 5
- Poster Day (date may change): Wednesday, April 5