Course Objectives

This course is about “Practicing Human Geography.” But, what does that mean? The very “practice” of Human Geography and engagement in the research process raises a number of questions which must be addressed by the researcher: What are the particular issues and practicalities facing researchers in human geography today? What are the implications of taking a particular theoretical stance or choosing certain methodologies?

In addressing these questions, our focus will be on developing critical research skills. We will explore the implications of various theoretical and methodological choices. An emphasis will be placed on understanding the relationship between theory and method. Methodologically, we will critically examine different research approaches, including, for example: ethnographic research; narratives; interviews; focus groups; mixed-methods; visual methodologies; etc. In so doing, we will also assess the relationships which are formed between researcher and subject, and seek to understand the ethical issues which may arise. While our primary focus will be on qualitative methods of data collection we will also explore other approaches including quantitative and mixed-method research.

This is a seminar course which means that it will be a chance for in-depth discussion about the “practice” of human geography. For this to work, however, we must all actively participate in and contribute to the discussions. In order to give some real life examples of research practice, I have also invited some guests to present to the class.

Course Requirements

Weekly Readings: You are expected to complete the readings before each class. All readings will be posted on WebCT (where possible). In addition, each of you must submit one question or idea for class discussion based on a substantive issue raised in at
Discussion “Chairing”: Aside from weekly attendance and participation in class discussion, each of you is required to co-chair class discussions for two sessions. This will involve a presentation of the key issues in the week’s readings. As well as the questions posed by the others in the class, the presenters should also provide the core questions around which the discussion will be based. The weekly question must be posted on WebCT by noon, at least, on each Friday preceding class.

Term work: In groups of two or three you will be required to carry-out a short primary research project and to present your experience and findings to the class.

Evaluation

The final grade will be based on the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation and weekly readings</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chaired class sessions (x 2)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research project presentation and paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
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Assignment Details

Participation: You are expected to complete all readings each week and to provide insightful classroom discussion. Remember, what you get out of a class reflects what you put into it. This is a great opportunity for us to learn from each other.

Chaired session: Each of you must sign up to co-chair the discussion for two sessions (or a part of a session). The chairs are required to not only lead the initial discussion (this requires more than just summarizing the readings – we have all read them) but also to sustain discussion throughout the class. Try to be creative and/or challenging in generating the discussion. In-class exercises and role-playing often work well. Where possible, you are encouraged to bring in your own research interests to the discussion. As these sessions will be co-chaired it is important that you work collaboratively – splitting the readings and, possibly, taking different stances. Think about how the material being discussed may fit into your own research approaches and the implications and issues which may arise in adopting these ideas!!

Research project: - Field work Assignment (50% of the final grade)

In groups of two or three, you are required to spend approximately 10-15 hours in “the field” prior to 8 November 2010 (please note:
the 10-15 hours is exclusive of the time taken to plan the assignment, prepare an ethics review application and complete your analysis and write-up). The objectives of this assignment are twofold: 1) to allow you to experience primary data collection using certain research methods; and 2) to reflect on your own participation in the research process in light of the ideas discussed in class.

There are five parts to this process:

1) **Completion of an Application for Research Involving Human Participants in Course-based Projects Form.** This must be completed no later than September 30 and must be approved by me before you begin your research.

2) **A research journal** in which you record your ideas, feelings and concerns about the process (this will be set up on WebCT.

3) **Data collection using a method discussed in class.**

4) **Presentation to the class of your research experience and findings, as well as a reflection on the process.** These presentations on the 6 December will be a maximum of 30 minutes (per group) (25% of final grade).

5) **Individually, you are then expected to write up your research results with a more in depth reference to course readings as well as ideas raised throughout the course.** This paper should be approximately 15-20 double-spaced, typed pages (25% of final grade). Due: 6 December 2010 (or negotiable).

NOTE: Both the written and the oral portions of this project should include a reflection of: a) the method(s) used (What were the strengths and weaknesses of this method(s) for specific purposes?); b) your own experiences (How did you feel about the process? What issues were raised in your own mind?); and c) how your work compared to that of others and the problems confronted by other researchers – as laid out in the course readings. Time will be set aside in class to discuss these projects as they progress.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Seminar Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Discussants: All</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Carleton University</strong></td>
<td>Miller, T., and M. Boulton (2007). “Changing constructions of informed consent: Qualitative research and complex social worlds.” <em>Social Science and Medicine</em>, 65:2199-2211.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Discussants: All


### Oct. 4

**“Methodological Fit” Qualitative or Quantitative Research?**


**Discussants: Ryan and Jaimie**

### Oct. 11

Thanksgiving – No Class

### Oct. 18

**Or Mixed-Method Research?**

**John Milton, PhD Candidate McGill University, Research Adjunct, Carleton University**


|---|---|
| Oct. 25 | **Interviewing**


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<th>Focus Groups</th>
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<td><strong>Surveys</strong></td>
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| Discusants: Ryan and Jaimie |
|---|---|
| Nov. 1 | **Doing Research: cross-cultural**

**Guest: Abra Adamo,**
PhD Candidate Carleton University

*Abra Adamo was a former research fellow with the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT). From May 1999 until May 2000, she worked with the Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organization*


on the Participatory Research for Improved Agro-Ecosystem Management (PRIAM) project, a multi-country initiative launched by CIAT and the Rockefeller Foundation. Her role was to document the participatory research experiences of communities and national research institutions at one or more of the PRIAM project sites in Ethiopia."

Discussion: Ivy and Kanina

**Nov. 8**

**Doing Research: Participatory Action Research**

**Guest:** Rodney Nelson, PhD Candidate Dept. of Anthropology, Carleton University.

Former: Senior Manager of Aboriginal Affairs, Conference Board of Canada; Ethics Officer at public Works and Government Services Canada; Senior Policy Analyst at Public Works and Government Services Canada. Current: [Partner at Global Governance Group](#)

Discussion: Chris and Meghan


**OTHER READINGS TBA**

**Nov. 15**

**Doing Research: Participatory Mapping**

**Guest:** Dr. Gita laidler, DGES and Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre, Carleton University

“I have been working in northern Canada since 1998 after first being introduced to northern research through Labrador field work as an undergraduate research assistant at York University. Fascinated by the remote sensing perspective, I pursued my M.Sc. in Geography at Queen’s University focused on tundra vegetation studies using multiple sensor types and resolutions. My 2001 field research was based out


Evans, Mike and Steven Foster (2009., ”Representation in Participatory Video: Some Considerations from Research with Métis in British Columbia,” *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue d'études canadiennes*, Volume 43, Number 1, Winter, pp. 87-108


of Taloyoak, Nunavut, with two months of camping on Boothia Peninsula to conduct ground truthing. After this summer on the tundra I was hooked on the Arctic! However, in continuing to a Ph.D. my research focus shifted to cultural and environmental geography with emphasis on collaborative research with Inuit communities. My doctoral research sought to characterize the local importance of sea ice processes, use, and change based on Inuit expertise, and in so doing to provide points of intersection with scientific sea ice monitoring and investigations. Therefore, I have been working with the Nunavut communities of Pangnirtung, Cape Dorset, and Igloolik since 2003, and am part of ongoing, long-term projects in each to continue exploring human-environment interactions and understandings at local and regional scales.

With increasing national and international interest in the effects of climate change on arctic environments and people (and related global climate feedbacks), political implications of circumpolar access and control, socio-economic challenges experienced in remote communities, and ongoing struggles for Aboriginal rights and cultural vitality, I am committed to undertaking research that addresses northern needs and interests through the coupling of social and environmental research. I am also interested in exploring the utility and applicability of collaborative research approaches within a range of potential topics, to address local concerns in other Aboriginal or local expert groups in southern Canadian or even developing nation contexts.”


Hoggart, Keith, Loretta Lees and Anna Davies (2002). ‘Part of life: research as lived experience,’ in Researching Human


Community Based Research

Discussants: Caroline and Ruxandra
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter/Context</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 22</td>
<td>Doing Research: Narrative Based</td>
<td>Guest: Prof. Brian Osborne (?), Dept. of Geography, Queen’s University</td>
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<td>“Dr. Brian Osborne is Professor Emeritus of Geography at Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, where he has taught since 1967. His research areas include aboriginal history, settlement history, cultural landscapes, and the role of the &quot;culture of communications&quot; in the development of a Canadian sense of place. He has published extensively on the Kingston area, his most widely read piece being the volume he wrote with Donald Swainson, Kingston: Building on the Past (1988) which he is currently reworking into a new edition. His most recent volume is The Rock and the Sword: A History of St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, Kingston (2004). Professor Osborne has served as a consultant for the National Capital Commission, Heritage Canada, Parks Canada, Canada Post, and the National Film Board. He is Past President of the Ontario Historical Society, Past President of the Kingston Historical Society, and serves on the boards of several heritage organisations.”</td>
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<td><a href="http://geog.queensu.ca/faculty/osborne.asp">http://geog.queensu.ca/faculty/osborne.asp</a></td>
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<td>Discourse</td>
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<td>Discussants: Ryan and Jaimie</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joan M. Schwartz, PhD</td>
<td>Beilin, Ruth (2005). ‘Photo-elicitation and the agricultural landscape: “seeing” and “telling” about farming,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Associate Professor / Queen's National Scholar</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Department of Art (x Geography)</td>
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<td>Ontario Hall 318C</td>
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**OTHER READINGS TBA**

Trew, J. D. (2005).“The Forgotten Irish?: Contested sites and narratives of nation in Newfoundland,” *Ethnologies*, vol. 27, n° 2, pp. 43-77.

A specialist in photography acquisition and research at the National Archives of Canada for more than two decades prior to her faculty appointment, Joan M. Schwartz brings expertise in archives, materiality, memory, and institutional discourse to her teaching and writing. An Adjunct Research Professor in both the Department of History and the Department of Geography at Carleton University, Ottawa, as well as an Associate Programme Advisor for the Portrait Gallery of Canada and a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists, she has published and lectured widely in the field of archives, historical geography, and the history of photography, and has served on the editorial boards of The Oxford Companion to the Photograph (2004) and the Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-century Photography (2007). She co-edited Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination (with James Ryan for I.B.Tauris, 2003) and Archives, Record, and Power, two double issues of Archival Science (with Terry Cook in 2002). Her current research focuses on the history of photography and society, and on theoretical issues relating to archives and memory. With the support of a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, she is currently engaged in a three-year project focusing on the role of photographic publications in nineteenth-century Canadian nation-building.

http://www.queensu.ca/art/bio.php?id=28

Discussants: Chris and Meghan

Dec. 6 Research Project Presentations
Important University Regulations – Notes from the Paul Menton Centre

For Students with Disabilities:
Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course are encouraged to contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities to complete the necessary letters of accommodation. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet and discuss your needs with the center at least two weeks prior to the first in-class test or ITV midterm exam. This is necessary in order to ensure sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements. Please note the following deadlines for submitting completed forms to the Paul Menton Centre: November 6th, 2006 for fall and fall/winter term courses, and March 9th, 2007 for winter term courses.

For Religious Observance:
Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the equity services website for a list of holy days (www.carleton.ca/equity) and Carleton’s Academic Accommodation policies, or may contact an Equity Services Advisor (ext. 5622) in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

For Pregnancy:
Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact and Equity Advisor in the Equity Services (ext. 5622) to complete a letter of accommodation. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Student Life Services
Student Life Services, located in Room 501 of the Unicentre, offers a wide range of programs and services to assist students in adjusting to academic life, in improving their learning skills, and in making academic and career decisions.
USEFUL CARLETON CONTACTS IF A STUDENT NEEDS ASSISTANCE WITH... REFER TO... CONTACT INFORMATION

...understanding academic rules and regulations; choosing or changing their major; finding a tutor; academic planning guided by an Academic Advisor; polishing study skills; etc.

**Student Academic Success Centre (SASC)**
"Helping students build a foundation for academic success by facilitating services that foster personal direction and academic competence" Students can call or drop in to make an appointment at:

302 Tory Building  
520-7850  
[www.carleton.ca/sasc](http://www.carleton.ca/sasc)

...a learning disability

**Paul Menton Centre**
"Integration, Individualization, Independence": Students can call or drop in to make an appointment

500 University Centre  
520-6608  
[www.carleton.ca/pmc](http://www.carleton.ca/pmc)

...developing writing skills **Writing Tutorial Service**
229 Paterson Hall  
520-6632  
[www.carleton.ca/wts](http://www.carleton.ca/wts)

...assistance with math **Math Tutorial** [www.math.carleton.ca/student](http://www.math.carleton.ca/student), peer assisted tutoring for pre-identified, notoriously difficult courses

**Peer Assisted Study Sessions**
"PASS workshops integrate how to-learn (study skills) with what to-learn (course content) in a fun, relaxed environment.

Centre for Initiatives in Education  
520-2600 Ext. 1523  
[www.carleton.ca/cie/PASS.htm](http://www.carleton.ca/cie/PASS.htm)

...polishing English conversation skills, or proof reading (International students only)

**International Student Advisory**

501 University Centre  
520-6600; [www.carleton.ca/isa/](http://www.carleton.ca/isa/)
…research assistance Staff at MacOdrum Library (reference services desk)

520-2735
www.library.carleton.ca