

9/2/12

**POLS 506
QUALITATIVE METHODS
Fall 2012**

**Professor Richard Doner
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Office hours: TTh 4-5:30; Wed. 4-5**

Course Description

This is a graduate seminar primarily designed for students interested in employing qualitative methods in political science (and other social science disciplines). By qualitative methods, we refer primarily to *research designs* that use small numbers of intensive observations, that do not rely on statistical tests for drawing causal inferences, and that strive to understand causal mechanisms and processes as well as causal effects. Our primary focus will be on research design issues; but we will address some of the distinctive approaches to *data gathering* typically used in qualitative designs, e.g. archival research, various types of in-depth interviews, focus groups, and participant observation.

The course is designed to help students develop proficiency in the use of qualitative methods in three respects. The first is to understand and be able to articulate the assumptions about the political world and arguments about scientific knowledge on which qualitative approaches in political science are grounded. In other words, how do we justify research designs involving relatively small numbers of observations as good political science given the fact that such designs may limit our ability to generalize about the phenomenon being studied? In this seminar we will examine two ways of answering this question that have been developed by qualitative methodologists. One involves research strategies that focus on co-variation among variables *across* observations. These types of qualitative research designs follow a logic similar to that employed in most mainstream quantitative research. A second approach involves a different logic of inference in which the focus is on causal processes and mechanisms *within* cases.

The course is also designed to help students position their research along what might be labeled a "theory value chain." There are a number of steps or stages toward our overall objective of theory-based causal inferences. These include concept development and operationalization, theory generation, theory specification, testing of "typological" or "contingent" theory, etc. Although our goal is typically to test theory-based causal inferences, there are times when theory is not sufficiently developed or specified to do so.

The third and perhaps most important goal of the course is to help students develop proficiency in actually conducting qualitative research. Here we will be concerned with more practical concerns, including case selection, concept development, operationalization, scaling, tracing causal processes, and techniques involved in collecting qualitative evidence or data. To these ends, the seminar will make extensive use of existing qualitative research.

Overall, the goal of the seminar is help graduate students develop the methodological tools needed to pursue rigorous qualitative research for the dissertation, in conjunction with quantitative and/or game theoretic approaches, or as the principal or stand-alone research strategy.

A word of caution. Doing good qualitative research is challenging; in some ways it is more challenging than doing quantitative or game theoretic work. Three factors may help to explain the difficulty graduate students often encounter with qualitative research.

First, while important qualitative work on politics has been produced for a very long time, the effort to develop explicit guidelines for doing rigorous qualitative research in political science is relatively recent. Many graduate programs in political science still do not offer courses devoted to qualitative methods; and while professional schools, such as public health programs, often offer training in qualitative methods, these typically limit their focus to techniques of data gathering. There is often little attention to the much tougher challenges of descriptive and causal inference and of external and internal validity. As a result, the guidelines or rules for doing good qualitative research are less well codified than those for statistical work. As you will discover in this course, basic rules for conducting rigorous qualitative research are still being developed and debated among political scientists.

Second, qualitative research does not produce the "clear" results generated by statistical measures. Consequently, more responsibility often falls on the qualitative researcher herself to justify casual claims and the strength of those claims.

Third, in-depth research on a small number of cases often leads students to get lost in (admittedly) fascinating details and stories that in and of themselves may provide little basis for generalization or knowledge accumulation. If properly focused, detailed knowledge of cases is a major strength of qualitative research. However, by failing to keep in mind what precisely they are trying to explain ("what is your question?") and lacking a clear understanding of which details of a case are important ("what would disconfirm your argument?) and which are less so, students risk 1) being overwhelmed by the complexity of the political world; and 2) finding themselves unable to communicate how their research contributes to broader concerns or general explanations that are of interest to most political scientists.

These challenges notwithstanding, this course is based on the assumptions 1) that socio-political phenomena often involve non-linear, complex and/or contingent relationships, 2) that qualitative methods are especially appropriate for identifying and understanding these relationships, and 3) that a failure to make effective use of such methods can lead to at best an oversimplification of reality and at worst a distortion of reality that in turn undermines effective knowledge accumulation as well as effective institutional and policy design.

Required Texts

Henry E. Brady and David Collier. 2nd edition. 2010. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Rowman and Littlefield.

Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. (MIT Press).

Unless otherwise noted, all other required readings are available through eJournals on the Woodruff Library homepage. Readings not available on eJournals will be posted on the course Blackboard site (classes.emory.edu) or available at other websites as indicated.

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation (25%): All members of the seminar are expected to read the assigned materials and come prepared to discuss them. Students will also make oral presentations on selected readings, especially scholarship illustrating the use of qualitative methods. Note that "getting our hands dirty" by reviewing how other scholars have actually used qualitative methods will form an important part of our discussions. Attendance is mandatory. If extraordinary circumstances require that you miss a seminar session, please notify me as soon as possible.

Concept Paper (25% - Due Oct. 19): An essay of 3-4 pages in which students analyze a concept of their choice. The concept should relate to the student's research interest, whether on the independent or dependent variable side, and should form the basis of the subsequent assignment. Further, the essay should grapple with the challenge of "generality" by providing both descriptive and explanatory typologies based on the concept in question.

Research Design (50% - Due Nov. 16): An essay of 15-20 pages in which students integrate the seminar material into their own research interests. To that end, it's worth reviewing some key aspects of this research component: To draw on Dr. Giles' POLS 507 syllabus, a research design is best understood as everything in a journal article or scholarly book involving empirical research except the actual data analysis and conclusion. Stated broadly, a research design thus includes a statement of the research question, a constructively critical review of the relevant literature, proposed hypotheses, discussion of key concepts and their measurement as variables, the proposed logic of inquiry, (e.g. cross-case comparison, large-N, crucial case), and proposed strategy for data gathering. More specific questions include:

1. What is the research question or puzzle the project addresses and how does it relate to the existing literature on the topic? Why should anyone care about this research? What gaps in the literature will your research address?
2. What are the project's objectives and how do they relate to the state of development in the relevant literature? (e.g. theory testing, theory or hypothesis generating, conceptual development.)
3. What are the hypotheses being tested? How will you know if your theory or hypothesis is wrong? If you are not proposing to test an argument, what are you proposing to do?
4. What type of qualitative research design are you proposing? How does the design fit into the design strategies we have discussed during the semester? Are you employing cross-case or within case analysis? Why? To what extent are you also employing quantitative methods and/or formal theory? What's your justification for using multiple methods?
5. What are the independent and dependent variables? Are there any intervening variables?
6. What are the cases? Why have you chosen them? Do the cases include multiple observations?
7. How do you intend to operationalize and measure your variables? What measurement problems do you anticipate and how might you address them? What kind of scale will you use and why?
8. What are your (probable) data sources (interviews, archives, etc)? Do you anticipate difficulties in gaining access to these sources? If so, how might you address these problems?
9. What are the main strengths and limitations of this research design?

Course Outline 8-29-12

1. September 4 Introduction: Contested Assumptions and Implications

David Collier, Jason Seawright, and Gerardo Munck. Ch. 2: "The Quest for Standards: King, Keohane, and Verba's Designing Social Inquiry," (pp. 33-64) in Brady and Collier, *Rethinking Social Inquiry* (2nd ed) (RSI).

David A. Freedman, 2010. "On Types of Scientific Inquiry: The Role of Qualitative Reasoning." Ch. 11 (pp. 221-236), in Brady and Collier, RSI.

Claudia Dreifus. 2012. "A Mathematical Challenge to Obesity." *New York Times*. May 14, 2012.

Giovanni Capoccia and Daniel Ziblatt. 2010. "The Historical Turn in Democratization Studies: A New Research Agenda for Europe and Beyond." *Comparative Political Studies*. 43 (8/9), 931-968 (ejournals).

Stephan Haggard and Robert Kaufman. 2012. "Inequality and Regime Change: Democratic Transitions and the Stability of Democratic Rule," *American Political Science Review* 106:3 (August), pp. 1-22 (available on blackboard / information).

Supplementary Readings:

"Symposium I: Ian Shapiro's *The Flight From Reality in the Social Sciences*," *Qualitative Methods* (Fall 2005).

"Symposium I: The Quantitative-Qualitative Distinction." 2005. *Qualitative Methods*. (Spring) 3:1, pp. 2-21.

Richard Snyder. 2005. "Creative Hypothesis Generating in Comparative Research." *Qualitative Methods*. (Fall), pp. 2-4.

Alexander George and Andrew Bennett. Ch. 1: "Case Studies and Theory Development," (pp. 3-36) *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences (CSTD)*

2. Sept. 11 Ontology and Methodology

George and Bennett, "Case Studies and the Philosophy of Science," Ch. 7, (pp. 127-149) in *CSTD*

Peter Hall, 2003. Ch. 11: "Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Research," (pp. 373-399) in Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, eds., *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (reserves direct)

James Mahoney and Gary Goertz, 2006. "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research," *Political Analysis* 14(3):, pp. 227-249.

Kathe Thelen, 2003. "How Institutions Evolve: Insights from Comparative Historical Analysis." Ch. 6) in Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, eds., *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (reserves direct).

Kenneth Castro and Philip LoBue, "Bridging Implementation, Knowledge and Ambition Gaps to Eliminate Tuberculosis in the United States and Globally," *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, March 17:3, 2011, 337-342.

Supplementary

Gabriel Almond and Stephen Genco. 1977. "Clouds, Clocks, and the Study of Politics." *World Politics* 29 (July): 489-522 (covered in 507)

Gary Goertz. 2005. "Necessary Condition Hypotheses as Deterministic or Probabilistic: Does It Matter?" *Qualitative Methods* (Spring) 3:1, pp. 22-27.

Locke and Thelen, 1995. "Apples and Oranges Revisited: Textualized Comparisons and the Study of Comparative Labor Politics." *Politics and Society* 23:3 (September).

3. Sept. 18 Inference: Descriptive and Causal - the Case of Economic Development

David L. Lindauer and Lant Pritchett. 2002. "What's the Big Idea? The Third Generation of Policies for Economic Growth." *Economia* (Fall), 1-39

Dani Rodrik, 2009. "The New Development Economics: We Shall Experiment, but How Shall We Learn." Ch. 2 (pp. 24-54) in Cohen and Easterly, eds., *What Works in Development? Thinking Big and Thinking Small*. (Brookings: 2009).

Collier, Brady and Seawright. 2010. "Critiques, Responses, and Tradeoffs: Drawing Together the Debate." Ch. 8 (pp. 135-160) in *RSI*.

Jason Seawright, 2010. "Regression-Based Inference: A Case Study in Failed Causal Assessment." Ch. 13 (pp. 247-271) in Brady and Collier, *RSI*.

Supplementary

James Mahoney, 2008. "Toward a Unified Theory of Causality." *Comparative Political Studies*. 41 (4/5), pp. 412-436. #507

Thad Dunning, 2010. "Design-Based Inference: Beyond the Pitfalls of Regression Analysis?" Ch. 14 (pp. 273-311) in Brady and Collier, *RSI*.

4. Sept. 25 Theory: What Kind? What Claims? Contingency and Typologies

George and Bennett, "Phase Three: Drawing the Implications of Case Findings for Theory," Ch. 6 (pp. 109-124; and "Integrating Comparative and Within-Case Analysis: Typological Theory," in *CSTD*, Ch. 11, pp. 233-262.

Colin Elman. 2005. "Explanatory Typologies in Qualitative Studies of International Politics." *International Organization*. 59:2 (Spring), pp. 293-326.

Paul Pierson. 2004. "Big, Slow-Moving and...Invisible: Microsocial Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics." in James Mahoney et al., *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. (only specific pages TBA).

Richard F. Doner and Amy Liu. 2012. "Crises and Change: A Typological Approach." Paper prepared for presentation at the APSA Annual Meeting, New Orleans, August 30-Sept. 2, 2012.

Jorgen Moller and Sven-Erik Skaaning, 2012. "Assessing the Explanatory Power of Typological Theories." Paper prepared for presentation at the APSA Annual Meeting, New Orleans, August 30-Sept. 2, 2012.

Supplementary

David Lake, 2011. "Against Isms..." *International Studies Quarterly* ??

5. Oct. 2 Concepts, Variables

David Collier and James E. Mahoney, "'Conceptual Stretching' Revisited: Alternative Views of Categories in Comparative Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 87:4 (December 1993), pp. 845-55.

David Collier, J. LaPorte and Jason Seawright, 2012. "Putting Typologies to Work: Concept-Formation, Measurement, and Analytical Rigor." *Political Research Quarterly* 65:1 (June). available on Collier website.

Layna Mosley. 2011. "Conceptualizing Workers' Rights." Ch. 4 (pp. 99-134) in Mosley, *Labor Rights and Multinational Production* (Cambridge U. Press).

Eva Bellin. 2000. "Contingent Democrats: Industrialists, Labor, and Democratization in Late-Developing Countries," *World Politics* 52 (January), 175-205.

Andrew Walker, 2012. *Thailand's Political Peasants: Power in the Modern Rural Economy* (Univ. of Wisconsin Press), Ch. 1 (reserves direct)..

Supplementary

David Collier and Steven Levitsky, "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research." *World Politics* 49:3 (April 1997), pp. 430-451.

Chalmers Johnson. 1962. "Peasant Nationalism in China," Ch 1 (pp. 1-30) in Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power: The Emergence of Revolutionary China 1937-'945*. (Stanford U. Press).

"Symposium II: Conceptualizing Concepts." 2005. *Qualitative Methods*. (Fall), pp. 19-36.

Amartya Sen and Joseph Stiglitz. 2009. "Report on Measuring Development."

Peter Evans, *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation*, Chap. 4, "Roles and Sectors."

6. Oct. 9 Single Cases in Comparative Research (Prof. Doner away; Guest speaker: Prof. Randal Strahan)

Arend Lijphart. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method" *American Political Science Review* 65 (September), pp. 682-693

George and Bennett, 2005. "The Congruence Method," Ch. 9 (pp. 181-204) in *RSI*.

John Gerring. 2007. "What is a Case Study? The Problem of Definition," Ch. 2 (pp. 17-36); and pp. 89-90; in *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge Univ. Press).

De Toqueville, *Democracy in America*, pp. TBA

Supplementary

Andrew Schrank. 2006. "The Case Study and Causal Inference," Ch. 9 (pp. 169-174), In Precman and Curran, *A Handbook for Social Science Field Research (Handbook)*.

Layna Mosley. 2008. "Workers' Rights in Open Economies: Global Production and Domestic

Institutions in the Developing World." *Comparative Political Studies*. (January) 41, pp. 674-714.

Oct. 16 **Fall Break**

7. Oct.23 **Cross-Case Analysis and Questions of Validity (Guest speaker: Prof. Michael Rich)**

George and Bennett, 2005. "Comparative Methods" Chs. 8 (pp. 151-180) in *CSTD*.

Victoria Murillo, 2001. Chs 1 (pp. 1-10) and Ch. 7 (pp. 173-195), *Labor Unions, Partisan Coalitions, and Market Reforms in Latin America* (Cambridge).

Richard F. Doner, 2009. "Development Tasks, Institutions and Politics." Ch. 3 (pp. 64-94), in Doner *The Politics of Uneven Development* (Cambridge).

Michael Rich. Chapter from new manuscript

Dan Slater and Daniel Ziblatt. 2008. "Revitalizing the Controlled Comparison: Extreme Variation and External Validity in Qualitative Research." unpublished paper.

Supplementary

Art, David. "What Do We Know About Authoritarianism After Ten Years." *Comparative Politics*. (April), pp. 351-373.

Rudra Sil. 2009. "Area Studies, Comparative Politics, and the Role of Cross-Regional Small-N Comparison." *Qualitative Methods*. (Fall), 7:2, pp. 26-31.

James Mahoney, "Strategies of Causal Assessment in Comparative Historical Analysis" in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. Mahoney and Rueschemeyer

Jeffrey Staton, 2004. "Judicial Policy Implementation in Mexico City and Merida." *Comparative Politics*. 37:1 (October), pp. 41-60 #507

8. Oct. 30 **Operationalization, Scales**

Marcus Kurz and Andrew Schrank, "Growth and Governance: Models, Measures, and Mechanisms," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 69, No. 2, May 2007, pp. 538-554.

Richard Doner, Bryan Ritchie, and Dan Slater. 2005. "Systemic Vulnerability and the Origins of Developmental States: Northeast and Southeast Asia in Comparative Perspective." *International Organization* 59:2 (Spring).

Emmanuel Teitelbaum. 2011. "Introduction: The Political Management of Industrial Conflict." Ch. 1 (pp. 1-24) in Teitelbaum, *Mobilizing Restraint: Democracy and Industrial Conflict in Post-Reform South Asia*. (Cambridge U. Press).

9. Nov. 6 **Case Selection**

Charles Raigin. 2004. "Turning the Tables: How Case-Oriented Research Challenges Variable-Oriented Research." Ch. 8 (pp. 123-138) in Brady and Collier, *RSI*, 1st edition (available from instructor)

Barbara Geddes. 1990. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." In James A. Stimson, ed., Political Analysis, vol 2, University of Michigan Press.

Collier and Mahoney. 1996. "Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research." World Politics 49 (October): 56-91

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

Stephan Haggard and Robert Kaufman. 2008. "Toward a Political Economy of Social Policy." Ch. 1 (pp. 1-24) in Haggard and Kaufman, *Development, Democracy and Welfare States*. (Princeton University Press.

Supplementary

Richard F. Doner. 2009. Ch. 1, of *The Politics of Uneven Development: Thailand's Economic Growth in Comparative Perspective*. (Cambridge U. Press).

James Mahoney and Gary Goertz. 2004. "The Possibility Principle: Choosing Negative Cases in Comparative Research." *APSR* 98:4 (November): 653-669

10. Nov. 13 Within-Case Analysis: Process Tracing and "Observations" (Guest: Prof. Carrie Wickham)

Collier, Brady, and Seawright, "Sources of Leverage in Causal Inference: Toward an Alternative View of Methodology," Ch. 9, (pp. 161-204), in Collier and Brady, *RSI*.

Andrew Bennett. 2011. "Process Tracing and Causal Inference." Ch. 10 (pp. 207-219) in Brady and Collier, *RSI*.

Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal. 2004. "Contra Coercion: Russian Tax Reform, Exogenous Shocks, and Negotiated Institutional Change," *APSR*, 98:1 (February), pp.

George and Bennett, 2005. "Process-Tracing and Historical Explanation," Ch. 10 (pp. 205-232), in CSTD.

Carrie Wickham, 2012. Ch. 1 from *New Book*, Princeton University Press.

Supplementary

Andrew Bennett. 200?. "Process Tracing: A Bayesian Perspective." In Bennett, ???, pp. 702-721.

Timothy McKeown. 1983. "Hegemonic Stability Theory and 19th Century Tariff Levels in Europe." *International Organization* 37(1): 73-91.

Henry E. Brady, "Data-Set Observations versus Causal-Process Observations," appendix, pp. 267-271, in Collier and Brady, *RSI*.

11. Nov. 20 Within-Case Analysis: Process Tracing and Causal Mechanisms

George and Bennett, 2005. "Case Studies and the Philosophy of Science." Ch. 9 (pp. 127-149), *CSTD*.

Michael Ross. 2001. "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics* 53:3 (April), pp. 325-362

Geoffrey Robinson, "The Post-Coup Massacre in Bali," get complete cite....

Allen Hicken, 2006. "Party Fabrication: Constitutional Reform and the Rise of Thai Rak Thai." *Journal of East Asian Studies*. 6: pp. 381-407.

Allen Hicken, 2007. "Omitted Variables, Intent, and Counterfactuals: A Response to Michael Nelson." *Journal of East Asian Studies*. 7: pp. 149-158.

Supplementary

Dan Slater. 2008. "Can Leviathan Be Democratic? Competitive Elections, Robust Mass Politics, and State Infrastructural Power." *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 43(3-4), 252-272.

Phillip Keefer. 2005. "Democracy, Public Expenditures, and the Poor: Understanding Political Incentives for Providing Public Services." *World Bank Research Observer*, 20:1 (Spring), pp. 1-27

Eric Thun. 2004. "Keeping Up with the Jones': Decentralization, Policy Imitation, and Industrial Development in China." *World Development*. 23:8, pp. 1289-1308.

Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal. 2010. *Oil is Not a Curse: Ownership Structure and Institutions in Soviet Successor States*. (Cambridge U. Press), Ch. 1 (pp. 1-30).

12. Nov. 27 Mixed Methods (Guest speaker: Dr. Jakub Kakietek)

Tarrow. 2004. "Bridging the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide." Ch. 6 in RSL.

Evan Lieberman, "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research." American Political Science Review. 93:3 (August 2005), pp. 435-452.

Michael Ross, 2008. "Oil, Islam and Women," *American Political Science Review* 102 (1): 107-23.

Supplementary

"Symposium: Cautionary Perspectives on Multi-Method Research." 2009. *Qualitative and Multi-Method Research* (Fall), 7:2, pp. 2-22.

"Symposium: Qualitative Comparative Analysis." 2004. *Qualitative Methods*, (Fall) 2:2 pp.2-25.

Michael Piore, "Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Tools." Ch. 7, pp. 143-158, in Percecman and Curran, ed., A Handbook for Social Science Research.

13. Dec. 4 Qualitative Comparative Analysis

Alex Hicks. 1994. "Qualitative Comparative Analysis and Analytical Induction: The Case of The Emergence of the Social Security State." *Sociological Methods Research*, 23, pp. 86-113.

Alejandro Portes and Lori D. Smith. 2010. "Institutions and national development in Latin America: A comparative study." *Socio-Economic Review*. 8, 585-621.

14. Dec. 11 Data Gathering: Interviewing and Participant Observation (Guest speaker: Prof. Andra Gillespie)

Rubin and Rubin, Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data, Chapters. XX

Hammer and Wildavsky, “The Open-Ended, Semistructured Interview: An (Almost) Operational Guide” in Wildavsky, *Craftways: On the Organization of Scholarly Work*

Andra Gillespie and Melissa Michelson. 2011. "Participant Observation and Political Science: Possibilities, Priorities and Practicalities." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44:2, pp.261-265.

Supplementary

Symposium: “Interview Methods in Political Science.” PS: Political Science and Politics (December 2002) XXXV:4, pp. 663-688.

Monika Nalepa. 2010. "Hostages and Skeletons in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic," Ch. 4 (pp. 58-96), in Nalepa, *Skeletons in the Closet: Transitional Justice in Post-Communist Europe*(Cambridge U. Press).

Supplementary: Using Archives

Robert Vitals. 2006. “The Past Is Another Country.” In Perecman and Curran, A Handbook...., pp.5-18.

Ian Lustick. 1996. “History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problems of Selection Bias” American Political Science Review 90 (September): 605-618

Articles by Gamm, Katznelson, Sala and Aldrich. 1997. The Political Methodologist. (Fall) 8:1, pp. 2-20.