MMC9102: RESEARCHING COMMUNICATION II
Temple University, Spring 2022
Fridays 1230 pm – 3 pm, Tuttleman 404
Zoom when needed: https://temple.zoom.us/j/96020253122
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Office Hours by Zoom: Tuesdays 10am-12pm & by appointment,
https://temple.zoom.us/j/9146332773

Course Description
This course is designed to introduce students to qualitative approaches relevant to the study of media and communication. We will focus on a variety of philosophical and conceptual approaches, as well as practical methodologies and tools that will help students conduct qualitative scholarly research in their area of interest. The major methods of study will include text-based analyses, visual/aural methods, ethnography/participant observation, historical analysis, interviews, and approaches to digital media. In addition to writings on epistemological and ethical issues, we will also critically examine the application of qualitative methods by way of recent studies of media audiences, industries, and texts.

The **learning objectives** of this course include:
1. To introduce students to the philosophical and historical origins of qualitative research
2. To introduce students to the contributions of qualitative methodology to communication research
3. To help students understand complex ethical concerns in qualitative research
4. To allow students to experience the qualitative research process by planning, conducting, and writing up a pilot study on a specific communication phenomenon
5. To help students develop the expertise necessary to analyze qualitative data
6. To improve students' academic writing skills

Required Texts
- Brennen, B. (2022). *Qualitative research methods for media studies*. New York: Routledge. [*QRM* in syllabus]
- Articles as distributed on Canvas
- Supplemental: "Doing Fieldwork in a Pandemic" Google Doc: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1clGjGABB2h2qbduTgfqribHmog9B6P0NvMgVuiHZCl8/edit?ts=5e88ae0a%23

Students may obtain their course materials from any vendor they choose, or from the Temple University Libraries. The one required book is available from Amazon for approximately $65. All other reading materials for the course will be provided in Canvas or as links from the syllabus.

Class technology requirements
Students will be expected to have access to a computer and internet to complete assignments and access our Canvas site, which can be accessed using your Temple AccessNet account. While class sessions will be face to face unless noted, if contingencies arise where we need to conduct class online, students will be asked to access Zoom and have access to a computer with a camera and microphone.

Limited resources are available for students who do not have the technology they need for class. Students with educational technology needs, including no computer or camera or insufficient

internet access should submit a request outlining their needs using the Student Emergency Aid Fund form. *Please notify the instructor the first week of class if you are having difficulties.*

Please see Temple University's Technology Usage policy for information on unauthorized access, disclosure of passwords, sharing of accounts and more.

<u>Class expectations and policies</u>

Participation
The success of this course will depend on what you bring to it and will hinge on your active participation. Our meetings will include lectures and presentations, occasional Q&A's with guest researchers, and group activities—in all of these, your participation in discussion will be central. These seminars are an opportunity for us to learn from each other and explore issues and methods that may be outside our individual comfort zones as we build our methodological toolkits. To ensure that we use our time well it is key that you do the readings (and I reserve the right to implement pop quizzes if I get the sense that you are not doing the readings). You are permitted one class absence with no questions asked. Further absences that are not documented emergencies/illness may affect your grade, as will joining late/leaving early. Please contact me if you are unable to attend class.

Attendance Protocol and Your Health
If you feel unwell, you should not come to campus, and you will not be penalized for your absence. Instructors are required to ensure that attendance is recorded for each in-person or synchronous class session. The primary reason for documentation of attendance is to facilitate contact tracing, so that if a student or instructor with whom you have had close contact tests positive for COVID-19, the university can contact you. Recording of attendance will also provide an opportunity for outreach from student services and/or academic support units to support students should they become ill. Faculty and students agree to act in good faith and work with mutual flexibility. The expectation is that students will be honest in representing class attendance.

COVID-19 and Expectations for Class Conduct
In order to maintain a safe and focused learning environment, we must all comply with the four public health pillars: wearing face coverings, maintaining physical distancing, washing our hands and monitoring our health.

Respectful communication
Because a seminar of this nature can bring up controversial and politically charged issues, it is important that we interact courteously during class discussions and presentations. The classroom should be a safe space for the open exchange of ideas and the exploration of various ideological and epistemological issues. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but not to attack an individual. Please refrain from making sarcastic or hostile comments when other are speaking, dominating every class discussion (while some students naturally tend to participate more than others, let's be conscious of class dynamics and make sure that everyone gets their turn as much as possible), and using electronic devices to the point of distraction. Treat your peers as professional colleagues both inside and outside of class.

Academic Rights and Responsibilities
Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. This course addresses issues and considers ideas that may be controversial or unpopular. We will not hide

from the hard questions and harsh language, but students and instructor alike are expected to remain sensitive to individual differences.

The university has recently adopted a policy on students and faculty academic rights and responsibilities (policy #03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link: http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy no=03.70.02

Permission to Record
Any students who wish to record lectures/guest speakers should speak with the instructor in advance to be respectful of class participants. Recording of lectures as a disability accommodation is permitted. Any recordings permitted in this class can only be used for the student's personal educational use. Students are not permitted to copy, publish, or redistribute audio or video recordings of any portion of the class session to individuals who are not students in the course or academic program without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded. Distribution without permission may be a violation of educational privacy law, known as FERPA as well as certain copyright laws. Any recordings made by the instructor or university of this course are the property of Temple University.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism
Adapted from the Temple University "Statement on Academic Honesty for Students in Undergraduate Courses."

Academic cheating is, generally, the thwarting or breaking of the general rules of academic work or the specific rules of the individual courses. It includes falsifying data; submitting, without the instructor's approval, work in one course that was done for another; helping others to plagiarize or cheat from one's own or another's work; or actually doing the work of another person.

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's labor: another person's ideas, words, or assistance. There are many forms of plagiarism: repeating another person's sentence as your own, adopting a particularly apt phrase as your own, paraphrasing someone else's argument as your own, or even presenting someone else's line of thinking in the development of a thesis as though it were your own. . . . It is perfectly acceptable to [use the ideas and words of other people], but we must never submit someone else's work as if it were our own, without giving appropriate credit to the originator. In general, all sources must be identified as clearly, accurately, and thoroughly as possible. When in doubt about whether to identify a source, either cite the source or consult your instructor. Here are some specific guidelines to follow:

a. *Quotations*. Whenever you use a phrase, sentence, or longer passage written (or spoken) by someone else, you must enclose the words in quotation marks and indicate the exact source of the material, including the page number of written sources.

b. *Paraphrasing*. Avoid closely paraphrasing another's words. Substituting an occasional synonym, leaving out or adding an occasional modifier, rearranging the grammar slightly, or changing the tenses of verbs simply looks like sloppy copying. Good paraphrasing indicates that you have absorbed the material and are restating it in a way that contributes to your overall argument. It is best to either quote the material directly, using quotation marks, or put the ideas completely in your own words. In either case, acknowledgment is necessary. Remember: expressing someone else's ideas in your own way does not make them yours.

c. *Facts*. In a paper, you will often use facts that you have gotten from a lecture, a written work, or some other source. If the facts are well known, it is usually not necessary to provide a

source. (In a paper on American history, for example, it would not ordinarily be necessary to give a source for the statement that the Civil War began in 1861 after the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln.) But if the facts are not widely known or if the facts were developed or presented by a specific source, then you should identify that source.

d. *Ideas*. If you use an idea or ideas that you learned from a lecture, written work, or some other source, then you should identify the source. You should identify the source for an idea whether or not you agree with the idea. It does not become your original idea just because you agree with it.

Penalties for violation of Temple University's academic honesty policies can range from a failing grade for the assignment or the entire course to expulsion from the University.

Special Needs
Temple University is committed to the inclusion of students with disabilities and provides accessible instruction, including accessible technology and instruction materials. Any student who has a need for accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability or medical condition should contact Disability Resources and Services (DRS) located in the Howard Gittis Student Center South, 4th Floor at drs@temple.edu or 215-204-1280 to request accommodations and learn more about the resources available to you. If you have a DRS accommodation letter to share with me, or you would like to discuss your accommodations, please contact me as soon as practical. I will work with you and with DRS to coordinate reasonable accommodations for all students with documented disabilities. All discussions related to your accommodations will be confidential. *Please bear in mind that COVID-19 may result in a need for new or additional accommodations.*

Counseling
Counseling services are available to assist you. Please refer to the Tuttleman Counseling Center website. For those not in geographic proximity to Main campus, the Care Team can assist you in finding support near you.

Financial and food insecurity
If you are experiencing food insecurity or financial struggles, Temple provides resources and support. Notably, the Temple University Cherry Pantry and the Emergency Student Aid Program are in operation as well as a variety of resources from the Office of Student Affairs.

Assignments and Grading- DUE 9AM MORNING OF CLASS

Participation/discussion leading (8%)
Learning is accomplished through active engagement with the course material. You are expected to complete the readings for each class and actively participate in all class discussions. In addition, you will sign up to lead class discussions of two readings over the course of the semester. For the readings where you are the discussion leader, you will submit a one-page summary of key issues and themes from the reading (can be bullet points) to be shared with the class, in addition to your regular weekly reflection.

Reading reflections and questions (12%)
Each week (unless noted) you are to turn in a 1-2 page, double-spaced, assignment distilling themes from the reading, and sharing at least one related question you hope to discuss in class. Your writing should be tight and coherent, deal with multiple readings tied together with a central

idea, and offer specific examples or quotes from the readings. This writing should synthesize basic points, but also draw important insights from the readings. If you attempt to base these writings after reading only 1 or 2 texts, I will probably be able to tell, but more importantly, your learning will suffer for it. *If these writings are of exceptional quality class-wide, I reserve the right to make them optional later in the semester.*

Methods exercises and IRB certification (40%)
Over the course of the semester you will have the opportunity for hands on exploration of several methods. Because researchers often work collaboratively, we will also have some opportunities for group work, and where possible will dedicate class time to complete group assignments. Students are encouraged, but not required, to use these methods exercises as a way to gather data for their research projects.

IRB certification
Submit to Canvas a "completion certificate" for the CITI Training IRB Basic Course for Social and Behavioral research. If you have already completed this training, and your certification has not expired, you can send me that certificate. Instructions on how to access this training are on the course site. Start this training EARLY.

Visual/Aural/Textual/Discourse analysis (individual assignment)
This exercise asks you to either A) perform an in-depth analysis of a single text/visual/aural object or B) trace the emergence and performance of a discourse across a series of texts. Turn in 3-page analysis of your chosen text(s)/object(s) along with a 1 page reflection on the exercise.

In-depth interview (individual assignment)
This exercise asks you to perform a 30-60 minute, semi-structured interview with a person, loosely based around their relationship to media/communication. You can interview a class mate, a room mate, a family member, a friend, or a stranger. You will conduct the interview, transcribe it, and perform an analysis. Turn in a 2-page analysis of the interview, a transcript, and a 1-page reflection.

Observation/fieldwork (group assignment)
This exercise asks you observe people engaging in some form of communication activity and/or consuming, engaging with, or producing some form of media. Work with your team to determine in advance whether you are taking a grounded theory approach or if you are guided by a specific research question. Your role as observers may be active or passive, but you must acknowledge the aspects of your relationship to the situation that implicate you in the research. This can occur in a digital or in-person context, but you should be clear about the medium of observation. Take fieldnotes individually, then analyze the individual field notes for similarities, differences and some preliminary interpretation. Turn in a 2-page group analysis, your individual field notes, and a 1-page individual reflection.

Focus group/coding (group assignment)
This exercise asks you to work with a group to conduct and then code a mock focus group. Work with your group to determine the topic and research question(s) and create a simple discussion guide listing key questions/activities and additional probes, plus a timeline. Conduct the group, rotating who moderates and participates for a 50 minute in-person or online group. Choose a 10-minute section of the discussion to transcribe and code. Work with your team to develop a preliminary codebook, code your transcript individually, then discuss. As a group submit: a 1-page summary of your focus group and the research question you explored, the 10-minute transcript, and your codebook. As an individual submit: your individual coding, and a 1-page

individual reflection on the challenges and insights you got from moderating, participating, reviewing the focus group recording, and coding.

Research Proposal (40% of final grade)
For your final assignment, you will produce a research proposal, with initial analysis, that utilizes qualitative methods to answer a research question. Your proposal should clearly set forth the study purpose, conceptual framework, and research questions, as well as provide sufficient methodological detail by which to evaluate the study's design and its likely findings.

We will work on developing these proposals over the course of the semester as follows:
- *Proposal summary with research question (5%)*
- An *introduction* outlining the significance of your project, a *literature review* situating it, and a *theory section* demonstrating how theory guides your research questions (5%)
- A *Methods section* that outlines, practically speaking, what you will do and how you will do it, and considers ethical and epistemological complications. Your proposal should use two methods: One text based (textual, visual/aural, historical, discourse analysis) and one person based (participant observation, interviews, or focus groups) *(5%)*
- *Proposal draft (10%)*
- *Peer review (5%)*
- *Revised proposal and class presentation (10%)*

Your proposal should be no more than 20 pages long, double spaced, and should include references in a recognizable citation style (APA, Chicago, Harvard, MLA). I am available to offer comments and feedback beyond the scope of class if you are interested in completing these papers and pursuing publication.

Grading
In this graduate class, an "A" represents exceptional work that fulfills the assignment with excellent insight, clarity, and execution. "B" work is competent, but may be lacking in execution or scope. "C" work falls within the parameters of the assignment, but significantly lacks in execution or content. I rarely assign a "D" to graduate work, but failing to turn in the work, or turning in work that is poorly executed or far off topic will result in a failing grade.

Work standards
- All work must be original. Plagiarism equals an automatic failure on the assignment and possibly for the course, depending on severity. See Below for more information on plagiarism.
- Be wary of typos, errors in punctuation, errors in grammar, and errors in style. Edit assignments before turning them in. Errors will negatively affect your grade, depending upon severity. Papers with copious errors will be returned without a grade.

Late assignments
Any late work will be marked down a third of letter grade for each day late (i.e., an A becomes an A-, an A- becomes a B+, etc).

Formatting
Papers must be written in a readable font, and should include citation and bibliography in a recognized academic format (APA, MLA, and Chicago Style are all acceptable examples).

While we'll make every effort to follow the schedule outlined in this syllabus, please recognize that modifications may be made as needed.

January 14:   Introduction- What is Qualitative Research?
Chapter 1, "Getting Started" in Brennen

Sign up for discussion leading
No weekly reflection due

January 21: Theories and Paradigms of Qualitative Work
Clifford G. Christians & James W. Carey (1989). The logic and aims of qualitative research. In G.H. Stempel and B. H. Westley, (Eds). *Research methods in mass communication* (pp. 354-374), Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

S. Elizabeth Bird (1992) "Travels in Nowhere Land: Ethnography and the 'Impossible' Audience." *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 9: 250-260.

Stuart Hall (1997). "The work of representation," *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices*. (pp. 13-74). Stuart Hall (ed). London: Sage

Howard S. Becker (1996) "The Epistemology of Qualitative Research." *Ethnography and Human Development: Context and Meaning in Social Inquiry* 27: 53–71.

January 28: Process and Ethics of Qualitative Research
Chapter 2, in Brennen

Chapters 8 and 9 from Boellstorff, T., Nardi, B., Pearce, C. and Taylor, T.L. (2012). in *Ethnography and Virtual Worlds: A Handbook of Method*. Princeton: Oxford University Press.

Lewis-Kraus, G. (2016). The Trials of Alice Goffman. *New York Times Magazine*. January 12. http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/17/magazine/the-trials-of-alice-goffman.html?smid=tw-share

Nyden, Philip and Wim Wiewel, "Collaborative Research: Harnessing the Tensions Between Researcher and Practitioner," *The American Sociologist,* Winter 1992. 43-55.

Review of documents on Temple University Institutional Review Board website.
http://www.temple.edu/research/regaffairs/irb/

Skim scholarly organizations' guidelines: ICA, NCA, AoIR, AEJMC

Due: IRB Certification

February 4: Working with Texts: Discourse and thematic analysis
Chapter 8, "Textual Analysis" in Brennen

Elfriede Fürsich (2009). In defense of textual analysis: Restoring a challenged method for journalism and media studies. *Journalism Studies*, 10, 238-252.

Maddox, Jessica, and Brian Creech. "Leaning in, Pushed out Postfeminist Precarity, Pandemic Labor, and Journalistic Discourse." International Journal of Cultural Studies, (October 2021). https://doi.org/10.1177/13678779211047997.

Anthony Nadler (2019) Nature's Economy and News Ecology, *Journalism Studies*, 20:6, 823-839.

Researcher Q&A with guest Anthony Nadler

Due: Proposal summary/research questions

February 11: Working with Texts: Visual and Aural
Chapter 6 from Gillian Rose (2017) *Visual Methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual material*s. 1st Edition. London: SAGE.

Geoffrey Baym (2000), The promise and the product: A textual-critical analysis of Public Television's *NewsHour*, *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 24(3): 312-331.

Kumanyika, C. (2015). 'We demand justice. we just getting started': The constitutive rhetoric of 1Hood media's hip-hop activism. *Popular Music, 34*(3), 432-451. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0261143015000355

Elsayed, Y. (2016). Laughing Through Change: Subversive Humor in Online Videos of Arab Youth. *International Journal Of Communication, 10*, 20. Retrieved from https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/4795

Researcher Q&A with guest Yomna Elsayed

February 18: Working with Texts: Archival Methods
Chapter 5 in Brennen

Susan J. Douglas (2010), "Writing from the Archive: Creating your own," *The Communication Review* 13(1): 5-14.

Jonathan Sterne (2010), "Rearranging Files: On Interpretation in Media History," *The Communication Review*, 13(1): 75-87.

Society of American Archivist's "Using Archives: A Guide to Effective Research" https://www2.archivists.org/usingarchives

Powers, Devon. (2019) "Chapter 2: Thinking in Trends." In <u>*On Trend: The Business of Forecasting the Future*</u>. University of Illinois Press

Researcher Q&A with guest Devon Powers

Due: Visual/Aural/Textual/Discourse analysis exercise

February 25: Working with People: Interviewing
Chapter 3 in Brennen

Kathleen Kuehn and Thomas Corrigan (2013), "Hope labor: The role of employment prospects

in online social production," *The Political Economy of Communication* 1(1): 9-25.

Williams Fayne, Miya. "The Great Digital Migration: Exploring What Constitutes the Black Press Online." Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly 97, no. 3 (September 2020): 704–20. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699020906492.

Lauren Kogen (2017): News You Can Use or News That Moves?, *Journalism Practice*, DOI: 10.1080/17512786.2017.1400395

Due: Intro, lit review, theoretical framework

March 4: NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

March 11: Working with People: Observation
Chapter 7 in Brennen

Patrick Murphy and Marwan M. Kraidy (2003) International Communication, Ethnography, and the Challenge of Globalization. *Communication Theory* 13(3): 304-323.

Lila Abu-Lughod. (1997) The Interpretation of Culture(s) After Television. *Representations* 59: 109-134.

Fabienne Darling-Wolf (2004), "Sites of attractiveness: Japanese women and westernized representations of feminine beauty," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 21(4): 325-345.

Seth C Lewis and Nikki Usher. "Trading Zones, Boundary Objects, and the Pursuit of News Innovation: A Case Study of Journalists and Programmers." *Convergence* 22, no. 5 (October 2016): 543–60.

Due: Interview exercise

March 18: Graduate Research Forum
Instead of the regularly scheduled class, students are to attend GRF and submit a 1-2 page reflection reviewing at least one study shared that used qualitative methods. Reflections are due by midnight March 21st.

Due: Methods section

March 25: Working with People: Focus Groups and Oral History
Chapter 4 and Chapter 6 in Brennen

Peter Lunt & Sonia Livingstone, S. (1996) Rethinking the focus group in media and communications research. *Journal of Communication*, 46 (2), 79-98.

Michael Conway (2013): "Oral history interviews," *International Encyclopedia of Media Studies Volume 7: Research Methods in Media Studies*. Fabienne Darling Wolff (ed).

Andrea D. Wenzel, Sam Ford & Efrat Nechushtai (2019): Report for America, Report about Communities: Local News Capacity and Community Trust, *Journalism Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/1461670X.2019.1641428

Due: Participant observation exercise

April 1: Case Studies and engaged research
Carolina Acosta-Alzuru, (2010), "Beauty queens, machistas and street children: the production and reception of socio-cultural issues in telenovelas," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 13(2): 185-203.

Robinson, Sue, and Kathleen Bartzen Culver. "When White Reporters Cover Race: News Media, Objectivity and Community (Dis)Trust." *Journalism* 20, no. 3 (March 2019): 375–91. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884916663599.

Andrea D. Wenzel and Letrell Crittenden (2021): Reimagining Local Journalism: A Community-centered Intervention, *Journalism Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/1461670X.2021.1942148

George Villanueva, Carmen Gonzalez, Minhee Son, Evelyn Moreno, Wenlin Liu & Sandra Ball-Rokeach (2017) Bringing local voices into community revitalization: engaged communication research in Urban planning, Journal of Applied Communication Research, 45:5, 474-494, DOI: 10.1080/00909882.2017.1382711

Researcher Q&A with guest George Villanueva

Due: Focus group exercise

April 8: Working with Data
Carol A. B. Warren and Tracy Xavia Karner, (2014). "Chapter 5. Writing Fieldnotes," and "Chapter 9 Analyzing Qualitative Data: Fieldnotes, Transcripts, Documents, and Images" in *Discovering Qualitative Methods.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Watch "Doing ethnography remotely" videos from the Stanford Center for Global Ethnography. Available at: https://iriss.stanford.edu/doing-ethnography-remotely

Due: Proposal draft

April 15: Writing it up
Re-read Chapter 2 of Brennen

Laurel Richardson and Elizabeth St. Pierre (2005), "Writing as a method of inquiry," in Norm Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln, eds. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research. (3rd Edition).* London Sage: 959-978.

William A. Firestone (1993) "Alternative Arguments for Generalizing from Data as Applied to Qualitative Research." *Educational Researcher* 22(4): 16–23.

Due: Peer review

April 22: Final presentations
Due: Revised Proposals