



## **SOCI 2005 – SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION & INQUIRY: PART A**

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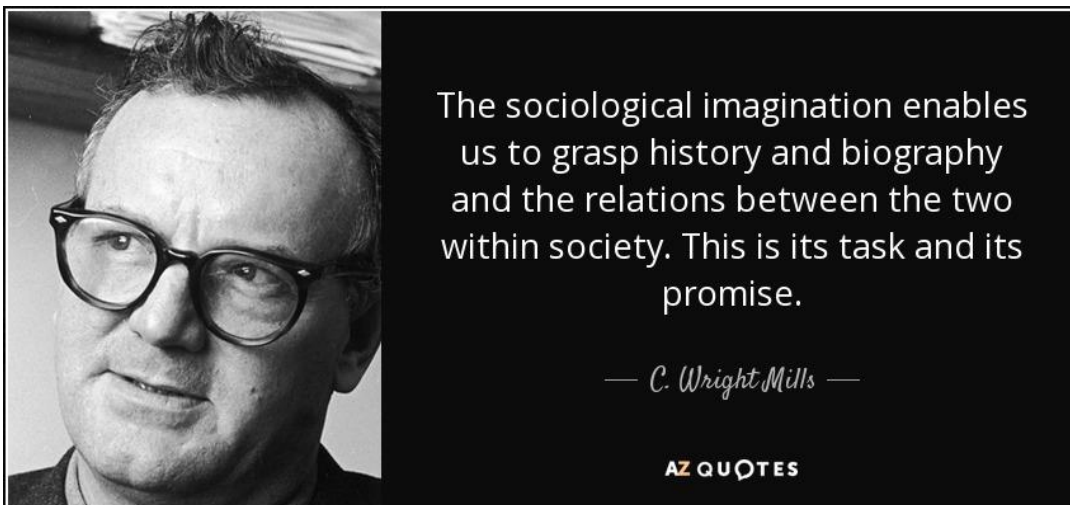
### **Course Description**

Sociology is the “study of society” that examines and questions patterns of social behavior. In this course, we will explore how it is that social scientists actually go about “studying” society in this way. Specifically, we will examine *qualitative* methods of data collection in the social sciences. The goal is for you to learn how to conduct and evaluate qualitative research. You will ask questions about the social world and answer them using qualitative data. This will be a very “hands on” class—we will learn about specific research methods and then we will apply them. In the end, you will not only be able to better understand your life and the lives of those around you, but you will be better prepared to study social phenomena in a systematic way.

### **Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

This course is intended to introduce you to three specific research methods that make up the qualitative researcher’s “toolkit” in sociology and criminology. The primary objective of the course is for students to learn how social scientists *think about, make sense of, and carry out* the methods that they employ in their research. Taken-for-granted aspects of social life will be closely examined through these methods. Our objectives will be met through readings, homework assignments, and writing, all of which represent important parts of doing research.

During this course, students will be expected to be actively engaged. *Students will need regular access to a computer with word processor capabilities, an audio recording device (such as a cell phone or a digital recorder), and a paper notebook.*



## READING LIST: THEMES, MATERIALS, & ASSIGNMENTS

### Introducing Qualitative Research Methods

Read: ☞ Cole, “Understanding the Sociological Perspective”

Read: ☞ Brink, “Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Research”

Homework: ? What do you hope to learn about research methods this quarter? Brainstorm some ways that methodological skills will be valuable for you in the future. **Refer to prompt.**

### Research Topics & Questions

Read: ☞ Agee, “Developing Qualitative Research Questions: A Reflective Process”

Homework: ? What are you researching (and how)? What is your research question? What other research exists on your topic? What do you expect to find? How will you know if you find it (or not)? **Refer to prompt.**

### Qualitative Content Analysis, Week 1

**Mon, Jan 25 – Asynchronous: Introducing content analysis & qualitative coding**

Read: ☞ Yi, “Themes Don’t Just Emerge: Coding the Qualitative Data”

Read: ☞ Del Rosso, “Researching the U.S. Politics of Torture Using Content Analysis”

Homework: ? Identify your data: What content will you analyze? How will you acquire it? What do you expect to find in these data? **Refer to prompt.**

### Qualitative Content Analysis, Week 2

Homework: ? Codebook and coding sheet with deductive and inductive codes. **Refer to prompt.**

### Ethnography, Part 1

Read: ☞ Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, chapters 1 & 2

Read: ☞ McKim, *Addicted to Rehab*, “Chapter 1: Intake: Pathways to Treatment”

Read: ☞ McKim, *Addicted to Rehab*, “Methodological Appendix”

Homework: ? “Mini proposal” for your ethnography. What is your research question? Who, what, when, where do you plan to observe? What are your expectations? **Refer to prompt.**

### Ethnography, Part 2

Collect data: ✍ Ethnographic data collection is a time-consuming process. Use this time to collect your observational data. Take jottings “in the field,” then type up rich, detailed fieldnotes afterwards.

Homework: ? Submit written field jottings, typed fieldnotes, and a short memo. **Refer to prompt.**

### In-Depth Interviews, Part 1

Read: ☞ Bradburn et al., *Asking Questions*, chapter 1

Read: ☞ Swidler, *Talk of Love*, “Chapter 6: Love and Marriage”

Read: ☞ Swidler, *Talk of Love*, “The Basic Interview Guide”

Homework: ? “Mini proposal” for your interviews. What is your overall research question? Who do you plan to interview? How/why did you choose them? What questions will you ask them? **Refer to prompt.**

### **In-Depth Interviews, Part 2**

Collect data: ✎ Finding interview participants can be a challenge. Conducting interviews can be surprisingly tiring. Transcription can be slow (although recent technology helps with that). Use this time to conduct your interviews *and* transcribe them.

Homework: ? Typed interview transcripts from two interviews. **Refer to prompt.**

### **Writing Up Research**

Homework: ? Outline of final project—list sections, subsections, etc. **Refer to prompt.**