



# QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND THE SCHOLARLY PUBLICATION PROCESS

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Feb 4, 2022

# Today's Talk

- What do qualitative research methods encompass
- Qualitative Methods and best practices
  - Observation, interviewing, sampling
- Becoming a qualitative methodologist
  - Examples of my work
  - Working with student researchers
  - Qualitative Data Repositories
- Some thoughts about Qualitative Methods?
  - To achieve what aim?



# Multiple qualitative methods

- Exploratory Research
- Formative/Summative Research
- Phenomenological Research
  - observation, focus groups, in-depth interview, ethnography, visual & textual analysis
- Descriptive Research
- Evaluation
- Usability Testing
- Case Studies
- Applied Research



Characteristics of Quantitative	Characteristics of Qualitative
“Objective”	“Subjective”
Research Question: How many? Strength of association?	Research questions: What? Why?
“Hard” science	“Soft” science
Literature review must be done early in study	Literature review done as study progresses or afterwards
Test theory	Develops theory
One reality: focus is concise and narrow	Multiple realities: focus on complex and broad
Facts are value-free and unbiased	Facts are value-laden and biased
Reduction, control, precision	Discovery, description, understanding, shared interpretation
Measurable	Interpretive
Report statistical analysis. Basic analysis is numbers	Report rich narrative. Basic analysis words/ideas
Context free	Context dependent
Hypothesis	Research questions
Sample size = n	Sample size is not a concern, seeks “informal rich” sample

# What we are not conducting:

- Surveys
- Questionnaires
- Self-Administered Questionnaires
- Close-Ended Questions
- Leading Questions



# METHODS

# Types of observation

- Complete Observer
- Participant Observer
- Complete Participant
- Total immersion

*What are the advantages and disadvantages of each approach?*

# Types of Interviews

- **Focus Group**
- Usability testing
- **In-depth interview**
  - Unstructured interview
  - Structured interview
- Exploratory Research
- **Evaluation**
- Applied Research

# Post Data Collection

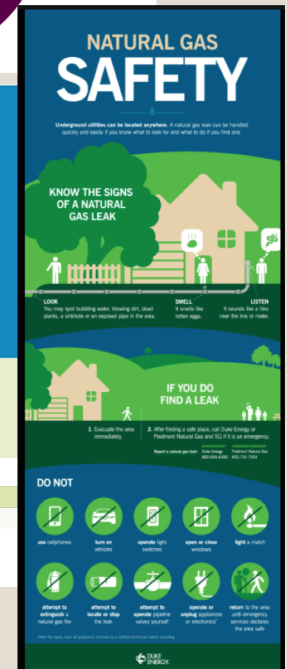
- Fieldnotes, transcripts, data scraping, video, open-ended responses from a survey
- Coding & Analysis phase
  - Themes, Codebook, Grounded Theory, Inter-rater reliability
- Writing up of findings, publication



# MY RESEARCH

# My current research interests:

- Public health messaging & digital technology
- Social Aspects of genetics
- Optimization of faculty office hours
- Critical qualitative methods
- Health inequities



17  
81m bases  
1770 genes

Jump to a gene:  or a chromosome:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 X Y MT

« Return to your whole genome.

Gene	Position	SNP	Versions	Katherine Gregory's Genotype
BRCA1	41209079	rs4000378		DD
9	Bad	Denys-Drash syndrome		
9	Bad	Raine syndrome		
9	Bad	early-onset Alzheimers disease		
9	Bad	Picks disease of the brain		
9	Bad	early onset Alzheimer's disease		
9	Bad	early-onset Alzheimers disease		
9	Bad	early-onset Alzheimers disease		
9	Bad	early-onset Alzheimers disease		
9	Bad	early-onset Alzheimers disease		

Notable genotypes

rs4000378(T;C)
Rs28942089(C;T)
Rs28941779(C;T)
Rs28941778(A;G)
Rs267606795(C;C)
Rs63751037(A;G)
Rs63751068(G;T)
Rs661(A;A)
Rs661(A;G)
Rs63751320(A;C)
Rs63751235(C;G)
Rs63751229(C;T)





# Community Engagement, Intervention Behavior and the Prevention of Gas Leaks in New York City

- Con Edison Social and Behavioral Research Award program - \$33K
- Four neighborhood-based focus groups.
- To understand what kinds of messaging or information will motivate New Yorkers to intervene in the event they smell a gas odor.
- Intervention behavior is a challenge to validate.
- To understand the role of the “bystander effect” and health belief model play in decision making when a gas leak is suspected.
- Concept test digital creatives developed by COMM Design students in Design Team (COMD 4701).
- Feedback on the call to action identified in national campaigns.
- To understand public opinion about utilities’ brand strength and procedural expectations.
- Work with two student researchers.



# Social impact of genetics on identity and health diagnostics

- 13 in-depth interviews with consumers who have acquired their genetic data from direct-to-consumer companies
- Data scrape thread posts found on online sites, You-tube videos, and other web-based sites where consumers discuss their interest in genetic testing.
- Content analysis of newspaper and popular science coverage of gene editing incident.
- Interview genetic counselors



The screenshot shows the article page for "Contestable kinship: user experience and engagement on DTC genetic testing sites" by Katherine Gregory. The journal is "New Genetics and Society: Critical Studies of Contemporary Biosciences", Volume 38, 2019 - Issue 4. The article has 88 views, 0 CrossRef citations to date, and 0 altmetric. The abstract discusses direct-to-consumer genetic testing products and their participatory social media outlets, exploring how they provide new ways to understand ancestral identity and build community. The abstract mentions the role of genetic determinism and user-generated information, as well as the examination of social networking sites like 23andme, GEDMatch, AncestryDNA, and MyHeritage. The abstract concludes that this communication shapes user interpretation of genetic results. Keywords include: Balkan identity, social media tools, genetic kinship, direct-to-consumer genetic testing kits, participatory tools, user-generated information and social capital, autoethnography.

Journal  
New Genetics and Society >  
Critical Studies of Contemporary Biosciences  
Volume 38, 2019 - Issue 4

Articles

## Contestable kinship: user experience and engagement on DTC genetic testing sites

Katherine Gregory

Pages 387-403 | Received 25 Nov 2017, Accepted 25 Sep 2019, Published online: 15 Oct 2019

[Download citation](#) <https://doi.org/10.1080/14636778.2019.1677148> [Check for updates](#)

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### Abstract

Direct-to-consumer genetic testing products and their participatory social media outlets provide users with new ways to understand ancestral identity, build community around shared results, and conceptualize the role of genetic determinism in their lives. In this article, I explore of role of user-generated information constructed with results from direct-to-consumer genetic scanning services such as 23andme, GEDMatch, AncestryDNA, MyHeritage. In particular, this paper considers how social capital is accumulated and disseminated utilizing these participatory tools in the communication practices of users. Through the sharing of genealogical knowledge, historical expertise, communication technology skills, access to genealogical services, selective behaviors such as cooperation, trust building, and a reliable presence on these social networking sites are examined. Thus this article aims to examine consumer contact practices and information sharing of social capital in the form of familial origin narratives, genetic ancestry estimations, and how this communication shapes user interpretation of genetic results.

Keywords: Balkan identity, social media tools, genetic kinship, direct-to-consumer genetic testing kits, participatory tools, user-generated information and social capital, autoethnography

# Optimization of Faculty Office

Hours, co-PI with Provost Pam Brown and Dr. Diana Samaroo

- To understand how students utilize faculty office hours.
- To understand how faculty encourage students to attend office hours and how to engage students during their office hours
- Interviews took place before adjunct lecturers were given additional 15 hrs. for holding office hours.
- Before migration to online learning during the pandemic
- Mixed Methods
- Pre and Post surveys of students who were enrolled in a chemistry course, fall and spring semesters
- Interviews with faculty who taught the course.
- Interview students about their experience

# Working with student researchers

- Spring/Summer 2022, will work with two student researchers on “Gas Leak Prevention” related focus groups
- Spring 2022, Fall 2020, working independently with a BIB student analyzing COVID-19 deaths, zip code residence, race, socio-economics, and area hospital ratings.
- Fall 2019-Summer 2020 two students worked on separate projects:
  - Media analysis of genetic editing covered by online news outlets
  - Coding interview transcripts with genetic kit users.
- Know their strengths.
- Provide learning environment regarding your research methodology.
- Provide support.
- Search for conferences and publication opportunities in which the student can participate or be a co-author.

# Recent articles and book chapter

- Gregory, K. (2020). The video camera spoiled my ethnography: a critical approach. **International Journal of Qualitative Methods**. Volume 5, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920963761>
- Gregory, K. (2020). Coding and Analysis: Deciding on Software Needs. **Becoming a Practitioner-Researcher: A Practical Guide for Information Professionals**, Lee Ann Fullington, Brandon K. West, and Frans Albarillo (eds) Chicago: ACRL publisher. <https://www.alastore.ala.org/content/reflections-practitioner-research-practical-guide-information-professionals>
- Gregory, K. (2019). Contestable Kinship: User Experience and Engagement on DTC Genetic Testing Sites. **New Genetics and Society**, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14636778.2019.1677148>
- Gregory, K. (2019). Lessons of a Failed Study: Lone Researcher, Media Analysis, and the Limitations of Bracketing. **International Journal of Qualitative Methods**, 18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919842450>
- Gregory, K. (2018). Online Communication Settings and the Qualitative Research Process: Acclimating Students and Novice Researchers. **Qualitative Health Research**, 28 (10): 1610–1620. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732318776625>

# Earlier articles and book chapters

- Kathryn Lane, MPH,<sup>1</sup>Katherine Wheeler, MPH,<sup>1</sup>Kizzy Charles-Guzman,MS,<sup>2</sup> Munerah Ahmed, MPH,<sup>2</sup> Micheline Blum, MA<sup>3</sup>, Katherine Gregory, PhD, MS, MA<sup>4</sup>, Nathan Graber, MD,<sup>2</sup> MPH, Nancy Clark, MA, CIH, CSP,<sup>2</sup> Thomas Matte, MD, MPH<sup>1</sup> (2014). Extreme Heat Awareness and Protective Behaviors in New York City. **Journal of Urban Health**.
- Gregory. K. (2010). In the Living Room: Transgendering in a Dutch Urban Streetwalking Zone. **Transgender Identities: Towards a Social Analysis of Gender Diversity**, Sally Hines and Tam Sanger (eds). New York; Routledge.
- Gregory, K. (2009). Confessions from at-risk-teens: Abstinence, the social construction of promiscuity, and the Oprah Winfrey Show. **Stories of Oprah: The Oprahfication of American Culture**, Kimberly Springer and Angela Cotton (eds). Oxford, MS: University of Mississippi Press.
- Gregory K. and Wood, E. (2009). Controlled Demolitions: The 9/11 Truth Movement on the Internet. **Internet Fictions**, Ingrid Hotz-Davies, Anton Kirchhofer and Sirpa Leppänen (eds), Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press.
- Gregory. K. (2007). Drawing a virtual gun. **Open Fire: Understanding Global Gun Cultures**, Charles Springwood (ed), Oxford, U.K.: Berg Publishers.
- Gregory, K. (2005). Am I an Albanian American. **From Generation to Generation: Maintaining culture over time**, Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz (ed), Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

# 5+ years as the Media Evaluation Researcher for NYC DOHMH

## **PI for Media Campaign Evaluation**

- HIV Women of Color
- Breastfeeding
- Tobacco Control NPGP
- Portion Control
- Pouring on the Pounds II
- Meningitis Vaccination Email Messaging
- Excessive Drinking
- Dog Licensing
- Light Smokers
- Tobacco Control Child Focus
- Make New York Your Gym/Be Fit

# Designed, Conducted & Analyzed

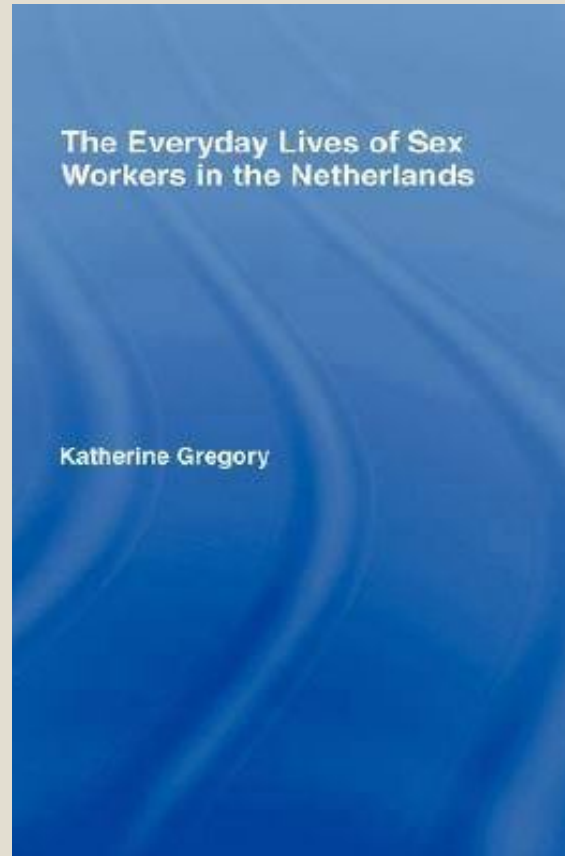
- H1N1 Vaccination Clinic Exit Survey
- Excessive Drinking campaign concept testing 2010 focus groups
- Flu-related focus groups & telephone survey for federally funded media evaluation
- Street intercept & online surveys for the Pouring on the Pounds subway poster and viral video campaign
- Street intercept survey for The Bronx Knows HIV testing subway poster campaign
- Online evaluation survey for Teen MindSpace on MySpace.
- Excessive Drinking 2011 concept testing focus groups
- Moderate Vulnerable Populations and Emergency Preparedness
- Anti-Obesity campaign recall street intercept survey
- Bed Bug Control and Information Seeking Behavior usability lab sessions
- NYC Teen Site usability lab sessions
- Usability Test Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response internal and external sites
- Usability test Falls Prevention website
- Usability test the new DOHMH site
- Usability test Teen Reproductive mobile app
- TeenMindSpace Usability Lab sessions



# Designed, Conducted & Analyzed

- STD Clinic Patient Satisfaction Survey
- MSM HIV prevention focus groups
- Cervical Cancer prevention questionnaire
- Newborn Home Visiting survey
- WTC Health Registry Treatment Referral Program focus groups
- Lead Poisoning Prevention Landlord/Contractor focus groups
- Tobacco Control media campaign focus groups and in-depth interviews
- Bodega Retailer focus groups
- Community Resiliency and Recovery focus groups
- Stellar Farmers' Market focus groups
- Heat Emergency focus groups
- Meningitis Vaccination Exit Survey
- HIV Women of Color surveillance and concept testing
- HIV+ MSM surveillance and concept testing
- Falls Prevention Family Caregivers focus groups
- Gun Violence Prevention focus groups
- Dog Licensing focus groups
- New Mothers & Breastfeeding focus groups
- Portion Control concept testing
- Nurse Family Partnership program evaluation focus group and in-depth interviews

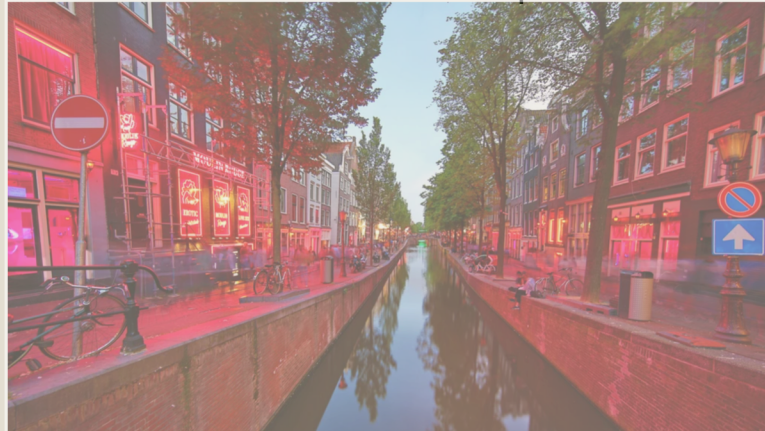
# Monograph publication



Gregory, K. (2005). **The Everyday Lives of Sex Workers in the Netherlands**, New York: Routledge

# Quality of everyday life for transgendered sex workers

- Two-tiered system is reproducing inequalities
- Civil rights for undocumented sex workers
- Changing social conditions in the zone – safety, high-risk behavior
- State will pay for gender reassignment surgery
- State recognition of transgendered (monogamous) relationships
- Does legalization dignify and professionalize prostitution?



# Repositories for Data Storage

- Determined by IRB protocols
- Grant stipulations
- AAA Data Registry Wiki
- Berkeley Institute for Transparency in Social Issues
- Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives
- NIH Data Sharing Repositories
- Open Context
- Open Data Institute
- Qualitative Data Repository- Syracuse University QDR
- UK Data Archive

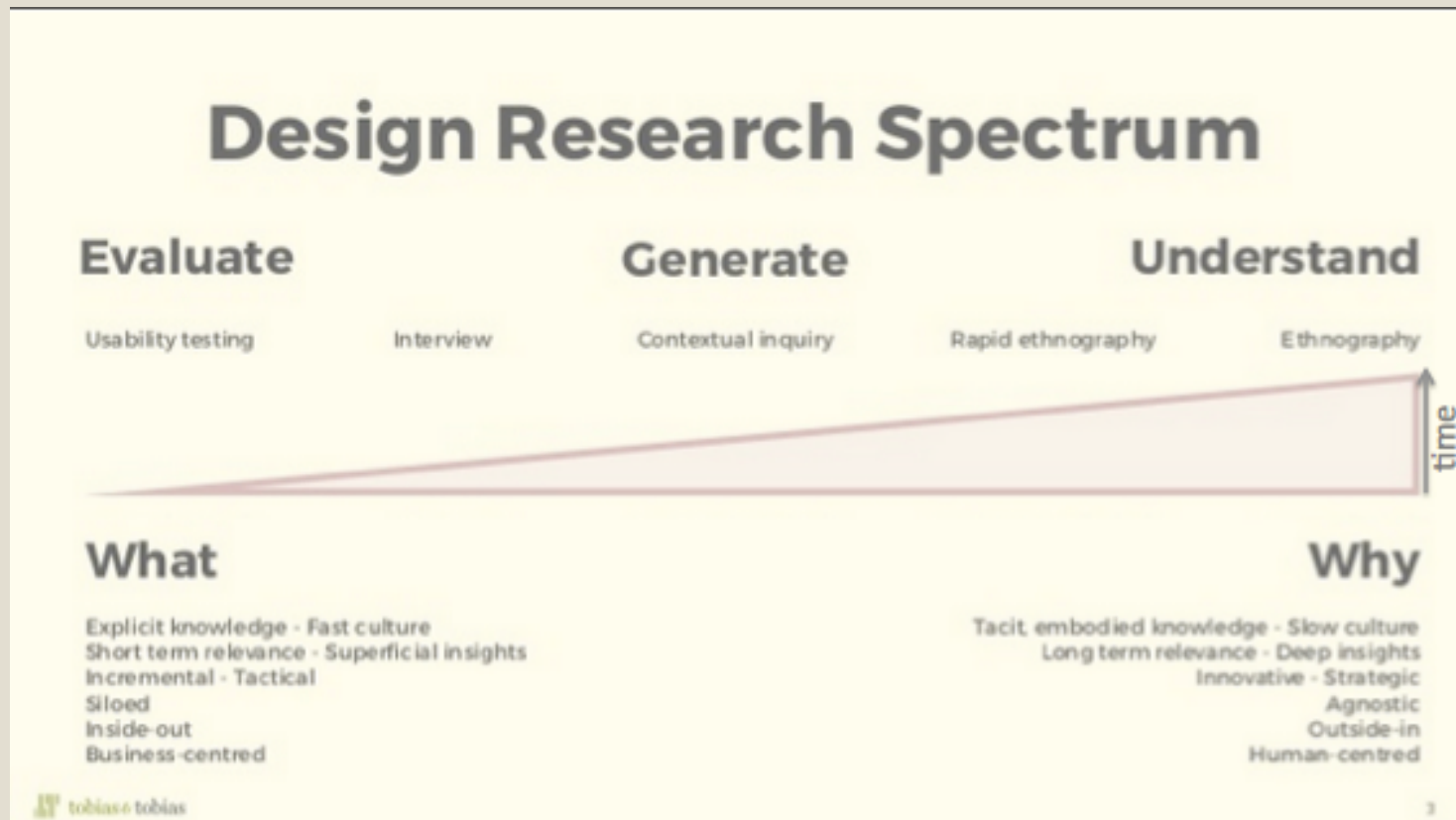


SOME THOUGHTS  
ABOUT QUAL  
METHODS

# Multiple methods

- Exploratory Research
- Formative/Summative Research
- Phenomenological Research
  - observation, focus groups, in-depth interview, ethnography, visual & textual analysis
- Descriptive Research
- Evaluation
- Usability Testing
- Case Studies
- Applied Research

# Design Research Spectrum



# What is qualitative

- Look at settings and people ***holistically***
- Descriptive data
  - **Peoples' own written or oral words**
  - Observable behavior.
- Inductive:
  - **Researchers develop concepts, insights** & understanding from patterns in the data.
  - **Without preconceived models** or hypotheses, theories.



# What is qualitative

- Recognize that **all perspectives are valuable.**
- Try to **be humanistic.** Try not to reduce humans to statistical equations.
- First-hand knowledge
- **All settings are worthy** of study

# What is qualitative

- Sensitive to **researcher's role**
  - Recognize **researcher's own frame** of reference
  - Try to **set aside researcher's own beliefs** and perspective

Qualitative informs the context in which life occurs

- Helps to **conceptualize issues from another's perspective**
- How to understand an experience from the perspective of priority populations
- Tries to answer “**why**” and “**how**” of question rather than “how much” and “how many”
- Helps to **build trust in the communities we study**

# Common Ways to Mix Methodologies

- Upon interpretation of *qualitative results* **use quantitative data** (socio-demographic data) related to study participants
- Qualitative phase could occur at the end quantitative study to **evaluate interpretation**
- Qualitative & quantitative techniques **used independently from different perspectives**

# Common Ways to Mix Methodologies

- **Formative phase** (focus groups) could precede quantitative phase (household survey) to generate hypotheses.
- **Qualitative exit interviews** can be conducted with a sample of quantitative survey participants to check external validity

# Why use qualitative data or mixed methods

- Contribute to disciplinary scholarship
- Informs policy
- Informs program initiatives
- Informs best practices for patient care/consumer interaction with organizations
- Informs communication strategies

# Need to consider

- Research Design
  - Methodology, research team, PI
- Sampling
  - Population, sample size, recruitment, screening, access, data saturation
- Timeline
- Budget
- Stakeholders
- Literature Review
  - What are the gaps in knowledge
  - What are my research questions?
- IRB and other ethical considerations
- What are your goals, outcomes?
  - Contributing to scholarship of discipline, policy, program initiatives, communication strategy, application

# Researchers must contemplate the following:

- What are we trying to find out?
  - Is it relevant? Is it important?
- Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?
  - Does the research seek to understand complex, subjective experiences or views of those being researched?
- How will we elicit narratives from participants?
- How will we interpret patterns?
- Do we have the means to reach insights into the human condition.



# Research Design Questions to Explore

- *What is the general area of inquiry?*
- **Where are the gaps in the research?**
- *What is the purpose of the research?*
- **How is the research problem defined?**
- *What is the larger conceptual framework?*
- **What questions will address the research problem?**
- *What methods will best address the research questions?*
- **Who should participate?**

# Research Design Questions to Explore

- **What ethical standards will assure the protection of study participants?**
- *How should the data be collected?*
- **How will data collectors be trained and monitored?**
- *How will the data be analyzed?*
- **How will the results be disseminated?**
- *What are the limitations of this study?*

# Why use qualitative data or mixed methods

- **Informs future research**
- Informs development of digital technology
- **Provides cultural and social context for issues**
- Provides listening tool
- **Provide perspective of at-risk populations excluded from large studies**

# Limitations

- **Personal biases**
- *Informant lies*
- **Small sample (can't be validated)**
- *Not really answering the question the study set out to answer*
- **Inconsistencies across different settings**
- *Researcher in the field*

# Sources

- *Analyzing Social Settings* by Lofland J., and Lofland L.H.
- *Qualitative Methods in Public Health* by Ulin P.R., Robinson E. T., Tolley E.E.
- *Qualitative Research Practice* by Seale C., Gobo G., Gubrium J.F., Silverman D., (edited by)
- *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* by Fretz R.I., Emerson R. M., Shaw L.



# THANK YOU!

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