

ASSR Methodology Clinic A: March 2010:

Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Design

Timing: Six All-Day Workshops, fortnightly (= every 2 weeks) on Mondays: 11 to 6.

Instructor: Gerd Baumann

Location: AISR Seminar Room = B.017, Kloveniersburgwal 48.

Days: 6 Mondays in Spring 2010: Please note: We start a week earlier this year, so as to avoid odd public holidays interfering with a) : our shared fortnightly rhythm , but also b) : to avoid our Clinic interfering with your extended weekend holidays. So a) + b) = :

1 March, 15 March, 29 March, 12 April, 26 April, 10 May.

Timing: 11-1 : Morning Session
1 – 2: informal lunch together, and / or private study as we progress.
2– 5: Afternoon Session
5 – 6: informal get-together (= avoid rush-hour [spits] and start fusing [Clinic])

Enrolment: Please notify BOTH at the same time :
M.May@uva.nl AND G.Baumann@uva.nl .

Aims and Purpose:

The emphasis of Methodology Clinic A is focused on ethnographic and qualitative Ph.D. projects which mainly rely on participant observation, in-depth interviewing, and detailed case studies. While there are useful inputs from quantitative and structure-orientated methodologies such as sampling, flow charts and network analysis, these, too, are discussed primarily with a view to adapting them to qualitative approaches.

The objective of Clinic A is thus to give hands-on crafts and skills training for ethnographic, though not necessarily small-scale, research as favoured by anthropologists, historians, and empirical (!) sociologists. It will concentrate on those methodological problems that occur in the everyday research processes as they develop, and it will try, by mutual discussion (hence the word ‘Clinic’) to distill and refine the individual research agenda of the participants. The aim is two-fold: in the medium term, it is, as Becker says, *‘to re-think your research while you’re doing it’*, in the short term it is to give a quality boost to your eighth-month paper.

Practice:

This Clinic is user-driven and has three aims : First, it is to stimulate mutual reflections on the effects of choosing particular qualitative methods on empirical results. Second, to reflect upon and re- think issues of crafts and skills in everyday empirical research. Third, to fuse your

different knowledges and skills and make each other better (hence the name 'Clinic': you are not patients, but each other's doctors, GB acts as 'headnurse'.)

This means that Each of you reads All of you : each submits all assignments to all in time, and then all can discuss all deliveries on the Clinic Day every two weeks. Your participation depends on timely submission circulated to all, plus preparedness to discuss all other submissions. After all, our common discussions about methodological choices will have immediate consequences for your and your fellow Docs' theoretical choices.

This requires intense solidarity. For each fortnightly meeting, you will write two assignments, each distilled (!) onto one A4 and pre-circulated to all (so that all read all in time and help all). The best timing for all is : submit all to all on the Wednesdays before the Monday meetings.

Readings Meths Clinic A:

Howard S. Becker 1998, *Tricks of the Trade. How to think about your research while you're doing it.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. This is around 30 Euro. All other readings will be made available freely as our work progresses.

Time Plan and Assignments:

Assignment Zero: Circulate your Project Sheet (please download below) to All Co-Clinicians. In case of over-subscription, we shall need these to decide on participation / advice. ALL of you will want ALL of these from ALL two weeks before our 1st Meeting. So please, send your Project Sheet to ALL on the participants' list **on : Monday 15 February.** (Please stick to that date to help your own and everybody else's pc-hygiene.)

Clinic Day One: 1 March

morning: Collective Discussion of your Project Sheets

afternoon: Focus on your choices re. Conceptual Triangles. (see Project Sheet below)

Assignment 1 a: Revise your three ! most useful Conceptual Triangles for use in your 8MP.

Assignment 1 b: Study Becker, ch.s 1 to 3, and distil one A4 total for all clinicians on two of these topics:

Imagery as applied to your own project,

Qualitative Sampling as applied to your own project,

Bernie's Trick and Nil-Hypothesis as applied to your own project.

NB: We need no summaries of Becker: all Clinicians can read. We need YOUR applications to YOUR project for YOUR 8MP. Please note: distilling 1 brilliant A4 needs writing and discarding a few drafts before you circulate your best☺

Clinic Day Two: 15 March

Morning: Cross-Discussion of Imagery,

Afternoon: Cross-Discussion of Qualitative Sampling, Bernie's Trick, and Nil-Hypothesis

Assignment 2 a: Study Becker on Concepts and Truth Tables: apply and circulate.

Assignment 2 b: Study Becker on Flow Charts: apply to your project and circulate to all.

Clinic Day Three: 29 March

Morning: Cross-Discuss Assignment 2 a: Concepts and Truth Tables.

Afternoon: Cross-Discuss Assignment 2 b: Flow Charts.

Assignment 3 a: Study the materials on Network Analysis and apply to your own 8MP.

Assignment 3 b: Try to combine / contrast your Network Analysis with your previous work, especially perhaps with your Flow Charts.

Note: Assignment 3c: Students' Evaluations (anonymous of course and collated by one of you) proved far more useful to All of Us in mid-Term, instead of only at the end.

Clinic Day Four: 12 April

Morning: Discussion of your alternative Network Analyses.

Afternoon: Cross-Methodology: combine your Network Analyses with your Flow Charts.

Note : Last semester, the results were so insightful that we even had an hour + to spare for exchanging prepared Tips (and Tricks) on Teaching as an aio.

Assignment 4 a: Distil 1 A4 with best tips for qualitative interviews. (include such problems as elite interviews (see lit. provided), key informants, selection, anonymity / informed consent, ethics, sequencing, etc.)

Assignment 4 b: Apply your reading on Case Studies (lit. provided) by sketching 3 original case studies crucial to your own project.

Clinic Day Five: 26 April

Morning: Cross-Discussion of Assignment 4 a: Interviews

Afternoon: Cross-Discussion of Assignment 4 b: Case Studies

Assignment 5 a: Study the principles and procedures of the Tables of Content (provided in the Reader) to imagine TWO alternative Ts of C for your own work. Circulate both (the boring one you need to exorcise and the 2nd one that shows your Sociological Imagination).

Assignment 5 b: Finalize all your work so far for inclusion in your 8MP. Alternatively, if the Clinic is as creative as it was during the last few semester, prepare Tips and Tricks for Publishing already during your promotion period.

Clinic Day Six: 10 May

Morning: Discussion of Assignment 5 a: your sophisticated T of C.

Make sure, please, to integrate all the Meths considerations you worked on.

Afternoon: Cross-Discussion of Assignment 5 b.

Evening: Party to celebrate work and success.

PROJECT SHEET FOLLOWS: NOW : Please download, fill in, and return to G.Baumann@uva.nl on ! 15 February. (“Deadlines are a Doc’s Best Friend.”)

Methods Clinic A: Pre- Assignment: Your Project Sheet.

0. Your name, academic institution, discipline, project, main supervisor, and best e-mail address / es. --

1. This is a study of: [3 IQ-sentences for all to understand please: NO jargon svp].
2. Name three central concepts and explain the relations between these concepts in your research design: (This looks tough, but we shall improve on it together):
3. What are the chief types of data you hope to collect ? Easy, but now: How can you increase their variety ? (Variety of data is crucial for 8MP and Ph.D.)
4. What are the interesting shortcomings (!) of the literature on your research topic ?

Authority 1: bad:

Me: better:

Authority 2: bad:

Me: better:

Any more, or in general ?

5. What are the two greatest difficulties you expect in the research process ?
How can you plan for these ?

2 Difficulties:

4 Plans:

6. What are the most difficult choices you anticipate having to make during the research process ?

2 Anticipated difficulties:

4 Choices:

Please send your Project Sheet to G.Baumann@uva.nl on (!) 15 February.

Thank you !