litical forces such as the bargaining, compromises, negotiation, even the raw power that bring about decisions in legislative bodies, that define the constitutions studied. Scholars like Bentley, Wilson and Merriam needed to step in at the beginning of the 20th century to suggest that politics was far more than rules and constitutional forms. Observation of the functioning of the administrative state taught much that was missing in the study of its structure. Or for those manipulating data about individual opinion or choice, Bentley's work from the first decade of the 20th century warns that the "process" of government, the "how" of government, means that "the raw material we study is never found in one man by himself...It is a 'relation' between men, but not in the sense that the individual men are given to us first, and the relation erected between them. The relation is...the given phenomenon, the raw material" (Bentley 1908, 176). Or Mary Parker Follett similarly speaks to scholars of today when she warns (in 1918) that those who fail to acknowledge the "new psychology" with its emphasis on relation will understand politics only as contract and be ineffective in their efforts at building democratic regimes in a "genuine community of nations."

We include in the syllabus several of the classics of the field, path-breaking works at the time they appeared, though some may appear methodologically dated now. The goal is to have the students understand what it was that made these works stand out, what made them works that changed the field. The "heroes" and "heroines" of the field achieved their influence because they ventured beyond the methodological givens of the time and place. They challenged themselves to draw on new ways to understand and communicate about the political world, but in order to do so they themselves often call on their readings of earlier classics. In this sense, perhaps they serve as object lessons about the importance of memory as well as of methodological risks (and institutional risks, e.g. Merriam) of earlier scholars. From these classics in political science, we learn as well that key themes and approaches that were once so important often regrettably receive little attention by contemporary scholars and that a reliance on narrowly focused methods today tends to obscure the insights of earlier writers. As the life story of Arthur Bentley suggests, the contributions of innovators were not necessarily immediately recognized and the image of Bentley returning to rural Indiana, far away from the academic world, after writing his major work may offer little consolation to a student eager for his or her first job. But the goal of the course is to use the history of the discipline to shake the potential self-assurance that may arise from a failure to see today's methods as similarly products of the particular political life of the times and the syncretism born of a interaction with a range of intellectual and disciplinary endeavors. It is a failure that leads to the unfortunate resistance to reading, learning from and apply the insights of those earlier classics in the field.

Endnotes

[1]Chris Achen may not have authored this piece, but the content derives entirely from our work together on developing and teaching the course; it has further benefited from his comments on an earlier draft.

Designing a Qualitative Methods Syllabus

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After some initial trepidation, I was excited about teaching a graduate seminar in qualitative methods. It could hardly be a more interesting time. The publication of King, Keohane, and Verba's *Designing Social Inquiry* reinvigorated interest in qualitative methods, and I wanted to design the course to profit from this emerging debate. Whereas KKV appealed to qualitative researchers to do their best to adopt quantitative methodological guidelines, I wanted to encourage students to think about whether that is always the best prescription for qualitative research. What is gained, and what is lost from evaluating case-oriented, comparative research from the perspective of large-N, variable-oriented research? What are the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research, and what types of questions or issues are best addressed with it? How does a researcher make valid causal inferences about complex political phenomena on the basis of case-study or comparative case study methods? I hoped to teach students how to create and critique sophisticated case study and comparative research. I also wanted them to be able to explain their methodological decisions to quantitative researchers in terms that the latter could understand and appreciate.

Once I had a sense of the general themes of the course, the choices became much harder. This difficulty seemed surprising. I was teaching the course in the third quarter of a required methods sequence so I could assume that the students understood research design and introductory statistics. I could also assume that they had read some of the classic and recent foundational work, such as KKV's book and Sartori's article on concept formation. In addition, there are lots of terrific resources available, such as the Consortium on Qualitative Research Method's posting of over thirty qualitative methods syllabi (http://asu.edu/clas/polisci/cqrm/syllabi.html). Nonetheless, the constraints of teaching in a ten week quarter meant that important issues would inevitably be ignored; others discussed all too briefly. I discuss below the four central tradeoffs I faced, how I resolved them, and whether after teaching the course, I think these decisions were the correct ones.

Should the syllabus include a section on the philosophy of the social sciences? Most Ph.D. students in political science will not develop expertise on broader epistemological issues, but they should be aware of the major debates in the philosophy of the social sciences. What are the different forms of social scientific explanation, the nature of human action and the forms of our knowledge of its causes and motives, and the scope and limits of scientific knowledge of society? How

do empiricist, positivist, interpretivist, and realist philosophers of science address these questions? What is critical social science and the basis of feminist critiques of the objectivity of science? Students should be introduced to these debates, and especially, have some understanding of the relevance of these issues to the conduct of their own social science research.

Unfortunately, the previous courses in my department's methods sequence do not cover the philosophy of social sciences. I reluctantly decided not to do so as well. I did not see how I could give these issues justice and still adequately cover central questions in qualitative research design, all within ten short weeks. Nor was I comfortable with the implicit message that the philosophy of social science is important to qualitative researchers, but that those relying on formal or quantitative methods need not consider it. Nonetheless, this was the most difficult choice I made, and the one that I have not found other ways to address. If students in my department wish to learn this material, they will do so outside our required courses.

Should I include a section on the ethics of research? This decision was similar to the one about the philosophy of the social sciences. I felt that a discussion about the ethics of research is a necessary foundation to any research in the social sciences, whether quantitative or qualitative.

It seems especially important that methodology courses not lose sight of the larger issue at stake – that good research designs are only useful to the extent that they address important questions. And figuring out what constitutes an important question is, in part, an ethical decision. Nor is it always clear whether our job is to be dispassionate or passionate scholars. Additionally, researchers face a variety of ethical issues in collecting evidence, ranging from the acceptability of deceiving research subjects, to issues of race, gender, and sexual orientation in participant observation. Finally, ethical issues arise about the products of research. For example, are we responsible for considering the ultimate use of our findings?

I decided to include a section on the ethics of research. Incorporating this discussion in a qualitative methods course, but not in other methods or research design courses, does risk sending an implicit message that researchers using other methodologies do not face ethical decisions, but that danger seemed minimal, especially when weighed against the importance of including some discussion of this crucial issue. Most important, and unlike the question of the philosophy of the social sciences, I felt that many of the important issues could be raised in one day's discussion.

Should I focus on the design of qualitative studies or the collection of qualitative evidence? Both directions seemed important. Concentrating on the varied issues involved in designing qualitative studies, such as the comparative method and case studies, case selection, concept formation, counterfactuals, and causal mechanisms and process-tracing, is a crucial first step. Yet discussing the varied ways of gathering qualitative evidence, such as participant observation, interviewing, and the use of archival and historical evidence, would also be beneficial. The latter seemed especially important as students often naively assume, for example, that good interview techniques are just common sense, only to later discover that they would have been much better off if they had thought through the issues involved prior to their fieldwork. Yet I decided to focus on the design of qualitative studies. I assumed that it would appeal to a wider range of students, and some design issues are more difficult to understand than those involved in collecting qualitative evidence. I also wanted to take advantage of the recent and innovative debate on qualitative research, and most of this work focuses on questions of research design. But the most important factor driving my decision was the sense that design issues are fundamental to good research. Sophisticated interviewing techniques are meaningless if the data is gathered for a problematic research design.

This decision has the disadvantage of not exposing students to the nuts and bolts of collecting qualitative evidence. To partially offset this gap, students can choose to write a literature review about one of the methods for collecting qualitative research. The students present their findings to the class and provide everyone with an annotated bibliography of the readings. These presentations cannot replace hands-on experience in collecting qualitative evidence, but they give students an overview of the issues involved in that particular method, and a list of relevant readings. The students can also choose to write literature reviews about some of the other important topics not covered in class, such as the debate in historical sociology about qualitative methods, or the contrasting approaches to qualitative methods in history and political science. Again, they present their findings to the class and provide an annotated bibliography. All together, these literature reviews provide everyone with a much broader introduction to qualitative methods than could sensibly be covered in a ten week quarter.

What is a good balance between discussions about qualitative methods, reading scholarship that uses qualitative methods, and students designing their own study using qualitative methods? I wanted to engage students in discussions about the design of qualitative studies in ways that seemed relevant to their own research interests. I did not want class discussions to lose sight of the reasons we care about good design: that there are pressing political, social, and economic issues to address, and that the better our research designs, the more useful our answers. I also wanted to insure that the discussion always returned to practical "how to" issues. In the hopes of achieving these goals, I paired readings that detailed abstract issues of research design with scholarly work that illustrated those methodological issues within studies addressing important political issues. Overall, this strategy worked, though it was difficult to find readings that appealed equally to students in American politics, political theory, international relations, and comparative politics. Finally, to insure some practical experience, each student is required to design a qualitative study, as well as read and comment on each of their colleagues' designs. The latter assignment was one of the most successful aspects of the course. We devoted a day's discussion to the draft research designs, and many of the final papers incorporated and responded to the suggestions made. Several students also commented that they found these discussions invaluable

in rethinking their designs and developing their research design skills.

Despite the difficulty of some of these choices, and my inability to adequately resolve some of them, this course was a lot of fun to teach. It gave me the chance to closely follow the burgeoning literature on qualitative methods, and the quality of the student's research designs seems to indicate that many of these decision were the corrects ones. Philosophy of social science issues did come up periodically in our discussion, and it would have been best if we had addressed them systematically. For those of you "lucky" enough to have thirteen weeks of teaching, I would recommend adding several sessions on it.

Qualitative Methods Textbooks

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Over the past few years, the number of political science departments offering qualitative methods courses has grown substantially. The number of qualitative methods textbooks has kept pace, providing instructors with an overwhelming array of choices. But how to decide which text to choose from this exhortatory smorgasbord? The scholarship desperately needs evaluated. Yet the task is not entirely straightforward: qualitative methods textbooks reflect the diversity inherent in qualitative methods itself. Consequently, evaluating qualitative methods textbooks consists more of weighing competing strengths than identifying weaknesses. I undertake just such an evaluation in the following survey, which should be useful both to teachers of qualitative methods and to researchers keen to brush up on specific techniques.

What counts as a textbook? In general, I have let existing teachers of qualitative methods decide. This sample includes texts that are regularly assigned in qualitative methods classes,[1] as well some additional recent publications. I have, however, restricted the sample to books published in the last twenty years; thus classics like Smelser (1976), Przeworski & Teune (1970), and Stinchcombe (1968) are not included. Moreover I have excluded books that, while quite useful for addressing particular topics, are not precisely teaching texts, such as Mahoney and Rueschemeyer (2003) and Goertz and Starr (2002). Finally, I do not include eagerly awaited, but still unpublished texts, like Brady and Collier (Fall 2003) and George and Bennett (Fall 2003). Nonetheless, the criteria I employ here should continue to be useful for evaluating future contributions to the field.

Much of the evaluation has been incorporated into a summary chart, which allows readers to quickly compare the strengths of the sampled textbooks. The letters that run along the top of the chart correspond to the first three letters of textbook authors' last names listed below (with full bibliographical information, price, and page-length). In closing, I comment briefly on three authors whose work has proved exceptionally useful to qualitative-methods instructors and practitioners.

Three Authors in Greater Detail

Ragin, Charles. 1989 The Comparative Method, Berkeley: UCP. 218 pages. $18.95.
———. 1994. Constructing Social Research. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge. 208 pages. $29.95.
———. 2000. Fuzzy Set Social Science. Chicago: University of Chicago. 352 pages. $20.00.

Charles Ragin's methodological trilogy seems particularly ill-suited to the tabular evaluation used above. Though Ragin addresses many of the same issues as other authors (e.g., conceptualization, measurement, causation, and research design), his vision of social-science is rather different. In synthesizing qualitative and quantitative strategies, he provides probing comparative criticism of case-oriented and variable-oriented research. This discussion provides constructive interlocution for advocates from diverse methodological traditions. His treatment of causal complexity, combinatorial causation, and the dialogue between ideas and evidence should be useful at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Finally, graduate students and professional scholars alike will benefit from insightful instructions for qualitative comparative methods (QCA) from their chief advocate.

Becker., Howard S. 1998. Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You're Doing It. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago. 232 pages. $9.65.

Tricks of the Trade provides a long-overdue and welcome complement to standard approach to methods. Becker provides graduate students with what we crave: practical knowledge (metis) about how research *is* done, rather than how research *should be* done. As a result, most scholars will probably find at least one – more likely several – pieces of advice they disagree with in the book, depending on their methodological and ontological tastes. Yet the book overflows with insight. Becker supplements his valuable discussions of sampling and conceptualization with less well-trodden topics, like how one's image of the world shapes one's own research. The book also spends a good deal of time discussing less familiar qualitative research strategies, such as truth tables and property space analysis. Adding to the book's charm, Becker's engaging informal writing style makes *Tricks of the Trade* a particularly accessible and pleasurable read.

Lieberson, Stanley. 1987. Making it Count: The Improvement of Social Research and Theory. Berkeley: University of California Press. 272 pages. $21.95

In this thoughtful book, Stanley Lieberson carefully dissects the differences between experimental and non-experimental research. His damning critique of scholars who misuse