

## Case Study Research Methods Project List

Project 0. An ongoing project for this course is the keeping of a journal, a record of what is happening to your thinking--observations, references, and personal musings--properly identified. From time to time, when an idea is particularly provocative, develop it into a paragraph or more, an assertion. The journal is for you but I may ask to see it from time to time.

Project A. At Lincoln Square (Urbana) Saturday, Sept 4 or 11, 7-11am, observe the Farmers Market. Prepare an 800-1200 word report. Presume that the report might be used to help sponsors, organizers and distant readers understand what happened and what the event is accomplishing. Identify several *issues* of potential or actual concern. Discuss these issues with other members of the class as you see fit.

Project B. After reflecting on Project A (and using no more than a single page), generate at least six rules or reminders for making such field observations.

Project C1. In 400 words or less, critique Nona Prestine's case study, "Political system theory as an explanatory paradigm for teacher education reform," *AERJ*, 1991. Project C2. Reflect carefully upon *your* approach to this critique. In 200 words or less, discuss your standards, bases of comparison and other conceptual organizers for critiquing this case study.

Project D. Read at least 1 major case study, e.g.:  
Howard Becker: *Boys in White or Making the Grade*  
Robert Cole: *Children in Crisis*  
Terry Denny: *Some Still Do*  
Elizabeth Eddy: *Becoming a Teacher*  
Robert Edgerton: *Cloak of Competence*  
Diana Kelly-Byrne: *A Child's Play Life*  
Oscar Lewis: *La Vida*  
Elliot Liebow: *Tally's Corner*  
Sarah Lightfoot: *The Good High School*  
Lind & Lind: *Middletown*  
MacDonald and Kushner: *Bread and Dreams*  
Peshkin: *Growing up American or God's Choice*  
Neil Sheehan: *A Bright and Shining Lie*  
Lou Smith: *Complexities of an Urban Classroom*  
Bob Stake: *Quieting Reform*  
Stake, Bresler, Mabry: *Custom & Cherishing*

Examine the conceptual structure of the report. Note what can be learned about the conceptual structure of the research from what is reported. Note illustrations and tactics which you might refer to in the future. Write it in your journal, not to hand in.

Project E. For your planning of Project F, prepare a brief proposal, perhaps 400 words long. Indicate the case, the context, the foreshadowing questions, the data to be gathered, and the sources from which they will be gathered.

Project F. This is the major project of the course, requiring at least 40 hours of work, probably more. Do a case study. Preferably the case will be a program, a conference, or service. Its issues should be related to your own profession, e.g., education, social work, leisure study. You should feel free to ask for assistance in data gathering and analysis from your classmates--and be ready to assist them with theirs. The final report should reveal a familiarity with the major concepts of this course. The length is up to you.
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Project G. Plan, conduct, and analyze a brief interview. Identify 1) an issue (as defined in this course) and 2) an event pertinent to it. Develop at least one question to obtain each of the following:  
1) a chronology (the sequence of happenings, what led up to the event, what followed, etc.);  
2) observations by the interviewee of the event;  
3) a value judgement of aspects of the event;  
4) a hypothetical alternative-outcome to the event ("What if it had happened that...?"), a question that brings out data and respondent interpretation. Write a technical report briefly describing procedure and outcome. Specify (verbatim) questions both intended and asked.

Project H. Contemplate the case study chosen for Project D. Estimate the degree to which the author used triangulation to organize and substantiate observations. Consider the question of how much the author should inform the reader about validation procedures. Write it in your journal, not to hand in.

Project J. Write up a vignette based on your own actual observation or interview data. Identify in an accompanying note of less than 250 words what the issue or theme of the vignette is, what point it illustrates. Not necessarily part of your Proj F work.