



Codex Boturini (Tira de la Peregrinación de los Mexica), c. late 15th-early 16th c., Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City.
Photo by Catherine S. Ramírez.

LALS 201

Research in Practice: Epistemology, Ontology, and Ethics

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Spring 2022

Wednesdays, March 30-June 1, 2022, 2:00-5:00pm

Porter Academic 250

Office Hours: TBD

As the final course of the LALS Department's core graduate requirements, LALS 201 aims to connect the conceptual discussions of other LALS courses to the design of individual research proposals. During the quarter, we'll read works by LALS faculty to identify and to understand the research approaches that define the multi- and interdisciplinary field of Latin American and Latinx studies. We'll pay special attention to connections between the construction of research questions, the genesis or choice of theory or conceptual framework, and the implementation of research strategies evident in these works. Meanwhile, we'll work step-by-step to develop compelling and feasible proposals for our own research projects. This will include discussions on how to identify a problem worth investigating; how to formulate a research question; how to situate that question within a conceptual framework; how to derive a conceptual framework from a question; how to determine the appropriate research strategies (namely, methods and sources); and how to garner support for our research. We'll also examine the relationship between research and societal power relations, connections between scholarship and social intervention, and the ways in which meanings change according to context.

This course is required for doctoral students in their first or second year in LALS. Space permitting, graduate students from other departments, particularly those pursuing the Designated Emphasis in LALS, may enroll.

Learning Objectives

1. Gain awareness of the questions, concepts, and strategies that characterize research in LALS
2. Determine what makes a research question important
3. Connect individual research questions to broader discussions and conceptual frameworks
4. Identify possible research strategies for addressing a given research question
5. Develop research proposals that are both compelling and feasible

Required Readings

Both books are available via [Akademos](#) (formerly the Bay Tree Bookstore) and are on reserve at the [University Library](#). Any edition or version (hardback, paperback, eBook, audio book) suffices.

- Leo R. Chavez, *Anchor Babies and the Challenge of Birthright Citizenship*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017.
- Laura Briggs, *Taking Children: A History of American Terror*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020. (Available as an eBook via the [University Library](#).)
- Course Reader (available as PDFs at Canvas)

Assignments and Evaluation of Performance

Seminars revolve around conversation and everyone's **active participation**. To achieve a full participation grade, please complete all reading and writing assignments on time and come to class prepared to discuss them. This includes preparing **Discussion Questions** and submitting them to Canvas by 11:59pm on Tuesdays.

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and unexcused absences and tardy arrivals will impact our discussions and your grade. Please notify me—in advance, if possible—if you can't attend class, will arrive late, or require a deadline extension. Students are responsible for making up any missed work.

Over the course of the quarter, we'll work to transform our research interests into research proposals. We'll do this incrementally, via the Discussion Questions, **Social Science Research Council Dissertation Proposal Development Program (SSRC DPDP) Workbook**, and **Writing Assignments**. Whether or not you've already completed the SSRC DPDP Workbook or UCSC continues to participate in [this program](#), the Workbook remains a useful tool for devising and revising a research proposal.

In general, Writing Assignments are due to Canvas by 9:00am on Wednesdays. Please bring a hardcopy to class when we meet that afternoon. Abstracts are due to Canvas by 5:00pm on Tuesday, May 31. We'll discuss them at our final meeting on June 1. **Please submit your revised SSRC DPDP Workbook to Canvas by 5:00pm on Tuesday, June 7.**

Grades will be determined according to the following percentages:

1. Attendance and Participation (40%)
2. Discussion Questions (1-5 sentences per response due to Canvas Tuesdays by 11:59pm; 24%)
3. Writing Assignments (due to Canvas Wednesdays by 9:00am and in hardcopy form in class; 24%)
4. Revised SSRC DPDP Workbook (due to Canvas, Tuesday, June 7, by 5:00pm; 12%)

Advisory

This course examines the uneven distribution of power in society and the ways people have responded to that unevenness. We grapple with such topics as white supremacy, dispossession, genocide, illegality, family separation, deportation, and persecution by the state. Of particular concern are the ways in which the state has branded certain people "illegal" and "alien." By contesting these dehumanizing labels, this course endeavors to expose their links to relations of power and inequality.

Student Support Resources

UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body.

If you're a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please arrange for the [Disability Resource Center](#) to send me your Accommodation Authorization Letter as soon as possible, preferably within the first 2 weeks of the quarter.

UC Santa Cruz is also committed to providing a safe learning environment that is free of all forms of gender discrimination and sexual harassment, which are explicitly prohibited under [Title IX](#). If you've experienced any form of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, the [Title IX Office](#), the [Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education office](#), and [Counseling & Psychological Services](#) are resources that you can turn to for support. ***Please be aware that instructors, Teaching Assistants, and Readers are required under the university's Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment to inform the Title IX Office should they become aware that you or any other student has experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment.***

A Note about Academic Integrity

We instructors assign particular readings and have students do particular exercises because those readings and exercises can lead to particular learning outcomes. To get the most out of this class and your education in general, do the work; don't shortchange yourself by skimming the readings, fast-forwarding through recordings, or skipping class or a meeting with your instructor. Above all, never take credit for someone else's work. In all your assignments, including drafts, you may use other people's words or ideas, but only with proper citation (e.g., [Chicago](#) style). If you're not sure how to cite sources, please consult the [University Library](#) or me.

A Note about Modality of Instruction and Zoom Etiquette and Safety

This course meets in person as long as it's safe to do so. If the public health situation in our community deteriorates, we'll return to the virtual classroom. To enhance the flow of our conversations and to participate in class to the fullest extent possible via Zoom, please activate your camera when you can. At the same time, please remember to mute your microphone when you're listening to others and use the "raise hand" function to contribute to discussions. Finally, please use your university email account when logging into Zoom. If you must use someone else's device, please notify me in advance. For everyone's safety, and unless I hear from you beforehand, I won't admit anyone into our virtual classroom if I'm not familiar with their name.

Course Schedule (*subject to change*)

Week 1 (Mar 30): Introduction to the Course & Discourse Analysis

- Chavez, *Anchor Babies*
- Booth, Wayne C., et al., "Planning Your Project—An Overview," "From Topics to Questions," and "From Questions to a Problem." In *The Craft of Research*, 29-64. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016.
- Discussion Questions (*respond via Canvas Tuesday by 11:59pm*)
 - What problem does Chavez investigate in *Anchor Babies*?
 - What are Chavez's main questions?
 - What are Chavez's sources?
 - How does Chavez use those sources to answer those questions?
 - What is Chavez's evidence?
 - What are Chavez's conclusions?
 - Who is Chavez's audience?

- Writing Assignment (*1-5 sentences per response due to Canvas Wednesday by 9:00am and in hardcopy form in class*)
 - What's your proposed research topic?
 - What don't you know about that topic? In other words, what would you like to find out about it?
 - Who's your academic audience? In what fields or disciplines do they work?
 - Why do you want them to know and care about your proposed topic?

Week 2 (Apr 6): SSRC DPDP Workbook (+ Archives, Oral History & Audience) (NO CLASS MEETING)

Please complete the SSRC DPDP Workbook and submit it via Canvas by 5:00pm. Before tackling your workbook, I urge you to review (and to bookmark) "[Grant Proposals \(Or Give Me the Money!\)](#)" from The Writing Center at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

In addition, please complete the following readings, along with Briggs's *Taking Children*, before our next meeting:

- [Archives & Archival Research: An Introduction for Students and Emerging Researchers at UC Santa Cruz](#)
- Cotera, María. "Invisibility Is an Unnatural Disaster': Feminist Archival Praxis after the Digital Turn." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 114, no. 4 (2015): 781-801.
- [Chicana Por Mi Raza](#) *Explore any aspect of this digital archive, but be sure to review the following pages:*
 - [About](#)
 - [Historias](#)
 - [Recent Uploads](#)
 - [Visualizations](#)
- Ramírez, Catherine S. "Domesticating the Pachuca." In *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory*, 25-54. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009.

Week 3 (Apr 13): Archives & Temporality

- Briggs, *Taking Children*
- Discussion Questions (*respond via Canvas Tuesday by 11:59pm*)
 - What problem does Briggs investigate in *Taking Children*?
 - What are Briggs's main questions?
 - What are Briggs's sources?
 - How does Briggs use those sources to answer those questions?
 - How do we answer historical questions when the historical sources that exist weren't written with those questions in mind?
 - How do we choose what sources to consult?
- Writing Assignment
 - Please bring a hardcopy of your SSRC DPDP Workbook to class

Week 4 (Apr 20)

- Erbig, Jeffrey Alan. "Introduction" and "Conclusion." In *Where Caciques and Mapmakers Met: Border Making in Eighteenth-Century South America*, 1-11 and 163-174. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020. (Available as an eBook via the [University Library](#).)

- Balloffet, Lily Pearl. “Venomous Company: Snakes and Agribusiness in Honduras.” *Arcadia*, no. 19 (2020).
- *Recommended reading: Jeffrey Erbig, 19 diciembre 2020 carta al Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, República de Uruguay*
- Discussion Questions (*respond via Canvas Tuesday by 11:59pm*)
 - How do scholars address the active role that archives play in the preservation, curation, and production of particular forms of historical remembering?
 - How can we write histories of people who moved in and out of the purview of the institutions that produced historical records?
- Writing Assignment (*due to Canvas Wednesday by 9:00am and in hardcopy form in class*)
 - Revise SSRC DPDP Workbook Section 1, Question 1.

Week 5 (Apr 27): HSR Training or RCA Records (NO CLASS MEETING)

Instead of meeting as a class, this week, you’ll complete [UCSC’s Human Subject Research \(HSR\) training](#) or explore the [Research Center for the Americas \(RCA\) records](#) at Special Collections & Archives at McHenry Library. Choose your option based on your research interests and needs. If you’ve already completed UCSC’s HSR training, or if your work isn’t considered an [HSR activity](#), then you get to check out the RCA records. [To visit Special Collections & Archives, you must make an appointment or stop by during drop-in hours.](#) I also urge you to review [Archives & Archival Research: An Introduction for Students and Emerging Researchers at UC Santa Cruz](#). Whether you complete the HSR training or peruse the RCA records, you should expect to spend 2-3 hours completing this exercise.

- Discussion Questions (*respond via Canvas by 5:00pm, Friday, April 29*)
 - For those completing the HSR training
 - What did you find most rewarding about the training process and why?
 - What did you find most challenging and why?
 - What might you have done differently to avoid or mitigate that challenge?
 - For those exploring the RCA records
 - What was the most interesting record you encountered and what makes it interesting? Describe it in detail.
 - Who created that record?
 - What does the record tell you about the RCA, UCSC, or anything/anyone else?
 - What questions does the record leave you with?

In addition, please complete the following reading before our next meeting:

- Clifford, James. “Introduction: Partial Truths.” In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, ed. James Clifford and George E. Marcus, 1-26. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.

Week 6 (May 4): Ethnography, Social Relationships & Institutions

- Perez, Justin. “Pêche Problems: Transactional Sex, Moral Imaginaries, and the ‘End of AIDS’ in Postconflict Peru.” *American Ethnologist* (forthcoming in 2022).
- Falcón, Sylvanna M. “Remembering and Reimagining Perú from the Diaspora”
- Discussion Questions (*respond via Canvas Tuesday by 11:59pm*)
 - What is ethnography and what other types of qualitative field research exist?
 - How do we go about setting up, preparing for, and conducting interviews?

- How can we incorporate research subjects' participation in research and, at the same time, acknowledge differences of power and privilege that may exist between the researcher and the research subject?
- Writing Assignment (*due to Canvas Wednesday by 9:00am and in hardcopy form in class*)
 - Revise SSRC DPDP Workbook Section 2, Part I

Week 7 (May 11): Research from the Top Down & Bottom Up

- Rivas, Cecilia M. "El Salvador Works': The Creation and Negotiation of a National Brand and the Transnational Imaginary." In *Borders in Service: Enactments of Nationhood in Transnational Call Centers*, ed. Kiran Mirchandani and Winifred R. Poster, 35-57. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016.
- Leiva, Fernando I. "Beyond Corporate Social Responsibility: New Territorial Management for Defeating Community-Based Resistance to Extractivism." In *Extractive Capitalism and Resistance Dynamics: Alternative Scenarios from Latin America*, ed. Henry Veltemeyer and Arturo Ezquerro-Cañete. New York: Routledge (forthcoming).
- Discussion Questions (*respond via Canvas Tuesday by 11:59pm*)
 - How do or should researchers study displaced, diasporic, mobile, marginalized, and/or vulnerable groups of people?
 - How do or should researchers study corporate and political elites?
 - What sorts of evidence do researchers look for when studying these groups?
- Writing Assignment (*due to Canvas Wednesday by 9:00am and in hardcopy form in class*)
 - Review [Jonathan O'Donnell's "How to Write a Simple Research Methods Section,"](#) then revise SSRC DPDP Workbook Section 3, Question 1, and Section 4, Part I.

Week 8 (May 18): Inductive & Deductive Reasoning, or Sometimes New Knowledge Demands a New Vocabulary

- Pinho, Patricia de Santana. "Whiteness Has Come out of the Closet and Intensified Brazil's Reactionary Wave." In *Precarious Democracy: Ethnographies of Hope, Despair, and Resistance in Brazil*, ed. Benjamin Junge, et al., 62-75. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2021.
- Pinho, Patricia. Race and International Higher Education: A Study of Whiteness, Academic Mobility, and Network Capital in the "Science without Borders" Program.
- Discussion Questions (*respond via Canvas Tuesday by 11:59pm*)
 - How do researchers choose or develop theories or conceptual frameworks?
 - How do researchers put their sources and theories/conceptual frameworks into conversation with one another?
 - How do researchers adapt to unexpected challenges that arise in the process of applying for funding or in the field?
- Writing Assignment (*due to Canvas Wednesday by 9:00am and in hardcopy form in class*)
 - Revise SSRC DPDP Workbook Section 5, Question 1.

Week 9 (May 24): Textual & Visual Analysis

- Ramírez, Catherine S. "The Economic Migrant and the Specter of Permanence in *Why Cybraceros?*, *The Rag Doll Plagues*, and *Walk on Water*." In *The Routledge Handbook of Cofuturisms*, ed. Grace L. Dillon, et al. New York: Routledge (forthcoming).
- Rose, Gillian. "Researching with Visual Methodologies: A Brief Survey." In *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials, Fourth Edition*, 1-23. London: SAGE Publications, 2016.
- To view before class

- [Council of California Growers, *Why Braceros?*](#) (1959, 0:18:53)
- [Alex Rivera \(dir.\), *Why Cybraceros?*](#) (2005, 0:04:44)
- [Guadalupe Maravilla, *Walk on Water*](#) (2019, 0:10:34 and 0:6:22)
- *Recommended reading: Alejandro Morales, The Rag Doll Plagues. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1991.*
- Discussion Questions (*respond via Canvas Tuesday by 11:59pm*)
 - What is a text?
 - How does a text's form shape the ways we analyze it?
 - How do researchers put text and context in dialogue with one another?
- Writing Assignment (*due to Canvas Wednesday by 9:00am and in hardcopy form in class*)
 - Revise SSRC DPDP Workbook Section 6, Part I, and Part II, Question 1.

Please review [“Abstracts” from the UNC, Chapel Hill, Writing Center](#). Then revise your 150-word abstract and submit the revision to Canvas by 5:00pm on Tuesday, May 31.

Week 10 (Jun 1): Conclusion to the Course

- Watts, Michael. “The Holy Grail: In Pursuit of the Dissertation Proposal.” Oakland: Regents of the University of California, 2001.
- Discussion Questions (*to be discussed in class, not uploaded to Canvas*)
 - What makes LALS research “LALS”? How do we do LALS research? Please respond to these questions with more curiosity than opprobrium.
- Writing Assignment
 - Please bring your abstract to class in hardcopy form

Full, revised SSRC DPDP Workbook due to Canvas by 5:00pm on Tuesday, June 7