

**Doing “Interpretation and Methods” @ WPSA:  
Nevertheless, they persisted!**

Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea

The I&M section and the Methods Café were both launched at the 2005 WPSA conference in Oakland, but several events preceded their creation.

Our methodology-focused research collaboration began at the 1999 Seattle WPSA meeting, although as successive presidents of the Women’s Caucus-West (1994-5/1995-6), we had already worked together on organizing things, like records of past presidents and such. But at lunch on Saturday that year, we started wondering what people actually did when they taught “research methods” courses in political science. We decided that a reasonable proxy for course syllabi would be research methods textbooks. After lunch, Peri went down to the book display room to case the joint, collecting several textbooks and titles of others. These launched the research. We presented the paper—“Is There Breadth in Methodological Training for Graduate Students in Political Science?”—reporting on our “findings” a year later at the San Jose meeting, with a full audience in attendance, including Jane Bayes, Eloise Buker, Christine Di Stefano, Janet Flammang, Mary Hawkesworth, Rita Mae Kelly, and Kirstie McClure.

For Peri, a “recovering positivist” (as Kirstie McClure called her), the paper and presentation were her first experiences with interpretive research. Rita Mae told us it was a worthwhile project to pursue; Christine, who had just been appointed to the editorial board of *PS*, encouraged us to submit the ms. to that journal. Its reviewers, however, did not share Rita’s assessment of the article’s worthiness or with Christine’s

that it belonged in that journal, let alone in the discipline. Reviewer 1 wrote, “I view this piece as essentially a polemic under the garb of some sort of analysis. ...I consider works such as this one merely regurgitating an argument that was lost over 40 years ago.” Reviewer 2 added, “Regardless of whether the author of the current paper likes it or not, the epistemological foundations of modern political science, as well as the underlying paradigms of virtually all current research in this discipline, *are* firmly positivist in nature.” With that bucket of cold water—and thinking, as well, that the reviewers did “protest too much”—we went back to the ms., made extensive revisions, and submitted it to *PRQ*. The editors there did not consider the work a research article, but they were willing to publish it as a “field essay.”<sup>1</sup>

The next project we undertook was organizing a Saturday afternoon workshop at the 2003 Western meeting in Denver (March 29): the “Interpretive Research Methods in Empirical Political Science Workshop.” The program consisted of a handful of presentations, divided among two different methodological background issues, one method for accessing data, and two methods for analyzing them (see Appendices 1, 2; we also prepared a bibliography, which became the basis for subsequent projects, and made available copies of presenters’ course syllabi). We saw the workshop at the time as a project of exploration, to find out if anyone else was interested in the topic. Over 30 people joined the session (1/3 faculty and 2/3 graduate students), which was held from 2 to 5 p.m. after the conference formally concluded. Peri remembers that in the discussion, someone asked her a question about generalizability. At the time, she had no good response; but her bafflement was the beginning of a long-term engagement

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<sup>1</sup> Peregrine Schwartz-Shea and Dvora Yanow, 2002, “‘Reading’ ‘Methods’ ‘Texts’: How Research Methods Texts Construct Political Science,” *Political Research Quarterly* 55 (2): 457–86.

with the topic and subsequent writing about it.

By this time, Perestroika (the one in US political science) had been flourishing for over two years. (The email that launched it was sent October 15, 2000.<sup>2</sup>) In 2002, still trying to get the lay of the land in terms of who was doing what sort of “interpretive” research, we organized a survey of Perestroikans (via its Yahoo listserv), asking people to respond with information about their research and publications, if any. In the Fall 2003, while on sabbatical, Dvora used the information from that survey to research prospective authors and their publications for what would become *Interpretation and Method*.<sup>3</sup>

The general idea that led to the Methods Café came from something Dvora had been involved in at the Academy of Management (the conference for organizational studies scholars)—an “informal” teaching and learning session on Sunday mornings, before the conference officially began. The impetus to organize something of that sort at the Western—enhanced subsequently at APSA—was the same idea that informed the *I&M* book: to *show*, rather than tell, what interpretive research could mean by putting the fullest possible panoply of methods on display. (As APSA is a much larger conference, we were able there to host a greater range of topics than we could at WPSA.)

We intentionally named the thing in general terms, so as not to mark “interpretive” methods as anything other than “normal” research. Indeed, the first café had a generic name: “Consult a Specialist: Methodological Brainstorming.” Several tables were set up

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<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Monroe, Kristen Renwick, ed., *Perestroika! The Raucous Rebellion in Political Science*. Yale University Press, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Yanow, Dvora, and Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine, eds., *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe. 2006; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., with new chapters, 2014.

in a small ballroom; each one had a topic, and we tried to get the program to list things by topic, alphabetically, rather than by the name of the person staffing each table:

Category Analysis/Metaphor Analysis/Space Analysis: Dvora Yanow;

Discourse Analysis: Cecelia Lynch;

Ethnographic / Field Research: Samer Shehata;

Narrative Analysis: Emery Roe;

New Historical Institutionalism / Science Studies: Pam Brandwein

and, sharing the table,

Reflexive Historical Analysis: Ido Oren

Among those attending that first Café were Paul Apostolidis, Sammy Basu, Stephen Engleman, Sujatha Fernandes, Diane Long, Dean McHenry, Jr., Timothy Pachirat, Dorit Rubenstein, and Patricia Strach. On her way out the door at the end of the session, Cecelia Lynch said something like, This really is a café. And that's how the Methods Café got its name!

Cecelia's observation reflected the fact that real conversations were taking place, in parallel, at different tables: You walked into the room, located the topic you wanted to discuss with the person staffing that table, sat down, and joined an ongoing conversation or started a new one. No session chair; no formal paper presentations; no designated discussants—just a conversation among people interested in learning about and teaching the topic of the table. It was such a difference, visually as well as substantively, from what people were used to that at the first session, Peri ended up as a de facto "host," as we discovered that those who came needed a guided introduction to what was going on and to appropriate conduct during the session. We institutionalized

the role of host at subsequent Cafés, recruiting a graduate student who would meet visitors at the door and show them the ropes. The most challenging part was getting people to grasp that they really could leave one table to move to a conversation at another without appearing rude. We ended up putting signs up on the tables in subsequent years to encourage that.

Meanwhile, Dvora had written to Michael Brintnall, then APSA's Executive Director, prior to the meeting to see if we might do the Café at APSA, and he and Rob Hauck, then Associate Director, came to see it in operation. They liked the idea, so we brought the Café to APSA, too, in 2006. In 2007, we published an essay in *PS* to share the idea with others who had not yet attended a Café and to "make interpretivism visible" (as Kevin Funk put it in his review of the Café a decade later) in a discipline in which interpretive methods, although present, had been flying under the radar.<sup>4</sup> We organized the WPSA Methods Café until 2016, after which Julie Novkov (SUNY, Albany) and Brent Steele (Utah) took it over. For a description of the 2016 tables, see Appendix 3; the program is in Appendix 4.

At the same 2005 WPSA, we created the Interpretation and Methods Section, with the blessing of Ron Schmidt, WPSA Program Chair. The Call for Papers was brief:

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<sup>4</sup> Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, "The Methods Café: An Innovative Idea for Methods Teaching at Conference Meetings," *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 2007, 40, 2: 383-86. See also Kevin Funk, "Making Interpretivism Visible: Reflections after a Decade of the Methods Café," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 52, 3: 465-69.

### **Interpretation & Method**

A section of the Western Political Science Association 2005  
Oakland, CA

Co-chairs:

Dvora Yanow, California State Univ., Hayward [dyanow@csu Hayward.edu](mailto:dyanow@csu Hayward.edu)  
Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, University of Utah <[psshea@csbs.utah.edu](mailto:psshea@csbs.utah.edu)>

#### Call for Papers

Interpretation & Method, a new section, is intended to provide a forum for the discussion of method and methodology related to interpretive research. We envision panels ranging from the practical to the philosophical, from the particularities of specific methods to strategies for effectively developing and conducting interpretive work to examples of interpretive research to issues in the philosophy of (social) science. We are particularly interested in submissions that explore the intersections between interpretation and various fields of substantive scholarship (e.g., interpretation and IR, interpretation and public policy, interpretation and comparative politics, and so on).

Interpretive methods are informed, explicitly or implicitly, by presuppositions deriving from phenomenology, hermeneutics, and some critical theory and related to pragmatism, symbolic interaction theories, and ethnomethodology. Their concerns often overlap with such other approaches as feminist theories, critical race theory, and critical legal studies. Although diverse in their modes of accessing and analyzing data, research processes in the interpretive tradition are united by an empirical and normative prioritizing of the lived experience of people in research settings.

We invite papers and ideas for panels. Please send them to both co-chairs. The deadline for submission is September 15, 2004.

We co-chaired the section for 2 years (in Oakland and Albuquerque), as we worked to get others involved. Subsequent section chairs were:

2007	Las Vegas	David Pion-Berlin, University of California, Riverside
2008	San Diego	Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, University of Utah Ron Schmidt, California State University, Long Beach
2009	Vancouver	Kevin Bruyneel, Babson College Renee Ann Cramer, Drake University
2010	San Francisco	Douglas Dow, University of Texas at Dallas
2011	San Antonio	Char Miller, George Mason University
2012	Portland	Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh, University of Connecticut
2013	Hollywood	Martin Johnson, University of California, Riverside

2014	Seattle	Amy Cabrera Rasmussen, California State University, Long Beach
2015	Las Vegas	Douglas Dow, University of Texas at Dallas
2016	San Diego	Edmund Fong, University of Utah
2017	Victoria	Samantha Majic, John Jay College, CUNY
2018	San Francisco	Justin Berry, Kalamazoo College
2019	San Diego	Natasha Behl, Arizona State University
2020	canceled	
2021	online	Vladimir Medenica, University of North Texas
2022	Portland	Kimala Price, San Diego State University

The third building block in this community organization effort was a Wednesday afternoon I&M Workshop, which we created and chaired in 2013 in Hollywood (when Peri was WPSA President) on the model of the Feminist Theory and Environmental Theory and Politics workshops. Sessions have taken up a range of topics, from discussions of methodological issues to engagements with interpretive books:

YEAR	CHAIR/S	TOPIC
2013	Dvora Yanow, Peri Schwartz-Shea	Abduction
2014	Amy Cabrera Rasmussen, Betsy Super	Comparing meaning
2015	Sarah Marusek, Natasha Behl	Digesting the Public Sphere
2016	Peri Schwartz-Shea, Dvora Yanow	Why Should We Believe You? Evidence and "Proof" in Field and Other Interpretive Research; reading Alice Goffman's <i>On the Run</i> (2014, University of Chicago Press)
2017	Sam Majic, Peri Schwartz-Shea	Matthew Desmond's <i>Evicted</i> (2016, Penguin)
2018	Ethel Tungohan, Paul Apostolidis	Erica Simmons' <i>Meaningful resistance: Market reforms and the roots of social protest in Latin America</i> (Cambridge UP, 2016)
2019	Rina Williams	Laura Dudley Jenkins' <i>Religious Freedom and Mass Conversion in India</i> (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019)
2020	canceled	

## Reflections

When he asked us to write a history of the section and the Methods Café, Ron Schmidt posed a couple of questions, which we take up here. For starters: *Why did these activities start at the Western?* Because it was THE place for academic “play”—and because we “were there,” not only at universities located in the west, but embedded in the Western’s institutions and embroiled in its politics. Because of its reputation for and history of inclusiveness<sup>5</sup> and because of the general activism, all of which were central to its identity, making it a place to innovate.

We learned a model of associational engagement and academic organizing from the annual Saturday, 7 a.m. Women’s Caucus-West breakfast meetings, and especially from senior colleagues there who, among other things, practiced *championing* newer scholars (not just “mentoring” them). We had also watched Association members—Kirstie McClure comes readily to mind—introduce motions from the floor at the Saturday afternoon business meetings. And we were aware of the tradition—by then—of men and women alternating as WPSA presidents and other efforts at gender inclusivity; e.g., Martin Gruber reporting at the annual breakfast meeting on the numbers of female scholars chairing panels, presenting papers, and serving as discussants.

Also, although we did not know each other then, both of us were in attendance at the SRO (Standing Room Only) session at the 1988 San Francisco meeting where four feminist theorists presented a paper written *ad seriatim*, not necessarily knowing the identity of the others. Each author had written her section, sometimes stopping mid-

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<sup>5</sup> With the exception of the last few years when its meeting schedule on Easter weekend has made it difficult for observant Christians to attend, as well as Jews observing the Passover holiday which often falls on some of the same days.



sentence, and then passed the ms. on to the next co-author. Each of us was hugely impressed—in particular as it was like nothing we had ever seen before! All of these activities spoke to the Association's willingness to innovate. Combine that with the general activism around Perestroika, in which we also took part, the confluence of ideas there leading people to embrace at least the rhetoric of methodological pluralism.

Ron also asked: *How do you envision the contributions these interventions have made to the discipline of political science?* We believe these efforts—along with those of others, as identified above—have helped to foster a deeper appreciation for and discussion of pluralism, not simply *methods* pluralism but *methodological* pluralism. For each of us, helping others to understand interpretivism as a strategy appropriate to empirical research requires recognition of the varying ontological and epistemological presuppositions held by any and all research approaches. In all of these efforts we have paid attention in particular to graduate students pursuing their own visions of research. To support their pursuits requires, we think, an awareness of methodological pluralism and the range of approaches they might take, especially when going against the headwinds that prevail in US political science departments and those under their sway. Perhaps most impactful for us (given where the discipline was when Perestroika took off) is that even if they don't fully understand it, political scientists use the word interpretivism today in a way they didn't two decades ago. We see that in the resistance to DA-RT, most dramatically, and in the QTD deliberations. DA-RT is likely not to have raised as many eyebrows as it did were it not for the groundwork laid by the I&M Section, the IMM Conference Group @ APSA and its panels, the 2009 National Science Foundation Workshop which we organized, and the Methods Cafés. There is now a home for interpretive research in the study of politics—and an active and growing

community of scholars doing it, witness the 6 online Methods Clinics we organized and ran monthly in the first half of 2021, with over 230 registrants at one point, including from Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kurdistan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Scotland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, and the US.<sup>6</sup>

We could add a question of our own: *What challenges remain for the ongoing success of interpretive research @ WPSA?* Two areas deserve mention: (1) the selection of the I&M section chair and (2) the need for that chair to be proactive in recruiting relevant papers and panels and in helping to make sure the Methods Café is at a good time and location, something challenging because of the differences in hotel configurations (and associated flow of people). On the first challenge, it is still the case that not all members of the Association understand what interpretive research is about: that it is not a branch of Political Theory, and that it is possible to do empirical research that is non-variables based! It remains important, therefore, to educate incoming WPSA Program Chairs so that they can select I&M section chairs who understand what the section is all about. Otherwise, it ends up with panels that take up measurement or other quantitative or positivist methods, perhaps understanding “interpretive” as a general mandate to interpret one’s results. Secondly, proposals have not typically flowed to this section over the transom, meaning that the section chair needs to be proactive in developing panel ideas and recruiting people to staff them. It might be useful to have a list of researchers in the interpretive community who could be drawn on, such as those

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<sup>6</sup> Videos, chat transcripts, and resource lists, with the exception of one video lost to a cyber attack on the East coast, are available at <https://connect.apsanet.org/interpretationandmethod/methods-clinic/>.

who have participated in past Methods Cafés; but it is equally as important to keep the door open to newer researchers. Also, the section chair should work together with Associate Director Elsa Favila on scheduling times and settings for the Cafés, given that the session is not a standard “talking heads” panel.

And one final question: *What lessons do we take from the history recounted here?* In brief, that two researchers were able to get together and seed an organizing effort, through a variety of activities, to grow a village supportive of interpretive research—and that that village in turn now works to support its members. Wanting to have other people to talk to in an informed way about your research and interests is a great motivator!

## Appendix 1. Flyer for post-conference workshop, WPSA 2003, Denver

### **Workshop: Interpretive Research Methods in Empirical Political Science**

2003 Western Political Science Association Meetings, Denver, Colorado

Saturday, March 29, 1:30 - 5:00 p.m.

<http://www.csus.edu/org/wpsa>

#### **Organizers:**

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This workshop is designed to introduce researchers to the varieties of interpretive methods available for the empirical study of politics and to their grounding in interpretive philosophies and methodology. These approaches have a long history and are used across the social sciences. Yet in our discipline, they are rarely taught in doctoral programs, so they are typically not part of the standard repertoire of empirical researchers.

The first half of the workshop (Panel 8.04, 1:30-3:15 p.m., sponsored by the Methodology Section of WPSA) will have two parts. The first will provide an overview of the philosophical grounding of interpretive methods. What are their epistemological and ontological presuppositions? How do these differ from the quantitative and qualitative approaches more commonly used in the discipline? What are the standards for assessing interpretive research? Which journals publish such research?

The second part of that session will focus on one technique of "accessing" data, conversational interviewing, in order to explicate the interpretive focus on meaning and to show how such interviewing contrasts with surveying, standard elite interviews, and focus groups. The sorts of research questions appropriate for this method will be explored.

The second session (3:30-5:00 p.m.) will emphasize that "data analysis" need not mean turning "word data" into numbers. Whether word data are accessed through conversational interviewing, (participant-) observation, or in document form, there are a variety of meaning-focused forms of data analysis for exploring content in its context (e.g., metaphor analysis, category analysis, ethnomethodology). This session will introduce several of them, emphasizing the research questions and empirical applications of such approaches for various subfields of the discipline.

Bibliographies will be provided to participants so that they can pursue subjects in greater depth than can be covered in the limited workshop time. Course syllabi may be included in the packet.

#### **Presenters:**

Martha Feldman, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor: "Semiotic Squares and Understanding Opposition"

Ronald Schmidt, Sr., California State University, Long Beach: "Value-Critical Policy Analysis: The Case of Language Policy in the U.S."

Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, University of Utah: "Issues in Qualitative-Interpretive Methodologies"

Frederic Schaffer, MIT: "Accessing Interpretive Data: Ordinary Language Interviewing"

Dvora Yanow, California State University, Hayward: "The Philosophical Roots of Interpretive Methods"

#### **Registration:**

No fee. There may be a small charge to cover copying expenses (for bibliographies, course syllabi). Pre-registration requested for planning purposes. Email intent to attend to [psshea@poli-sci.utah.edu](mailto:psshea@poli-sci.utah.edu) by **MARCH 1, 2003**.

Appendix 2. Program, WPSA 2003 Workshop

## Interpretive Research Methods in Empirical Political Science

### Workshop

#### Session 1: 1-3:15 p.m.

##### A: Why "interpretive" methods?

Dvora Yanow, California State University, Hayward: "The Philosophical Roots of Interpretive Methods"

Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, University of Utah: "Issues in Qualitative-Interpretive Methodologies"

##### B: Methods of Accessing Data

Frederic Schaffer, MIT: "Accessing Interpretive Data: Ordinary Language Interviewing"

#### Session 2: 3:30-5 p.m.

##### C: Methods of Analyzing Data

Martha Feldman, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor: "Semiotic Squares and Understanding Opposition"

Ronald Schmidt, Sr., California State University, Long Beach: "Value-Critical Policy Analysis: The Case of Language Policy in the U.S."

## Appendix 3

**WPSA METHODS CAFE 2016 - TABLE DESCRIPTIONS****Analyzing Visual Materials: Paintings, Photographs, Political Cartoons, ...**

What methods and technical skills are required for the study of how visual materials are related to power, identity, and other issues in the study of the political, such as the cultural logic of early and late capitalism? How do particular theoretical choices and commitments inform the researcher's methodology as she or he turns to visual materials to understand, for example, disciplinary power, changing codes of criminality, governmentality, and the invention, maintenance, and transformation of categories of identity? How may researchers meet the challenges and opportunities offered by current interdisciplinary conversations on perception, the vast numbers of digitized images now available on the internet, as well as the need to have a supple understanding of the historical context in which images are produced, put in circulation, and received. To take but one specific example, analyzing political cartoons highlights the contextual knowledge needed to interpret their complex symbolism. Table visitors are invited to discuss the challenges of using visual materials such as paintings and cartoons and specific approaches to their analysis. Examples will be available.

**Conversational Interviewing**

Visitors to this table can expect discussions and advice regarding the use of in-depth interviews for interpretive research. We will discuss such issues as how to locate potential interviewees, how to deal with consent issues, how to frame questions, how (or whether to) establish rapport, and how to deal with sensitive topics. Other topics typically include interpretive methodologies and research designs, interview preparation and technique, integration of interviews into broader field-research activities, analysis of interview transcripts, and writing articles and books based on interview texts. The table will provide a forum for questions and answers from all participants and an opportunity to share insights with others using this method in their research.

**Discourse Analysis**

Discussions at this table review various approaches to the study of discourse in the political domain. Questions might include how to conduct a discourse analysis, what the underlying assumptions of such an analysis are, and how these techniques can be used to advance political inquiry. Both the power and limitations of the method can be discussed and the ways in which it differs from other modes of interpretation.

**Feminist Methods**

French philosopher Michelle LeDoeuff (*Hipparchia's Choice*, 1991, 29) defines a feminist as one "who does not leave others to think for her (or him)." Feminist inquiry regardless of specialization lends force to that observation. Interrogating accepted beliefs, challenging shared assumptions, and reframing research questions are hallmarks of feminist scholarship in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Feminist scholars take issue with dominant disciplinary approaches to knowledge production. They contest Anglocentric and androcentric "ways to truth" that universalize the experiences of a fraction of the human population. They challenge power dynamics

structuring exclusionary academic practices that have enabled unwarranted generalizations to remain unchallenged for centuries or indeed millennia. They identify and develop alternative research practices that further feminist goals of social transformation. Discussion at this table considers various feminist strategies to enrich individual research projects.

### **Interpretive Methods in Political Theory**

Visitors to this table are welcome to join a discussion on the various approaches to textual interpretation used in political theory, including Straussianism, the Cambridge School, feminism, deconstruction, Lacanian psychoanalysis, and Marxism. In particular, we will address key differences over the purposes and techniques associated with these and other major approaches to textual interpretation. Some of the topics that can be discussed at this table include the answers that different interpretive approaches give to questions concerning what counts as a proper object of interpretation in political theory, what the purpose of interpretation is, how to employ the tools and techniques of interpretation, whether authorial intent matters, what standards of appraisal are used to judge the status of texts and the quality of readings, and the ways that power and politics influence interpretive practices. In addition, we can point visitors to useful resources on the various methods discussed.

### **Intersectionality Research: Critical Approaches**

“Intersectionality” takes into account how multiple forms of oppression— race, class, gender, and sexuality, among others—inform the lived realities of women of color and other marginalized populations. In interrogating intersectionality, researchers might explore the question, As intersectionality travels, who/what is missing and what is next? Asking this question allows us to explore the theory, method/methodologies and praxis of intersectionality. Our conversations will center on topics including, but not limited to: recent theoretical developments and debates, interdisciplinary perspectives on intersectionality, methodological advancements for studying not only what is present but also that which is absent, policy and practice applications. Our table will provide an opportunity for all to share issues in integrating intersectionality in research and the challenges faced in doing so.

### **Law, Courts, and Judging: Interpretive Approaches**

We will discuss interpretive approaches to law, courts, and judging, including law-and-society approaches and historical-institutional approaches to Supreme Court decision-making. Whereas the former directs attention to multidimensional lenses of power, accessibility, and everyday interactions between law and society, the latter directs attention to ideological and institutional dynamics that pertain to the construction of legal meaning, which often includes constructions of race, gender, labor, etc. We thus welcome conversation on a variety of topics: law-in-action and “bottom up” analyses of law and courts as formalized venues for dispute resolution; rights consciousness; legal mobilization; the relationship between legal decision-making and its social, political, and intellectual contexts; and legal/constitutional development. We welcome, as well, conversation that de-centers courts in legal analysis: in the government, the president and Congress are interpreters of law and the Constitution; in everyday life, judging takes place outside of courts in spatio-temporal settings where law is informalized and

responsive to context. Finally, we welcome conversation about scholarship that blends these interpretive approaches.

### **Race & American Political Development (APD)**

Come to this table to discuss interpretive and critical analytic approaches to research on ethno-racial politics and the central place of race in American political development. Among the approaches we will be prepared to discuss are: frame analysis, critical race studies, value-critical policy analysis, intersectional analysis, and more.

### **Research Ethics**

Ethics review systems have been built around experimental research designs, largely as used in biomedical research. At times this can lead to problems in the review process for those conducting field research. We are interested in learning from people about their experiences with IRBs and in sharing our own on-going research into IRB and other processes (e.g., Canada's REB). We can provide background information and interpretation of the key elements of federal policy that are most relevant to field researchers, such as "minimal risk," categories of "exempt" research, and "consent." We are also prepared to discuss strategies for communicating research to review committees.



**2016**  
**Methods Café**  
 Friday, March 25, 3:15 - 5:00 PM

**Western Political Science Association**  
**San Diego**

**HOST:** Elizabeth Newcomer, The Graduate Center, the City University of New York

**TABLES:**

**Analyzing Visual Materials: Paintings, Photographs,  
 Other Visuals, ...**

Mary Bellhouse, Providence College

**Conversational Interviewing**

Robert Forbis, Texas Tech University  
[Samantha Majic](#), John Jay College/CUNY

**Discourse Analysis**

Eric Blanchard, SUNY Oswego

**Feminist Methods**

Mary Hawkesworth, Rutgers University

**Interpretive Methods in Political Theory**

Clement Fatovic, Florida International University  
 Sean Walsh, Capital University

**Intersectionality Research: Critical Approaches**

Susanne Beechey, Whitman College  
 Anna Sampaio, Santa Clara University

**Law, Courts, and Judging:**

**Interpretive Approaches**

Pamela Brandwein, University of Michigan

**Race & American Political Development (APD)**

Edmund Fong, University of Utah  
 Ron Schmidt, California State University, Long Beach

**Research Ethics**

Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, University of Utah  
 Dvora Yanow, Wageningen University