

**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL  
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP  
SPRING 2009 WORKSHOP AGENDA\***

**CULTURES AND HISTORIES OF THE HUMAN SCIENCES**

<https://workspace.ssrc.org/dpdf/cultures>

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**Astor Crowne Plaza, New Orleans, LA  
May 28- 31, 2009**

This is the first of two workshops designed to help students prepare cogent and fundable dissertation proposals in their chosen field. The two goals of the first workshop are 1) to map the research field with respect to contributing disciplines, methods, sources, and area knowledge; and 2) to help prepare fellows for their pre-dissertation summer research. (The goal of the second workshop will be to focus on the mechanics and methods of writing a dissertation proposal). The two goals stand in close relation to each other: through a sustained and structured discussion of student proposals and their component parts, we hope to contribute to the mapping of the research field itself.

The field of Cultures and Histories of the Human Sciences is loosely organized around the broad question of ‘the human’ as the subject of scientific and social scientific inquiry from the eighteenth century to the present. Anthropologists, historians, sociologists, psychologists, and historians of science have been critical to its consolidation as a specialty, defining its contours in explorations of topics as various as characterizations of human nature from the Enlightenment to the present; the nineteenth-century sciences of race and gender; the relationships of the normal and the pathological; measurement and “mismeasurement” of human populations; hysteria and the female body; norms and intelligence; trauma and the politics of memory; and the nature of the modern and post-modern self. Scholarship in the culture and histories of the human sciences has enriched existing disciplinary traditions while at the same time pushing at established disciplinary boundaries.

In the workshop, we will attend in particular to the issue of how and under what conditions scientific knowledge of the human is produced and how explorations of this issue distinguish our work from existing disciplinary practices. We recognize that the field’s interdisciplinary nature poses particular difficulties for students as they embark on their research, as they must on the one hand master a wide-ranging literature and be conversant with methodologies in fields beyond those of their home disciplines and on the other aim to write dissertations that will be recognized as sufficiently mainstream within their home disciplines to make them employable. The workshop aims to draw students into common conversation around the human sciences while giving them the tools to craft compelling and successful dissertations.

## Workshop Readings and Resources

Research Field resources will be placed on the relevant Workspace websites. Students will receive separate explanations and detailed instructions about the access and use of the DPDF digital platform.

## Workshop Assignments

### By May 22, 2009: Online posting of first assignment.

Each participant should prepare a 4-5 page statement specifying the research questions being asked, describing the method(s) to be employed, and discussing the sources of data to be examined.

### By May 28, 2009: Readings

1. Read carefully the statements prepared by all of the workshop participants. These may be found on the DPDF workspace site. Participants will *not* present their own projects at the workshop; it will be assumed that everyone has read closely *all* of the proposals.

2. Read the following assigned selections:

- M. Callon, "Some elements of a sociology of translation"
- C. Figley, "Traumatology"
- C. Figley, "The impact of repression, hostility, and post-traumatic stress disorder"
- I. Hacking, "Making up people"
- D. Kaufmann, "Dreams and self-consciousness"
- A. Lakoff, "The Lacan ward"
- S. L. Star and J. Griesemer, "Institutional ecology, 'translations', and boundary objects"
- A. Young, "Suffering and the origins of traumatic memory"

These have been posted on the Human Sciences Workspace homepage.

### At the workshop: Presentations

Each student will lead a discussion of another student's research. Please plan to speak for 6-7 minutes, and to address in a concise way: What are the research questions (including both general orienting questions and more specific questions)? What are the methods? What sorts of evidence will be considered and assessed? And how do question, methods, and evidence fit together? You may wish to propose one or two suggestions for the author or pose one or two questions for the group (for example, concerning an additional method or an alternative way to formulate the question). These discussions should not aim to evaluate or assess the project but rather to introduce our discussions by focusing attention on key issues of research questions, methods, and evidence.

## **WORKSHOP SCHEDULE**

**ARRIVAL, Wednesday, May 28: Reading handouts / packets will be distributed at registration along with other materials.**

**Wednesday Evening: Reception, 6-8 pm.**

**Session 1: Introduction and Purpose of Workshops**  
(Thursday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

Plenary Session: Presentations by Program Director Josh DeWind and the Research Directors

**Session 2: Mapping the Field of the Human Sciences**  
(Thursday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

The session will start with introductions and an overview of the workshop sessions and aims. We will then turn to a general discussion of assigned articles by *Hacking* (history), *Callon* (science studies) and *Young* (anthropology). Our aim is to trace the theoretical and methodological connections between materials from different disciplines concerned with the human sciences, and to explore the kinds of sources, methods, and theoretical assumptions operating within both humanistic and social science disciplines. Students should consider in advance what questions these texts are aiming to answer, what methods and comparisons they are using, and how different or additional questions and methods could have improved the analysis. How do different disciplines frame and delimit the kind of research questions that can be asked?

The second half of the session will be devoted to discussions of student proposals. Discussants will introduce their assigned proposals, speaking for 6-7 minutes; 30 minutes will be devoted to each proposal. Throughout these discussions, we will examine each student's attempts to relate theory to method and explore the contributions each method will bring to his or her research problem. We will be asking how, as we match research questions with appropriate methods, do we move beyond our usual disciplinary boundaries in order to conceptualize the human sciences as a field without losing focus or promising too much? How do we describe our proposed methods so others can understand exactly how they will produce information that will answer our research questions?

We will discuss student proposals that explicitly engage normative issues and questions of morality:

Dwaipayan Banerjee, "Caring for the self in Bopal: The everyday life of moral subjects" (Steel)

Terence Keel, "The contested legacy of monogenesis in America: The democratic and religious stakes of race for the human sciences" (Rubinstein)

Siri Suh, “Medicine, modernity and morality: Negotiating professional identity among providers of post-abortion care in Senegal” (Ozludil Altin)

### **Session 3: Developing Research Proposals--I**

(Friday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

In this session we will continue our examination of interdisciplinarity in discussion of exemplary articles on the cultures and histories of the human sciences, considering the assigned works by *Kaufmann* (history), *Star* (science studies), and *Lakoff* (anthropology).

The student proposals we discuss focus on psychology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis (commentators are listed in parentheses):

Matthew Amato, “Minding their business: Psychology, psychiatry, and Hollywood film practice” (Esala)

Ellen Rubinstein, “Making meaning out of madness: Interpretations and treatment of psychosis in Japan” (Keel)

Simon Taylor, “The invention of existential psychoanalysis” (Fleming)

### **Session 4: Methods Seminar: Studying Trauma in Post-Katrina New Orleans**

(Friday, 2:00 PM – 4:30 PM)

Professor Charles Figley, Dr. Paul Henry Kurzweg Distinguished Chair and Professor of Disaster Mental Health in the School of Social Work, Tulane University, will lead a seminar on studying trauma in post-Katrina New Orleans. Students should read his two assigned articles prior to class.

### **Tour of New Orleans**

(Friday, 4:30 PM – 7:30 PM)

Daniel Usner, Holland M. McTyeire Professor of History, Vanderbilt University, and a native of New Orleans who teaches courses on its history, will lead a tour to selected sites in the city relevant to issues raised in the seminar.

### **Session 5: Developing Research Proposals--II**

(Saturday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

In this session we discuss student proposals that focus on culture, technologies, space, and power:.

David Alworth, “Humans, non-humans, and societies in deviant realisms after 1945” (Suh)

Jennifer Esala, “Biomedicine meets biofeedback: How alternative therapies are transforming modern medicine” (Alworth)

Mark Fleming, “Measuring feeling: Technologies of experience in neuroscience” (Amato)

Janelle Lamoreaux, “The making of a relationship between sperm and society: ‘Independent variables’ of infertility science in contemporary China” (Taylor)

Burcak Ozludil Altin, “Healing spaces: Mental institutions in the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey, 1870-1930” (Banerjee)

Connie Steel, “Who put the ‘human’ in ‘human rights’?: The meeting of rhetoric, philosophy and psychology in the 18<sup>th</sup> century” (Lamoreaux)

### **Session 6: From the Field to the Proposal**

(Saturday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

In this session, we address the challenge of coming out of the field with a mass of notes and moving towards a dissertation proposal. We will discuss the elements—questions, methods, sources and strategies—around which dissertation proposals are constructed, and will examine several sample proposals (provided by the SSRC). We will collectively grapple with the issue of the relationship between research strategies and the broader research field, and will aid each other in fine-tuning summer research plans in light of our work together

### **Session 7: Looking Forward**

(Sunday, 9 AM – 12:30 PM)

We look ahead to our September workshop in this session. We will collectively draw up a reading list for discussion there, and will discuss the mechanics of staying in touch and getting feedback over the summer. We will devote most of the session to a consideration of the shape and structure of the field of Cultures and Histories of the Human Sciences in light of our discussions of readings and student projects. We will also try to consolidate some of the lessons learned during the workshop, particularly as they pertain to the fit between research questions, methods, and evidence. We will end with a discussion of the practicalities of field research, reviewing strategies to make the most of the months ahead.

\* The schedule for individual appointments with the Research Directors will be posted on the workspace separately.

**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL  
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP  
FALL 2009 WORKSHOP AGENDA**

**CULTURES AND HISTORIES OF THE HUMAN SCIENCES**

<https://workspace.ssrc.org/dpdf/>

Research Director: Emily Martin [[em81@nyu.edu](mailto:em81@nyu.edu)]  
Research Director: Elizabeth Lunbeck [[elizabeth.lunbeck@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:elizabeth.lunbeck@vanderbilt.edu)]

**Hilton Garden Inn, Philadelphia City Center  
Thursday, September 10 – Sunday, September 13**

This is the second of two annual DPDF workshops designed to help graduate student fellows prepare cogent and fundable dissertation proposals in their chosen field. The two goals of the second workshop are 1) to help fellows synthesize their summer research; and 2) to draft proposals for dissertation funding. The fall workshop focuses on the mechanics and the philosophy of proposal writing. The workshop also aims to challenge fellows to reflect on their summer research in ways that link meaningfully to their research field. In this, the goals of the fall workshop are closely related to the project of mapping a research field that was started during the spring workshop in New Orleans.

Fellows will come out of the second workshop with supportive networks, consisting of both mentors and cohorts of new scholars carrying out research in their fields, as well as intellectually mature dissertation proposals.

To these ends, we will work intensely as a group to hone the conceptualization and writing of each Fellow's draft proposal. Our main emphases will be to ensure 1) that each proposal has realistic, concrete, and effective research methodologies and 2) that each proposal frames its questions within newly emerging research questions in the history and cultures of the human sciences. We will also continue developing the list of networking resources begun on the DPDF Workspace.

### **Workshop Readings and Resources**

Should there be any new resources, they will be placed on the relevant Workspace websites.

### **Workshop Assignments:**

- **Be sure you have posted your two letters from the field and read those posted by others.**
- **Before writing your draft proposal: Read some of the "Sample Funding Proposals," paying particular attention to those that share the kinds of methods you are using. (These are on the DPDF Workspace site.)**
- **September 1: Due on DPDF Workspace site: upload a draft dissertation proposal to be examined during the workshop. Explain the purpose of your proposal (i.e. if it is a**

department requirement, what does the department specify? If it is a grant proposal, which funding source are you aiming for?)

- **Before arrival at Workshop: Read all of the other Fellows' draft proposals; prepare to comment on the one you are assigned in the following agenda.**

## ***WORKSHOP SCHEDULE***

***ARRIVAL, Wednesday, September 9th: Registration packets will be distributed at check in.***

**Thursday, September 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Session 1: Panel – The Dissertation Proposal: Strategies and Funding Sources**  
(Thursday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

- Welcome and Introductions
- Dissertation Funder Presentations

### **Sessions 2-7: Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday**

These sessions will focus on student proposals, which have been (roughly) grouped in thematic / methodological clusters.

One hour will be devoted to discussion of each draft proposal. We will assume everyone will have already read each draft proposal carefully so that no summarizing will be necessary. Each proposal will be assigned a discussant, who will make suggestions about how to improve these aspects of the draft, in particular: the conceptualization and explanation of research questions and goals; the methodologies; the links between methods and questions/goals. Each discussant will have the floor for 10 minutes. After this, the proposal author may respond briefly. Open discussion will follow for the rest of the hour. The directors will attempt to enable each member of the group to participate, while also fitting in their own recommendations. Following each session, the two students whose proposals were just discussed will have 30 minute individual appointments with the directors: the focus of these meetings will be to decide which suggestions from the group discussion will best help the Fellows proceed to the next step in their progress toward funding.

We have grouped the proposals discussed in each session around shared disciplinary methodologies.

**Session 2:**  
(Thursday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)  
Janelle Lamoreaux-- Discussant: Burcak Altin

Mark Fleming-- Discussant: David Alworth

*Individual appointments during the last hour*

**Session 3:**

(Friday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

Burcak Altin-- Discussant: Ellen Rubenstein

Connie Steel-- Discussant: Jennifer Esala

*Individual appointments during the last hour*

**Session 4:**

(Friday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

Siri Suh-- Discussant: Matthew Amato

Jennifer Esala-- Discussant: Terrance Keel

*Individual appointments during the last hour*

**Session 5:**

(Saturday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

Terence Keel-- Discussant: Janelle Lamoreaux

Simon Taylor-- Discussant: Mark Fleming

*Individual appointments during the last hour*

**Session 6:**

(Saturday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

Dwai Banerjee-- Discussant: Connie Steel

Ellen Rubenstein-- Discussant: Simon Taylor

*Individual appointments during the last hour*

**Session 7:**

(Sunday, 9 AM – 12:30 PM)

Mathew Amato -- Discussant: Dwai Banerjee

David Alworth -- Discussant: Siri Suh

*Individual appointments during the last hour*