

DCI/ECD 791
Advanced Qualitative Research Methods
Spring, 2002
Joseph Tobin

“The word is half ours...”

This course is about the analysis and interpretation of transcripts and other texts. We will read theory and method pieces from the humanities as well as the social sciences and use this theory and method to make sense of things people say to us when we interview them as well as in other contexts.

The central concept of this course is that talk can be analyzed productively using techniques borrowed from the study of (written) texts. We will approach transcriptions of interviews as a literary scholar would approach a poem or a theological scholar a fragment of scroll. We will draw on methods of textual analysis including deconstruction, reader response theory, formalism, structuralism, and performance theory to open up new avenues to making meaning out of interview data.

The key theorist for the course is the Russian literary theorist/semiotician/philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin. We will read several works by Bakhtin, and by V.N. Volisonov (who may or may not have been Bakhtin) and apply such Bakhtinian concepts as citationality, hybridity, and heteroglossia to interview transcripts.

The course will begin, following an idea of Slavoj Zizek's, with a consideration of the detective and the psychoanalyst as models of interpretive inquiry. We will then turn to a consideration of literary theories, and then to Bakhtin.

Class time will be devoted to a combination of discussing the assigned readings and collaboratively analyzing interview transcripts. The transcripts will be contributed by students in the class. Each of you will select a 1-2 page transcript from an individual or focus-group interview (or of utterances recorded in another context) and share this transcript with the class.

As the quarter progresses, drawing on the theory we read as well as on our experiences dealing with transcripts, we will collaboratively assemble a methodological toolkit, a collection of techniques and strategies for making sense of interviews and other qualitative texts.

Assignments:

- 1) reading notes/discussion questions posted to the class e-mail discussion group (at least 2, ungraded).
- 2) a paper in which you use interpretive techniques to make sense of a transcript or other text (due date: May 6, 2002).

Texts:

A packet of readings will be distributed the first class. The table of contents for this course pack:

Arthur Conan Doyle	The Red Headed League
Sigmund Freud	Parapraxes
Slavoj Zizek	excerpt from <u>Looking Awry</u>
Gerald Graff	“Determinacy/Indeterminacy”
Thomas McLaughlin	“Figurative Language”
Volosinov	“Discourse in Life and Discourse in Art”
Mikhail Bakhtin	Excerpts from <u>Dialogic Imagination</u>
Mikhail Bakhtin	Excerpts from <u>Art and Answerability</u>
Julie Kaomea	“Dilemmas of an Indigenous Academic: A Native Hawaiian Story”

The other required text is Joseph Tobin’s Good Guys Don’t Wear Hats: Children’s Talk about the Media (2000).

Recommended texts:

Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin, Critical Terms for Literary Study (2nd ed). University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Terry Eagleton, Literary Theory: An Introduction (2nd ed). Minnesota, 1998.

Raman Selden, Peter Widdowson, & Peter Brooker, A Reader’s Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory (4th ed). Prentice Hall, 1997.

T. Todorov, Mikhail Bakhtin: The dialogical principle. University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Mikhail Bakhtin (1986). Speech genres and other late essays, (V. McGee, trans.), Austin: University of Texas Press. 1986.

-----Discourse in the novel. In M. Holquist (ed.), (M. Holquist & C. Emerson, trans.), Dialogic imagination: Four essays. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984.

-----Art and answerability, (M Holquist & V. Liapunov, trans.), Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990.

Class Schedule:

- 1/16 **“In the beginning...”**
Analyze: Genesis, a Wordsworth poem, and a transcript (“what’s real”)
Discussion of the syllabus, the goals of the class, assignments, and class routines
- 1/23 **The Detective and The Psychoanalyst**
Discuss: Arthur Conan Doyle’s “The Red Headed League”; Freud’s “Revision of the Theory of Dreams” and excerpt from Zizek’s *Looking Awry*
Method Workshop: Interviewing
Analyze an interview transcript (“Jade”)
- 1/30 **The Literary Critic**
Discuss Graff’s “Determinacy/Indeterminacy” & McLaughlin’s “Figurative Language”
Analyze a transcript: “Mary”
- 2/6 **Interviewing**
Discuss: Tobin’s *Good Guys Don’t Wear Hats* (chapters 1-4)
Method Workshop: Cued Response
Student transcript #1
- 2/13 **Cued Response**
Discuss: *Good Guys Don’t Wear Hats* (chapters 5-7)
Method Workshop: Focus Groups
Student transcript #2
- 2/20 **Meaning in Context**
Discuss: Volosinov’s “Discourse in Life and Discourse in Art”
Student transcript #3
- 2/27 **Meaning in Context (Continued)**
Discuss: Volosinov essay, continued
Student Transcript #4
- 3/6 **Bakhtin**
Discuss: Excerpt from *Art and Answerability*
Student transcript #5
- 3/13 **Spring Break (no class)**

- 3/20 **Bakhtin** (Cont.)
Discuss: Excerpt from *Art and Answerability*
Student transcript #6:
- 3/27 **Bakhtin** (Cont.)
Discuss: Excerpt from *The Dialogic Imagination*
Student transcript #7
- 4/3 No class
- 4/10 **Bakhtin** (Cont.) *The Dialogic Imagination*
Discuss: Excerpt from
Student transcript #8
- 4/17 No class
- 4/24 **Reading pictures**
Discuss Kaomea's "Dilemmas of an Indigenous Academic: A Native Hawaiian Story"
Student transcript #9
- 5/1 **Updating the toolkit**
Student transcript #10

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Readings

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Julie Kaomea	“Dilemmas of an Indigenous Academic: A Native Hawaiian Story”