

570X8 Social Research in Conflict Affected Zones

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The workshop explores the particular methodological issues that face social scientists conducting research in conflict-affected zones. In the mid-1990s a seminal volume edited by Carolyn Nordstrom and Antonius Robben drew attention to the particular ethical and personal dilemmas anthropologists (and social scientists in general) face when conducting research in conflict affected areas. Drawing on this volume; a recent volume edited by Chandra Lekha Sriram et al.' 'best practice' developed by NGOs working in such contexts and individual case studies, the workshop will consider the generic problems that research in conflict affected areas poses for researchers and will explore the strategies and responses researchers have adopted. At the end of the workshop, participants will have a clear understanding of the following key issues: ethical dilemmas; security of researchers and respondents; coping with stress; and dilemmas of maintaining objectivity.

By the end of the workshop, you will be able to:

- Understand the ethical dilemmas and access obstacles associated with conducting research in conflict-affected zones.
- Design research in a way that anticipates the particular ethical issues associated with conducting research in conflict-affected zones.
- Identify, describe and evaluate the links between existing theories and models and findings and the proposed research and specify research questions or hypotheses.
- Characterise and critically evaluate types of research questions that quantitative and qualitative methods are best able to address and articulate rationales for combining quantitative and qualitative approaches.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the principles behind a range of analytic techniques (including rationale, philosophical assumptions, assumptions about data type, and capacity to answer specific questions). This understanding should make it possible to understand a range of techniques beyond those typically employed in any single discipline.

Indicative Readings

Hoffman, D. (2003) Frontline anthropology: Research in a time of war *Anthropology Today* Vol. 19, No. 3.

J. C. Kovats-Bernat (2008) Negotiating Dangerous Fields: Pragmatic Strategies for Fieldwork amid Violence and Terror *American Anthropologist* Vol. 104, No. 1.

Lekha Sriram, C, J. C. King, J. A. Mertus, O. Martin-Ortega, J. Herman (eds) 2009 *Surviving Field Research: Working in Violent and Difficult Situations* Routledge

Nordstrom, C. and A. C. G. M. Robben (eds) (1996) *Fieldwork Under Fire: Contemporary Studies of Violence and Culture* University of California Press

Wood, E. (2006) 'The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones', *Qualitative Sociology*, Vol. 29 No. 3.