

**Ph.D. Seminar in Information Systems & Technology:  
Qualitative Research Methods  
CRN (21214) LIS 3600**

Dr. Stuart Shulman • Spring 2006 • University of Pittsburgh

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**Law Librarian Blog**

A Member of the Law Professor Blogs Network

Tuesday, November 1, 2005

**Security Alert: Think Twice About Using AOL Instant Messenger**

CNet is reporting the spread of a worm via AOL IM. One security expert calls this unnamed worm "a very nasty bundle" of malicious software including for the first time a so-called "rootkit."

"A rootkit is a tool designed to go undetected by the security software used to lock down control of a computer after an initial hack," the CNet report explains. It's part of a "disturbing trend" using the popular IM systems to spread viruses.

[Read all about it.](#)

November 1, 2005 in [Web Communications](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)

**No Established Right of Access to a Prison Law Library for Defendants Representing Themselves**

So ruled the Supreme Court in an unsigned opinion in *Kane v. Espitia*, 04-1538.

**Bloomberg report**

Mark Giangrande, DePaul Law Library, and Ron Jones, University of Cincinnati Law Library



**Web Log (Blog)**

**Focus Group**

**Course Overview:** The spring 2006 Ph.D. Seminar in Information Systems and Technology focuses on qualitative research methods. This seminar is a hands-on review of the literature, tools and strategies that inform qualitative researchers. Although the course is housed in a School of Information Sciences, it is intended to help prepare Ph.D. students across a wide range of disciplines who are conducting, or may be contemplating, a qualitative study or thesis. Opportunities for interesting qualitative research abound in traditional forms (ex., interview and focus group data or open ended survey answers) and novel new sources (ex., database and web content or blog postings). Each student will learn to use ATLAS.ti, a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) qualitative data analysis package, and will complete a semester-long research project utilizing ATLAS.ti or a similar COTS product of their choice.

**Reading:** Readings must be completed for the day listed on the syllabus. In addition to supplemental handouts and suggested readings catalogued on the class web site, the required books are:

**G.E. Gorman & P. Clayton**, *Qualitative Research for the Information Professional: A Practical Handbook* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)

**D. Silverman (ed.)**, *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)

**A.M. Huberman & M.B. Miles (ed.)**, *The Qualitative Researcher's Companion*

**Reading Responses:** There are 5 required reading responses. Each response must be in the form of a post to your **Qualitative Research Fluency Blog** (see description below) that situates the assigned reading in relationship to either a) your major project, and/or b) the goals of the class. The response should be an analytical critique and argumentative extension rather than merely a summary. It ought to take advantage of the particular attributes of the blog medium to creatively link your analysis to other web-based resources.

**Qualitative Research Fluency Blogs (CRFBs):** Each student will create and post to a qualitative research fluency blog. It will archive the path to qualitative research fluency that you find best suited to your needs and aspirations, and it will link together the efforts of each student with those of the others.

**Semester-Long Qualitative Project:** Each student will design, implement and write up results from a semester-long qualitative research project. There is wide latitude about the size, scope, and nature of the data used in the project. The projects can be individual or small project teams. Each project will make use of COTS qualitative data analysis software, such as ATLAS.ti, Ethnograph, NVivo, or MaxQDA.

**Class Participation:** This is a seminar in which your ability to talk in an informed, analytical and interesting manner counts. Regular participation is required for a passing grade and exemplary participation is required for a good grade.

**Student Presentations:** Every student will make a 20-30 minute conference-style presentation with Q&A.

## Reading Schedule

### **Week One (January 4) Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods**

- Class introductions and overview of requirements
- Knowledge inventory
- Grounded theory reading and exercise
- Brainstorming project ideas

### **Week Two (January 11): The (Soft?) Nature of Qualitative Research**

- (S) Chapter 1
- (G&C) Chapter 1
- (H&M) Chapters 1 & 4

### **Week Three (January 18): Evaluating the Validity of Qualitative Research**

- (G&C) Chapter 2
- (S) Chapter 15
- (H&M) Chapters 2 & 8
- <http://snipurl.com/jdrd> (N. Golafshani, 2003)

### **Week Four (January 25): Designing Qualitative Research**

- (G&C) Chapters 3 & 4
- (H&M) Chapters 3 & 5

### **Week Five (February 1): Fieldwork**

- (G&C) Chapters 5, 6 & 11
- (H&M) Chapters 3 & 5

### **Week Six (February 8): Texts**

- (G&C) Chapter 10
- (S) Chapters 4, 5 & 6

### **Week Seven (February 15): Ethnography**

- (H&M) Chapter 7
- (S) Chapters 2 & 3

### **Week Eight (February 22): Focus Group Research**

- (S) Chapter 10
- (G&C) Chapter 9
- <http://snipurl.com/9od6> (S. Shulman, 2004)

**Week Nine (March 1): Interviews**

- (G&C) Chapter 8
- (S) Chapters 7, 8 & 9

**Week Ten (March 15): Talk**

- (H&M) Chapter 14
- (S) Chapters 11 & 12

**Week Eleven (March 22): Visual Data**

- (S) Chapters 13 & 14

**Week Twelve (March 29): Empirical Studies and Policy**

- (S) Chapters 16 & 17
- (G&C) Chapter 12
- (H&M) Chapter 12

**Week Thirteen (April 5): Writing-up Results and Reflecting on Qualitative Research**

- (H&M) Chapter 16
- (G&C) Chapter 13
- (S) Chapter 18

**Week Fourteen (April 12): Student Presentations**

**Week Fifteen (April 19): Student Presentations**

