

Field Research

- Mode of data collection
- Observe social behavior in natural setting
- Understand *social processes*
- Survey vs. field research
- Richard La Piere & anti-Chinese hostility
- Where appropriate?

Roles of observer

- 1) *Complete participant* (full participant; covert research)
- 2) *Participant-as-observer* (full participant; research status known)
- 3) *Observer-as-participant* (interacts, but not full participant; research status known)
- 4) *Complete observer* (full observer without participation; research status unknown)

Qualitative Sampling Methods

- Quota sample (delineate important component groups)
- Snowball sample (build on small numbers)
- Deviant cases (look to nonparticipants for insights)

Field research

- Data collection: immersion and observation
- Qualitative interviewing: general plan but responsiveness to interviewee
- Field notes: write down everything
- Full picture of social setting and social processes

Advantages

- Study nuances in behavior
- What people say they do vs. what they do
- Complete understanding of social process
- Cheaper!



Disadvantages

- Problems with observing
- Dangers of ethnocentrism
- Selective perception
- Interdependence of observation and inference
- Lack of generalizability