

OzCHI Tutorial - Fieldwork and Interdisciplinary Design.

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In recent years there has been an expansion of the notion of design to embrace a range of socio-technical issues of varying kinds concerned with spatiality, temporality, sociality and aesthetics. The domains and settings to which 'design' and technology is relevant has also expanded to embrace domestic settings, public spaces of various kinds, healthcare etc. The tutorial will address a range of methodological and technical knowledge, skills, understandings and related issues in fieldwork studies as used in the Social Sciences. In particular it considers a number of advances in sophistication and rigour for conducting fieldwork research, especially in inter-disciplinary projects; developments arising from the incorporation of new or newly relevant disciplines, perspectives and techniques – such as art and aesthetics, ethics and design; advances brought about by the need to adopt and adapt existing methodological approaches to new situations, such as public spaces, healthcare and domestic environments' and by developing notions of what constitutes 'best' practice in fieldwork studies for interdisciplinary research projects.

Tutorial Objective.

The tutorial develops and expands themes concerning the use of fieldwork methods in the Social Sciences in general and CSCW and HCI in particular. It has the overall objective of developing an understanding and appreciation of the various theoretical perspectives utilised by researchers and the practical issues that arise during the conduct of such 'naturalistic' fieldwork enquiry.

The tutorial will include comprehensive notes and an updated, annotated bibliography. It will review and build on existing literature on ethnography, systems design, and change management but will endeavour to maintain a practical focus.

Web-based Resources: <http://www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/computing/users/rouncefi/OzCHITutout.html>

Target audience

The tutorial will be of use to a range of Social Science researchers including those in Management, Healthcare and Education as well as commercial researchers and consultants working in interdisciplinary teams who are intending to embark on observational studies themselves; and to system developers who wish to become familiar with issues arising from the adoption of observational methods.

Provisional agenda.

Time	Topic
10 min	Introduction
15 mins	Ethnographic perspectives and analytic procedures
25 mins	Practical problems and support: Video, Audio, and Computer Support.
20 mins	Discussion and analysis based on case studies and scenarios
	Coffee break
25 mins	Developing Ethnographic Methodologies – 'probes'
25 mins	Working through some examples of 'probe material'
25 min	Fieldwork in 'Sensitive' Settings: Examples, Problems and Ethics.
35 min	Closing discussion

About the presenters:

The presenters, from Lancaster and Melbourne Universities, have conducted fieldwork investigations in a range of settings including financial services; managerial work; healthcare and domestic environments; and covering a variety of technologies including; databases, workflow management, situated displays, messaging systems and navigational aides. They are particularly associated with new, interdisciplinary developments in ethnographic practice such as cultural and technology probes and the varied practices associated with participative design.
