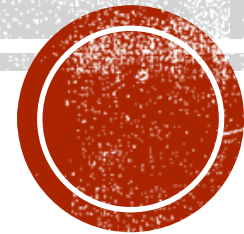


# ENTERING THE FIELD

Elizabeth M. Pope

University of West Georgia

[epope@westga.edu](mailto:epope@westga.edu)



# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand what fieldwork is in qualitative research.
- Recognize ethical considerations in conducting fieldwork.
- Differentiate between appropriate terminology for qualitative vs. quantitative fieldwork and data collection.
- Determine appropriate action steps for researchers in entering the field.



# WHAT IS FIELDWORK?

- Research in natural environments
- How qualitative researchers generate their data
- Gaining access to research sites
- Level of participation must be determined before fieldwork begins
- :Purposive sampling
- Participants vs. subjects



# ORIENTATION TO THE FIELD

- Determine role to play
- Observe setting with the viewpoint of an “outsider”
- Becoming an insider
- Barriers to researchers
- Strategies to gain access to the field:
  - Extended time in the field before beginning research
  - Permission from authority figures
  - Snowballing



[Photo Source](#)



# ETHICS IN FIELDWORK



- Safeguard the participants
- Communicate purposes of research
- Protect privacy of participants
- Never exploit participants
- Share written reports with participants

[Photo Source](#)



# REFERENCES

Flick, U. (2019). *An introduction to qualitative research* (6th ed.). SAGE.

Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant observation*. Wadsworth Thompson Learning.

