



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY  
GENERAL STUDIES COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

**Course information:**

Copy and paste current course information from [Class Search/Course Catalog](#).

Academic Unit Social Sciences Department SBS

Subject SOC Number 426 Title Social Inequality Units: 3

Is this a cross-listed course? No  
If yes, please identify course(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a shared course? No If so, list all academic units offering this course \_\_\_\_\_  
Course description: \_\_\_\_\_

**Requested designation:** (Choose One)

Note- a separate proposal is required for each designation requested

**Eligibility:**

Permanent numbered courses must have completed the university's review and approval process.  
For the rules governing approval of omnibus courses, contact [Phyllis.Lucie@asu.edu](mailto:Phyllis.Lucie@asu.edu) or [Lauren.Leo@asu.edu](mailto:Lauren.Leo@asu.edu).

**Submission deadlines dates are as follow:**

For Fall 2015 Effective Date: October 9, 2014

For Spring 2016 Effective Date: March 19, 2015

**Area(s) proposed course will serve:**

A single course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. A course may satisfy a core area requirement and more than one awareness area requirements concurrently, but may not satisfy requirements in two core areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirement and the major program of study.

**Checklists for general studies designations:**

Complete and attach the appropriate checklist

- [Literacy and Critical Inquiry core courses \(L\)](#)
- [Mathematics core courses \(MA\)](#)
- [Computer/statistics/quantitative applications core courses \(CS\)](#)
- [Humanities, Arts and Design core courses \(HU\)](#)
- [Social-Behavioral Sciences core courses \(SB\)](#)
- [Natural Sciences core courses \(SQ/SG\)](#)
- [Cultural Diversity in the United States courses \(C\)](#)
- [Global Awareness courses \(G\)](#)
- [Historical Awareness courses \(H\)](#)

**A complete proposal should include:**

- Signed General Studies Program Course Proposal Cover Form
- Criteria Checklist for the area
- Course Catalog description
- Course Syllabus
- Copy of Table of Contents from the textbook and list of required readings/books

**Respectfully request that proposals are submitted electronically with all files compiled into one PDF. If necessary, a hard copy of the proposal will be accepted.**


**Contact information:**

Name Jennifer Keahey Phone 602-543-2897

Mail code 3051 E-mail: Jennifer.Keahey@asu.edu

**Department Chair/Director approval:** (Required)

Chair/Director name (Typed): Jeffrey W. Kassing Date: 6/4/14

Chair/Director (Signature): 

## Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for

### GLOBAL AWARENESS [G]

#### Rationale and Objectives

Human organizations and relationships have evolved from being family and village centered to modern global interdependence. The greatest challenge in the nuclear age is developing and maintaining a global perspective which fosters international cooperation. While the modern world is comprised of politically independent states, people must transcend nationalism and recognize the significant interdependence among peoples of the world. The exposure of students to different cultural systems provides the background of thought necessary to developing a global perspective.

Cultural learning is present in many disciplines. Exposure to perspectives on art, business, engineering, music, and the natural and social sciences that lead to an understanding of the contemporary world supports the view that intercultural interaction has become a daily necessity. The complexity of American society forces people to balance regional and national goals with global concerns. Many of the most serious problems are world issues and require solutions which exhibit mutuality and reciprocity. No longer are hunger, ecology, health care delivery, language planning, information exchanges, economic and social developments, law, technology transfer, philosophy, and the arts solely national concerns; they affect all the people of the world. Survival may be dependent on the ability to generate global solutions to some of the most pressing problems.

The word university, from universitas, implies that knowledge comes from many sources and is not restricted to local, regional, or national perspectives. The Global Awareness Area recognizes the need for an understanding of the values, elements, and social processes of cultures other than the culture of the United States. Learning which recognizes the nature of others cultures and the relationship of America's cultural system to generic human goals and welfare will help create the multicultural and global perspective necessary for effective interaction in the human community.

Courses which meet the requirement in global awareness are of one or more of the following types: (1) in-depth area studies which are concerned with an examination of culture-specific elements of a region of the world, country, or culture group, (2) the study of contemporary non-English language courses that have a significant cultural component, (3) comparative cultural studies with an emphasis on non-U.S. areas, and (4) in-depth studies of non-U.S. centered cultural interrelationships of global scope such as the global interdependence produced by problems of world ecology, multinational corporations, migration, and the threat of nuclear war.

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

<b>ASU--[G] CRITERIA</b>			
<b>GLOBAL AWARENESS [G]</b>			
YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>1.</b> Studies <b>must</b> be composed of subject matter that addresses or leads to an understanding of the contemporary world outside the U.S.	
		<b>2.</b> The course must match at least one of the following descriptions: (check all which may apply):	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>a.</b> In-depth area studies which are concerned with an examination of culture-specific elements of a region, country or culture group. <b>The area or culture studied must be non-U.S. and the study must contribute to an understanding of the contemporary world.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>b.</b> The course is a language course for a contemporary non-English language, and has a significant cultural component.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>c.</b> <b>The course is a comparative cultural study in which most, i.e., more than half, of the material is devoted to non-U.S. areas.</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>d.</b> The course is a study of the cultural significance of a non-U.S.-centered global issue. The course examines the role of its target issue within each culture and the interrelatedness of various global cultures on that issue. It looks at the cultural significance of its issue in various cultures outside the U.S., both examining the issue's place within each culture and the effects of that issue on world cultures."	Course syllabus, including list of required readings/books; and copy of Table of Contents from the textbook.

Course Prefix	Number	Title	Designation
SOC	426	Social Inequality	Global Awareness (G)

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the **specific** designation criteria.  
Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checklist)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)
<b>SAMPLE:</b> 2d: study the cultural significance of a non-U.S. centered global issue	<b>SAMPLE:</b> The course examines the cultural significance of financial markets Japan, Korea, and the UK.	<b>SAMPLE:</b> Module 2 shows how Japanese literature has shaped how Japanese people understand world markets. Module 3 shows how Japanese popular culture has been changed by the world financial market system. Modules 4 & 5 do the same for Korea and modules 6 & 7 do the same for the UK.
2d: study the cultural significance of a non-U.S. centered global issue	The course examines the cultural significance of social inequality as a critical aspect of globalization.	The course presents global data and multinational evidence to provide a broad-based understanding of social inequality. This is done in textbook chapters and in course lectures. The third course section presents theories of development and globalization in order to examine inequalities between nation-states and explores the global justice movement as an integrated response to this global issue.

## **SOC 426 Course Catalog Description**

Current Course Description: Examines stability and change in social inequality based on age, class, ethnicity, gender, and race.

Proposed Course Description: Examines multiple dimensions of social inequality as a critical aspect of globalization.

## **SOC 426: SOCIAL INEQUALITY**

Fall 2014; M-W: 4:30-5:45am; West – CLCC 180

**Dr. Jennifer Keahey**  
**Email:** [jennifer.keahey@asu.edu](mailto:jennifer.keahey@asu.edu)

**Office:** FAB S173     **Phone:** 602-543-2897  
**Office Hours:** T-TH 12:00-1:30pm; by appt.

*"The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living." –Karl Marx*

*"It is not inequality that is the real misfortune, it is dependence." –Voltaire*

*"The 'working poor' as they are approvingly termed, are in fact the major philanthropists of our society. They neglect their own children so that the children of others will be cared for; they live in substandard housing so that other homes will be shiny and perfect; they endure privation so that inflation will be low and stock market prices high." –Barbara Ehrenreich*

*"The global economy is enriching a few, often at the expense of many, but new global connections across old barriers can enrich our understanding, empower our actions, and embolden our spirit."  
–Scott Sernau*

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The world is witnessing unprecedented levels of social inequality, leading some to argue that we are residing in a new "gilded age" of robber barons and indentured masses. Without a nuanced understanding of inequality, we cannot fully comprehend the social ills that human societies are currently facing, including climate change, pandemics, war, poverty, malnutrition, and crushing debt. Given its impact on all aspects of society, the strain of inequality affects not just our daily lives, but jeopardizes our shared future. Over the course of this semester, we will study social inequality as a critical aspect of globalization, and more specifically examine it through the lens of class, race/ethnicity, and gender. Yet if the forces driving the global economy are threatening social wellbeing, they also are opening up surprising avenues for change. People from around the world are harnessing knowledge, skills, and technologies to demand a more equal playing field. The world is an interesting place, and we are alive at a pivotal moment. The unanswered question, of course, is what next?

Sociological knowledge can provide insight into this question, but scholars broadly recognize that more holistic understanding is necessary if we are to determine future trajectories. In order to better capture the complexity of social issues such as inequality, we must learn how to synthesize multiple perspectives and strategies. While a great deal of sociological scholarship is focused upon this task, different attempts at integration remain exploratory. One of my goals is to foster innovative thinking by encouraging students to develop a deeper awareness of their own standpoints and asking them to locate points of commonality with those operating from other positions.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS**

Sernau, Scott. 2013. *Social Inequalities in a Global Age. Fourth Edition.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ehrenreich, Barbara. 2011. *Nickel and Dimed.* New York, NY: Picador.

\*Other required readings are available via Blackboard (**B**) along with handouts and announcements.

## COURSE RESPONSIBILITIES

This course combines lectures, discussions, media, and self-guided work. My role is to introduce topics, provide information, facilitate discussion, and assess performance. Your role is to attend class, learn the material, turn in assignments on time, and explore interesting concepts. Our mutual role is to stimulate a positive, co-learning process where each of us has something to teach and to learn.

**Media:** I actively encourage the use of technology in my classes. If you have a laptop, smartphone, or other form of portable device, bring it. I may ask students to locate definitions and share these with the class. We may investigate answers to hard questions or use the Internet for group research. You also may look up lecture information as a learning strategy or to contribute to discussions. Phones and computers must be silenced, and you may only engage in activity related to the discussion. Should you access inappropriate websites or otherwise disrupt the class, you will forfeit your right to this privilege.

**Written and Verbal Communication:** The twenty-first-century job market is competitive and global. Successful professionals possess strong written and verbal skills, including a demonstrated ability to work in multicultural environments. In this class, you will have the opportunity to engage multiple perspectives in your examination of social inequality. Written and verbal communication comprise approximately 100% of your grade, so put this opportunity to good use.

**Academic Integrity:** Discussion is framed by open-mindedness, civility, self-reflection, and informed opinion. If any questions arise, please email me or come talk to me in person. Official university policy forbids academic dishonesty, encompassing cheating and all forms of plagiarism, including copying other peoples' electronic or written work. Do your own work, and cite all information sources properly.

**Accountability:** You are fully responsible for whatever goes on in class, even if you are absent. This includes knowing the material and reading unexpected Blackboard announcements. I only give incomplete grades in situations when your grade is passing, but there is a small amount of the work you have not been able to complete for reasons beyond your control.

**Support mechanisms:** I am here to support you, and enjoy having discussions with students in my office as this helps me to get to know you and better meet your needs and interests. ASU's wonderful Writing Centers provide in-person assistance on all campuses as well as online support.

**ASU Writing Center Information:** Getting feedback: It's what writers do. ASU Writing Centers offer in-person and online feedback at any stage of the writing process. Trained tutors can help writers (1) brainstorm, (2) plan papers, (3) organize content, (4) use and document sources, and (5) revise for clarity, correctness, and flow. While tutors won't do your writing for you, they will work with you to improve your skills. Be sure to bring assignment instructions, source materials, and printed drafts to your appointment to get the most out of your experience. *Take advantage of this free service, use it frequently, and schedule your appointments early.* To book an appointment, contact ASU West at Fletcher Library LL2 (602) 543-6169, or the Online Center at (480) 965-9072.

**Special Situations:** If you have any kind of learning challenge or difficulty, tell me so we can make the appropriate arrangements to ensure your success in this class.

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

I employ active and socially engaged learning strategies, encouraging students to view theories and methods as tools that they may employ to better understand and solve identified social issues. Pedagogy emphasizes the importance of bringing multiple activities into the learning cycle, including reading, writing, problem-solving, and active experimentation. I have designed this class to be engaging in a variety of ways in order to provide you with a strong foundation in scholarly knowledge, while also enabling you to examine the topic in a way that best suits your specific goals.

**Reading Summaries (20%):** Each Wednesday, turn in a typed half-page summary of **ONE** of the assigned readings from the current week, for a total of 10 summaries out of 14 possible due dates (noted in the course schedule as \*RS\*). This is an easy way to collect points as I give full credit to everyone who submits work on time. You must turn in your weekly summary on time and in hard copy unless I formally approve your absence in advance. See attached handout for further details.

I strongly suggest getting into the habit of typing brief summaries as soon as you finish readings for all of your courses. This strategy improves exam performance, and enables you to efficiently write papers (ie. in less time, giving you more free time).

**Problem-solving Exams (60%):** This course requires completion of three problem-solving exams. I have designed the exams to test your ability to apply knowledge instead of simply asking you to repeat memorized information from each section of the course. Each exam is worth 20 percent of your grade.

For each exam, you will be presented with written scenarios that detail experiences with social inequality. To answer these questions, you will (1) engage information from the course readings and lectures to sociologically analyze the problem, and (2) propose a course of action that you believe will help solve the problem. Relevant information to provide in your answers include: key course terms, concepts, theories, and data that are relevant to your problem. Note that your proposed solution(s) should align with the theory or theories that you employ to analyze the problem.

The problem-solving exam format reflects the ways in which knowledge is used in the real world, where professionals routinely use their knowledge to address issues. Yet professionals are not expected to rely upon memory alone—they have information at their fingertips and people whom they can turn to for advice. To mirror real-life conditions, my exams are open-book and (relatively) open-communication. On 9/15, you will form into study teams that will have the opportunity to communicate with one another before, during, and after the exams. Each of you must submit your own work and you will be graded as individuals, but you may sit with your team members during the exam and quietly ask one another for assistance.

**Experiential Learning Project (20%):** ELP is self-directed and gives you the opportunity to experientially engage with the material. All students will conduct their projects during the second week of November and we will meet on Monday, 11/17 to unpack what we have learned. To fulfill this assignment, you will attempt to step into the shoes of “the other” by determining a social dimension in which you are relatively privileged, and then creatively working to rid yourself of that privilege over the course of one week via participant observation activities that you design and conduct. You also may decide to step into a privileged sphere from a current position of disadvantage, though in practical terms, this may be more challenging to achieve.

You will submit an outline of your proposed project on 10/27 for my approval. During ELP week, you will keep a typed daily journal of your experiences and insights you have gained. Upon project completion, you will present your preliminary findings to a group of your peers for feedback. Two weeks later, you will submit a two-page executive summary of project actions and findings with attached journal entries as appendices.

The grading breakdown for this assignment is as follows: project proposal (5 points), class presentation (2 points), two-page executive summary, (10 points) and journal entries (3 points). We will discuss this assignment in class, and I will distribute detailed guidelines prior to the project.



## COURSE ASSESSMENT

### SOC 426 Course Assessment

Student Assessment	Percentage	Points Possible
Reading Summaries (10 @ 2% each)	20%	20.0
Problem-solving Exams (3 @ 20%)	60%	60.0
Experiential Learning Week Project	20%	20.0
Total	100%	100.0

**Course Grading Scale:** I give +/- grades to encourage and reward hard work.

A+ = 97.0+	B+ = 89.9-87.0	C+ = 79.9-76.0	D = 69.9-60.0
A = 96.9-94.0	B = 86.9-84.0	C = 75.9-70.0	E = 59.9-Below
A- = 93.9-90.0	B- = 83.9-80.0		

**Extra Credit:** I typically do not offer extra credit options because assignments are already diverse.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### 8/25: Course Introduction

-- (B) Syllabus.

\* Purchase books, review Blackboard account, and print course readings\*

### 8/27: Introduction to the Study of Social Inequality

-- Sernau, Scott. 2013. "The Gordian Knot of Race, Class, and Gender." Pp. 3-26.

\*RS\*

### 9/1: Labor Day

### 9/3: The Great Debate

-- Sernau, Scott. 2013. "The Great Debate." Pp. 27-52.

\*RS\*

### 9/8: Functionalist Perspectives

-- (B) Durkheim, Emile. 2000. "The Division of Labor in Society." Pp. 37-66 in *From Modernization to Globalization: Perspectives on Development and Social Change*, edited by J. Timmons Roberts and Amy Hite. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

-- (B) Davis and Moore. 1944. "Some Principles of Stratification." *American Sociological Review* 10: 242-249.

### 9/10: Conflict Perspectives

-- (B) Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. 2000. "Manifesto of the Communist Party (1848) and Alienated Labor (1844)." Pp. 27-36 in *From Modernization to Globalization: Perspectives on Development and Social Change*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

-- (B) Weber, Max. 2008. "Class, Status, Party." Pp. 113-122 in *Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective*, edited by David B. Grusky. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

\*RS\*

### **9/15: Symbolic Interactionist Perspectives**

-- (B) Blumer, Herbert. 1958. "Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position." *The Pacific Sociological Review* 1(1): 3-7.

-- (B) Anderson, Leon and David A. Snow. 2001. "Inequality and the Self: Exploring Connections from an Interactionist Perspective." *Symbolic Interaction* 24, 4: 395-406

\*Study Team Formation\*

### **09/17: Status Prestige**

--Sernau, Scott. 2013. "Status Prestige." Pp. 161-180.

\*RS\*

### **9/22: Class-based Inequality**

--Ehrenreich Barbara. 2011. "Introduction," "Serving in Florida," and "Scrubbing in Maine." Pp. 1-119.

### **9/24: Class-based Inequality**

-- Ehrenreich, Barbara. 2011. ""Selling in Minnesota," "Evaluation," and "Afterward." Pp. 120-238.

\*RS\*

### **9/29: Sociological Problem-Solving**

\*Problem-Solving Exam 1\*

### **10/1: Power and Politics**

-- Sernau, Scott. 2013. "Power and Politics." Pp. 181-206.

\*RS\*

### **10/6: Racial and Ethnic Inequality**

-- (B) Said, Edward. 1979. "Knowing the Oriental." Pp. 31-49 in *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Random House.

### **10/8: Racial and Ethnic Inequality**

-- Sernau, Scott. 2013. "Racial and Ethnic Inequality." Pp. 109-140.

\*RS\*

### **10/13: Fall Break**

### **10/15: Gender-based Inequality**

-- Sernau, Scott. 2013. "Gender and Sexuality." Pp. 141-160.

\*RS\* \*Midterm Course Evaluation\*

### **10/20: Identity and Sexuality**

-- (B) Gamson, Joshua. 1995. "Must Identity Movements Self-Destruct? A Queer Dilemma." *Social Problems* 42(3): 390-407.

### **10/22: Education and Mobility**

--Sernau, Scott. 2013. "Moving up: Education and Mobility." Pp. 209-232.

\*RS\*

### **10/27: Education and Mobility**

-- (B) Freire, Paulo. 2004. "Chapter Two." Pp. 71-86 in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum.

\*ELP Outline Due\*

### **10/29: The Question of Meritocracy**

-- (B) McNamee, Stephen J. and Robert K. Miller Jr. 2004. "The American Dream: Origins and Prospects." Pp. 1-24 in *The Meritocracy Myth*. Lanham, MA: Rowman and Littlefield.

\*RS\*

### **11/3: Sociopolitical Problem-Solving**

\*Problem-Solving Exam 2\*

### **11/5: Poverty and Place**

-- Sernau, Scott, 2013. "Abandoned Spaces, Forgotten Places: Poverty and Place." Pp. 233-258.

\*RS\*

### **11/10-11/12: ELP Week**

\*Self-Directed Participant Observation\*

### **11/17: Knowledge-Sharing**

\*ELP Presentations\*

### **11/19: The Global Debate**

-- Sernau, Scott. 2013. "The Global Divide: Inequality across Societies." Pp. 53-82.

\*RS\*

### **11/24: Globalization and Development**

-- (B) Peet, Richard and Elaine Hartwick. 1999. "Critical Modernism." Pp. 196-199 in *Theories of Development*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

### **11/26: Poverty and Policy**

--Sernau, Scott. 2013. "Reversing the Race to the Bottom: Poverty and Policy." Pp. 259-288.

\*RS\*

### **12/1: Social Movements in a Global Age**

-- Sernau, Scott. 2013. "Challenging the System: Social Movements in a Global Age" Pg. 289-318.

\*ELP Summaries/Papers Due\*

### **12/3: Social Change**

-- (B) Hawken, Paul. 2008. "Blessed Unrest." Pp. 9-26 in *Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Social Movement in History is Restoring Grace, Justice, and Beauty to the World*. London: Penguin.

\*RS\* \*Final Course Evaluation\*

### **5/? : Finals Week: Global Problem-Solving**

\*Problem-Solving Exam 3: On XX/XX from XX:XX\*

## SOC 426

### *Weekly Reading Summary Instructions, Advice, and Examples*

#### Instructions:

- Choose ONE reading from the assigned weekly readings to summarize
- Write a one half-page summary, including citation, main argument, key points, and good quotes
- Due at start of class on Thursday of every week in hard copy.
- Each student must submit ten of fourteen possible weekly summaries
- Pass/Fail: Students receive full credit (2 points) for every submitted summary (20% of grade)
- **I do not accept late submissions** unless I have formally approved your absence from class

#### Advice:

- Keep an extra electronic copy of your summary in one place for later review
- Write brief summaries for all of your readings, for all of your classes, and keep them organized
- Review summaries before exams (instead of re-reading your readings)
- Review summaries with your study team before exams (learn from one another)
- Review summaries to explore potential topics for your experiential learning project

#### Examples:

**Sklair, Leslie. 2002. "The Culture-ideology of Consumerism." Pp. 164-207 in *Globalization: Capitalism and its Alternatives*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.**

Sklair offers a brilliant critique of transnational consumerism but he is overly pessimistic in that he neglects examining the positive outcomes of globalization. He states that globalization drives the expansion of a transnational consumerist culture, but that “consumerism is basically antithetical to development.” (164) He discusses Wells’ classic typological assessment of societies in relation to consumerism and production. Wells classifies four types of societies, including: (1) high producer-consumer societies such as the US and Europe, (2) high consumer-low producer societies which are problematic to identify empirically, (3) low producer-consumer societies that are largely traditional, and (4) high producer-low consumer socialist societies such as found in Cuba. Sklair’s underlying argument is that production drives development; thus consumption-based, rather than production-based globalization negatively impacts the poor. Sklair provides empirical cases to demonstrate how transnational corporations promote a culture-ideology of consumerism in both wealthy and poor countries. First he examines the relationship between cultural and media imperialism. The cultural imperialist perspective “argues that the values and beliefs of powerful societies are imposed on weak societies in an exploitative fashion” and “media imperialism follows logically from cultural imperialism” (167). For instance, media have successfully promoted pro-development soap operas in low-income countries, and the popularity of these shows highlights “the triumph of capitalist consumerism” (170) Next, Sklair discusses other forms of advertising, again demonstrating how these are dominated by corporations that promote consumer ideology. He even highlights how certain military regimes have used transnational advertising agencies to clean their image (181). However, Sklair also notes the growth of global social movements that challenge the consumer ideology, advocating a return to authentic living. This isn’t his primary point but to my mind, it is the most interesting. How might we integrate the diverse local movements that are forming all over the world to achieve similar authentic living goals?

**MacIntyre, Alice, 2008. Participatory Action Research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications**

MacIntyre defines PAR as “an approach characterized by the active participation of researchers and participants” (5). The process promotes individual and collective social change. She stresses that no PAR project is alike, and that each practitioner will need to be creative and patient when democratizing research processes. The book offers a sense of the difficulties of doing PAR, and notes that participants may be less engaged than the practitioner originally imagined. I appreciated its sober assessment of the limitations of PAR, including the fact that people must agree upon a common definition of participation because individuals may understand it differently, leading to conflict. MacIntyre sees PAR as an opportunity, but states that researchers cannot force participation, though I would have liked to have seen more discussion about different types of participatory decision making. Throughout the book, MacIntyre highlights the difficulties of doing PAR with examples from her own projects in two sites: the first with a group of young people in an urban school, and the second with a group of women in Northern Ireland. Through these examples, she explains how she dealt with participants failing to do what they had promised and planned as a group. You also see participants arguing with one another, treating each other poorly due to frustration, choosing sides in arguments, and at times, coming to one another’s defense. I thought that an insightful idea was how MacIntyre used transcripts from group discussions (group data) at critical junctures in the PAR process to promote better communication. By reviewing the transcripts in small groups, PAR participants were able to review their experiences, including what they had learned, and to summarize group lessons learned into key recommendations so that they could transcend difficulties and move forward in subsequent project phases.

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