Key Points from Chapter 12 (Chapter 11 in Red Book):

**Unobtrusive methods:** Allow us to investigate social processes at other times and in other places, when the actual participants in these processes are not available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cross-Sectional</th>
<th>Longitudinal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Single Case</strong></td>
<td>Historical events research</td>
<td>Historical process research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Cases</strong></td>
<td>Cross-sectional comparative research</td>
<td>Comparative historical research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Features of qualitative historical research:** Case-oriented, holistic, conjunctural, temporal, historically specific, narrative (idiographic), inductive

**Features of quantitative comparative research:** Uses available data to examine relationships between variables across cities, nations, etc.

**Secondary data:** publicly available data archives, data from another researcher, data from your own previous projects. Examples:

**Responsible use of secondary data:**
1. What were agency’s goals in collecting the data?
2. Who was responsible for data collection and what were their qualifications?
3. What data was collected, and what were they intended to measure?
4. When was the information collected?
5. What methods were used for data collection?
6. How is the information organized? What form are data available in? Adequate documentation – e.g. variable labels???
7. How consistent are the data with data available from other sources?
8. What is known about the success of the data collection effort? Documentation?

**Methodological Complications:**
- Measuring across contexts: missing data, hard to test reliability and validity, measures are inadequate, measurement equivalence a problem, necessary simplifications
- Sampling across time and place: interdependence among cases
- Identifying causes: method of agreement - comparison of cases in terms of similarities and differences on independent and dependent variable

**Ethical Issues:** FOIA, cross-cultural issues
Census Background
Article I Section 2 of the Constitution of the United States calls for an actual enumeration of the people every ten years, to be used for apportionment of seats in the House of Representatives among the states. The decennial Census is conducted every ten years, on April 1 in years ending in a zero. Besides providing the basis for congressional redistricting, Census data are used in many other ways: the distribution of funds for government programs such as Medicaid; planning the right locations for schools, roads, and other public facilities; and for evaluating the environmental justice implications of proposed policies (see below). Most Census data are available for many levels of geography, including states, counties, cities and towns, ZIP codes, census tracts and blocks, but they are not reported at the level of individuals or households.

The Census uses a household sampling frame. The “long form” is sent to a sample of households, while the “short form” is sent to the remaining households. Overall, about 1 in 7 households receive the long form, which includes more detailed questions about the members of the household and the housing unit in which they live. Short form questions include: age, sex, hispanic or latino origin, race, tenure (whether home is owned or rented), and vacancy characteristics. Although the Census Bureau takes great pains to collect data from every person in the U.S., we know that certain populations tend to be undercounted (e.g. minorities, immigrants, rural residents) and some populations are overcounted (e.g. college students). The net undercount for the 2000 Census was between 0.12% and 1.14%.

Some ways census data can be useful in a research project:
- As a source of descriptive statistics at the start of a research project.
- As a way of identifying appropriate communities to use as a part of a sampling plan.
- As a basis for assessing how well your sample matches the target population.

An Important Use for Census Data: Environmental Justice!
On February 11, 1994, President Clinton signed Executive Order 12898, “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations.” Based on the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and on Title VI and Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, this order requires federal agencies to make environmental justice a part of its mission “by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.” Each agency is required to analyze and mitigate environmental effects on minority communities and low-income communities when analysis of environmental effects is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). An important source of data for these analyses is the decennial U.S. Census, which provides detailed demographic data on households and individuals down to the geographic scale of a city block.

Thursday class will be in 1137 PES!!!

Check website for background on US Census