me

- danyel fisher
- concluding phd student
- interested in
  - mapping social networks
  - temporal rhythms (the ways relationships change over time)
  - as expressed in email and online social groups
- student working with prof dourish

recap

- from theory to methods
  - qualitative approach
  - want to get at the DETAILS
  - want to get at the DIVERSITY of settings and attitudes
  - understanding “the member’s point of view”
  - observation and interviewing
- why was it done just then and by so-and-so?
- field notes are a continual site of activity

recap ii: interviews

- you need to write stuff down -- you will forget
  - writing them up quickly
  - re-reading and re-working
  - early analytic thoughts...
- interview guide
  - pre-organize information
  - track conversation

today:

- focusing and analyzing data

reminder
  - should be doing observations
  - should be starting interviews

deceptive title

- this chapter is about asking questions
this chapter is about asking questions... of the data

you don’t ask real people these questions
you don’t necessarily direct your interview around these questions

but you will ask these questions about your results

so you kick back, and start digging through the data

“what do i have here? what is this data trying to tell me?”
– the data has a story
– figure out what it is

journalism 101

basic structural question that the article should answer
– who
– what
– when
– where
– why
– how

basic structural question that the article should answer
– who - agency
– what - types
– when - processes
– where - structures
– why - causes
– how - frequencies and magnitudes

what is it that i’m looking at?

• types
  – e.g. the total institution
  – the rule of mutual exclusiveness
  – the rule of exhaustiveness
eight questions

- frequency
  - how often does it happen?
- magnitude
  - how big does it happen?

Quantitative questions ... but qualitative data can give an important sense.

eight questions: structures

- related to types, but:
  - what are the internal features of the type?
  - what is the relationship between different types?
  - example: bureaucracies

eight questions: processes

- temporal structures: how things develop
  - cycles

eight questions: processes

- spirals – rolls back on itself
- sequences – a series of steps

eight questions: cause

- not simple cause and effect
  - cumulative causes... think of the processes through which situations come about
- situational versus dispositional causes
  - programs crash because users have something else to do
  - programs crash because users are idiots

eight questions: consequences

- functional approach
  - what functions are served?
  - what role does this play?
- nonfunctional approach
  - what ends are served?
  - what are the products?
eight questions

- agency
  - the other questions illustrate the passive model
  - brute facts and the machinations of the social world
  - people are active entities!
  - coping, acting, scheming, evading, cajoling, maneuvering
  - the issue of agency:
    - whose action brings about the situation?
    - how does this action come about?
  - structure/agency dyad
    - it’s a cycle!