***PhD Qualitative methods seminar – May 2nd 2024***

***Based on Lofland et al. Analyzing Social Settings (4th edition 2005)***

***Come up with a thinking topic***

*Good thinking topics are based in action –* through interrogating bounded actions we can begin to generate local meanings, power dynamics, underlying connections

* **Bounded, repeated process:** process of accomplishing a work task, beginning/middle/end of meetings, process of making a decision, process of repairing something, process something changing, etc.
* **Bounded, repeated, communication act:** formal/informal greetings, opening moves of meetings, solicitations and replies, moments of contradiction, etc.
* **Activity around a material object/technology that carries weight**
* **Key terms deployed in practice**

***8 Questions to ask your thinking topic:***

1. Type
   1. What is this an instance of?
   2. What are the various aspects of the type?
2. Frequency
   1. How often is this happening?
   2. Descriptive statistics
3. Magnitude
   1. What was the size, intensity, or strength of the topic?
4. Structure
   1. What are the formal and informal arrangements of people/groups that give social life a measure of predictability and order?
5. Processes
   1. How does something happen?
   2. What are the steps or stages, that occur?
   3. What is the timeframe?
   4. Is it linear, cyclical, spiral?
   5. What inspires movement between stages?
   6. What are the turning points?
6. Causes
   1. What circumstances must occur for event to happen?
   2. Not attempting to delineate causality in a statistical sense
7. Consequences
   1. What happened next, as a result (a good prompting question) – not causal inference
   2. Who/what is affected?
   3. Are consequences intended or unintended?
8. Agency
   1. Who is able to do what?
   2. What did what? (\*Melissa addition)

*Don’t forget to think through each of your questions in terms of actors, actions, temporal dynamics, physical space*, tools and technology.