Comparison of Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, editions 3 and 4

Overview and Recommendation

SYA 4300 will use the fourth edition in spring, 2013. One of the reasons I chose the Bryman book is that its price, $54.95, is about half that of the competition, and I recommend that you buy the fourth edition unless cost is the paramount concern.

You could use the third edition, but you should be aware of the differences between the two editions and the problems they might create. The third edition has much the same content – including a great deal of identical contact – as the new edition. The main differences I have identified that would make your life more complex are:

1. One completely new chapter (chapter 1), one chapter with major changes (chapter 28), and one chapter that combines and reorganizes parts of other chapters and adds new material (chapter 18) will be used in the course. If you use the third edition, you should make arrangements to read chapters 1, 18, and 28 in the new edition.

2. Chapter numbering as well as numbering of some figures and tables changes. The syllabus will use chapter numbers from the fourth edition. See a later section for a discussion of changes in chapter numbering.

3. The third edition provides instruction in an older version of the software to be used in the course. While even the fourth edition does not use the most recent software version that we will use in the lab, the differences between the third edition’s software description and the current version will be somewhat greater.

4. There are minor changes in other chapters even when the detailed outline remains the same.

Read the rest of this document for more detail. Exams as well as class and lab presentations will assume the fourth edition even when I have not identified differences in this document.

Identifying the two editions

*Fourth edition*

*Third edition*

Revised: 16 October 2012
Price

The list price for the fourth edition on the Oxford University Press US website is $54.95. If an internet seller offers the book at a substantial discount from this price, check carefully to see what edition you’re buying. In addition to independent online sites, the book may be purchased from the Oxford University Press directly: http://www.oup.com/us/catalog/general/subject/Sociology/TheoryMethods/?view=usa&c
i=9780199588053

Changes in Chapter Numbering and Detailed Outlines

This discussion refers to chapter numbers in the fourth edition unless otherwise specified.

Chapter 1: New chapter in the fourth edition.

Chapters 2-17: Each of these chapters has the same title and same detailed outline as in the third edition. However, the chapters are numbered one higher. Chapter 2 in the fourth edition has the same title and detailed outline as chapter 1 in the third edition, and so forth. Note that some of the discussion within the detailed outline changes and some new figures are added.

Chapter 18: New chapter in the fourth edition. The material in this chapter is taken from the third edition’s chapter 17 and also includes some new material.

Chapters 19 to the end: Same chapter titles as in the third edition, but the numbering is two higher. Chapter 19 in the new edition has the same title as chapter 17 in the third edition, and so forth. Some of the detailed outlines change, and some discussion within the detailed outline changes. Changes in detailed outline are:


Chapter 20 (ch. 18 in the old edition): Minor changes in detailed outline. This chapter will not be used in the course.

Chapter 21 (ch. 19 in the old edition): Very minor change in detailed outline.

Chapter 23 (ch. 21 in old edition): Minor changes in detailed outline. This chapter will not be used in the course.

Chapter 27 (ch. 25 in old edition): Very minor change in detailed outline. This chapter will not be used in the course.

Chapter 28 (ch. 26 in old edition): There are large changes to the content of this chapter.