The Convivial Research Group of Humboldt County is a collective of community members who enjoy gathering to think and dialog together about social justice. We have been gathering to socialize and eat for nearly a decade, creating a space for learning and applying the skills of supportive, collaborative, radical research methodology to the work we do individually and together.

The group began in 2007 when some graduate students of color in the Environment and Community (E&C) Interdisciplinary Masters Degree Program at Humboldt State University began meeting to support one another in analyzing issues of gender, power, culture, race and class in their university experience. They also began to study an activist research methodology developing in Latin America known as Coyuntural Analysis, or Convivial Research. Interested community members were invited to join in and over the years a varied group of participants continued to meet in homes and public venues, bringing real world issues into a space for analysis and action.

We are all researchers and our group has taken on projects in Settler Colonialism, Historic Preservation, Othering within the Patrons of Husbandry, Media Sovereignty, Sustainable Agriculture, Cop-Watch, Immigrant Rights and Houselessness. Our “shared project” is the region we all inhabit and the communities in which we collaboratively conduct our research and initiate strategies toward greater equity. We use a variety of facilitation tools to create a climate of learning based on mutual respect and acknowledgement that there are many ways of knowing.

By discussing the writings of global scholars, activists, philosophers, educators and movement theorists we have become better able to situate our “local issues” within a wider context of historical, cultural, social, economic, environmental and political conditions.

Our guide to Convivial Research is Dr. Manolo Callahan, former professor at HSU and founder of the Center for Research and Autonomy. He has defined the methodology this way:

"A Convivial  community - based research approach is a grassroots collective investigative effort that fundamentally refuses to objectify groups, organizations, or communities-in-struggle and promotes facilitating spaces for on-going encounters of collective knowledge production put in service of self-organized constituencies seeking to address specific problems impacting them. By convivial research we mean:

* a collective investigative approach
* that refuses to objectify communities of struggle,
* engages multiple sites of knowledge production,
* generates new strategic, conceptual tools
* while also promoting an on-going process of community regeneration."

*“We cannot get out of the state we are in by street-fighting; we must think our way out.”*

*--*Manolo Callahan