

Anthropology 411
Fieldwork in Cultural Anthropology
Fall 2007, Davenport 109

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Office Hours

Friday, 9-12 a.m.
230a International Studies Building (Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies), 910 S.
5th St, (please arrange meetings with Lucretia Williams, 333-7273 or lawillia@uiuc.edu)
This time is for you – do make an appointment!

My Thinking on the Course

Welcome Back! Hope the summer was a good one.

This syllabus is founded on the understanding that it makes no sense to think of “fieldwork” independently of the inquiry by which it is motivated and the writings that emerge from it. Thus, this course understands that fieldwork is an analytically motivated process. Ethnographers enter their "fields" with -- and conduct their research in constant dialogue with -- research questions and hypotheses. In this spirit, this course will take up the methods of anthropological research, namely the articulation among the research question, field research, and data analysis.

The literature on fieldwork (ethnography, qualitative inquiry etc.) is immense and to be frank I find it all a bit daunting – and to be even more frank, some of it gets pretty repetitive. The last time I taught the course I opted for finding practice in ethnographic monographs – but it didn’t always work. This version combines meta-reflective pieces on ethnography itself with some in-the-thick-of-it readings as well. I am very grateful to my colleagues Ellen Moodie for reading suggestions culled from her last teaching of this course, and Alma Gottlieb for her suggestions already several years ago.

Of course, in a methods course, you need to get your feet wet. I have opted *against* having you write full blown proposals early in the semester and in turn pursuing extensive field research. Rather, I would like to think of what I have mapped out for you here this way: a series of *parsimonious* (i.e., short but meaningful!) exercises that lead you to a *short* research proposal that will be your final assignment. Let me warn: you will not have the pleasure of conducting many, many hours of fieldwork and becoming a master of one or another corner of social reality. Rather, my hope is that in a rather skeletal fashion you will be able to imagine the (always complicated) relationship between a burning question, the texts (or discourses) and contexts that matter to that question, and in turn the fieldwork methods that would make sense for the pursuit of your passions. Your fieldwork assignments will be more like occasional stones on an imagined research path than a full-blown research project. Let me quote Ellen Moodie,

“The goal is for you to develop confidence for doing longer-term research projects with the recognition of the inevitable adjustments and improvisations ethnographic fieldwork requires.” Please know that I know that some of you do not aspire to this goal (i.e., graduate school, longer-term projects): no problem. For you, my goal is to make you a different (I hope, better) reader of ethnographically-culled knowledge/arguments (across many disciplines and in the popular realm as well) for having tried your own hand at it.

Your research exercises and proposals will be a part of The Ethnography of the University Initiative (EUI, www.eotu.uiuc.edu), a campus-wide initiative to introduce students to institutional inquiry and the research process through a sustained examination of our own university. Students in EUI courses (over 60 to date) have the unique opportunity to house their inquiry process in an on-line archive (IDEALS, <http://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/755>), and to build on the research of concurrent and earlier cohorts of U of I students. I am committed to teaching this course through EUI for several reasons: (1) the university is our most easily accessible research laboratory; (2) it is an institution that we are all affected by/implicated in and it thus makes sense for us to interrogate it meaningfully and to think about its transformation/s as well; (3) the opportunity to build on and contribute to student colleagues’ work is exciting and I hope meaningful – likely, your proposal will become the seed of future EUI research and hopefully your proposal can build on the queries and findings of EUI colleagues, past and present; and (4) because EUI is committed to the archiving of the research process which will allow all of us to watch one another as we go through the process.

Please note: the decision to archive your EUI project will be your own – made at the end of the semester.

One more thing: both within and beyond EUI, for several years now I have recently been engaged in a number of group ethnographic projects with from 2-9 investigators and I have become increasingly convinced that the quality of field research and analysis is greatly enhanced by both collaboration and by early sharing of notes, results etc. In this way the technologies that we use in this class, and the requirement that each of you will be a part of a 3 person team (not for joint research, but for sharing and commenting), will make for this sort of collective feed-back (and I hope encourage you to work collaboratively into the future).

On a final note: I want the class to be pleasurable and meaningful. If you have suggestions *at any point* as to how to better steer the course with these aims in mind, please speak up!

Readings

All readings are available on the course Moodle (see below).

Supplies

You will need access to a tape recorder at a couple of points in the semester. I have some that can be borrowed, but not enough for the entire class. Also, you will need a few tapes.

Assignments and Grades

See separate document

NOTE: For this class you need to subscribe to Moodle, our course management site. In order to do this go to <https://moodle.atlas.uiuc.edu/course/view.php?id=33>. You will be asked to enter an enrollment key (i.e., password). It is: 411. After that you will have easy access.

Weekly Schedule

Week 2

August 29

Raising Issues: Methods, Ethics, Race, Gender

Duneier, Mitchell. 1999. *Sidewalk*. NY: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux. Introduction (3-14); Appendix: A Statement on Methods (333-357).

American Anthropological Association, "Code of Ethics" (1998), available online at: <http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>

Twine, France Winddance. 2000. "Racial Ideologies and Racial Methodologies." In *Racing Research, Researching Race: Methodological Dilemmas in Critical Race Studies*, ed. France Winddance Twine and Jonathan W. Warren. NY: New York University., xi-xiv and 1-34.

Stacey, Judith. 1991. "Can There Be A Feminist Ethnography?" In *Women's Worlds: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, eds. Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai. New York: Routledge. 111-119.

Assignment #1: Reading Response

Week 3

September 5

Blurry Boundaries: Doing, Recording, Writing Ethnography

Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 1995. Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research. In *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1-16.

Stilgoe, John R. 1998. Beginnings. In *Outside Lies Magic: Regaining History and Awareness in Everyday Places*. NY: Walker and Company. 1-19.

Becker, Howard. 1998. *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While You're Doing It*. Selections from "Imagery." 46-57.

Balshem, Martha. 1993. *Cancer in the Community: Class and Medical Authority* Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press. ix-xiii, 1-54.

Assignment #2: An Observation

*Assign comment groups

Week 4

September 12

University Stories

On universities generally...

Ewell, Peter. 1998. Who Do You Think You Are? The Art of the Institutional Reality Check. *University Business*: 20-21.

Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates. 1998. *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities*. Stony Brook, NY: State University of New York at Stony Brook for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. <http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/Pres/boyer.nsf/> (for some reason I couldn't hyperlink from the address on the syllabus but when I googled "Boyer Report" I got there very easily).

"What is a Research University" (to give you a sense of where UIUC fits (we are a so-called research university)) (pp. 2-4).

"An Overview" and "The University as Ecosystem" (pp. 1-10).

See assignment sheet for additional web resources to help you select a text.

To help you analyze a text

Fairclough, Norman. 2003. "Assumptions." In *Analyzing Discourse: textual Analysis for Social Research*. London: Routledge (55-61).

Strauss, Claudia. "Analyzing Discourse for Cultural Complexity." In Naomi Quinn ed., *Finding Culture in Talk: A Collection of Methods*. NY:MacMillan. 203-242.

Assignment #3: Analysis of a Text

Begin comment groups (of 3)

Week 5

September 19

Proposing Research: Linking Inquiry and Methods

You will only meet for one hour

EUI Project Coordinator Tim McDonough will come to class to discuss EUI IRB Compliance (3:00 – circa 3:45)

U of I policy governing the use of human subjects in research -- You need to become very familiar with this material

<http://www.irb.uiuc.edu/?q=regulation-policies/uiuc-policies.html>

Week 6

September 26

The Ethnographic Interview I + Proposing Research

Pierre Bourdieu et al. 1993. *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society* (Stanford University Press) “To the Reader,” “The Space of Points of View,” “Jonquil Street” (1-22).

Weiss, Robert. 1994. Interviewing. In *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*. New York: The Free Press. 61-119.

Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. “In the Field: Participating, Observing, and Jotting Notes” (selection from, 26-30). Writing Up Fieldnotes I: from Field to Desk (selection from, 39-50).

The Art of Writing Proposals: Some Candid Suggestions for Applicants to Social Science Research Council Competitions

http://www.ssrc.org/fellowships/art_of_writing_proposals.page

Balshem, Martha. 1993. *Cancer in the Community: Class and Medical Authority* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press). 55-90.

As you continue to read in Balshem, try to imagine how she would have advocated for her own research: its questions, hypotheses, and methods.

Assignment #4: A Practice Interview

Week 7

October 3

The Ethnographic Interview II

Becker, Howard. 1998. *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While You're Doing It*. "Sampling." 67-108.

Anderson, Kathryn and Dana C. Jack. "Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses." In *Women's Worlds: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, eds. Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai. New York: Routledge. 11-26.

Balshem, Martha. 1993. *Cancer in the Community: Class and Medical Authority* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press). 91-124.

Assignment #5: Question and Plan

Week 8

October 10

The Ethnographic Interview III

Quinn, Naomi. 2005. How to Reconstruct Schemas People Share, from What they Say. In Naomi Quinn ed., *Finding Culture in Talk: A Collection of Methods*. NY:MacMillan. 35-81.

Pierre Bourdieu et al. 1993. *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society* (Stanford University Press). "Understanding" (607-626).

Assignment #6: A Project Interview

Week 9

October 17

The Archive

The Primary Source Village

<http://www.library.uiuc.edu/village/primarysource/index.htm>

This is a wonderful tutorial on primary sources – what they are, how to find them, and what to do with them! Please review Modules 1, 2, and 3 – they are clearly marked on the site.

NOTE: We will gather at the Student Life and Culture Archival Program

(located in the Archives Research Center, room 105, at 1707 S. Orchard Street in Urbana, (222-7841). This facility is in the former Horticulture Field Laboratory Building just east of the University of Illinois President's house on Florida Ave.)

The Student Life and Culture Archival Program

<http://web.library.uiuc.edu/ahx/slc/>

Assignment #7: EUI Link

Week 10

October 24

Beyond the Interview I

(We will divide these readings among class members)

Mapping

Nelson, Laura C. 2000. "Special Places: Neighborhoods, Memories, Movement." In *Measured Excess: Status, Gender, and Consumer Nationalism in South Korea*. NY: Columbia University Press. 60-66.

Lynch, Kevin. 1960. "The Image of the Environment." In *The Image of the City*. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press. 1-13.

Kinship and Social Exchange

Julia Crane and Michael Angrosino. 1984. "Charting Kinship," in *Field Projects in Anthropology*, 2nd ed. J. Crane and M. Angrosino, eds. pp. 44-52.

Johnson, Allen. 1978. The Exchange Orientation. In A. Johnson, ed. *Quantification in Cultural Anthropology*. pp. 96-117.

Time Allocation

Gross, Daniel. 1984. Time Allocation: A Tool for the Study of Cultural Behavior. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 13:519-558.

Focus Groups

<http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU19.html>

<http://ag.arizona.edu/fcs/cyfernet/cyfar/focus.htm>

Morgan, David L. 1988. *Focus Groups a Qualitative Research*. Sage Publications. 1-17.

Assignment #8: The Archive

Week 11

October 31

Beyond the Interview II

Fink, Arlene and Jacqueline Kosecoff. 1998. *How to Conduct Surveys: Step-by-Step Guide*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. Pp. 9-26, 36-38, 60-62.

Bernard, H. Russell. 1995. "Questionnaires and Survey Research." In *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Creek, CA: AltaMira Press). 256-288.

Some national numbers that might be of interest

National Center for Education Statistics (www.nces.ed.gov): (under postsecondary button) www.nces.ed.gov/surveys (longitudinal surveys on students) and www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds (census-type data on colleges and universities).

Measuring Up 2000: State Report Cards (The National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education) (www.highereducation.org).

Some local numbers that might be of interest

Management and Information main web site: <http://www.dmi.uiuc.edu>
Campus Profile: <http://www.dmi.uiuc.edu/cp/>
Student enrollment reports: <http://www.dmi.uiuc.edu/stuenr/>
Course Information System: <http://www.dmi.uiuc.edu/course>

Assignment #9: Data continued

Week 12

November 7

Writing with Photos/Video I

Barbash and Lucien Taylor. 1997. Getting Going. In *Cross-Cultural Filmmaking: A Handbook for Making Documentary and Ethnographic Films and Videos*. (Berkeley, CA: UC Press). 1-89.

Pink, Sarah. 2001. Photography in Ethnographic Research. In *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media, and Representation in Research*. Sage Publications. 49-76.

View before class: Wife among Wives by Judith and David MacDougall. 1982. (at Undergraduate Media Center: 306.0967 627 W638)

View in class: Photo Wallahs by Judith and David MacDougall. 1992.
(DVD770.92.P5663).
(MacDougall's filmography at:
filmhttp://www.berkeleymedia.com/catalog/berkeleymedia/producers/david_macdougall)

Week 13

November 14

Putting It Together

Balshem, Martha. 1993. *Cancer in the Community: Class and Medical Authority* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press). 125-147.

Heider, Karl G. 1988. The Rashomon Effect: When Ethnographers Disagree. *American Anthropologist* 90:73-81.

Assignment #10: Discuss

THANKSGIVING BREAK. As we say, "Enjoy"!

Week 14

November 28

Writing with Photos/Video II

Review:

Grant proposal document:

http://www.ssrc.org/fellowships/art_of_writing_proposals.page

Institutional Review Board Investigator Handbook:

<http://www.irb.uiuc.edu/?q=regulation-policies/uiuc-policies.html>

Assignment #11: Video/Plan

Note: EUI Coordinator Tim McDonough will visit to discuss IDEALS archiving and your intellectual property rights.

NOVEMBER 29 (Thursday): EUI Student Conference, 2:30-8:30, 126 GISLIS
(Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences)

You are required to offer a poster or a presentation (VERY short, circa 5 minutes) (you will schedule your presentation directly with Tim McDonough (tmcdonou@uiuc.edu))

Week 15

December 5

Wrap Up

You will (all, I hope) briefly present your Moodles – although the final proposal is not due until December 10 – I expect you to have drafts (high points) to share by this date.

Assignment #12: Research Proposal