Anthropology 562: The Practice of Ethnography

Fall 2017  Lecture 10643R  T 2:45PM  KAP 137

Professor:  Lanita Jacobs
Office:  Kaprielian Hall (KAP) 356
Email:  jacobshu@usc.edu
Office Hours:  T/TH 11-11:50AM; also by appointment. You can also contact me Monday-Friday via email.
Course Website:  ANTH 562 course materials are accessible through Blackboard; to access, click on: https://blackboard.usc.edu/

Required Texts:
1. Anthropology 562 Reader. (Abbreviated as RDR in Reading Schedule; (Available in Blackboard under Course Resources)

Highly Recommended Text

NOTE: All texts are on reserve in Leavey Library.

Course Description: Ethnography is most commonly understood as anthropology’s hallmark methodology. But to its impassioned practitioners, ethnography is much more than that. Ethnography is also a theoretical approach and a dynamic way of seeing and being in the world. In this seminar, we will explore modes of inquiry and analysis that characterize the practice of ethnography. Special attention will be devoted to the various phases of ethnographic fieldwork, from “entering the field,” collecting data, to writing/representing one’s findings. We will also examine such analytical paradigms as discourse analysis, narrative analysis, visual analysis, among others. A review of specific case studies will augment this training and further illuminate the intersubjective dimensions of ethnographic fieldwork. At the end of the semester, you will gain insights with which to conduct pilot and/or ongoing fieldwork, as well as an appreciation for the politics of representation and the imperative of researcher accountability, collegiality, and professionalization.
Class Expectations & Evaluation: Class meetings will consist of a brief lecture, article/data presentations, and discussion, with a strong emphasis on the latter. Accordingly, it is essential that you keep up with the weekly readings and complete written assignments on time. This seminar centers methodological training for scholars in and beyond anthropology; participants should likewise anticipate structured lectures and discussion during the first five weeks.

Class Participation. Regular attendance is expected. If you are unable to attend a class, please let me know in advance. (20% - 20 points)

Presentations of Readings. In order to facilitate class discussion, students will be required to present a 5-10 minute synopsis of up to THREE required/optional readings across the span of the semester. On the day your article/chapter is assigned, you should prepare and post in Blackboard’s “Discussion Board” a handout that summarizes the author’s argument, methods, and findings and offers several discussion questions for our collective consideration. Breathe life into this exercise; for example, feel free to indicate the relevance/significance of the paper, particularly as it relates to ethnographic methods and the study of culture. You might also critique the author’s methods or conclusions before presenting thoughtful questions to the class that encourage a critical examination of the reading. If you are conducting research, you can also incorporate examples from your data and/or fieldwork experiences that might extend class discussion. (NOTE: I will cover most, if not all of the assigned readings from O’Reilly [Ethnographic Methods].) (30% - 30 points)

Final Paper. For your final paper, you have the option of completing an ethnographic analysis OR an annotated bibliography on a topic relevant to your research. A half-page summary of your paper focus is due during the 6th week of class.

- Ethnographic analyses should be no more than 15-20 double-space pages in length (excluding a bibliography of 8-10 sources) and present data gleaned from a pilot ethnographic study, interview/life history, etc. Ethnographic analyses can also employ one or several modes of analysis (e.g., discourse analysis, narrative analysis, visual analysis). Graduate students who are well beyond their 4th year are strongly encouraged to complete an ethnographic analysis.

- Annotated bibliographies should specify a central research question and include a review of 25-30 texts (e.g., articles, chapters, films, and/or books). Ideally, these texts should inform your present/projected research. Annotated bibliographies should be single-spaced and provide a three to five sentence summary for each source.

Final papers must adhere to the following format: 12 point-font, 1” top, bottom, right, and left margins. Staple your paper(review and number your pages (no folders please); also include a title page. Bibliographic entries should be formatted according to either MLA or APA format; sample guidelines are available on the web at: http://www.intranet.csupomona.edu/~dhanne/styleman.html. Also, ethnographic analyses should be double-spaced (please avoid extra spaces between paragraphs) and annotated bibliographies should be single-spaced. **Final papers are due in my mailbox by 4:50PM on Thursday, December 7th** (Do not email papers; late papers will be docked points). (50% - 50 points)
READING SCHEDULE*

[NOTE: Emerson = Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, Hurston = Mules & Men, Jackson = Harlemworld, Jacobs-Huey = From the Kitchen to the Parlor (unless otherwise stated), O’Reilly = Ethnographic Methods, Zinsser 2006 = On Writing Well, Zinsser 1993 = Writing to Learn, RDR = ANTH 562 Reader, TBA=To be announced]

MODES OF INQUIRY

WK 1: 8/22  Course Introduction

WK 2: 8/29  The Practice and Ethics of Ethnography
  • O’Reilly: Chapters 1-3

WK 3: 9/5  Ethnographic Fieldwork/Participant Observations
  • Geertz: Being There [in RDR]
  • Jacobs-Huey: Introduction [From the Kitchen to the Parlor]
  • O’Reilly: Chapter 4
  Optional/Additional Readings:
  • Agar: Who are you to do this? [in RDR]
  • Kent: Fieldwork that Failed [in RDR]
  • Clifford: Spatial Practices [in RDR]

WK 4: 9/12  Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes
  • Emerson: Chapters 1-3
  • O’Reilly: Chapter 8
  Optional/Additional Readings:
  • Emerson: Chapter 5

WK 5: 9/19  Ethnographic Interviews/Life Histories
  • Gwaltney: Introduction, The Many Shades of Black [in RDR]
  • O’Reilly: Chapters 5 and 6

WK 6: 9/26  Multi-Sited Ethnography [Post ½ Page Summary of Final Project in Blackboard]
  • Berg: The Practical Challenges of Multi-Sited Ethnography
  • Casey: How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time [in RDR]
  • Falzon: Multisited Field Studies [in RDR]
  • Jacobs-Huey: Chapter 6 [From the Kitchen to the Parlor]
  • Marcus: Ethnography in/of the World System [in RDR]
  Optional/Additional Readings:
  • Jacobs-Huey: Chapter 5 [From the Kitchen to the Parlor]
  • Poole: An Excess of Description [in RDR]
  • O’Reilly: Chapter 7

WK 7: 10/3  Reading/Writing Day [No Class]

CRITICAL/META-INQUIRIES

WK 8: 10/10  Native Ethnography
  • Jacobs-Huey: Chapter 7 [From the Kitchen to the Parlor]
  • Jackson: An Ethnographic Film/Flam [in RDR]
  • Kondo: The Eye/I [in RDR]
  • Navarro et al.: Sitting at the Kitchen Table [in RDR]
  Optional/Additional Readings:
  • Behar: Writing in My Father’s Name [in RDR]
  • Narayan: How Native is a “Native” Anthropologist [in RDR]
### Analytical Paradigms

**WK 9: 10/17**  
**Politics of Representation**  
- Geertz: I-Witnessing [in RDR]  
- Hurston: *Mules and Men*, Part I  
- Washington: Introduction, ZNH [in RDR]  

**Optional/Additional Readings:**  
- Jacobs-Huey: “Into the Breach” [in RDR]  
- Rosaldo: Grief and A Headhunters’ Rage [in RDR]  
- Rosaldo: Subjectivity & Social Analysis [in RDR]  
- Zinsser 1993: *Writing to Learn* (Chapters 2, 4, and 10)

**WK 10: 10/24**  
**Narrative Analysis**  
- Basso: “Stalking with Stories” [in RDR]  
- Jacobs, Lawlor, Mattingly: I/We Narratives among African American Families Raising Children with Special Needs [in RDR]  
- Mattingly: Finding Narrative in Clinical Practice [in RDR]  
- Ochs & Capps: Narrating the Self [in RDR]  

**Optional/Additional Readings:**  

**WK 11: 10/31**  
**Ethnographic Writing as Praxis**  
- Emerson: Chapter 7  
- Geertz: Thick Description [in RDR]  
- O’Reilly: Chapter 9  
- Marcus & Fischer: Ethnography & Interpretive Anthropology [in RDR]  

**Optional/Additional Readings:**  
- Rankin: Meeting Readers’ Needs [in RDR]  
- Zinsser 2006: *On Writing Well* (Chs. 17, 20-24)

### Ethnographic Case Studies

**WK 12: 11/7**  
**Ethnography of Popular Culture**  
- Duranti: The Audience as Co-Author [in RDR]  
- Jacobs: Introduction; “The Arab is the New Nigger” [in RDR]  
- Jacobs: “It’s about to get real”: Kevin Hart as a Modern Day Trickster [in RDR]  
- Jacobs-Huey: Chapter 4 [*From the Kitchen to the Parlor*]  

**Optional/Additional Readings:**  
- Gwaltney: A Nation within a Nation [in RDR]  
- Jacobs-Huey: Black/“Urban” Standup Comedy: A Performance by Brandon Bowlin [in RDR]  
- Jacobs-Huey: Moralizing Whiteness in *Joan of Arcadia* [in RDR]  
- Kondo: Shades of Twilight [in RDR]  
- Morgan: Redefining “Language in the Inner City” [in RDR]

**WK 13: 11/14**  
**Ethnography of/ as Social Justice**  
- Abu-Lughod: Do Muslim Women (Still) Need Saving? [in RDR]  
- Lund & Nabavi: A Duo Ethnographic Conversation on Social Justice Activism [in RDR]  

**Optional/Additional Readings:**  
- Jackson: *Harlemworld*  
- Manning: The Challenges of Postmodernism [in RDR]

**WK 14: 11/21**  
**Reading Day (Thanksgiving)**
WK 15: 11/28  Reading Day (American Anthropological Association Meetings)
Note: Final Papers/Annotated Bibliographies are due in my mailbox (KAP 352) by 4:50PM on TH 12/7/17. (Please do not email or post papers in Blackboard.)

Course Bibliography


