

SABANCI UNIVERSITY
ANTH468/568: Ethnography: Fieldwork and Writing in Anthropology
FALL 2021/ Tuesday 11.40-14.30

Instructor: Arzu Ünal
arzu.unal@sabanciuniv.edu.tr

Teaching Assistant: İlkan Can İpekçi
ilkancanipekci@sabanciuniv.edu

Link for Zoom Meeting
<https://sabanciuniv.zoom.us/j/3921680787>

Link for ANTH 468/568 WhatsApp group:
<https://chat.whatsapp.com/LsWHoyK8nfF9qhHZJrfsbo>

Course Outlines

Ethnography refers both to the main qualitative research methods and the written product of anthropological research. This course aims to prepare students to design and develop ethnographic projects. Throughout the course students will get familiar with the main tools of conducting ethnographic research step by step. We will begin by examining what anthropological research is, samples of ethnographic writing, its short history, how it is designed, and what kind of a research field it describes and sets out to explore. We will then move on to understanding how some basic anthropological research methods are put to practice.

Students will both read about, and try out methods such as participant observation and fieldnote taking, interviewing, narrative analysis of both topical life stories, fiction and nonfiction texts (such as novels, historical archives, and legal documents).

This course will allow you to practice and develop research skills that could be applicable to a under/graduate research projects or employment after graduation. Undergraduate student may also use their research projects/papers as a sample work for graduate applications.

Ethnography is best learned through hands-on practice.

Requirements

This course requires the active participation of all class members through small and large-group activities, class presentations, debate, five short reaction papers and in-class discussion. Students will be expected to write research proposal, conduct small-scale ethnographic fieldwork (practice in-depth interviewing, participant observation, taking field notes), discuss ethical matters and practice narrative analysis and try to make sense of their collected data.

**** Course plan is partly adapted by permission from Gül Özyeğin, Margaret L. Hamilton Professor of Sociology and Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, William and Mary**

Grading

- Research Project: Four assignments and final research paper: % 70
- Presentations and classroom participation (all student cameras need to be on throughout the class in order to obtain participation points): %15.
- Five Reaction Papers: %15

Our research project is structured around four written assignments and a final paper:

- 1) Writing a research proposal: You state your research topic (Further details will be shared in lectures) - 10 points
- 2) Preparing in-depth-interview questions - 10 points
- 3) Notes on conducted interviews and observations - 10 points
- 4) Coding and Triangular Charts - 10 points
- 5) Research Paper - 30 points

Students will prepare weekly class assignments and write a substantial research paper based on the findings of their ethnographic research, and they will present it at different stages of their research as well.

All assignments will be submitted via Turnitin. Late submissions will NOT be accepted under any circumstances. If you are unable to submit your assignments due to serious illness, you must provide a medical certificate to the instructor. In order to succeed in this course, students need to attend class regularly, complete readings, meet assignment deadlines and be prepared to participate in class discussion.

Copying and plagiarism (using someone else's work without citation) will not be tolerated, and all assignments in this class are considered as exams in this respect.

COURSE PLAN **

Week 1 (28 September) Course Introduction and The Logic of Qualitative Methods

Overview of the course, getting to know each other, brainstorming on your research topic for the course.

Reading assignments:

Kirin Narayan, "How Native is a 'Native' Anthropologist?" American Anthropologist, 95, no: 3 (1993: 671-686).

Barber, The Objectivity Myth in Research

<https://thesocietypages.org/feminist/2016/06/08/the-objectivity-myth-in-research>

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Week 2 (5 October) Designing Qualitative Research

Brief history of qualitative research and discussion of the range of reasons people do qualitative research

Reading assignments:

Rosaldo, R. (1989, 1993). "The Erosion of Classical Norms." in Culture and Truth, The Remaking of Social Analysis. Beacon Press.

Becker, Howard. (1998). Chapter 1 in Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You Are Doing It. London: The University of Chicago Press.

Due 9 October - Reaction Paper I

Week 3 (12 October) `The Field` and Grounded Theory

Reading Assignments:

Kelle, U. (2007). "Emergence" vs. "forcing" of empirical data? A crucial problem of grounded theory" reconsidered. Historical Social Research, Supplement, (19), 133-156.

Charmaz, K. (1990). 'Discovering' chronic illness: using grounded theory. Social science & medicine, 30(11), 1161-1172.

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J. (1997). "Discipline and Practice: 'The Field' as Site, Method and Location in Anthropology" in Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science. Gupta, A. & Ferguson, J. (eds). Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (2017). Discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research. Routledge. (1-21)

Due 16 October - Written assignment 1: Research Proposal- 5 pages, double-spaced

Week 4 (19 October) Literature Review, Sampling and Imagery

Reading assignments:

Becker, Howard (1998). Chapter 2 and 3 in Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You Are Doing It. London: The University of Chicago Press.

Due 23 October - Reaction Paper II

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Discussions on Proposals

Week 5 (26 October) Ethics and Interviewing

Reading assignments:

Tolich, M. (2004) "Internal confidentiality: When confidentiality assurances fail relational informants" *Qualitative Sociology* 27(1):101-106

Moors, A. (2019). The trouble with transparency: Reconnecting ethics, integrity, epistemology, and power. *Ethnography*, 20(2), 149-169.

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Robinson and Schulz, "New Avenues for Sociological Inquiry: Evolving Forms of Ethnographic Practice." *Sociology*

Due 29 October - Written Assignment 2: In-depth-interview Questions (20 Q: warm up/ topical life story 5+ the rest would be about researched theme preferably in 3-4 sub-clusters - and reflections on your ethical concerns

Week 6 (2 November) Fieldnotes, Participant Observation

Reading assignments:

Clifford, J. (1990). "Notes on (Field)notes" in *Fieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology*. Sanjek, R. (ed). Cornell University Press: Ithaca & London.

Fabian, J. (2001). "Ethnographic Misunderstanding and the Perils of Context" in *Cultural Memory in the Present*. Stanford University Press.

Conducting at least an Interview and at least 5 interviews for graduates

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York: Basic Books, pp. 310-333

James Spradley, *Participant Observation* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980), 39-84.

Due: 6 November - Reaction Paper III

Week 7-8 (9 November - 16 November) Data Analysis and Findings

Reading assignments:

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Becker, Howard (1998). "Concepts" in *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You Are Doing It*. London: The University of Chicago Press.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "Anthropology and the Savage Slot?: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness" in *Global Transformations in the Modern World* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 7-28.

Due 20 November - Written assignment 3: Notes on your conducted interview and fieldwork experience

Discussions on Triangular Charts

Week 9 (23 November) Narrativity: Oral History/Life Histories 2 April

Reading assignments:

Rosenwald, G. & Ochberg, R. (1992). "Introduction: Life Stories, Cultural Politics, and Self-Understanding" and "Conclusion: Reflections on Narrative Self-Understanding" in *Storied Lives: The Cultural Politics of Self-Understanding*. Rosenwald, G. & Ochberg, R. (eds.). New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

Linde, Charlotte (1993) *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Bruner, J. (1991). "The Narrative Construction of Reality." In *Critical Inquiry*. Vol.18 (Autumn).

Due 27 November - Reaction Paper IV

Week 10 (30 November): Novels, Media and Archives

Reading assignments:

Parla, J. (2003). "Car Narratives: A Narrative Subgenre in Turkish Novel Writing." in *South Atlantic Quarterly*. 102(2-3): 535-550.

Hall, S. (1980). "Encoding/Decoding." in *Media Studies: A Reader*. 2nd edn. Morris, P. & Thornton, S. (eds.). Washington Square, NK: University Press, 2000, pp. 51-61.

Oncu, A. (2000). "The Banal and the Subversive: Politics of Language on Turkish Television." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 3(3): 296-318

Due 4 December - Written assignment 4: Transcriptions and Triangular Charts

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Week 11 (7 December) Analysis and Writing Research Material

Reading assignments:

Charmaz, K. (2008). "Writing the Draft" in Constructing Grounded Theory, a Practice Guide through Qualitative Research. London: sage

Due 11 December - Reaction Paper V

Week 12 (14 December) Presenting Research Material

Reading assignments:

Clifford, J. (1986). "Introduction: Partial Truths" in Clifford, J and Marcus, G. Eds. Writing Culture: Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. University of California Press

Presentations and Discussions

Week 13 (21 December) Presenting Research Material

Reading assignments:

Fabian, Johannes. (1983). Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Objects. New York: Colombia University Press.

Presentations and Discussions

Week 14 (28 December): Presenting Research Material

Deadline for the final draft: 3 January