

Community Ethnography Essay #1: Iresearcher

To begin this project you will write an essay about yourself and how you relate to this project. As I mentioned previously, it is hard to go into a culture that you may know something about or may not, may have preconceived ideas about or may not. It colors our judgment, makes us jump to conclusions. To counter this, it is important to think about who we are, what we believe, and how it will affect how we interpret our data prior to starting our data collection/observation. The first part of the ethnography, the first formal writing I will see from you this semester, should discuss the person you are in relation to the community/culture you are observing. Things you might talk about in this essay:

- What culture you're doing your field work on.
- What you know or don't know about your culture- or what you think you know about it.
- How are you like this culture: class, race, gender, age, socio-economic status, where and how you grew up, if you work, where you work, level of education, level of privilege, marital status, sexual orientation, religious views, political views. The list could go on. It all depends on the group you chose because the assignment asks you to think about you in relationship to the group you are observing.
- How will any of the above affect how you look at this group-will it make it hard to study this group?
- Why are you interested in studying this culture or group? How does it relate to your major or career interests?

When writing this essay include anything that could be relevant to how you relate to this study. It may not all appear in the final large essay at the end of the semester but that is what revision is for. It is important to write about anything that you suspect may matter. Do some digging around in your own past. Talk to family members or friends if needed. Look through family photographs and artifacts. Include any images or other artifacts in your paper that may be relevant. You can scan images at the library and place them in your document. You can also take photographs of artifacts and include them in your paper.

Crafting a Thesis: As with any essay you should develop a thesis statement that you prove throughout your essay with evidence and support. A thesis statement in this case might state the way you relate to your site or why you are interested in this site or what in your life is going to color your judgment as you observe this site.

Audience: Your audience for this essay, as with each of the essays forming the ethnography, is two-fold: First, it is the people at the site you are observing and second, it is your peers in the class as you will share parts of this with them.

Brass Tacks: Your paper should be 3-4 pages long, not including images. You must include at least two images within your essay. Please be sure to use text wrapping and incorporate the images appropriately with captions. We will talk more about this in class.

How I will Evaluate Your Essay

I am using something called "spec" grading to evaluate and assign a grade for your essay draft. The grade is the result of quantity--or just doing what I'm asking you to do--and to a lesser extent, quality. As explained in the syllabus, your work on your essay draft will determine 10% of your final grade for each one, 30% total.

In order to earn a "B" grade for that 10%

- You must complete the workshop draft and the revised draft that is turned into me.
- Respond to the prompt.
- Write an essay that is at least three pages . It can be over. It can't be under.
- Use examples from your own life and knowledge to explain/support your narrative.
- Have a thesis, introduction, and conclusion
- Show awareness of audience
- Include at least 2 images

In order to earn an "A" grade for that 10%

- You must complete the workshop draft and the revised draft that is turned into me.
- Respond to all parts of the prompt.
- Write an essay that is four pages .
- Use detailed examples from your own life and knowledge to explain/support your narrative.
- Have a well developed thesis, introduction, and conclusion
- Show keen awareness of audience
- Include at least 2 images that add meaning to the essay.

In order to earn a "C" grade for that 10%

- You must complete the workshop draft and the revised draft that is turned into me.
- Respond to some parts of the prompt.
- Write an essay that is less than three pages .
- Use some examples from your own life and knowledge to explain/support your narrative.
- Have a thesis, introduction, and conclusion
- Attempts to show awareness of audience

If you do not meet the requirements for a "C" paper, you will fail the paper for that 10% of your grade.