

Seminar 6 – Ethnography and Autoethnography

Purpose of the Week

This week introduces the concepts of ethnography and the role of the ethnographer working in the field. We will also consider autoethnography where you are observing your own thoughts and insights. Autoethnography is a way of taking the reflexive part of the phenomenological inquiry and making it the centre of the research process. Essentially it is autobiography with an academic rationale and purpose. Taken by itself, autoethnography is open to the classic criticism of 'naval gazing', but it is an important way of taking reflexivity to its limit.

Tasks for this week:

- Watch the lecture on Ethnography and Auto-ethnography by Dr Jack Hunter.
- Do the required reading but also take a few hours to sit with your own thoughts about your forthcoming research project and write some notes on your ideas and feelings around this project.

Required Reading

The reading this week focuses on ethnography in different guises. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey offers ideas on how to observe, take notes and write up observations and is relevant to seminars 6 and 7. lie Bird's chapter 3 is her account of the ethnographer stepping into the field.

Theory:

Hennink, M. M., Hutter, I. & Bailey, A., *Qualitative Research Methods* (Los Angeles; London: SAGE, 2011/2020). Chapter 9.

Evans-Pritchard, E.E., *Social Anthropology* (London: Cohen and West Ltd., 1967 [1951]), chapter 1 ('The Scope of the Subject'). On Moodle.

Practice:

Bird, Alison, 'Astrology in Education: An Ethnography', DPhil Thesis, University of Sussex, 2006. Chapter 3. Available on the Moodle page and in the MA CAA Online Library.

Optional Reading:

There are additional research papers in the research PDF folder which use ethnographical methodologies.

Autoethnography:

Alsop, Christiane Kraft, 'Home and Away: Self-Reflexive Auto-/Ethnography', *Forum: Qualitative Research*, Volume 3, No. 3 – September 2002. Available via the Moodle page.

Decolonising Methodologies:

Tuhiwai Smith, Linda, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London, Bloomsbury Publishing: third edition 2021). Available online through the library.

Also look at:

Pike, Sarah M., 'Forging Magical Selves: Gendered Bodies and Ritual Fires at Neo-Pagan Festivals', *Syzygy: Journal of Alternative Religion and Culture* 3.3-4, pp. 253-269.